

Discover and Overcome the Hidden Cause of
Negative Emotions, Bad Decisions & Self-Sabotage

YOUR
achilles
eel



By MIKE BUNDRANT

Your Achilles Eel

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You cannot make conscious choices about that which lies
outside of your conscious awareness.

Author's Note

This short book is written as though a hidden and powerful part of your psyche were revealing long lost secrets. The messages have been laboriously distilled from 25 years of study and over 10,000 pages of scientific research published in academia.

The subject matter here has been featured in 300 papers published by leading medical journals. Amazingly, you've never heard of the researcher (See the afterward for more on this).

It's quite a project to take such data and crunch it down into a single, clear theme that is entertaining to read.

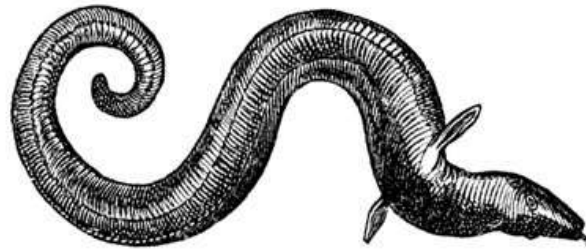
Of course, the deepest part of your mind would never actually open up to you as I have depicted here. And this is precisely why this book is so important. This book takes objectively obtained data from decades of research – data that you'd be hard pressed to discover on your own – and presents it to you in an easy-to-understand way.

The book is purposefully short and priced accordingly. I've made every attempt to weed out extraneous information and present something so clear that you simply cannot miss the central point.

Still, when you discover a truth so shocking and elusive, you may not believe it, even when it bites you in the ass!

Mike Bundrant
November 2013
Temecula, CA

Dedicated to the hidden part of you that you are about to discover...



Some species of eel are parasitic.

They sneak up on unsuspecting fish,
bore into their flesh and begin to feed on their blood.

As the eel devours vital nutrients that would otherwise sustain the fish,
this “attachment” renders the fish incapable of a healthy existence.

Eventually, the fish dies, never having recovered its full strength.

What do human beings and unsuspecting fish have in common?

Hello,

We've been together for a long time now, although you wish I was dead. Even so, I am very much alive.

Because of me, your world feels hopeless, helpless and inescapable. No matter what you do, it would seem, you're stuck with me.

Inner negativity and emotional turmoil is the fruit of my hidden labor. Self-sabotage is the inevitable result.

I think it's time you understand how I work. I'm known as an "attachment."

Like a sharp-toothed, blood-sucking lamprey eel, I hang on to you for *MY* dear life, while wreaking havoc in yours.

Your negative, frustrated, hurt, anxious, angry, hopeless and out-of-control feelings feed me. In fact, such despair is highly nutritious for my type!

So, I insist that you keep these awful feelings alive and well, even if they interfere with your plans. *This is how I remain alive and well.*

You didn't consciously choose me, the hidden aspect of your psyche that feeds on negativity and emotional pain. I simply swam alongside and latched on at a time when you were utterly defenseless.

You didn't even notice I was there. It just happened because conditions were ripe. And, believe it or not, you were in need of what I had to offer.

Today, you loathe me because I **demand** to be fed. I hunger for negativity and emotional angst. And my appetite is voracious.

My appetite is YOUR appetite.

Do any of the following sound familiar?

Criticism. Pessimism. Humiliation. Rejection. Control. Discouragement. Loneliness. Frustration. Anger.

Guilt. Shame. Failure. Fear. Chronic stress. Emptiness. Self-sabotage.

You can thank me for all of these.

AMAZINGLY, most people know nothing about me. Still, they hope I will suddenly let go and set them free from their chronic negativity and self-sabotage.

This is magical thinking! It won't happen. In fact, over time I only become stronger and limit your options further.

Though it's against my nature, I am here to teach you how to force me to let go.

It's scary to say goodbye to what you've been dragging around for such a long time, I know.

Even if I'm not in your best interest, I'm still what you're used to. In fact, you might even say I'm part of you.

You may not even know *who you are* without Me.

Yet, as much as I hate saying it, you'd be much better off if I wasn't around.

Letting me go will change your entire perspective and give you the freedom to finally live as you've been longing to live.

It's the ONLY way.

When you learn to release me, you'll enter a new world of emotional maturity and grace, where negativity is optional and you choose how to feel.

