

The Death of Sex and the Demise of Monogamy

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The book is based on interviews since 1996 with 2000 people diagnosed with
Narcissistic and Antisocial Personality Disorders (narcissists and psychopaths)
and with thousands of family members, friends, therapists, and colleagues.

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Foreword: #MenToo: Witch-hunting of Men Gone Too Far

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) of the United Kingdom (UK) has recently criminalized “lovebombing”: overzealous flirting in the first phase of a relationship.

There is no debate that rape and other forms of sexual assault should be punished severely.

But we are criminalizing and stigmatizing sex itself as well as most forms of flirting and courting.

Large swathes of romance and inter-dyadic dynamics are now promulgated as delinquent as is the majority of inter-gender interactions.

We have sterilized lovemaking and rendered it transactional with the novel requirement for “enthusiastic consent”.

The law in many countries is heavily biased in favor of women: shockingly, rape is defined in the UK as the misuse of a penis only!

The justice system and “rape shield laws” have all but eradicated due process and the ability to defend oneself – if one is a man that is.

Nine out of ten conceivable and indispensable defense strategies are inadmissible and impermissible in cases involving intimate relationships. This is unprecedented and has no equivalent in any other type of criminal offense.

The laudable idea is to accord women some protection from public shaming and retraumatization. But victims of all crimes feel humiliated and are traumatized. There is no reason whatsoever to single out rape, let alone sexual assault.

Literally every sex act is now construed as sexual assault. Half of all men and women report being wary of each other in the workplace (Pew Center).

Memory is highly unreliable: it degrades and is reframed with time (E. Loftus). Therefore, sexual offenses should be time debarred (there should be a statute of limitations) akin to other forms of bodily harm and assault.

Yet, in some countries in the West, rape is equated with murder: a complaint can be filed – and often is – decades after the alleged events have taken place.

The cyclical argument is: only 2-6% of sex crimes allegations are false. The proof? The conviction rate. Yet, the true number is probably ten times that, according to multiple studies.

Women are weaponizing these newfound juridical powers and are colluding in groups to ruin men's lives. In the wake of the #MeToo movement, celebrities have become the preferred targets – and lucrative settlements among their victims, real and alleged, are all the rage.

Lying is much more common among certain psychopathological profiles, such as personality disorders. As the incidence and prevalence of Borderline, Narcissistic, Antisocial, Paranoid, and Histrionic personality disorders increases among women, the likelihood of mendacity among complainants is skyrocketing.

Liars should be punished as harshly as the penalties are for the offenses that they allege. Yet, very few of them are even prosecuted for fear of exerting a chilling effect on real victims.

Enthusiastic consent is an impractical, stultifying constraint: no two individuals maintain the same level of passion for any specific sex act. Good sex involves compromise and the wish to please one another – not selfish gratification. We are reducing sex to mutual masturbation.

The entire debate feeds off toxic versions of both feminism and masculinity. Misandrist sentiments equate the unraveling of the patriarchy with retribution for millennia of subjugation. The woke, politically correct ideal is to eliminate gender altogether (unigender and the stalled revolution).

The pendulum has swung too far against men: young men are terrified to approach young women; every signaling behavior, however innocuous, amounts to sexual harassment; flirting and courting in the real world (IRL) are widely considered creepy and are even criminalized

Women are dissonant. They are caught between the still dominant sexual double standard (hypervigilant virtue) and invulnerability signaling: “I am the helpless victim, but I am also empowered, agentic, unaffected, and untouchable.”

Throughout post-modern societies, entitled grandiose victimhood has replaced dignity and reputational social control.

Current laws and their interpretation by the courts incentivize hyperbole or counterfactual reframing in a spiral of ever more fantastic accusations and allegations.

The aforementioned rise of narcissism, borderline (which is now being reconceived as a form of secondary psychopathy), and primary psychopathy among women leads to extreme fantasies, emotional dysregulation, acting out, psychotic microepisodes, dissociation, infantilism, and alloplastic defenses (blaming others for the predictable consequences and outcomes of your own regretted choices and decisions, never taking responsibility, never apologizing, never feeling guilty or blameworthy).

We must transition from the nebulous construct of enthusiastic consent towards behavioral or transactional consent. Behaviors before and after the fact provide an indispensable and often indisputable context. Post-facto remorse should not transform the acts performed into unwitting crimes.

Transactional sex should never be criminalized, regardless of the identities of the willing participants: power asymmetries are inherent in every give and take, sexual or not. Moreover: women have always been the sexual gatekeepers and have been trading sex for favors since the dawn of Mankind.

Additionally, we should define far more narrowly and rigorously criminal offenses such as coercive control.

Finally: the playing field should be levelled. Many women are primary breadwinners, more educated than men, and have been known to be abusive, too – yet there are almost no persecutions of women for such offenses despite these clear power asymmetries.

For example:

Marital rape is criminalized as it should be. But the withholding of sex, affection, and intimacy should also be criminalized: it amounts to mental cruelty and is a manipulative control technique (a form of Machiavellianism).

Women should be prosecuted for harassment (including of the sexual sort), stalking, defamation, coercion, rape, and a host of other offenses currently enforced exclusively against men.

Equal power confers equal responsibility and equal liabilities. Women are having it both ways nowadays. It is time to end this malpractice. The alternative is a reactionary male backlash against the hard-earned rights of women. We are witnessing the harbingers of this disturbing trend all over the globe, from rescinded abortion rights in the USA to Russia and Afghanistan where domestic violence has been decriminalized and access to the public sphere is being denied.

