Pushing Your Own Buttons

A Pilgrim's Guide to Hypnosis and Self-hypnosis

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A PREFACE FOR PILGRIMS

This book has taken several years to get this far. I thought about it for many, many years. My conclusion was that there wasn't anything all that new to be said about hypnosis and self-hypnosis. As a result I pushed it to background.

Then as I thought about it more and more, I realized that there was a very important difference between what I had to say and what I read in most books on hypnosis. Still, what I really felt I had to say could be said in a few pages, or so I felt. Book publishers don't go out of their way to publish pamphlets. As a result I pushed it to background.

Then for a while, about two years ago, I got all charged up about the "Book" and I wrote the first draft in about a month. Then I wrote the second draft... Then I wrote the third draft... After awhile, I realized that I was a bit too demanding. As a result I pushed it to background.

After that, I decided that what I really needed was for someone, with greater objectivity, to come along and edit the book for me. I enlisted a total of six people to do so. With only one exception they just never did anything with it. The one exception did an excellent job of marking it up, suggesting revisions, pointing out areas of lack of clarity and generally critiquing my work. While thankful, I found the weight of the revision work to be oppressive. As a result I pushed it to background.

While all of this was going on I also started to deal with what I imagined to be the "facts of life" regarding publishing. I assumed that the chances of finding anyone other than a vanity publisher who would publish the Book were very slim. In addition, the Book would cost more than I wanted it to cost and it would be inaccessible to many people. The amount I might get for all the effort, I realized, was probably pretty small. As a result I pushed it to background.

I might add, lest you get the wrong idea, that any of the above reservations could have been dealt with in a couple of weeks with a good motivational tape. As you will read, in the Book, it is important to deal with issues that are really important to you. Motivating myself to get beyond my fear of dancing was only one of many, higher priorities. That, at least, had the promise of more fun, meeting new people and other forms of high energy. As a result I pushed The Book to background.

In 1995, something happened that changed the scenario and introduced the promise of more fun. As the Internet, and the connections to it expanded, I began to realize that there was another distribution method that was exciting to contemplate. I started thinking more and more about putting the book out on the Internet for free. For many years, there have been people who have been writing software and distributing it free of charge. The usual method is to put it out on the Internet (GNU – Free Software Foundation – Richard Stallman)or have it packaged along with other programs, on shareware diskettes or compact disks. While the cost of the diskettes or CD's is minimal, they contain software that is worth far more.

The objective of shareware is to give people a chance to try the software out and to see if they want to continue using it. If the user likes the software, they may be asked to either contribute to the ongoing project or they are asked to purchase a licensed copy. Often, the version that they have has been floating around the net for a while and if they purchase a licensed copy they get the latest version. Regardless of whether they like it or not, they are free (in fact they are encouraged) to give copies to friends, clients, co-workers, etc. In this way, even if they don't consider it useful enough to purchase it or support the ongoing work on it, they can contribute to its wider distribution.

Several months ago, I realized that this would be an excellent way to go with the Book and a good deal of fun as well. As a result, I moved the Book to the foreground.

While making some money on it would be nice, my ego is fed by the dozens of sites that have mirrored the book, the hundreds of people I have developed friendships with around the world, and the thousands of readers who have visited the hypnosis homepage. Don't get me wrong; more money would be real nice. But the biggest kick has been knowing that people are using The Book. So, even if your decision is that the Book isn't worth contributing to, either financially or intellectually, I would appreciate hearing from you - responding to you may be more difficult.

Now, there is another type of free software that is also quite significant. It is software that is put out and the users are encouraged to contribute to its development. This is also how I would like to see the Book handled. The following areas are ones that I am either planning to work on or areas that I would be pleased to see other people work on. They are not the only areas that need work, but they are suggestive. If you have an idea about how to improve the Book, email me (address below) and suggest it. If nobody else is working on that task, I will let you know to go ahead. If someone else is working on it, I will give you their name and how to contact them. If they want help or are no longer involved in working on that, you and they can work it out and let me know the new roles and responsibilities.

This version, as are all versions, is copyrighted. Nobody, and that includes you, has the right to appropriate the text, the ideas and the approaches as their own work. You do have limited freedom to distribute the first three chapters of the Book, intact as they appear on the official hypnosis website: www.afn.org/~hypnosis and including user registration information and the fact that it is my intellectual property. Neither you, nor anyone else has my permission to distribute incomplete versions of the Book or to charge anything other than a minimal charge for the convenience of your distribution. In no case do you, or anyone else, have my permission to claim this work as your own.

WARNINGS ************* WARNINGS ************* WARNINGS

Most of the scripts are not of as high quality (yet) as I would like. I have far more experience with the smoking and weight control scripts and that is reflected in their higher quality. Read them before making your own scripts since they are the best in the lot. I will, assuming a good response to the book, have all the scripts in similar

quality shape in Version 2, due for distribution in December, 1995. Make lemonade until then...

Hypnosis is a serious, psychological tool. Nothing in this book is intended make you think that you are qualified to hypnotize another person. You are probably not skilled in psychotherapeutic technique and should not assume that you are prepared to deal with another person's emotional or therapeutic needs. You assume all risks associated with the use of these techniques. Neither the author; nor the Alachua Freenet nor any other site administrator or site is responsible for your use of this material nor do the aforementioned or anyone at all, but you, assume any responsibility for your well being or any harm to you resulting from the use, misuse, misunderstanding, appropriate or inappropriate use of these techniques. If you are not satisfied that you can accept the full and unlimited responsibility for your own well-being you ought not proceed. While self-hypnosis can be a great help to individuals suffering from a variety of nervous disorders, this book is intended for use by people who are ready to take charge of their own lives and are not looking for someone to blame for their failure to do so.

NOTE TO THERAPISTS AND OTHER MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

You have my permission to distribute the first three chapters of this book in either written form or by making audiotapes of the scripts in the appendices for specific clients. However, you do not have my permission to claim credit for it, to charge for it, or to in any way discourage persons you give it to, from becoming registered users. This includes failing to include the Preface or other items that ask users to become registered users with your distribution. You have my permission to distribute the book intact and giving me full credit for it.

Good reading to all, and I hope you find the Book helpful in your pilgrimage.

WHO AM I?

I earned a master's degree in social work from SUNY at Stony Brook in 1975.

I am licensed as a social worker in Pennsylvania and New York.

I am a former college professor of social work and also served as the Director of an undergraduate social work program.

I have been formally practicing as a clinician since 1975.

I have been interested in hypnosis since about the age of 9 or 10.

I have been doing hypnosis for almost three decades.

I have worked with hundreds (thousands) of people either directly or through the sharing of tapes that I have made, prior drafts of this book and other written materials.

I earned my BSN degree at the University of Florida in 1999, my MS in Nursing at Virginia Commonwealth University in 2001 and I am finishing my PhD program at Virginia Commonwealth University in 2004.

I earned a master's degree in applied mathematics and statistics from SUNY at Stony Brook in 1972.

I have taught mathematics and statistics at several colleges and universities.

I worked as an actuary for eight years (1981 - 1989): quite boring, even with self-hypnosis motivation though it turns out that my current work is very closely related.

I have published a number of papers including: "Sexual Excitement and Response by Imagery Production" and "Post-Hypnotic Suggestion in Behavior Modification", several papers in biostatistics, a few papers in social sciences area and I have, in mind, a couple of more books. More recently I have been publishing and presenting on professional caregiver insurance risk and risk induced professional caregiver despair.