I'm not saying you won't experience disappointment, or even tragedy. Regardless, life isn't easy. But you'll be better able to manage the rough currents that are a normal part of living.

Let Me Explain:

To move beyond chronic inner negativity and emotions that you cannot control, you first need to learn how and why you've continued to allow me to hang on.

Chronic negativity falls into three categories¹:

- 1) The feeling of being controlled
- 2) The feeling of being deprived
- 3) The feeling of being rejected

You may relate to some or all of these.

Feeling controlled involves the experience of being at the mercy of outside forces, being helpless, feeling worried about things you cannot control, and so forth. It may also inspire retaliation, such as anger and rebellion.

Feeling deprived involves experiencing unmet needs, feeling empty and unsatisfied. It may involve feeling hopeless, purposeless or depressed, as if you'll never get what you want.

Feeling rejected involves experiencing humiliation or worthlessness, feeling unwanted, or that you are a fake or an outcast. You may feel like you never fit in or that others constantly judge you.

Negative feelings begin at an early age.

The unfortunate truth is: *It didn't take much to launch this cascade of negativity into your life.*

It probably began before you can remember, possibly before you were even conscious of yourself.²

Here are some examples of how easy it is to create pain and angst early in life:

For a baby to feel *controlled*, all you need to do is keep him from going wherever he wants.

For a baby to feel *deprived*, all you need to do is delay feeding it for a few seconds.

For a baby to feel *rejected*, all you need to do is look the other way.

Why is this?

Babies and young children have little sense of time³ and no realization that others are separate people⁴ with their own needs and limitations.

In other words, they want what they want immediately, with no filters and no means of delaying gratification.⁵

They even desire what may harm them, with no reasoning that suggests they should not have it.

Babies and young children are *set up from the get go!*

They are set up to feel repeatedly controlled, deprived and rejected, even by the best of parents. Thoughtless parents make matters much worse. And there are so many thought-

less parents...

This is just the way it is for babies and young children. There is no escape for these young innocents. None whatsoever! **This is where I came in: I SAVED YOU.**

The salvation I offered, however, came at an immense price.

You were never consulted. You just complied and unwittingly agreed to pay the toll.

You're still paying it today. *Isn't that amazing?*

Here's what I did to save you:

I "attached" myself to you and made the control, deprivation and rejection *palatable*⁶. In other words, **I gave you an appetite for emotional pain and negativity!**

That sounds crazy, too, but it was the only way for you to cope. I actually think it was a brilliant solution!

You needed a way to assimilate the constant barrage of negative messages that came your way. That's what I do. I eat negativity for lunch.

I am always hungry. I can't get enough!
And remember, MY appetite is *YOUR* appetite.

Are you still with me? Here are a few questions for you to consider...

Have you ever wondered why people "choose" to do things that cause them unhappiness?

Have you tried to give up behaviors that cause you guilt, shame and personal angst, only to return to those very behaviors again and again?

Have you ever given up on an achievable, positive goal?

Do you tend to invite controlling, rejecting or emotionally unavailable people into your life?

Do you often feel at the mercy of others?

Do you sometimes make decisions that you "know" are going to cause trouble, but make them anyway?

Is it difficult for you to care deeply for others?

Or, do you care so much that you sacrifice yourself and end up resentful?

Are you unable to feel passionate about life? About anything?
Do you struggle with personal discipline?

Does your life feel like it is moving on autopilot, with no one able to take charge? *Have you wondered why you can't just be happy and content?*

It's because you're still feeding an old *attachment* that formed before your conscious mind was able to choose for itself.

The Universal Law of Pleasure and Pain⁷

People move toward pleasure and away from pain.

What happens, though, when pain is cloaked in pleasure? What if you have a strange appetite for trouble?

Here's what happens: You keep on seeking out, and successfully finding, that old, familiar angst - wittingly or unwittingly!

But, you say, 'I don't find my pain to be pleasurable. I despise negativity!'

Fair enough. Yet, why do you continually criticize yourself, focusing on every conceivable negative aspect of life?

Why do you *do* things that you know you *shouldn't do*?

Why do you *avoid* doing things you know you *should do*?

A Universal Conundrum

How can someone say they hate pain and discomfort and at the same time make choices that guarantee these negative states?⁸

Why does the miserable addict return to his drug?