Sam Vaknin, June 2023

I.The New Normal

Whatever Happened to Marriage?

The ancient institution of monogamous marriage is ill-suited to the exigencies of modern Western civilization. People of both genders live and [work longer](#) (which renders sexual exclusivity impracticable); travel far and away frequently; and are exposed to tempting romantic alternatives via social networking and in various workplace and social settings. As leisure time increases and physical survival is all but effortlessly guaranteed, recreation takes precedence over procreation.

Until the 1920s only women were expected to abide by a strict code of sexual exclusivity. Men, openly albeit discreetly, kept mistresses and patronized brothels to sate their exuberance. In many cultures, polygamous men maintained harems. As women's lib and gender equality gradually took over, sexually emancipated women assumed many hitherto male behaviors. Alarmed by this turn of events, men suddenly became paragons of virtue, akin to women in erstwhile days. Men now vowed to adhere to a single sexual partner, thus attempting to force women to "revert to type". This abrupt about-face wrought mayhem on the monogamous bond because it forcibly equated sexual exclusivity with love and bonding and regarded cheating as proof of their absence.

Contradictory expectations from one's intimate partner are unrealistic. No single person can be a passionate, exciting lover; an empathic, patient friend; a stalwart companion; a good father/mother, cook, and handyperson; an intellectual equal; an adventurer; a stable breadwinner; and myriad other functions besides. Hence the need to outsource and the recurrence of emotional and sexual affairs, the disruptive outcomes of overwhelming, all-pervasive ennui.

Thus, even as social monogamy and pair commitment and bonding are still largely intact and more condoned than ever and even as infidelity is fervently condemned, sexual exclusivity (mislabelled "sexual monogamy") is declining, especially among the young and the old. Monogamy is becoming one alternative of many lifestyles and marriage only one relationship among a few (sometimes, not even a privileged or unique relationship, as it competes for time

and resources with work, same-sex friends, friends with benefits, and opposite-sex friends.) We may be heading towards a future of serial monogamy devoid of sexual exclusivity: emotional attachment and bonding within sexually open marriages or partnerships (whether its open nature is proclaimed and promulgated or tacitly accepted and overlooked).

The contractual aspects of marriage are more pronounced than ever with everything on the table: from extramarital sex (allowed or not) to pre-nuptial agreements. The commodification and preponderance of sex – premarital and extramarital - robbed it of its function as a conduit of specialness and intimacy and since childrearing is largely avoided (natality rates are precipitously plummeting everywhere) or outsourced, the family has lost both its *raison d'être* and its nature as the venue for exclusive sexual and emotional interactions between adults.

Professed values and prevailing social mores and institutions have yet to catch up to this emerging multifarious reality. The consequences of these discrepancies are disastrous: about 40-50% of all first-time marriages end in divorce and the percentage is much higher for second and third attempts at connubial bliss. Open communication about one's sexual needs is tantamount to self-ruination as one's partner is likely to reflexively initiate a divorce. Dishonesty and cheating are definitely the rational choices in such an unforgiving and punitive environment.

Indeed, most surviving marriages have to do with perpetuating the partners' convenience, their access to commonly-owned assets and future streams of income, and the welfare of third parties, most notably their kids. Erstwhile sexual exclusivity often degenerates into celibacy or abstinence on the one hand – or parallel lives with multiple sexual and emotional partners on the other hand.

One night stands for both genders are usually opportunistic. Extra-pair affairs are self-limiting, as emotional involvement and sexual attraction wane over time. Infidelity is, therefore, much less of a threat to the longevity of a dedicated couple than it is made out to be. Most of the damage is caused by culturally-conditioned, albeit deeply and traumatically felt, reactions to conduct that is almost universally decried as deceitful, dishonest, and in breach of vows and promises.

But the roots of the crumbling alliance between men and women go deeper and further in time. Long before divorce became a social norm, men and women grew into two disparate, incompatible, and warring subspecies. Traditionalist, conservative, and religious societies put in place behavioural safeguards against the inevitable wrenching torsion that monogamy entailed: no premarital sex (virginity); no multiple intimate partners; no cohabitation prior to tying the knot; no mobility, or equal rights for women; no mixing of the genders. We now know that each of these habits does, indeed, increase the chances for an ultimate divorce. As Jonathan Franzen elucidates in his literary masterpieces, it boils down to a choice between personal freedoms and the stability of the family: the former decisively preclude the latter.

During the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, discreet affairs were an institution of marriage: sexual gratification and emotional intimacy were outsourced while all other domestic functions were shared in partnership. The Industrial Revolution, the Victorian Age, the backlash of the sexual revolution, belligerent feminism, and the advent of socially-atomizing and gender-equalizing transportation, information processing, and telecommunication technologies led inexorably to the hollowing out of family and hearth.

In a civilization centred on brainpower, Men have lost the relative edge that brawn used to provide. Monogamy is increasingly considered as past its expiry date: a historical aberration that reflects the economic and political realities of bygone eras. Moreover: the incidence of lifelong singlehood has skyrocketed as people hope for their potential or actual relationship-partners to provide for all their sexual, emotional, social, and economic needs – and then get sorely disappointed when they fail to meet these highly unrealistic expectations.