I was born in Washington, DC, grew up in New York City by mistake and currently live in North Central Florida.

I live with my dogs: Vana (Princess Nirvana II - Schitzu) and Goldie (Goldie - Golden retriever).

IN MEMORIAM

Vana took leave of this dimension in June of 1996. She was the most loyal, sensitive and intelligent creature I have ever met. She was a self- ascended mistress of the highest caliber. As a spiritual guide, confessor and friend I could not have asked for more. She is deeply missed on this planet but I know she watches over me...

Goldie left for new adventures in March, 2003. She was the sweetest creature imaginable and I will miss her greatly.

I am an itinerant inventor and consider any used equipment to be a treasure.

I am an amateur extra class licensed ham radio operator - NK3F and have been a licensed ham off and on since approximately 1962.

I am a classic ARIES so don't bother trying to change me - it is hard enough for me to change myself.

Favorite slogan: ANTICIPATE LESS - APPRECIATE MORE

Favorite Books: "Nuts come in Pairs" by Shepard Gellert. Real Analysis by Royden; General and Special Theories of Relativity by Einstein, and anything written by Richard Feynmann, Bertrand Russell or Ludwig Wittgenstein.

I consider myself intelligent, not necessarily intellectual.

I have blue eyes - of course.

Yes, I am available for dinner.

I like to teach people things - Hello, Dr. Falken, would you like to learn something today... I have taught/tutored mathematics, statistics, physics, chemistry, anatomy, nutrition, hypnosis, relaxation, and microbiology... I look forward to learning new things to teach.

CHAPTER 1
THE INTERNAL DIALOGUE

There is an ever-present dialogue that takes place in all creatures that use language. For healthy, well-adjusted people that dialogue is filled with positive statements about themselves, the people around them and the universe they live in. For others, this internal conversation is filled with negativity. They don't trust themselves, their feelings, other people or life. For these people, life is a daily dose of misery and drudgery. Many of your fellow humans, most notably those in: mental hospitals; prisons; reform schools; and menial, boring, life draining jobs, have internal dialogues that are literally bankrupt of the possibility that is each human being. After you complete the following exercise I will list a few examples that will help to set the record straight as to where you might fall in the continuum between these extremes.

Exercise 1

In a moment, I am going to ask you to stop reading and take a few minutes to consider some of the thoughts that "come" into your head on a regular basis. Try to recall some of the more common things that you "hear" yourself saying about you and the people you come into contact with and the world in general. Keep a pad of paper in front of you and a pencil or pen in your hand. When one of these thoughts pops into the foreground write it down on the pad of paper. When you finish that, turn to the next page of your pad and let the next thought come into the foreground. Do this for fifteen to twenty minutes or until you have about twenty such thoughts listed. If a thought recurs, write it down again. NOW: get a pad and either a pencil or pen; stop reading and do the exercise.

If you finished the exercise you did "good". Pat yourself on the shoulder and, speaking out loud say: "I did the exercise and I'm a good person". If you didn't do the exercise - do the exercise. Let me be clear about that. This is a how-to book. It is not meant to be skimmed at three thousand words a minute. It is not meant to be a text that you want to be able to pass a test with a grade of seventy percent or higher. If you don't USE the book you're not going to get much out of this book. If you don't get anything out of it, you won't become a registered user. If you don't become a registered user I will be SAD. If I am sad the book will get no better than it is now. So make sure that you get more than your money's worth out of it. SO, if you didn't do the exercise go back to the second paragraph, of this chapter, and follow the instructions NOW.

So you should now have 10 -20 thoughts listed on the pages of your pad. Consider what you wrote down. Are they things that promote good feelings about yourself,

other people and the world. Do they promote negative feelings about you, other people and the world in which you live. Are you so used to these thoughts that you don't even know the difference? Do you buy into the idea that you are a "bad" or "sick" person who has to be fixed somehow? You may rationalize the negative thoughts on the basis that they are really true. Let me say with virtually no doubt - your negative thoughts about yourself and the world are not objectively true. This is true simply because there are no "truths". More importantly, your negativity toward yourself is untrue because you are an exquisite work of art. Your very existence and the fact that you are reading this book should be grounds for absolute awe about the mystery of life and the part you play in it.

One very easy test of whether a feeling is positive or negative is this: Suppose your best friend came to you and expressed the same thoughts that you have about yourself except that they expressed these thoughts about themselves. Would you say: "Oh you're so right. I noticed that about you and I agree wholeheartedly" OR Would you say: "Oh no, that's not true, you are really...". If the way you would respond to the same self-assessment would be to deny it, it is probably negative.

Here is a sample of positive and realistic thoughts:

I am a good looking person.

I like myself

I'm my own best friend

I can do anything I want to do

People are good

Here is a sample of negative and unrealistic thoughts:

I'm: ugly; stupid; bad; incompetent; depressed; neurotic

I'm no good

People are bad

The world is scary

I'm too dumb to: do my job; make it; live alone; live with ...

When I say that the thoughts that you have are negative I am considering the fact that you, like me, probably do not consider yourself to be a perfect person. Let's face it, if you thought you were perfect you wouldn't be reading this book. Chances are that you are not under active consideration for either sainthood or the Nobel peace prize. You have probably: kicked the dog; yelled at your husband/wife and occasionally cheated on your spouse, taxes or school or professional examinations. It is also possible that you have: stolen money; assaulted someone and maybe even killed someone. You may be sitting in your house, at your place of work, commuting to work, sitting in a locked ward at a mental hospital or residing in a maximum-security penitentiary.

The thing to really grasp hold of and run with for the rest of your life is this: You probably don't have these negative thoughts because of what you have done. More

likely, you have probably done what you have, because you have had these thoughts. These thoughts may have been rattling your cage for decades. These thoughts didn't start because of the things that you have done as an adult. From the time of Adam and Eve there has been a fundamental breach between the possibilities implicit in your being human and the reality of your inability to live up to those possibilities.

Are your "thoughts" about your strengths or your weaknesses. Do your "thoughts" help you to set concrete goals and achieve them or do they encourage you to drift through life without direction. Do you find yourself constantly over-committing to other people and under-committing to your friends and loved ones? Alternatively, are you so over-committed to friends and loved ones that you have lost touch with what you want for yourself? Are your thoughts good friends that you welcome to consciousness or are they like ill- tempered bullies that you try to "make it through the day" without hearing from. Do your "thoughts" coerce you to accept them or do they gently remind you of the complete and total freedom of choice that you have.

PROGRAMMING

Many people will understand the word programming in the way in which I intend to use it. The meaning of the word, as I will use it, in referring to your personality is close to the meaning of the word in terms of computer programming. In the domain of computer programming a program is simply a set of instructions for accomplishing some task. Language is a large and complex program that the child (or adult) acquires to be able to communicate with other similarly programmed language users. We all have programs of various sorts. There is a branch of the philosophy of science known as "operationalism" that makes this clear. Operationalism suggests that we "know" something when we have a clearly defined procedure for "measuring" it in some sense. This procedure is a clearly defined set of instructions for how to derive knowledge about the physical world around us. This procedure is a "program". Consider, for a moment, a procedure for measuring distance.

1) Obtain a standard "ruler" that is longer than the distance to be measured and that has been certified by the National Bureau of Standards

2) Determine the starting and ending point of the distance to be measured.

3) Place the ruler over the starting and ending points of the distance to be measured so that both the starting point and the ending points correspond to interior points of the ruler.