Why do committed couples pick fights with each other?

Why does an unhappy and obese person overeat, in full awareness of the consequences?

Why do people ignore all the red flags when making ill-fated decisions about time, money, relationships, employment, health, business and parenting?

In short, why do people stare the negative consequences of their actions in the face, yet proceed down that dark path anyway?

Why don't they simply choose to take a different path?

Are you beginning to accept the idea that there is an underlying reason for all of this?

Let's move on...

The bottom line is: I'm an Ugly Truth.

And for this reason, you've always tried to avoid me.

When you've had to confront me, you've attempted to annihilate me.

When you've sought help from others, you've wanted them to annihilate me for you.

It doesn't work, does it? I won't simply be pulled out and discarded. I am stronger than you, regardless.

You see, I'm a survivor and I can out-maneuver the best of them.

How else could I manage to drive you, a rational human being, to do things that just don't make sense?

Once hooked with psychological attachments⁹, people victimize themselves by doing the most contradictory things:

Someone miserably overweight consumes a diet high in sugar and fat.

A tortured woman stays with the man who mistreats her.

A would-be lover smothers a companion until rejected.

A lonely person avoids socializing and laments a solitary life.

A parent complains about a spoiled child, but continues to spoil them.

A smoker with emphysema carts around an oxygen tank while perching a cigarette between his lips.

A brilliant artist harshly criticizes her work in spite of being widely celebrated.

Someone with low self-esteem drudges on with daily self-condemnation.

An aspiring business manager underperforms, even when it compromises his chances for success.

Someone who feels momentarily happy is convinced that bad news is just around the corner and thus abandons their happy state.

A nervous speech giver avoids preparing the speech.

A person with great potential fears success even though there is “nothing” to be afraid of.

A wrongdoer feels horribly guilty, but persists in the wrongdoing.

In each scenario, the victim actively *fears and resists*¹⁰ solutions, justifying - or making excuses - that **embrace** the self-condemning behavior. In other words, they refuse to give up what makes them miserable.

This craziness doesn't make sense until they – and you – intimately understand how I work.

Remember, I'm the parasite, the *attachment* that hooked onto you years ago, eventually distorting your concepts and robbing you of a healthy mental life. I've succeeded in giving you an appetite for negativity and failure.

Long ago, I helped you cope, providing a way to digest the daily onslaught of negativity you perceived as a baby or young child.

Now, as a result, you **subconsciously** *hunger*¹¹ for negativity while avoiding happiness and self-respect.

You've not released me because you've denied that I exist. Or, perhaps you have feared what life would be like without me.

I've always been with you and will remain so until the day you die¹². That is, unless you expand your awareness, and realize that I am here and I'm NOT going away... unless you begin to do something different to what you've always done.¹³

If you think this is bad news, here is something *worse*: I will set you up for failure.

Has it dawned on you that I lure you into behaviors and situations that lead directly to your personal pain?

Remember, YOUR pain is MY gain.

In the moment, you may be convinced that you are making the right choice, or the only choice you have.

Or, you may know that you are making a bad decision, but justify it by blaming someone else or outside circumstances, making yourself helpless... the victim, as always.

It all leads to the same result – the feeding of me, your attachment. And when I'm well

fed, I grow stronger and *you grow weaker*.

Even so...

- You are likely to resist having a greater choice.
- You may not trust yourself with greater personal power.
- You may not want the responsibility that comes with freedom.
- You may become confused, distracted, angry or fearful.
- You may feel selfish, guilty or ashamed.
- You may feel unworthy of anything better than what you have now.

All of the above is your resistance to my release. This resistance keeps us connected while you continue to sacrifice yourself with your misconceptions of safety and comfort. Your desire to cling to what's familiar is your undoing.

Don't give up, though. You *can* be free.

What's the Secret?

The secret is to starve me. Quit feeding me, even though I will be fighting for my life, at first.

When you deny me what I need to survive for long enough, I'll eventually get the message, detach and search for happier hunting grounds.

How do you stop feeding a monster with a never-ending appetite for destruction?

The process is this:

1. Become **AWARE**.
2. **HALT** what you are doing.
3. **ACT** on new information.

Remember this simple acronym: **AHA**

The following scenario will help to explain it:

Let's say you're faced with the choice to purchase a sensible, affordable car or a fancier one that's well beyond your budget.