In an age of economic self-sufficiency, electronic entertainment, and self-gratification, the art of compromise in relationships is gone. Single motherhood (sometimes via IVF, with no identifiable partner involved) has become the norm in many countries. Even within marriages or committed relationships, solitary pursuits, such as separate vacations, or “girls’/boy’ nights out” have become the norm.

The 20th century was a monument to male fatuity: wars and ideologies almost decimated the species. Forced to acquire masculine skills and fill men’s shoes in factories and fields, women discovered militant self-autonomy, the

superfluosness of men, and the untenability of the male claims to superiority over them.

In an age of malignant individualism, bordering on [narcissism](#), men and women alike put themselves, their fantasies, and their needs first, all else – family included – be damned. And with 5 decades of uninterrupted prosperity, birth control, and feminism/ women’s lib most of the female denizens of the West have acquired the financial wherewithal to realize their dreams at the expense and to the detriment of collectives they ostensibly belong to (such as the nuclear family.) Feminism is a movement focused on negatives (obliterating women’s age-old bondage) but it offers few constructive ideas regarding women’s new roles. By casting men as the enemy, it also failed to educate them and convert them into useful allies.

Owing to the dramatic doubling of life expectancy, modern marriages seem to go through three phases: infatuation (honeymoon); procreation-accumulation (of assets, children, and shared experiences); and exhaustion-outsourcing (bonding with new emotional and sexual partners for rejuvenation or the fulfilment of long-repressed fantasies, needs, and wishes.) Divorces and breakups occur mostly at the seams, the periods of transition between these phases and especially between the stages of accumulation-procreation and exhaustion-outsourcing. This is where family units break down.

With marriage on the decline and infidelity on the rise, the reasonable solution would be [swinging \(swapping sexual partners\)](#) or polyamory (households with multiple partners of both genders all of whom are committed to one another for the long haul, romantically-involved, sexually-shared, and economically united.) Alas, while a perfectly rational development of the traditional marriage and one that is best-suited to modernity, it is an emotionally unstable arrangement, what with [romantic jealousy](#) ineluctably rearing its ugly head. Very few people are emotionally capable of sharing their life-partner with others.

Human psychology dictates that in any modern, adaptable variant of marriage monogamy must be preserved while allowing for emotional, sexual, and romantic diversity. How to square the circle? What virtual chastity belt can we conjure up to replace the spiked medieval original?

Enter “time-limited marriages” (TLM). These are marriage contracts with expiration dates: one to three years for childless couples and a minimum of

seven years for those blessed with children (to allow the parents to provide a stable environment during the child's formative years.) These contracts can be allowed to expire and then the parties are free to look elsewhere for the fulfilment of their sexual and romantic dreams and wishes; or they can be renewed and renegotiated.

The question is not why there are so many divorces, but why so few. Surely, serial monogamy (in effect, a tawdry variant of TLM) is far better, fairer, and more humane than adultery? Couples stay together and tolerate straying owing to inertia; financial or emotional dependence; insecurity (lack of self-confidence or low self-esteem); fear of the unknown and the tedium of dating. Some couples persevere owing to religious conviction or for the sake of appearances. Yet others make a smooth transition to an alternative lifestyle (polyamory, swinging, or consensual adultery).

Indeed, what has changed is not the incidence of adultery, even among women. There are good grounds to assume that it has remained the same throughout human history. The phenomenon - quantitatively and qualitatively - has always been the same, merely underreported. What have changed are the social acceptability of extramarital sex both before and during marriage and the ease of obtaining divorce. People discuss adultery openly where before it was a taboo topic.

Another new development may be the rise of "selfish affairs" among women younger than 35 who are used to multiple sexual partners. "Selfish affairs" are acts of recreational adultery whose sole purpose is to satisfy sexual curiosity and the need for romantic diversity. The emotional component in these usually short-term affairs (one-night stands and the like) is muted. Among women older than 60, adultery has become the accepted way of seeking emotional connection and intimacy outside the marital bond. These are "outsourcing affairs."

Within the TLM, partners would have little incentive to cheat: they could simply wait for the contract to lapse. The looming expiry would also keep the intimate partners on their toes and on their best behavior by generating a sempiternal environment of courtship and positive sexual tension. The periodically renegotiated marriage contracts would reflect changing economic realities, shifts in romantic sentiment, and other pertinent new data. Of course, TLM would eliminate the need for divorces (except in extreme, emergency cases.)

Until recently, couples formed around promises of emotional exclusivity and sexual fidelity, uniqueness in each other's mind and life, and (more common until the 1940s) virginity. Marriage was also a partnership: economic, or related to childrearing, or companionship. It was based on the partners' past and background and geared towards a shared future.

As Betty Friedan noted in her celebrated tome, "The Feminine Mystique", women in the 1950s reverted to traditional gender roles as housewives, undoing most of the educational and vocational accomplishments of their mothers and grandmothers (see [this excerpt](#)). It took the rebellion and contumacious disillusionment of the 1960s to emancipate women to think and act like men. The pendulum had swung too far, though: women now largely emulate and adopt behaviors which were once the preserve of psychopathic or narcissistic men.

Nowadays, couples coalesce around the twin undertakings of continuity ("I will ALWAYS be there for you") and availability ("I will always BE there for you.") Issues of exclusivity, uniqueness, and virginity have been relegated to the back-burner. It is no longer practical to demand of one's spouse to have nothing to do with the opposite sex, not to spend the bulk of his or her time outside the marriage, not to take separate vacations, and, more generally, to be joined at the hip. Affairs, for instance – both emotional and sexual – are sad certainties in the life of every couple.