4) Determine the distance by subtracting the smaller number on the ruler that occurs at the starting point from the larger number on the ruler that corresponds with the ending point of the distance to be measured.

5) Repeat the procedures in (3) and (4) above ten times.

6) Take the average of all ten measurements resulting from repeated measurements.

7) The distance is assumed to be the average of all ten measurements.

This procedure, or program, is not really complete. We haven't defined how to take the average of the ten measurements. We haven't been as precise as we would need to be about the ruler. We haven't explained what subtraction is and we haven't been as clear as we could be about how we are going to line the ruler up with the starting and ending points. In some of these cases, we are dependent on other programs. For example, the "average" I intend is the "mean" of the ten measurements which is determined by adding the ten measurements together and dividing by ten. However, this is far from the only possible program for finding the "average" value of the ten measurements. Two other commonly used measures of "central tendency"(another term for average value) are the mode (the most frequently occurring measurement and the median (the observed measurement that is such that as many of your measurements lie above it as below it).

Another consideration is the fact that the distance between two points is not entirely clear. If you are driving across the United States then the distance between San Francisco and New York City is not the straight distance between these points. Instead, there are at least two other possibilities: It is the curvilinear distance between San Francisco and New York City that takes the curvature of the earth into account. Second, it is the number of miles that you will have to drive to get there. There is no straight-line route between San Francisco and New York City so the driving distance is considerably more than the straight-line distance you would get by laying a ruler on the map and translating inches into miles. This is easy to see if you plan a trip that makes maximal use of the Interstate highway system. In this network of roads it was necessary to hit major cities. In the effort to tie in various cities, considerable lengthy detours sometimes occur. In general, the more programs you have the wider the domain of your influence and control of the world around you. However, there are also programs that prevent you from retrieving some of the programs that you have. I refer to these programs as saboteur-programs. These programs keep you from seeing your real talents and abilities. Even though you have a wealth of programs, this does not mean that you will "feel" good about yourself. You could have every program ever developed by any other human being and still feel neurotic, psychotic, or evil. You may be able to speak every language known in human history and you could still "run" the same negative thoughts on yourself except in more than one language. This is an essential point. Your "thoughts" have nothing to do with reality. You could be a saint and still feel like a sinner. Likewise, you can be a sinner and have "thoughts" appropriate to a saint.

Over the years, I have met my share of people who could have used a few more "modesty" programs. A person who no matter how they may trample on other people, no matter how many mistakes they make, no matter how many times they commit the same mistakes over and over they still believe that they are the finest human being that has ever lived. They still believe that the way they do things is the best possible way for these things to be done. These people have a user-friendly set of programs that govern their internal dialogue that does not countenance the possibility of their being wrong. Despite monumental errors of judgment and despite frequent failures to

achieve what they set out to achieve, such people just continue to persist in doing things in ways that don't work. They are protected from realizing the errors of their ways by the fact that they never see their actions or the consequences of their actions in negative terms.

Some of your programs might govern the use of arithmetic, some geometry and others advanced mathematics. Other programs determine your skills in physics, astronomy, human relations, psychology and business dealings. Your programs, especially the saboteur-programs, more than random circumstances, determine whether you will succeed in any business transaction. When people who are programmed to fail engage in a business deal you can be sure that there will be some aspect of the deal that guarantees failure. This aspect of the deal would be obvious to a person programmed for business success. But it is somehow "overlooked" by the person programmed for failure.

Also, there are many people who can provide the best possible advice to another person but who seem incapable of acting in accordance with this advice themselves. An accountant whose daily work involves maintaining his/her clients' books and business interests may be failing at their own business as an accountant. A psychiatrist, psychologist or social worker may have excellent advice and be successful in counseling married couples while he/she, him/herself may be on their fourth or fifth marriage.

Other programs govern your use of the social amenities. How you: brush your teeth; comb your hair; like your eggs cooked and what your favorite foods are. Some, more interesting programs, determine your: sexual practices; the level of pleasure you derive from your sexual experiences; how sensual you are; what sexual practices are okay; who you can be sexual/sensual with; whether you are straight, gay, transexual or bisexual; whether you are turned on by: males, females, clothing, objects; sexual innuendo; or flirting. Here I take the view that all forms of sexual behavior) can be re-programmed. The issue is not whether you can re-program your mind but do you want to do that?

It is okay to re-program yourself if you truly are uncomfortable being what you believe you currently are. It is perfectly okay if you are re-programming yourself to be better at being you. If you prefer to be a heterosexual or a bi-sexual, or whatever ____sexual, you prefer to be, than you can use the technology you are going to learn in this book to make such a change.

There is absolutely nothing sacrosanct about your current "programmed" tastes and choices. You don't have to change however. The alternative option is to re-program yourself to be more self-accepting. It is a "racket" of the worst order to constantly criticize yourself for who you are. There are some exceptions to this rule. If you are truly imposing on someone else or injuring someone else you should consider whether you can live with integrity by hurting someone else. If you can't live with yourself for the way that you are treating others maybe you should change such behavior - at least that is what I think. Programming yourself to become more

accepting of the fact that you are a serial killer is not my idea of rational decision-making.

Another consideration is that there is no worse reason to re- program yourself than to "fit in" better. Notice that I assert that even rigid positions can be re-programmed. I say this without making any moral judgment about what you are rigid about. There is nothing magical or mysterious about your choices. Everything you do is simply a set of programs that you carry along with you and which help you experience the world the way you want to believe it to be. These programs are no harder to change than the programs that determine whether you are a "smoker" or whether you are "overweight" or whether you are a Republican, Democrat, or non-affiliated.

When I refer to your programs, I am not talking about your genetic programming. Some people are genetically programmed to weigh more than the average weight of their fellow human beings. When you are genetically programmed for something that is hardware. Hardware can be replaced, as is the case when a "healthy" gene is introduced into the body on a virus with the hope that it will influence your body to produce healthy cells. Your "verbally" modifiable programming, i.e. your software, can be modified with the help of this book. By re-programming yourself you may have an impact on how your genetic programming is played out. You won't be able to change the fact that you are tall or that you have a large frame and bones, but you can have some influence, through diet and exercise on how much you will weigh. Your diet and exercise choices are re-programmable.

Your programs determine whether you smoke cigarettes, eat chocolates to excess, are overweight, are underweight, eat too many "bad" foods, are addicted to exercise or almost never engage in physical exertion of any sort. Your programs, exclusive of accidental causes, will determine when, where, how and why you will die. Your programs determine if you need to jump out of planes or bungee jump to hit an excitation peak. Your programs determine if you bite your nails, bite your fingers or perpetually tear away at your skin. Your programs determine if you pick scabs or leave them alone to heal. Since your programs determine your lifestyle habits, your programs determine whether you will die of lung cancer, colon cancer, skin cancer, cancer of the bowels, prostate cancer, heart disease, etc.

As you can see, and as John Lilly has suggested, it may well be that your behavior, intellectual and emotional characteristics are little more, or for that matter, little less than the collection of your programs. Clearly, your raw intellectual ability is genetic. But how you use your intelligence (software determined) will have a lot to do with how intelligent you feel and how intelligent others think you are.

It is largely your programming that determines what you think of as your uniqueness. Clearly all human beings who are not on life support have functioning hearts, lungs, and circulatory systems, grey matter, etc. The things that most markedly and seemingly permanently distinguish you, as a human being, from other human beings, is for the most part embedded in your programs. While I believe that it is possible to alter virtually all of your programming that doesn't mean that you can do so easily or that you should do so frivolously.