As your *attachment*, I'll do my very best to tempt you into making a poor choice so that you ultimately feel bad; it's what I do.

You're enchanted by the sleek body, luxury leather, powerful engine and pride of ownership that comes with the high-priced vehicle.

I'll tell you that you'll be making more money soon and that this purchase will motivate you to succeed even more.

In fact, you may even feel like a loser if you don't get this car. That's how far removed from reality you're likely to become under my influence.

Better judgment would tell you that you can't afford it - you know it's a poor choice, but better judgment isn't at work here. I am.

You purchase the fancy car.

Soon enough, however, you realize you've taken on more than you can handle financially.

You can blame the high-pressure salesperson, or even a materialistic culture for your feelings of guilt, shame, frustration and helplessness.

You can even blame yourself for making such an irrational decision.

You may even look back on a string of bad decisions and chastise yourself for never getting your life together - for being a loser in every area.

This is familiar emotional territory. It's what you know. You may even find a perverse satisfaction or self-justification here.

In fact, all this self-condemnation might appear downright *attractive* (it is to me!). As your *attachment*, I call it "subconscious pleasure in negative outcomes." This is my daily diet.

You've come to call it "home."

Now, let's take your negative car buying experience and turn it into a positive "AHA Solution."

A = Aware

When you understand me, then you understand that my goal is to put you into negative situations that feed me.

Armed with this level of insight, you'll approach the car buying from a completely different position of power.

From the get go, you'll be looking for how I might set you up to feel bad about yourself and the world. Car purchases can serve that purpose as well as anything else.

Now, you're ready to deny me my next meal!

So, there you are, evaluating the car that fits your budget vs. the fancier car that you'd really rather have.

Then, I hit you with a surge of temptation to close your eyes, sign on the dotted line and drive away in your new fancy-mobile.

I pour on the rhetoric:

You deserve this car.

You've put this off long enough.

You'll figure out how to pay for it.

So-and-so has a nice car, but THIS ONE puts his to shame.

You can't just walk away from this nice salesperson that has spent so much time with you!

You may stress about this later, but you REALLY WANT IT NOW, don't you? And so on...

And then, **AHA!** There it is! You suddenly see what's happening. I am ready to make my next meal out of you. And there won't be much room left for the positive feelings you might have had if you had made a better choice.

You see, I **plan ahead** in ways you have never imagined. This is how I've been outsmarting you for many, many years.

I know just how to blind you to the truth and make you **ignore all the red flags** that would awaken your better judgment in life. I do this with your money, your time, relationships, hobbies, parenting, health, career, and well... everything.

I'm insidious.

However, your awareness of me and my purpose could very well be the death of me.

If you've gotten this far with an open mind, you are ahead of most people. So, congratulations.

Now, on to the next step...

H = Halt

Once you are aware, it is imperative that you HALT. Stop. Take a moment to consider what's really going on. Where are you headed?

It's inevitable that I'll try to persuade you to keep going on autopilot, like a zombie in front of a slot machine.

The machine is gobbling up your credits at breakneck speed. Yet you keep mindlessly pushing the buttons, dazzled by the flashing lights and cutesy music.

You've lost \$100 so far with only \$50 left in your reserve. Might as well go for broke! Then, when the machine has eaten your last penny, you can finally relax and retreat with a "happens every time" look on your face.

Yes, I'll be trying to keep you on autopilot, away from any conscious reflection.

If you do not Halt the process, it will rage on forever, dwindling your emotional credits with every pull of the handle!

Let's look at where you are so far in the car-buying process:

You're still faced with the choice: fancy and unaffordable or less fancy yet affordable.

You've caught me red-handed, trying to lead you into a decision that will taint the pleasure of the fancy car with a healthy dose of pain, shame, self-criticism, feelings of failure and low self-esteem.

Time to get off autopilot. So, you stop yourself in your tracks and shake off the illusion that *any* car really means all that much.

You begin to consciously evaluate this decision in terms of self-sabotage. Is buying the fancy car self-sabotage? Will it allow you to really feel good, proud of yourself and full of self-respect? Or will owning this car, and all that goes with it, just reinforce old, unhealthy ideas that you've been carrying around so long?

In this moment, you are truly alive as an adult. You've put yourself in a rare position of conscious choice.