Members of the couple are supposed to make themselves continuously available to each other and to provide emotional sustenance and support in an atmosphere of sharing, companionship, and friendship. All the traditional functions of the family can now be – and often are – outsourced, including even sex and emotional intimacy. But, contrary to marriage, outsourcing is frequently haphazard and unpredictable, dependent as it is on outsiders who are committed elsewhere as well. Hence the relative durability of marriage, in its conservative and less-conventional forms alike: it is a convenient and highly practicable arrangement.

Divorce or other forms of marital breakup are not new phenomena. But their precipitants have undergone a revolutionary shift. In the past, families fell apart owing to a breach of exclusivity, mainly in the forms of emotional or sexual infidelity; a deficiency of uniqueness and primacy: divorced women, for instance, were considered "damaged goods" because they used to "belong" to

another man and, therefore, could offer neither primacy nor uniqueness; or an egregious violation of the terms of partnership (for example: sloth, dysfunctional childrearing, infertility).

Nowadays, intimate partners bail out when the continuous availability of their significant others is disrupted: sexually, emotionally, or as friends and companions. Marriages are about the present and are being put to the test on a daily basis. Partners who are dissatisfied opt out and team up with other, more promising providers. Children are serially reared by multiple parents and in multiple households.

Still, despite all the fashionable theories of marriage, the narratives and the feminists, the reasons to get married largely remain the same. True, there have been role reversals and new stereotypes have cropped up. But biological, physiological and biochemical facts are less amenable to modern criticisms of culture. Men are still men and women are still women.

Men and women marry to form:

The Sexual Dyad – Intended to gratify the partners' sexual attraction and secure a stable, consistent and available source of sexual gratification.

The Economic Dyad – The couple is a functioning economic unit within which the economic activities of the members of the dyad and of additional entrants are carried out. The economic unit generates more wealth than it consumes and the synergy between its members is likely to lead to gains in production and in productivity relative to individual efforts and investments.

The Social Dyad – The members of the couple bond as a result of implicit or explicit, direct, or indirect social pressures. Such pressure can manifest itself in numerous forms. In Judaism, a person cannot hold some religious posts unless he is married. This is a form of economic pressure.

In most human societies, avowed bachelors are considered to be socially deviant and abnormal. They are condemned by society, ridiculed, shunned and isolated, effectively ex-communicated. Partly to avoid these sanctions and partly to enjoy the emotional glow that comes with conformity and acceptance, couples get married.

Today, myriad lifestyles are on offer. The old fashioned, nuclear family is one of many variants. Children are reared by single parents. Homosexual couples bind and abound. But a pattern is discernible all the same: almost 95% of the

adult population get married ultimately. They settle into a two-member arrangement, whether formalized and sanctioned religiously or legally – or not.

The Companionship Dyad – Formed by adults in search of sources of long-term and stable support, emotional warmth, empathy, care, good advice and intimacy. The members of these couples tend to define themselves as each other's best friends.

Folk wisdom tells us that the first three dyads are unstable.

Sexual attraction wanes and is replaced by sexual attrition in most cases. This could lead to the adoption of non-conventional sexual behavior patterns (sexual abstinence, group sex, couple swapping, etc.) – or to recurrent marital infidelity.

Pecuniary concerns are insufficient grounds for a lasting relationship, either. In today's world, both partners are potentially financially independent. This new found autonomy gnaws at the roots of traditional patriarchal-domineering-disciplinarian relationships. Marriage is becoming a more balanced, business like, arrangement with children and the couple's welfare and life standard as its products.

Thus, marriages motivated solely by economic considerations are as likely to unravel as any other joint venture. Admittedly, social pressures help maintain family cohesiveness and stability. But – being thus enforced from the outside – such marriages resemble detention rather than a voluntary, joyful collaboration.

Moreover, social norms, peer pressure, and social conformity cannot be relied upon to fulfil the roles of stabilizer and shock absorber indefinitely. Norms change and peer pressure can backfire ("If all my friends are divorced and apparently content, why shouldn't I try it, too ?").

Only the companionship dyad seems to be durable. Friendships deepen with time. While sex loses its initial, [biochemically-induced](#), lustre, economic motives are reversed or voided, and social norms are fickle – companionship, like wine, improves with time.

Even when planted on the most desolate land, under the most difficult and insidious circumstances, the obdurate seed of companionship sprouts and blossoms.

"Matchmaking is made in heaven" goes the old Jewish adage but Jewish matchmakers in centuries past were not averse to lending the divine a hand. After closely scrutinizing the background of both candidates – male and female – a marriage was pronounced. In other cultures, marriages are still being

arranged by prospective or actual fathers without asking for the embryos or the toddlers' consent.

The surprising fact is that arranged marriages last much longer than those which are the happy outcomes of romantic love. Moreover: the longer a couple cohabitates prior to their marriage, the higher the likelihood of divorce. Counterintuitively, romantic love and cohabitation ("getting to know each other better") are negative precursors and predictors of marital longevity.

Companionship grows out of friction and interaction within an irreversible formal arrangement (no "escape clauses"). In many marriages where divorce is not an option (legally, or due to prohibitive economic or social costs), companionship grudgingly develops and with it contentment, if not happiness.

Companionship is the offspring of pity and empathy. It is based on and shared events and fears and common suffering. It reflects the wish to protect and to shield each other from the hardships of life. It is [habit forming](#). If lustful sex is fire – companionship is old slippers: comfortable, static, useful, warm, and secure.