Heretofore, it has proven difficult, if not impossible for most clinicians to alter another persons sexual orientation. I assert that this is not because this aspect of human behavioral programming cannot be altered. Instead, the sad fact is that most clinicians have used approaches that have failed rather than approaches that have succeeded. Evidence for this is clearly suggested by the fact that nicotine addicted cigarette smokers can be gradually eased away from their cigarette addictions in three to five weeks. At the same time most clinicians have had little or no success with altering the programming that governs sexual object choice even when they have years to work on it. It should be clear that object choice is nowhere near as difficult to deal with as an addiction to nicotine. Despite this, many people falsely believe that sexual object choice is less amenable to re- programming then a serious, life threatening physical addiction.

FEELINGS

I take a fairly extreme position with regard to "feelings". As such, I neither elevate them to a position of sacredness nor do I inappropriately denigrate them. I understand "biological" feelings quite well. I know how it feels to be hungry (I have fasted for as long as 12 days so I also know the difference between the compulsion to eat and when the body is demanding nutrition.

Similarly, I understand the pain that accompanies cutting ones skin, being hurt in an auto accident, recovering from surgery and stubbing one's toe. I understand what it is like to "feel" oxygen deprivation as a result of having been choked on several occasions, having held my breath underwater or elsewhere and from suffering a serious lung infection. I understand feeling "horny."

I have more difficulty with feelings such as "happiness", "sadness", "satisfaction", "pleasure", ad infinitum. These things appear to be real and I am not saying that I have not "felt" this way. The problem is that these "feelings" are distinctly different from the "feelings" I described in the two paragraphs above. These are what we may think of as socially adapted feelings. Often, "I feel sad" is little more than an expression of what the individual thinks is a legitimate way of either describing how they think they should feel or a way to get the attention/ sympathy/ encouragement/ affection... of the party to whom they are describing the "feeling".

As such, this use of the word "feeling" is distinctly different from the use of the word "feeling" in paragraphs 1 and 2. Unfortunately, few people realize that the "feelings" they usually report experiencing are very much under their control. If you are my lover and you reject me in favor of another I will have some "feelings". Objectively there will be a space in my life that will no longer be occupied by you. However, whether I see this as sad or joyful is entirely up to me. In the best scenario, I too have realized that we were growing apart and I have started to "grow" in directions that haven't included you. Your sudden departure, while discomforting, is far from "saddening". In fact, I may feel relief that I am now completely free to pursue my new interests without concerning myself with how you feel or what you are doing. Most of the "feelings" that we humans bury ourselves in are really just choices we make.

Objective reality, rarely, if ever, dictates a particular "feeling" in response. I suffer from a pain in my back from lifting a heavy object. Do I use this to immobilize myself? Do I use this to entrap others in attempts to improve the way I feel? Do I use this to justify not going out to dinner/ dancing/ bridge night, etc? All of these are ways in which we use "feelings". I might look at the pain and say to myself - "Oooh boy, you don't want to go lifting any more objects that are that heavy." A pain such as that might convince me to go for a physical exam and that may mean the early diagnosis of a cancerous tumor. Having lifted that heavy object and having interpreted the pain as a warning to see a health provider may just have saved my life.

On the other hand, my response to the pain may have kept me from participating in the Olympics because I didn't perform as well in the Olympic trials as I would have had I chosen to favor what I believed to be an injured back.

Of greater import is that the major avenue open to us in managing how we "feel" is to take complete and total responsibility for how we "feel".. If you don't like what you are feeling -- "change" how you feel.

In my four decades experience with psychotherapy this has got to be the most difficult point to get across to the client. Clients inevitably cannot see how they could possibly feel different in their current situation. There is always a story that "explains" how and why they feel the way they do. Were this true there would be no benefit whatsoever from psychotherapy. The chief benefit is awakening, in the client, the recognition that they are completely in charge of how they feel - i.e, PUSHING THEIR OWN BUTTONS. Once the client accepts this, the major hurdle in psychotherapy has been overcome. That doesn't mean that there is no more room for growth in therapy, it just means that the "CURE" has been accomplished. Now, the task is to build onto and reinforce the "CURE".

Re-programming yourself assumes that the "CURE" has been accomplished and that you accept the notion that you are in charge of your destiny.

RE-PROGRAMMING AS AN ART FORM

Most of us seem to have arrived at our current store of programs in a haphazard, random fashion. In fact, most of our programming is controlled by "meta-programs" that determine what additional programs "we" want to acquire. This is why Joe Criminal acquires new programs such as safe-cracking, mugging, burglary and assault, while Joe Doctor, a neurosurgeon, acquires: office management; brain surgery; medical school professor ...

While it may be true that there is a certain haphazard and random quality to re-programming it is more likely that we "create" opportunities to acquire new programs. Many people do not believe that any event is purely random. They, instead, see that coincidences can all be explained if you just stretch your imagination a little bit. For any two people who smoke there are probably slightly different "stories" about how they became smokers. Likewise, each person who chooses, heterosexuality, homosexuality or bisexuality arrived at that choice on his or her own, seemingly unique, path. Genetics may play a role but I really believe that it is a minor role in comparison with social programming and choice. If you want to make changes in your internal programming you have to accept the fact that there will be a certain amount of haphazard, randomness in your re-programming efforts. What works for you will often prove deficient for the person sitting next to you on the commuter train.

Fortunately, there are some general themes that seem applicable in a wide variety of re-programming efforts. Generally speaking, establishing the desired goal as a

positive rather than a negative change works best. Setting up rewards for small changes in behavior works better than seeking gross re-programming changes outright. Recording your starting behavior and monitoring your changing behavior with procedures derived from behavior modification therapies (or management by objectives technology) works better than not having any idea where you started and where you are currently, at any time after you start your re-programming efforts.

An interesting aspect about re-programming is that indirection or mis-direction is often more effective than a frontal assault on a particular behavior. Encouraging sub-behaviors, or related behaviors, that are not as important as the behavior targeted for change but which are not consonant with your undesired behaviors tends to be more effective than directly assaulting a problem by saying you will "never" do such and such again. You will see examples of mis-direction and indirection in some of the scripts in the appendices at the back of the book.

Another important tool in achieving behavioral change is the "enrollment" of other people in your new identity. This can happen in two broad ways. First, and probably most effective, is to identify people in your current life, or people you can become involved with who are supportive of the person that you want to be. If you are seeking to become a non-smoker it only makes good sense to start having more non-smokers around you.

The second, and more difficult, method is to "enroll" the people who are currently in your life to support the changes that you want to make. Let them know that you intend to stop smoking and ask them to be supportive of you in this effort. If they are smokers, ask them to refuse to give you cigarettes. Also, ask them to encourage you in your efforts and to not speak disparagingly about your efforts to bring about these changes. The more people that you "enroll" in supporting your new sense of identity, the easier it will be to make the changes that you desire.

It is essential, in this context, to note that there is no general sense of reality. Reality is a social construct and things are real to the extent that people ascribe to the view that they are real. Prior to the demonstration that the world was round, most people believed that the world was flat and that if you went too far you would come to the end and fall off. The fact that virtually everybody believed this didn't make it true. BUT, the fact that almost everybody believed this kept him or her from finding out the truth. As long as they believed that the world was flat they continued to avoid behaving as though it were not. In essence, the reality was that the world was flat not as an objective fact but as a consequence of people's agreement.