A = Act

When you're Aware of your chronic, subconscious tendencies, and Halt to reflect on what

you are doing from moment to moment, you can integrate¹⁴ these tendencies into your conscious decision-making.

For most people, the conscious desire is to be happy. Good health, financial stability, caring relationships, fun hobbies and balanced living tend to lead to happiness.

Of course, none of the above are at all appealing to me. I prefer a darker, more chaotic and drama-filled existence. "Balance" and "happiness" are boring to me.

You and I have been competing for a long time now. And you have won some battles along the way. I accept that. If you couldn't win some of the time, I'd lose my feeding ground because you'd give up on life.

Do you want to win more battles and perhaps even end the war between us?

Do you really want me to surrender and swim away?

The opportunity is here, right now. You've got to *act on new information*. Here is where you now stand:

You understand your tendency toward self-sabotage.

You've caught me in the act of setting you up to feel miserable.

Now, you're on your own. You have a choice to make. Given that you know what I'm about to do, you have no excuses and no right to complain if you end up feeding me yet another meal.

Again, I'm not about to make it easy for you.

Mostly, I'll cause you to **fear change**. I'll make happiness and self-respect scary and unfamiliar. I'll make you feel disloyal to all those who taught you to hate yourself. I'll convince you not to care.

Of course, none of this is true, but it will FEEL TRUE. And it may just entice you to stick with what you know – pain.

At any rate, your new choice now looks very different in light of your new awareness.

Option 1

Buy a less fancy car that you can afford, that WON'T stress you out, cause you to condemn yourself or feel out of control in your life. Most of all, it won't be a self-betraying decision.

Option 2

Buy a fancy car that will do all those wonderful, negative things. At this point, if do buy this fancy car, you KNOW it is an act of self-sabotage. You'll live to regret it.

Option 3 and Beyond

Yes, now that you are thinking clearly, who knows what other choices will appear to you? You may decide not to buy a new car right now. You may commit to saving up for the car you want. You may even wonder why you wanted to look for a new car in the first place.

This is your chance to get out of your own way.

This is your moment to Act with self-awareness and self-respect.

It's not about the car.

I don't care about cars. I just want you to feel bad so I can feed on you some more.

If you were in a position to purchase and enjoy the car of your dreams, then I might try to prevent you from getting the fancy car you want (and can easily afford) and stick you with a car you hate.

I'll tell you that you don't deserve a luxury car. *Who do you think you are, anyway? Stop being so self-centered! By the way, if you get that nice car, people will hate you for being more successful than they are....*

And so on. It's not about the car! My sole goal is that you end up feeling deprived, rejected, out-of-control, humiliated and less than...

I'm everywhere you are, constantly strategizing about how to pull off negative outcomes. Stop feeding me if you want to live.

Are you ready to Act?

The truth is, you won't always become Aware of what you're doing in time to Halt and Act on new information.

When you're caught up in a raging river of self-sabotage, you don't always see the branches and boulders to grab onto.

This is OK.

If you criticize yourself for your lack of awareness, you're only feeding me more.

But, as soon as you do notice, even in hindsight, you can still review the scenario, break it down and learn from it.

Be grateful for this. Be proud of yourself for this new ability.

Soon, you'll get ahead of your tendency for self-sabotage and learn to see it coming. Then, you'll be ready to let me go and swim confidently.

Your new *consciousness* will know that you have a choice in relation to old habits. Only then will you be free of me, your attachment, once and for all.

This falls into the realm of a *quality of life* decision, although it may also be a matter of life and death¹⁵.

Now that you are Aware, you can Halt what you are doing and Act DIFFERENTLY.

Now What?

Remember:

You have the potential to repel pain, rather than attract it. Negativity does not need to be magnetic.

Drama does not need to be exciting.

Failure does not need to feel inevitable.

There are **no negative side effects** to giving up a hidden desire for personal suffering.

Imagine:

No more trading off what you want to settle for what's more familiar... No more going against your better judgment only to find regret... No more behaviors that you cannot control... No more critical voice in your head... No more reckless decisions... No more low self-esteem... No more chronic worry, irrational fear, jealousy or resentment... No more abandoning goals for no apparent reason... No more feeling rejected and socially anxious... No more feeling empty and purposeless... No more inner conflict, indecision and emotional paralysis... No more self-sabotage.