Experiments and experience show that people in constant touch get attached to one another very quickly and very thoroughly. This is a reflex that has to do with survival. As infants, we get attached to other mothers and our mothers get attached to us. In the absence of social interactions, we die younger. We need to bond and to make others depend on us in order to survive.

The mating (and, later, marital) cycle is full of euphorias and dysphorias. These "mood swings" generate the dynamics of seeking mates, copulating, coupling (marrying) and reproducing.

The source of these changing dispositions can be found in the meaning that we attach to marriage which is perceived as the real, irrevocable, irreversible and serious entry into adult society. Previous rites of passage (like the Jewish Bar Mitzvah, the Christian Communion and more exotic rites elsewhere) prepare us only partially to the shocking realization that we are about to emulate our parents.

During the first years of our lives, we tend to view our parents as omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent demigods. Our perception of them, of ourselves and of the world is magical. All entities - we and our caregivers included - are entangled, constantly interacting, and identity interchanging ("shape shifting").

At first, therefore, our parents are idealized. Then, as we get disillusioned, they are internalized to become the first and most important among the inner voices

that guide our lives. As we grow up (adolescence) we rebel against our parents (in the final phases of identity formation) and then learn to accept them and to resort to them in times of need.

But the primordial gods of our infancy never die, nor do they lie dormant. They lurk in our superego, engaged in incessant dialogue with the other structures of our personality. They constantly criticize and analyze, make suggestions and reproach. The hiss of these voices is the background radiation of our personal big bang.

Thus, to decide to get married (to imitate our parents), is to challenge and tempt the gods, to commit sacrilege, to negate the very existence of our progenitors, to defile the inner sanctum of our formative years. This is a rebellion so momentous, so all encompassing, that it touches upon the very foundation of our personality.

Inevitably, we (unconsciously) shudder in anticipation of the imminent and, no doubt, horrible punishment that awaits us for this iconoclastic presumptuousness. This is the first dysphoria, which accompanies our mental preparations prior to getting wed. Getting ready to get hitched carries a price tag: the activation of a host of primitive and hitherto dormant defence mechanisms - denial, regression, repression, projection.

This self-induced panic is the result of an inner conflict. On the one hand, we know that it is unhealthy to live as recluses (both biologically and psychologically). With the passage of time, we are urgently propelled to find a mate. On the other hand, there is the above-described feeling of impending doom.

Having overcome the initial anxiety, having triumphed over our inner tyrants (or guides, depending on the character of the primary objects, their parents), we go through a short euphoric phase, celebrating their rediscovered individuation and separation. Reinvigorated, we feel ready to court and woo prospective mates.

But our conflicts are never really put to rest. They merely lie dormant.

Married life is a terrifying rite of passage. Many react to it by limiting themselves to familiar, knee-jerk behavior patterns and reactions and by ignoring or dimming their true emotions. Gradually, these marriages are hollowed out and wither.

Some seek solace in resorting to other frames of reference - the terra cognita of one's neighbourhood, country, language, race, culture, language, background,

profession, social stratum, or education. Belonging to these groups imbues them with feelings of security and firmness.

Many combine both solutions. More than 80% of marriages take place among members of the same social class, profession, race, creed and breed. This is not a chance statistic. It reflects choices, conscious and (more often) unconscious.

The next anti-climatic dysphoric phase transpires when our attempts to secure (the consent of) a mate are met with success. Daydreaming is easier and more gratifying than the dreariness of realized goals. Mundane routine is the enemy of love and of optimism. Where dreams end, harsh reality intrudes with its uncompromising demands.

Securing the consent of one's future spouse forces one to tread an irreversible and increasingly challenging path. One's imminent marriage requires not only emotional investment - but also economic and social ones. Many people fear commitment and feel trapped, shackled, or even threatened. Marriage suddenly seems like a dead end. Even those eager to get married entertain occasional and nagging doubts.

The strength of these negative emotions depends, to a very large extent, on the parental role models and on the kind of family life experienced. The more dysfunctional the family of origin - the earlier (and usually only) available example – the more overpowering the sense of entrapment and the resulting paranoia and backlash.

But most people overcome this stage fright and proceed to formalize their relationship by getting married. This decision, this leap of faith is the corridor which leads to the palatial hall of post-nuptial euphoria.

This time the euphoria is mostly a social reaction. The newly conferred status (of "just married") bears a cornucopia of social rewards and incentives, some of them enshrined in legislation. Economic benefits, social approval, familial support, the envious reactions of others, the expectations and joys of marriage (freely available sex, having children, lack of parental or societal control, and newly experienced freedoms) foster another magical bout of feeling omnipotent.

It feels good and empowering to control one's newfound "lebensraum", one's spouse, and one's life. It fosters self-confidence, self esteem and helps regulate one's sense of self-worth. It is a manic phase. Everything seems possible, now that one is left to one's own devices and is supported by one's mate.

With luck and the right partner, this frame of mind can be prolonged. However, as life's disappointments accumulate, obstacles mount, the possible sorted out

from the improbable and time passes inexorably, this euphoria abates. The reserves of energy and determination dwindle. Gradually, one slides into an all-pervasive dysphoric (even anhedonic or depressed) mood.

The routines of life, its mundane attributes, the contrast between fantasy and reality, erode the first burst of exuberance. Life looks more like a life sentence. This anxiety sours the relationship. One tends to blame one's spouse for one's atrophy. People with alloplastic defences (external locus of control) blame others for their defeats and failures.