Getting in touch with the manner in which you have created a world, which you do not like, is the single biggest hurdle you will ever face in life. Once you accept both responsibility and opportunity for change, change is easy. Welcome to the path, Pilgrim.

CHAPTER 2
WHERE DOES THE INTERNAL DIALOGUE COME FROM

Freud felt that most of your personality structure was in place by the age of two years. Most psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and counseling professionals would agree that the overwhelming majority of personality characteristics are in place by the age of five. If you think about it for a moment, it will be easy to see that most of your beliefs about yourself, people and the world are either in agreement with your "PARENTS" or are reactions to your "PARENTS" beliefs about themselves, you and the world.

I use "PARENTS" rather than "parents" because I want to stress that it is not the usual notion of biological parent that I have in mind. The nuclear family, the American ideal for the last fifty to a hundred years has been a colossal failure. Divorce runs rampant throughout the land. Fathers, mothers and children are torn apart as a result of divorce, disability and death. The notion of two parents, one of who works while the other nurtures the children and strives to make a safe and pleasant home environment has completely fallen apart. In its place are single parent households where this lone parent works full time, maybe even has two jobs. Instead of providing nurturing and being deeply involved in their child's growth and development, these single parents often have to delegate child-rearing to someone else. Often, that someone else is little more than a television set that keeps the children occupied and distracted (more about distraction later).

When I use the term "PARENTS" it is meant to refer to the people who played a significant role in rearing you from infancy until now. However, the time before you were five years old appears to be significant. The Law of Primacy (see appendix) appears to be a good rule of thumb in explaining why early childhood experiences seem to have such a dramatic effect on your life. Your "PARENTS" might have been your biological parents. They may have been your adoptive parents. They may have been your foster parents. They may have been day-care personnel, orphanage workers, neighbors, relatives or friends of the family. They may even be characters in movies, on television and soap operas. Many readers of this book will have no recollection of who these people were. In fact, it really doesn't matter who they were. The reality is, that you carry them around in your head and you hear them in your head. They are coming through in all your thoughts. If you are in your forties it is quite likely that television and movie characters played some role in your life as "PARENTS".

While it is probably true that many of your programs are acquired during the first five years of your life, this is not the only period during which you acquire new programs. You acquire new programs throughout the course of your life. Some of you constantly

increase the rapidity with which you acquire new programs while others of you seem to continually slow down the acquisition of new programs. In reality, you are all, constantly re-programming yourselves. The distinction here is that most of us are opening ourselves to being re-programmed with the same banal programs, day after day after day.

If you watch several television soap operas for a period of a month or so you will see the same exact themes being played out: infidelity, self-absorption, deceit, dishonesty, and hiding oneself from other people. Despite the fact that none of this behavior ever gets people what they want, not for very long anyway, the characters on one soap are essentially carbon copies of the characters on every other soap opera. In fact, the characters on soap operas today are the carbon copies of the characters on soap operas twenty and thirty years ago. Little ever changes.

The distressing thing is that the lives of the people who watch soap operas (and even those who eschew soap operas) are distressingly like the lives of the soap opera characters. They lack intimacy and openness in their lives. They lack any enduring social values. They lack direction and purposefulness and this goes on day after day after day. Perhaps even worse, it is as though most of us were engaged in rehearsing for our "real lives" which we expect to arrive sometime after our deaths. **THIS IS NOT A REHEARSAL**.

These people are constantly re-programming themselves with the same banalities. Instead of re-programming themselves with new information, they are merely reinforcing their old programs. Though they have the capacity to acquire brand new programs each and every day, they simply don't do this. From the standpoint of someone who doesn't realize that you are constantly re-programming yourself it looks like these people are no longer learning. They are learning. They just aren't learning anything new. There may actually be a time when the brain shuts itself down to re-programming. It may be that Alzheimer's disease, coma and massive brain injury are examples of the brain shutting down. On the other hand, it may be the way that you treat people that determine whether they acquire new programming or continue to re-program their futures to be like their past.

When a person goes into a coma instead of increasing the stimulation that they experience we tend to leave them alone. It would seem to be a lot better strategy to increase the level of stimulation. Leave a radio or television on, have news reports, have lights that change in color and intensity, stimulate the taste receptors, massage the person and introduce interesting odors to the environment. Hook them up to a machine that will exercise them automatically. It is far more likely that a coma victim treated in this manner will come around then it is that a coma victim left in a quiet room with the same sounds, odors and sensations, hour after hour will spontaneously awaken.

In fact, considering the fact that most coma patients are plugged in to a variety of machines it is probably the case that their usual stimulation is so painful that they are impeded from "waking" rather than encouraged to "waken". I have long believed and practiced the notion that there is much to be learned during sleep. While the brain

slows down to replenish itself, sleep is also an excellent time to be re-programming oneself and acquiring new information. The tapes that you will make, with the assistance of this book are only one of many ways that you can use the time that you normally reserve for sleeping to be acquiring new knowledge, skills and attitudes.

BIO-MACHINES AND YOU

The amazing thing is that most of your "PARENTS" would be surprised to discover that they had any effect on you at all. The sad truth is that most of your programming was completely unintentional. Nobody would go out of their way to program an expensive machine to self-destruct. A machine, by the way, is exactly what you are. A most ingenious machine, to be sure, but a machine nonetheless.

Most machines are constructed to address a specific purpose. Wood saws are built to cut wood. But they may also be used to cut plastic, polyethylene foam, plastic and maybe even metal. You could balance a saw between two supports and use it as a shelf. You could bend the saw back and place an object on it and use it as a catapult. If the saw was small enough you could even use it to stir sugar and cream into your coffee. With the exception of cutting wood, the raison D'etra for it's construction, the saw is being "misused". If you doubt this for a moment, borrow a wood saw from a friend, neighbor or relative who really reveres their tools. Use this "wood saw" to cut a rubber tire or use it to mix concrete and return it without cleaning it up so that there will be no question about how you used it. You'll get a fast lesson in the appropriate use of tools. Of course, you will never get to borrow tools from this person again.

Galileo engaged in thought experiments. He reasoned thusly: If a heavier object falls faster than a light object than when you "glue" together a heavy and a light object they should: 1) Fall to earth faster because the combined object is heavier and 2) Fall to earth more slowly because the lighter object would act as a drag on the heavier object. Without ever tossing objects off the Leaning Tower of Pisa, Galileo "knew" what was going to happen because there was no other way the actual experiment could go. Rather than experiencing the reaction of your friend, relative or neighbor perhaps you can try a "thought experiment" of your own.

If you are not into tools, ask a relative, friend or neighbor if you can borrow their silverware. Then, when you have gotten their permission, tell them that you intend to use one of their steak knives to cut branches from your tree. If not silverware, try borrowing their crystal punch bowl to use to catch the oil from your car's engine when doing an oil change. Another possibility is to ask a friend if you could borrow her wedding dress to sponge up the water from an overflowed toilet.

All the above are an example of devising or creating new uses for a machine/tool. Whether it is a simple lever, a saw or a human being there is hardware and there is software. The hardware represents the original "intended" purposes and the limitations of use. These limitations are often intended limitations rather than actual physical limitations. In the last few years, many insurance companies have had to pay out on claims for people who have inappropriately used ladders as diving boards. These people didn't intend to dive off the ladders but their inappropriate use of these ladders had the same effect.