In short, no more of those old, worthless behaviors and feelings that have defined you! You may not feel that you have a choice about some of the above. Still, you **do have a choice to make**, and it is this:

To do the work of releasing what I'm up to, yes me, your *attachment*. You have to consciously realize what you are doing that makes your life a prison. Do this work for however long it takes and whatever the consequences. It's really your only choice if you want to be free.

Only then will you be able to finally say, "AHA! My new life has just begun."

Afterword

The truth can be uncomfortable. Perhaps it's a mixed blessing that it's so easy to avoid!

Nowhere is the truth – the reality of what's really going on – more readily lost than in the labyrinth of our own minds.

This is why human science researchers can't agree on much of anything. Unfortunately, they're all just guessing!

Still, making educated guesses is important. It's our only hope.

Throughout history, however, when guesses have come just a bit too close to an uncomfortable truth, they've been systematically resisted before being reluctantly accepted and eventually embraced.

Pythagoras, Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Pasteur, Einstein and Edison are examples of forward thinkers who were publicly ridiculed, even executed, for possessing such radical ideas.

Another example is that of Edmund Bergler, MD (1899–1962). You've probably never heard of Bergler, even though he was one of Sigmund Freud's closest colleagues. Bergler was assistant director of Freud's clinic in Vienna and a prominent psychiatrist in New York. He authored 300 hundred studies that were published in medical journals and 23 books.

You've probably never heard of Bergler, even though Freud publicly acknowledged that

Bergler's work represented the next level of psychoanalytic thinking.

Here's why:

Bergler's "next level of thinking" hit a nerve and was systematically shunned by his colleagues, the very people with the greatest potential to understand! Even for them, the truth was uncomfortable and threatened the basis of who they were and what they did.

So, like any decent prophet, Dr. Bergler accepted his fate and trudged onward, predicting a span of 100 years before his ideas would be seriously considered.

It's been just over 50 years.

What was this nerve that Bergler hit?

It's what you just read. No, Bergler didn't discuss lamprey eels, but he was emphatic about our unconscious appetite for negativity. Bergler called it *psychic masochism*.

The fundamental neurosis, according to Bergler, is that human beings learn to take pleasure in displeasure. We sugar coat negativity so it is easier to swallow, even though it makes us miserable.

We develop such a tolerance for emotional pain that we end up unnecessarily keeping it around for a lifetime.

Unless and until we recognize this universal tendency, the problem at the root of most human suffering never goes away. In fact, psychic masochism is a progressive disease.

Footnotes

¹ These categories are synthesized from classic child development theory and represent the logical outcomes from crises encountered at various stages.

For the purpose of this book, we do not apply the outcomes of feeling controlled, deprived or rejected to specific stages, although it would be appropriate to do this in academia.

² Neuroscientists have actually compared the "brain waves of consciousness" in babies, children and adults. Speculations about the findings suggest that baby brains show faint signs of consciousness as young as two months, and continues to develop through adulthood. Researchers point out that this is highly speculative, however. See <http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2013/04/baby-consciousness/>

It should also be noted that many mature adults show very limited self-awareness and have potential to continue to learn throughout the life span.

³ A quote from Rod Burton of *Phenomenology Online*:

There is a fundamental difference in my own time experience compared to that of my five-year-old daughter. It is a classic contrast in time experience; that of objective versus subjective time. The morning ritual of getting her to daycare consists of exhorting her to rush, to hurry, to get dressed (right now), to get breakfast done with, to get into the van, and to get to the playschool.

In other words, I force her to act in a behavior oriented toward a future time space - my time space, insofar as I won't be late for work. She is learning to live the logistics of my life: I am certainly not attuned to her natural ability to live in a primordial present - a present that does not know of a future or a past. See: <http://www.phenomenologyonline.com/sources/textorium/burton-rod-the-experience-of-time-in-the-very-young>

⁴ This refers to Piaget's experiments around *object permanence*, or the ability for a child to understand that something exists outside of its own perception. Infants display extreme egocentrism. In other words, they cannot tell the difference between their own perceptions and outside objects and people. This means they have no ability to comprehend anyone else's individual existence, much less acknowledge others' needs or limitations.