Thoughts of breaking free, of going back to the parental nest, of revoking the marriage become more frequent. It is, at the same time, a frightening and exhilarating prospect. Again, panic sets in. Conflict rears its ugly head. Cognitive dissonance abounds. Inner turmoil leads to irresponsible, self-defeating and self-destructive behaviours. A lot of marriages end here in what is known as the "seven year itch".

Next awaits parenthood. Many marriages survive only because of the presence of common offspring.

One cannot become a parent unless and until one eradicates the internal traces of one's own parents. This necessary patricide and unavoidable matricide are painful and cause great trepidation. But the completion of this crucial phase is rewarding all the same and it leads to feelings of renewed vigour, new-found optimism, a sensation of omnipotence and the reawakening of other traces of magical thinking.

In the quest for an outlet, a way to relieve anxiety and boredom, both members of the couple (providing they still possess the wish to "save" the marriage) hit upon the same idea but from different directions.

The woman (partly because of social and cultural conditioning during the socialization process) finds bringing children to the world an attractive and efficient way of securing the bond, cementing the relationship and transforming it into a long-term commitment. Pregnancy, childbirth, and motherhood are perceived as the ultimate manifestations of her femininity.

The male reaction to childrearing is more compounded. At first, he perceives the child (at least unconsciously) as another restraint, likely to only "drag him deeper" into the quagmire. His dysphoria deepens and matures into full-fledged panic. It then subsides and gives way to a sense of awe and wonder. A psychedelic feeling of being part [parent](#) (to the child) and part child (to his own parents) ensues. The birth of the child and his first stages of development only serve to entrench this "time warp" impression.

Raising children is a difficult task. It is time and energy consuming. It is emotionally taxing. It denies the parent his or her privacy, intimacy, and needs. The newborn represents a full-blown traumatic crisis with potentially devastating consequences. The strain on the relationship is enormous. It either completely breaks down – or is revived by the novel challenges and hardships.

An euphoric period of collaboration and reciprocity, of mutual support and increasing love follows. Everything else pales beside the little miracle. The child becomes the centre of narcissistic projections, hopes and fears. So much is vested and invested in the infant and, initially, the child gives so much in return that it blots away the daily problems, tedious routines, failures, disappointments and aggravations of every normal relationship.

But the child's role is temporary. The more autonomous s/he becomes, the more knowledgeable, the less innocent – the less rewarding and the more frustrating s/he is. As toddlers become adolescents, many couples fall apart, their members having grown apart, developed separately and are estranged.

The stage is set for the next major dysphoria: the midlife crisis.

This, essentially, is a crisis of reckoning, of inventory taking, disillusionment, the realization of one's mortality. We look back to find how little we had accomplished, how short the time we have left, how unrealistic our expectations have been, how alienated we have become, how ill-equipped we are to cope, and how irrelevant and unhelpful our marriages are.

To the disenchanted midlifer, his life is a fake, a Potemkin village, a facade behind which rot and corruption have consumed his vitality. This seems to be the last chance to recover lost ground, to strike one more time. Invigorated by other people's youth (a young lover, one's students or colleagues, one's own children), one tries to recreate one's life in a vain attempt to make amends, and to avoid the same mistakes.

This crisis is exacerbated by the "empty nest" syndrome (as children grow up and leave the parents' home). A major topic of consensus and a catalyst of interaction thus disappear. The vacuity of the relationship engendered by the termites of a thousand marital discords is revealed.

This hollowness can be filled with empathy and mutual support. It rarely is, however. Most couples discover that they lost faith in their powers of rejuvenation and that their togetherness is buried under a mountain of grudges, regrets and sorrows.

They both want out. And out they go. The majority of those who do remain married revert to cohabitation rather than to love, to co-existence rather to experimentation, to arrangements of convenience rather to an emotional revival. It is a sad sight. As biological decay sets in, the couple heads into the ultimate dysphoria: ageing and death.

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Divorce as a Re-Distributive Mechanism

"Even in modern times, in most cases husbands and wives differ in their potential for acquiring property. In separation of property, husbands and wives owning property and dealing with each other will be in the same position as unmarried adults.

There are, however, grounds for distinguishing marital property questions from ordinary property questions, because persons who cohabit on a domestic basis share a common standard of living and usually also the benefits of each other's property. A major element in many marriages is the raising of children, and the traditional female role, requiring her full-time presence in the home, places the married woman at a disadvantage so far as earning money and acquiring property are concerned. It is inconsistent of society to encourage a woman to take the domestic role of wife and mother, with its lower money and property potential, but in property matters to treat her as if she were a single person. It is also inconsistent to place upon the husband the sole responsibility for maintaining his wife and children, if his wife has regular employment outside the home. When the marriage is dissolved, if the wife has not been regularly employed and now enters the labour market on a full-time basis, she may be at a considerable disadvantage as far as salary and pension rights are concerned."

Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1997 Edition

When a man and a woman dissolve their marriage, matters of common matrimonial property are often settled by dividing between them the assets generated and accumulated by one or both of them during the marriage. How the property is divided depends on the law prevailing in their domicile and upon the existence of a prenuptial contract.

The question is legally exceedingly intricate and requires specific expertise that far exceeds anything this author has to offer. It is the economic angle that is intriguing.