A ball of cookie dough can be extruded (stretched out) to form a longer, thinner cylinder of dough from which cookies may be cut. In the extrusion process, the

primary function of the dough is not changed - it is there to be made into cookies (chocolate chips are my favorites}. Human beings on the other hand are extremely poor candidates for extrusion. Cookie dough can be extruded to many times it's original length without altering it's ability to be used to make cookies. On the other hand, the primary function of a human being is completely destroyed with only very minor stretching. Stretch a human being to be 50% taller and all you have is a dead human being. Use a steak knife to cut tree branches and you have a dull steak knife. Use a crystal bowl to collect the oil drained from your car and it's owner will probably never use it for punch again.

The meaning I attribute to all of this is that there are inherent limitations in all machines. Accordingly, you might consider the differences between machines. One important distinction to make when using machines is their adaptability. Some machines are quite adaptable in terms of their physical characteristics. A saw has many unintended, but equally plausible uses. Not all of these uses will preserve the intended function of the saw. For example, a saw will work for a while as a stirrer for molten steel. However, sooner or later, the saw will melt and will no longer be able to be used as a saw.

The first level of machines were simple but useful machines or tools. The lever and wheel have been around for thousands of years. Though they are quite simple, they have been incorporated into thousands of other, more intricate and useful machines. One hundred years ago, there were far fewer tools available at a hardware store. In fact, there was a profession known as tool and die making, the members of which were skilled at making tools. Usually tool and die makers would design and build a tool to do one simple task and when they completed that task they would either throw out the tool, store it for future use or salvage parts of it for use in some other tool-building project. The important thing is that such tools were usually intended to be used only for one task.

To further explain what tool and die makers do, suppose I want to join two pieces of wood at a 90 degree angle. One way to do this is to just put the two pieces together at what looks like a 90 degree angle. Another possibility is to use a protractor to measure the angle. Suppose I am going to join just two pieces of wood together and it makes very little difference how they are joined together. Instead of being joined at a ninety degree angle, let's assume that they can be connected at ninety degrees, give or take forty-five degrees. With such a great latitude, joining them by sight may be an acceptable approach. If I am going to join a small number of pieces of wood, say five joined pieces, and they absolutely have to be close to a right angle (ninety degrees, give or take one degree), i.e. they cannot be at less than eighty-nine degrees nor at more than ninety-one degrees, I might use a protractor (a device for measuring angles). But if I am going to join 1,000 pieces of wood to form 500 joints I will be far better off if I make a tool to help me accomplish this.

How might I make such a tool? One way would be to take two pieces of steel and join them in a 90 degree angle using a very accurate protractor. Then I could just slide two pieces of wood into the frame, make sure that they lay against the metal arms of my tool and that they meet at the intended joint in such a way that they have maximal

contact on the intended adjoining surfaces. I won't have to use the protractor ever again and instead of taking thirty to forty seconds to measure and adjust each pair, it will probably only take me four or five seconds to slide the wood into place. If I have to make 500 joints this will save me somewhere between twelve minutes and two hours. If it takes less than twelve minutes to build my tool then I will save time by investing in tool building. When I'm done with my project I will have to decide whether to store the tool I have made, dismantle it, or throw it away. Another possibility is that I will be able to modify it for use in another way - perhaps simultaneously joining three pieces of wood together.

Next let's consider a food processor. A food processor performs a variety of functions in cutting, shredding, dicing, blending and mixing. A food processor replaces many kitchen tools that aren't so versatile. How does it do this? A food processor has many different attachments that allow it to function as many different primary tools. Slip in a cutting blade and the processor will cut fruits and vegetables. Slip in another blade and it will make a tossed salad. Can you use a food processor to mix concrete? Yes, you can mix concrete, but it certainly isn't what it was intended for and you certainly should not use gravel in the mix.

In the garage or tool room, take an electric drill as your tool. By using different types of drill bits you can use the drill for many different purposes. With a wood drill bit the tool is intended for drilling holes in wood. With a metal drill bit it becomes a tool to cut holes in metal. Substitute a concrete drill bit and it becomes an excellent tool for cutting holes in concrete. Substitute a Phillip's head or regular screwdriver bit and it becomes a powerful screwdriver. Can you use a drill to mix a martini? Certainly, but it is not at all how it was intended to be used and you will probably raise some eyebrows at the next cocktail party that you host.

Both the food processor and the electric drill represent a higher order of tools than the tool I created for joining the two pieces of wood. Whereas the joining apparatus was complete, in and of itself, and would have to be modified to do a different task, the electric drill and the food processor were designed to serve a variety of functions with substitute mechanical devices to round out their range of applicability. The use of the electric drill as a power screwdriver was not one of the original intended uses. Even before the current availability of power screwdrivers many people realized that a drill could be used this way. In both of these classes of machines, the drill and the food processor, it is usually necessary to change the hardware to change the range of applicability of the machines.

Another class of machines is those that use both hardware and "software" to change the range of applicability. The computer is the best example of this type of machine today but the old "Player Pianos" that used holes in paper to control the music played is one that older readers will recall.

In their earliest days, computers were hardware bound. The simplest types of adding machines were good examples of hardware bound technology. The advantage of the primitive adding machines was that they could be used in a variety of disciplines. It doesn't matter whether you are counting up apples, oranges or sheep. It doesn't matter

whether you are a merchant, an accountant or a scientist. If you had numbers that you needed to add together a mechanical adding machine could do the job for you. Some of the older mechanical adding machines had gears that would turn whenever a new amount was to be added in. As you added from right to left the gears would turn the next highest gear each time that you exceeded a "9".

The earliest electronic computers were very limited in their uses. The approach used in the earliest computers was to hardwire the machines to solve a particular problem. Then came hardwiring to solve a class of related problems. Finally, computers were designed that allowed their range of applicability to change on the basis of programs or software that would direct the power of the computer. This change from hardware to software problem solving was one of the most significant steps forward in the evolution of machine technology. Nowadays, the same basic computer can be used to play games, perform complex mathematical computations, solve numerous scientific and business problems, create art, process words and graphs, and on and on. As time goes on, computers with more and more latent power are developed. As ever more useful software is developed the range of applicability of computers will continue to grow wider and wider.

Human beings are incredibly complex machines but you are a machine. From a hardware point of view you are remarkably similar to every other human being. Most human beings are born with the usual arms, legs, eyes nose, feet, toes, fingers etc. They are also born with what may be the most intriguing piece of hardware in the universe - the human brain. But the brain is simply hardware. The brain is composed of billions of neural cells. As such, there is again a remarkable similarity between human beings when it comes to their brains. The fundamental issue is that the brain is programmable and more important, re-programmable. In fact, the human brain, unlike most machines, can decide to re-program itself. There is no other machine built by mankind that comes close to the human body and the human brain. The real shame about human beings is that most of us humans have "meta-programming" and "saboteur programs" that limit our ability to see that re-programming is both necessary and appropriate on a regular basis.

A computer can have a program, called a meta-program that changes the way the computer works. A multi-tasking system is a good example of this. You might have a computer at home or at work that allows you to run two, or more, different programs at the same time. You might have a "windowing" program on your terminal, that allows you to create separate "windows" to work on different tasks, one for spreadsheet work and another for word-processing... If you are working on a letter you might be in the word-processing window. If someone calls up and asks you what 396 times 404 is, you might jump to the spreadsheet window to have the computer calculate this product for you. The operating system allows you to instantaneously adapt the computer to whatever problem you want to solve. In fact, with multi-tasking the computer is actually solving two or more different problems at the same time.