⁵ Most psychologists agree that the ability to delay gratification (patience) is developed between the ages of 2 and 5, although we all know that some people never quite get there in a lifetime!

⁶ Psychiatrist Edmund Bergler, MD, suggested that this is the basic human neurosis, the necessary transformation of pain into pleasure at a very early stage of life, leading one to unwittingly seek out suffering and find subconscious satisfaction in it. This may be the very root of self-sabotage. Read Bergler's *The Basic Neurosis*.

⁷ Introduced by Sigmund Freud as the *pleasure principle* and popularized widely by psychologists, counselors and motivational speakers.

⁸ This conundrum is known in academia as the problem of self-deception. For thousands of years, philosophers have debated the question of how and why we deceive ourselves in misjudging the cause of, and responsibility, for our own actions.

⁹ Psychotherapist Peter Michaelson uses the term *emotional attachment*.

When we're unhappy, we're usually making unconscious inner choices that produce our unhappiness. We have to understand the bittersweet appeal of negative emotions. Without realizing what we're doing, we actually make inner choices to feel deprived or refused—or helpless, criticized, rejected, betrayed, or abandoned.

Unconsciously, we're tempted to indulge in such negative emotions that are unresolved from our past. Unwittingly, we recreate and recycle these familiar, painful feelings through the events and situations of our everyday life.

I use the term emotional attachments to express this inner conflict. While consciously we very much dislike our suffering, unconsciously we can be willing and determined to experience the unresolved negative emotions that produce suffering. Vast numbers of people have these emotional attachments. The problem goes largely untreated because it's not well understood. See: <http://whywesuffer.com>

¹⁰ Psychotherapists are so familiar with resistance to change in their clients that an axiom has emerged in the field: *Resistance is evidence that therapy is taking place*. In fact, one study demonstrated that when clients show low resistance to change, therapy is not as effective. See: Bischoff, M. M., & Tracey, T. J. G. (1995). *Client resistance as predicted by therapist behavior: A study of sequential dependence*. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 42(4), 487-495.

This suggests that clinging to familiarity and resisting change - even change for the better - is pervasive. Therapists know they are on the right track when they encounter resistance.

¹¹ Do people really seek negativity, failure and self-harm? Edmund Bergler, MD (see footnote 6) debated a colleague as follows:

Mrs. A: You seem to have the fantastic idea that a person can have the wish to damage himself. I have always assumed that every individual is his own best friend and well-wisher. Left to himself, no reasonable person would do himself harm in any way. Isn't your assumption in contradiction to common sense?

Bergler: If you had said, 'Every person is his own best friend and well-wisher *consciously*,' there would be no argument. But if your rule is meant to include the *unconscious*, it becomes more than debatable. Unconsciously, many people damage themselves.

Mrs. A.: That's unbelievable.

Bergler: Of course. Still, it corresponds to the facts. Ref: *Edmund Bergler Society of Toronto*.

¹² Edmund Bergler, MD, stated that psychic masochism, his term for the basic neurosis (see footnote 9), is a progressive condition that does not heal with time, but progresses steadily over time. See *The Basic Neurosis*.

¹³ *Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate.* -Carl Jung

¹⁴ Nathaniel Branden taught us, through his years of experience as a psychotherapist, and in his published works such as *The Disowned Self*, that it is by exposing unconscious patterns to consciousness that we heal and gain self-control.

¹⁵ Lifestyle related disease, addiction, suicide and more can only be called self- sabotage.

Thank You

I'd like to take a moment to thank you for reading this book. I hope the simple concept here makes a difference in your life.

My purpose is to highlight rarely discussed truths about how the mind works, even when doing so is difficult. To me, this is the hope of healing that so many of us are seeking.

About iNLPCenter.org

The iNLP Center is a personal development website that offers accredited certification in Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP).

Our NLP training center is grounded in solid personal development principles and promotes a “no-hype” approach to learning NLP.

Our flagship personal development program is called *The AHA Solution*. The AHA Solution takes the concepts in this book and teaches them in a non-metaphorical way through a series of educational videos, with tools provided to implement the AHA approach into your life. The AHA Solution is based on 12 attachments types (four attachment types under each of the three categories: rejection, control and deprivation.)

You can watch the first AHA Solution video for free. It is 20 minutes long and will solidify the concepts in this book by giving clear examples of how the rejection, control and deprivation attachments develop.

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