Divorce in modern times constitutes one of the biggest transfers of wealth in the annals of Mankind. Amounts of cash and assets, which dwarf anything OPEC used to have in its heyday, pass between spouses yearly. Most of the beneficiaries are women. Because the earning power of men is almost double that of women (depending on the country) – most of the wealth accumulated by any couple is directly traceable to the husband's income. A divorce, therefore, constitutes a transfer of part of the husband's wealth to his wife. Because the cumulative disparities over years of income differentials are great – the wealth transferred is enormous.

Consider a husband that makes an average of US \$40,000 after-tax annually throughout his working years. He is likely to save c. \$1,000 annually (net savings in the USA prior to 1995 averaged 2.5% of disposable income). This is close to US \$8,000 in 7 years with interest and dividends reinvested and assuming no appreciation in the prices of financial assets.

His wife stands to receive half of these savings (c. \$4,000) if the marriage is dissolved after 7 years. Had she started to work at the same time as her husband and continued to do so for 7 years as well – on average, she will have earned 60% of his income.

Assuming an identical savings rate for her, she would have saved only US \$5,000 and her husband would be entitled to US \$2,500 of it. Thus, a net transfer of US \$1,500 in cash from husband to wife is one of the the likely outcomes of the divorce of this very typical couple.

But this ignores the transfer of tangible and intangible assets from husband to wife. A seven year old couple in the West typically owns \$100,000 in assets. When they divorce, by splitting the assets right down the middle, the man actually transfers to the woman about \$10,000 in assets, taking their income differential into account.

An average of 45% of the couples in the Western hemisphere end up divorcing within 7 years. A back-of-the-envelope calculation demonstrates the monstrous economic magnitude of this phenomenon. Divorce is, by far, the most powerful redistributive mechanism in modern society.

Despite recent social advances, women still belong to an economically underprivileged class, are still highly dependent on male patronage and, therefore, are the great beneficiaries of any social, progressive, mechanisms of redistribution. Income taxes, social security, other unilateral transfers, single parent benefits – all accrue mostly to women. The same goes for the "divorce dividend" – the economic windfall profit which is the result of a reasonable and standard divorce.

But economic players are assumed to be rational. Why would a man be a willing party to such an ostensibly disadvantageous arrangement? Who would give up money and assets for no apparent economic benefits? Dividing the matrimonial property in the above mentioned illustrative case is the equivalent of a monthly transfer of US \$150 in cash and assets from the husband to his wife throughout their 7 years of marriage.

What is this payment for? Presumably, for services rendered by the woman in-house, in child rearing, as a companion, and in the conjugal bed. This must be the residual value of these services to the man after discounting services that he provides to the woman (including rent for the use of his excess property, sexual

services, protection, companionship to the extent that he can provide it, etc.). This is also the marginal value added of these services.

It is safe to say that the value of the services that the woman renders to her man exceed the value of the services that he provides to her – by at least US \$150 per month. This excess value accrues to the woman upon divorce.

But this makes only little sense. Consider the woman's ostensible contribution to the couple in the form of children.

Children are an economic liability. They are not revenue generating assets. They do absorb income and convert it to property when they grow up. But the children's property does not belong to the parents. It is outside the ownership, control, and pleasure of both members of the couple.

Every dollar invested by the parents in their offspring's education – is an asset to the off-spring and a liability for the parents. Why should a man stimulate a woman (by providing her with US \$150 a month as an incentive) to bring children to the world, raise them, and make them the beneficiaries of the parents' resources?

The couple's offspring compete with their father for scarce resources. It is an economic Oedipus complex. When a woman maintains the house, she preserves its economic value and both members of the couple enjoy it. When she prepares dinner for her mate, or engages in lively talk, or has sex with him – these are services rendered for which the male should be content to pay. But when she raises children – this both reduces the quality of services that the man can expect to receive from her (by taxing her resources) and diminishes the couple's assets (by transferring them to people outside the marital partnership).

There is only one plausible explanation to this apparently self-defeating economic behavior. Rearing children is an investment with anticipated future rewards (i.e., returns). There is a hidden expectation that this investment will be richly rewarded (i.e., that it will provide reasonable returns).

Indeed, in the not too distant past, children used to support their parents financially, cohabitate with them, or pay for their prolonged stay in convalescence centres and old age homes. Parents regarded their children as the living equivalent of an annuity. "When I grow old" – they would say – "my children will support me and I will not be left alone."

Such an economic arrangement is also common with insurance companies, pension funds and other savings institutions: invest now, reap a monthly cheque in old age. This is the essence of social security. Children were perceived by their parents to be an elaborate form of insurance policy.

Today, things have changed. Higher mobility and the deterioration in familial cohesion rendered this quid pro quo dubious. No parent can rely on future financial support from his children. That would constitute wishful thinking and an imprudent investment policy.

As a result, a rise in the number of divorces is discernible. The existence of children no longer seems to impede or prevent divorces. It seems that, contrary to a widespread misconception, children play no statistically significant role in preserving marriages. People divorce despite their children. And the divorce rate is skyrocketing, as is common knowledge.

The less economically valuable the services rendered by women internally and the more their earning power increases, the more are the monthly transfers from men to women eroded. This looming parity gives impetus to prenuptial property contracts, and to separation of acquests and other forms of matrimonial property.