By the way, 396 times 404 is 159,984 -- 400 times 400 minus 16. This shows another aspect of the way the human brain operates. A machine that is given the product of 396 and 404 to calculate will proceed quite mechanically. I, on the other hand,

noticed that both 396 and 404 are equally spaced four units on either side of 400. The product then is 400 times 400 minus 4 times 4. Given the same problem as the machine, I was able to use a neat little trick of mental arithmetic. A machine could be programmed to check if this "trick" applies. However, this would be a waste of time for the machine. It can, in general, do the calculations faster than it can check for the appropriateness of using the trick.

Before I made extensive use of computers for arithmetic computation I had a set of programs for rapid mental calculation. I developed these as a child and almost all of them were in place by the time I finished junior high school. Given a particular arithmetic problem I could often tell whether I could do the rapid calculations necessary to solve the problem. I was an engineering major at a time when students still 'wore' sliderules. I could get the answer to complicated multiplications and divisions of 5 and six digit numbers before my classmates could get their sliderules out of their cases. Sometimes I did the multiplications and divisions in my head the same way that you might do them on a piece of paper, but a lot of the time I took shortcuts using 'tricks'. Given that I decided to use one of these tricks (programs), I selected one, not necessarily the best one, and solved the problem. This element of strategizing and selecting between alternative programs is a unique characteristic of the human brain. This capacity for selecting, on the run, between such competing skills is, perhaps, the most unique capacity in the universe.

The human brain is many orders of magnitude superior to the most complex computers created to date. It has the fundamental distinction of being somewhat self-aware. This means that not only can it be re-programmed but it can monitor itself and it is capable of making a decision with regard to whether or not to re-program itself and what type of re-programming is necessary. The most pitiful aspect of the re-programmability of the human brain is that almost all of us opt either to not engage in re-programming at all or we reprogram our brains each day to function exactly the same way as they functioned the day before.

Worse yet, most of us accept the unintentional, random and haphazard programming we received from our "PARENTS" as we were growing up. We assume that this is the "right" programming and will fight to our deaths to maintain those programs. This wouldn't be too bad except for the fact that most of this initial programming is, completely flawed.

This early programming is flawed in many ways. First, it is flawed because the programs that we created are not even what our "PARENTS" intended. Our "PARENTS" might have been uptight about sexuality/sensuality, so they reprimanded us for playing with ourselves, for touching and exploring our genitalia. They believed, perhaps, that it was inappropriate for infants and children to enjoy stimulating themselves. They intended that we not play with ourselves, especially when others might be around to see us, but they never intended that we deny ourselves the right to be pleasured by our husbands, wives or lovers. But we may have been only a few months old when they stopped us from playing with ourselves. The programs we created, around pleasure, assumed that it was not okay to be

touched at all, or that we should be ashamed of our impulses to seek pleasure from others or ourselves.

Another good example is the banal program for non-being in the world. Many children are told that they should be "...seen and not heard". In more severe cases they are told (programmed) not to be seen or heard at all. They grow up and become wallflowers. They take menial jobs because they think that they are inadequate. They either don't enter into relationships at all or they enter into abusive relationships where they are taken advantage of over and over. They fail at school, at work and at life because they never even try to succeed. Even in this case, their "PARENTS" didn't intend to produce losers in life; their "PARENTS" thought that they were showing them how to succeed. The problem is that succeeding with your "PARENTS" when you are an infant or young child is not at all the same thing as succeeding in the world as an adult.

Likewise, your parents may have been afraid of fire so they reprimanded you not to play with matches. They never intended for you to die of exposure to the cold with 20 boxes of unopened matches and a pile of firewood in your possession. But there are some people who would do just that because of early childhood prohibitions and the programs they created around them. In the worst-case scenario, the programming is so banal that you don't even make the connection between the matches and the wood and that of a fire and warmth. There are many people who are homeless and living on the streets who have not made this type of connection with the fact that there is money all around them.

The reason that it doesn't matter who your "PARENTS" were is that knowing where your internal dialogue and your programs come from doesn't free you from the constraints you have imposed on yourself. Sigmund Freud encouraged awareness and expression of the internal dialogue as a primary ingredient in psychoanalysis. He felt that as a person became more aware of the internal dialogue, they would be freed of their neuroses. In fact, very few people actually achieve such benefits from psychoanalysis.

Five generations of psychoanalysis patients have bravely trooped in to their analysts offices three to five times per week. Many such patients have continued psychoanalysis for decades. They have become incredibly self-aware in that process. They have ascribed most of their behavior to re-directed sexual impulses and they interpret their behavior and the behavior of others in largely sexual terms. What most of these clients have not done is to transform their lives so that they can be free. Free of their programs, free of the influence of their "PARENTS", and most of all free of their analysts.

In my terms, Freud was trying to make his patients self-aware of their programs. There is nothing whatsoever wrong with becoming more aware of your programs. In fact, that is precisely what you are encouraged to do in this book. The difference is that that was all that Freud had his patients do until the analysis stage of their therapy was close to completion. This book, on the other hand, has you working to CHANGE your programs from the start.

This book is a relatively painless way to bring about profound change very rapidly. This book is excellent for people who have not had, until now, the self-control to use other methods of bringing about significant behavioral and emotional change in their lives. If you have tried meditation but didn't "get it", this book is for you. If you have been on more diets than you can remember, this book is for you. If you have trouble concentrating on your work or your studies, this book is for you. In fact, if you even have trouble sticking with this book, this book is for you - so dedicate yourself to getting through the first few chapters. At that point you will have learned enough about how to re-program yourself to enable you to finish the book.

There is no gut-wrenching requirement to consciously change. Instead, you decide what you want to change. Then, you write a script that will "gently" encourage that change. Then you make a self-hypnosis tape that contains that script. Then, you listen to the tape, as you are ready to go to sleep at night. At the end of the tape you will just drift off to sleep. When you wake up the next morning you will feel relaxed, refreshed and better than you have ever felt before.

This book is about striving for freedom. It is easier and more efficient than psychoanalysis and other traditional forms of therapy and self-help. But, human beings "being" as they are, it is a never-ending process. Once you start to realize your ability to transform your life, you will want to do it often. At first, most readers will be thinking thoughts such as: "I don't want to feel ugly anymore" or "I don't want to feel stupid anymore". They will use this book to transform themselves and they will start feeling beautiful and intelligent.

Other people will see and respond to these changed self-images. Then the person who used to feel ugly or stupid will not be satisfied with feeling beautiful and intelligent. They will want to re-program themselves to feel stronger, healthier, more socially adroit, and more confident in business and personal relationships, more energetic and more responsive. This is exactly what I intend to happen.

There is no end to the refinement that can be achieved using the methods described in this book. The person who feels ugly and stupid does not immediately think of being more creative, fun, and energetic. However, when they feel beautiful and intelligent, they come to realize that there is more to life than not feeling ugly and stupid. Likewise, there are many people whose daily lives are filled with unpleasant memories or fears. This book will help those people leave these unpleasant memories and fears behind. Once relieved of those memories and fears such readers will see an entire universe of possibilities opening up for them. This is all just as it should be.

CHAPTER 3
CAUSATION: THE DAY THE TREEHOUSE FELL

My mentor, friend and supervising therapist Shepard D. Gellert, in his excellent book on couples therapy: "Nuts Come in Pairs", relates the following story about why we are the way we are:

"Consider six little, five year-old kids playing in a shack: Tom, Dick, Harry, Jill, Judy and Dotty. The shack collapses on them, and they are almost suffocated. However, people passing by dig them out in time.

Little Tom is back in school the next week, where the teacher and principal confront him for smashing a window. He feels as if they're closing in on him, and he begins to stutter. Now Tom is forty-six years old, and he still stutters. Why does Tom stutter when faced with authority figures? Answer: Because a shack fell on him when he was five years old.

Little Dick goes home. Because of his experience, his mother is terrified lest he get hurt, so she keeps him at home and is very careful about whom he plays with, what he does, and where he is. Forty years later Dick is a bachelor, lives with his mother, and doesn't have many friends. Why is Dick a mamma's boy? Answer: Because a shack fell on him when he was five years old.

Little Harry goes home, and his father beats the tar out of him because he tore his pants. Little Harry thinks to himself: 'They'll be sorry some day when I'm dead.' At the age of nineteen Harry is killed in a motorcycle accident. Why did Harry die so young. Answer: Because a shack fell on him when he was five years old.

Little Jill goes home and tells her parents all about her experience, and her father beams at her and says, 'My little girl is one tough fighter.' Forty years later Jill is vice-president of an advertising agency in a position where infighting counts in a highly competitive situation. Why is Jill the vice-president? Answer: Because a shack fell on her when she was five years old.

Little Judy goes home, and her parents are worried about her. But since they both work, they make Theresa, her older sister take care of her. Theresa now has to take Judy with her whenever she goes out to play. She has to stay home and help Judy, and is really angry about this. Forty years later Theresa is very angry: she is taking care of her family, her husband, her children, the world in general, but not taking care of herself. Judy now lives two thousand miles from her sister. Judy is 'helpless, "can't" do things, and is dependent on her husband to make decisions and take care of her. He is angry and feels like a martyr. Why is Judy helpless, resentful and depressed? Why is Judy's husband angry? And why is Judy's sister, Theresa, such a

caretaker and so angry? Answer: Because a shack fell on Judy when she was five years old.

Little Dotty goes home to her parents. Her mother is very strong and aggressive; her father is very weak and passive. Up until this time, they have given Dotty a lot of recognition for being a tomboy. They always wanted a boy, anyway. When she comes home, her father looks at her approvingly and says, 'Boy, you are tough.' Little Dotty hears (1) She is a boy, and (2) she is tough. Forty years later, Dotty is working on a construction site and tough. Why is Dotty tough? Answer: Because a shack fell on Dotty when she was five years old."

Shep, as he was known to those whose lives he influenced, felt that his parable had pretty much demolished the usual question psychotherapy patients ask over and over: "Why am I the way I am." In fact, the question is still viable but the answer is so confounding that there is little reason to try to answer it.

Each of the six children's lives were obviously influenced by the day the shack fell on them. BUT, their lives were also dramatically influenced by the events before, during, and after the time that the shack fell on them. Theresa and Judy's husband are clear examples of the infinitude of experiences that influence the course our lives take. Theresa didn't have a shack fall on her but her life was seemingly influenced by the events of that fateful day. Of course, Theresa was only a couple of years older than Judy. SO, she was still a kid and we know that kids are dramatically influenced by such traumatic events. But what of Judy's husband. He was an adult when he met Judy so the shack falling on her couldn't have had much of an influence on him, could it?

Many psychotherapy clients are experts at classic cases of making sour lemonade out of sweet oranges. There is always a "story" which caused it all. There is always a way to make a good situation into a bad one. There is always a way to experience pain rather than pleasure in one's life. What is usually absent is recognition of the myriad opportunities they have to experience the pure joy of living. Psychotherapy patients will spend incredible amounts of money rehashing the past, trying to answer that ultimate question: "Why am I the way that I am"? More relevant however, would be to ask the question: "Given that I seem to be the way that I am, what do I do next to make the future different?"

The common thread is that we are all programmed. In addition, we all interact with each other. More specifically, it is our programs that interact with other people's programs. The state of being temporarily "program-free" is what the Buddha attained. So, even though we are all programmed with general themes, the exact manner in which our lives unfold appears to be "up in the air", to us, even when an objective observer can predict the general pattern.

As a psychotherapist, I have seen numerous examples of women who have moved from one relationship to another where they have been battered. They have been emotionally and physically abused and violated by men that they describe as insecure, self-centered and vicious. The common thread in their stories is that all these men

seemed to be Dr. Jekylls at some point in time and suddenly, overnight, they turned into Mr. Hydes.

Likewise, I have seen numerous examples of men who have been in one relationship after another with women they described as frigid, angry, hostile and nagging. As was the case with the male partners of the abused women, all these women, seemed at one time, to be warm, sensitive, loving and compassionate - Ms. Jekylls, until, mysteriously, and overnight they turned into Ms. Hydes.

There is a germ of truth in those initial assessments. Dr. Jekyll and Ms. Jekyll didn't become Dr. and Ms. Hyde in isolation. They were programmed with both Jekyll and Hyde programs. When Dr. Jekyll and Ms. Jekyll meet everything seems okay. After awhile one of four things happen: Dr. Jekyll and Ms. Jekyll become Dr. and Mrs Jekyll and life is blissful (at least until the Hyde children come). Alternatively, Dr. Jekyll becomes Dr. Hyde and Ms. Jekyll becomes an all-suffering Mrs. Jekyll who is devoted to her horrible husband. She works two jobs, takes care of the children and her chronically unemployed and abusive husband until he falls down the stairs and dies while trying to kick her in the face.

Alternatively, Dr. Jekyll becomes Dr. Jekyll and Ms. Jekyll becomes Mrs. Hyde. He works two jobs, takes care of the kids, and covers for his drunken, nagging wife until the day she dies of cirrhosis of the liver. Last but certainly not least, Dr. and Ms. Jekyll become Dr. and Mrs Hyde and their stormy marital history is written in police blotters, the county morgue and the pathologist's report of either murder or suicide.

The shame, of course is that even with the Hyde programming available, Dr. and Ms. Jekyll could have led happy, sexy and productive lives. High quality psychotherapy and or re-programming to strengthen the Jekyll programming could have altered their stories. But there aren't enough high quality therapists in the world to eradicate or reduce the impact of all of our Hyde programs. That is one of the reasons I decided to write this book. I know that it is possible to reduce the impact of "Hyde" programming but I can't see enough clients, enough times, to impact the whole world. And merely helping strengthen Dr. or Ms. Jekyll isn't enough. Both Dr. and Ms. Jekyll have to be strengthened and then they have to meet and really work at being Dr. and Mrs. Jekyll, each and every day of their lives.

The bottom line, and the conclusion that it is essential that you accept is this: It doesn't matter where you are, where you have been or how you came to be the way you are. What really counts is where you want to be and getting there.

A personal footnote. I used to be terribly inhibited about dancing. I would say things that most people would be far too inhibited too say. I have had an active, fulfilling and gratifying sex life. But when it came to dancing I was a no show. I had so many rationalizations of why I couldn't dance that it was never even an open issue that it might change someday. Then I woke up and realized that dancing was fun. In a few weeks I was out on the dance floor. I didn't learn how to dance by using hypnosis - I could have taken that course of action. Instead, I helped myself get on the dance floor by re-programming myself so that I no longer cared what other people might think about my appearance on the dance floor.

I was a lousy dancer but I had more fun dancing. Whether it is getting out on the dance floor, stopping smoking or drinking, losing weight, making it big in your career or becoming a great lover, you can succeed in becoming the person you want to be with the technology offered in this book.

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