Women try to keep all their income to themselves and out of the matrimonial property. Men prefer this arrangement as well, because they feel that they are not getting services from women to an extent sufficient to justify a regular monthly transfer. As the economic basis for marriage is corroded – so does the institution of marriage flounder. Marriage is being transformed unrecognizably and assumes an essentially non-economic form, devoid of most of the financial calculations of yore.

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Whatever Happened to Sex?

"One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman."

Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex (1949)

With same-sex marriage becoming a legal reality throughout the world, many more children are going to be raised by homosexual (gay and lesbian) parents, or even by [transgendered or transsexual](#) ones. How is this going to affect the child's masculinity or femininity?

Is being a gay man less manly than being a heterosexual one? Is a woman who is the outcome of a sex change operation less feminine than her natural-born sisters? In which sense is a "virile" lesbian less of a man than an effeminate heterosexual or homosexual man? And how should we classify and treat bisexuals and asexuals?

What about modern she-breadwinners? All those feminist women in traditional male positions who are as sexually aggressive as men and prone to the same varieties of misconduct (e.g., cheating on their spouses)? Are they less womanly? And are their stay-at-home-dad partners not men enough? How are sex preferences related to gender differentiation? And if one's sex and genitalia can be chosen and altered at will – why not one's gender, regardless of one's natural equipment? Can we decouple gender roles from sexual functions and endowments?

Aren't the feminist-liberal-emancipated woman and her responsive, transformed male partner as moulded by specific social norms and narratives as their more traditional and conservative counterparts? And when men adapted to the demands of the "new", post-modernist woman – were they not then rebuffed by that very same female as emasculated and unmanly? What is the source of this gender chaos? Why do people act "modern" while, at heart, they still hark back to erstwhile mores and ethos?

We assume erroneously that some [roles are instinctual](#) because, in nature, other species do it, too: parenting and mating come to mind. The discipline of sociobiology encourages us to counterfactually learn from animals about our social functioning.

But humans and their societies are so much more complex that there is little we can evince from lobsters, chimpanzees, or gorillas.

In nature, there is "male" and "female", not "man" and "woman" which are learned and acquired gender roles. There is no "mother" and "father", even

among apes - just progenitors.

To fulfill any of these demanding and multifarious human functions, we must be exposed to good enough and working role models in childhood and then practice tirelessly through adulthood, constantly reframing and evolving as demands and expectations change with social mores and the times. Evolution in the human species is no longer predominantly genetic - but social and cultural.

So, many people simply don't know how to act as men or as women, as mothers or as fathers. Here, faking it never makes it.

In nature, male and female are distinct. She-elephants are gregarious, he-elephants solitary. Male zebra finches are loquacious - the females mute. Female green spoon worms are 200,000 times larger than their male mates. These striking differences are biological - yet they lead to differentiation in social roles and skill acquisition.

Alan Pease, author of a book titled "Why Men Don't Listen and Women Can't Read Maps", believes that women are spatially-challenged compared to men. The British firm, Admiral Insurance, conducted a study of half a million claims. They found that "women were almost twice as likely as men to have a collision in a car park, 23 percent more likely to hit a stationary car, and 15 percent more likely to reverse into another vehicle" (Reuters).

Yet gender "differences" are often the outcomes of bad scholarship. Consider Admiral Insurance's data. As Britain's Automobile Association (AA) correctly pointed out - women drivers tend to make more short journeys around towns and shopping centers and these involve frequent parking. Hence their ubiquity in certain kinds of claims. Regarding women's alleged spatial deficiency, in Britain, girls have been outperforming boys in scholastic aptitude tests - including geometry and maths - since 1988.

In an Op-Ed published by the New York Times on January 23, 2005, Olivia Judson cited this example

"Beliefs that men are intrinsically better at this or that have repeatedly led to discrimination and prejudice, and then they've been proved to be nonsense. Women were thought not to be world-class musicians. But when American symphony orchestras introduced blind auditions in the 1970's - the musician plays behind a screen so that his or her gender is invisible to those listening - the number of women offered jobs in professional orchestras increased. Similarly, in science, studies of the ways that grant applications are evaluated have shown that women are more likely to get financing when those reading the applications do not know the sex of the applicant."

On the other wing of the divide, Anthony Clare, a British psychiatrist and author of "On Men" wrote:

"At the beginning of the 21st century it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that men are in serious trouble. Throughout the world, developed and developing, antisocial behavior is essentially male. Violence, sexual abuse of children, illicit drug use, alcohol misuse, gambling, all are overwhelmingly male activities. The courts and prisons bulge with men. When it comes to aggression, delinquent behavior, risk taking and social mayhem, men win gold."

Men also mature later, die earlier, are more susceptible to infections and most types of cancer, are more likely to be dyslexic, to suffer from a host of mental health disorders, such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and to commit suicide.

In her book, "Stuffed: The Betrayal of the American Man", Susan Faludi describes a crisis of masculinity following the breakdown of manhood models and work and family structures in the last five decades. In the film "Boys don't Cry", a teenage girl binds her breasts and acts the male in a caricatured relish of stereotypes of virility. Being a man is merely a state of mind, the movie implies.

But what does it really mean to be a "male" or a "female"? Are gender identity and sexual preferences genetically determined? Can they be reduced to one's sex? Or are they amalgams of biological, social, and psychological factors in constant interaction? Are they immutable lifelong features or dynamically evolving frames of self-reference?

In rural northern Albania, until recently, in families with no male heir, women could choose to forego sex and childbearing, alter their external appearance and "become" men and the patriarchs of their clans, with all the attendant rights and obligations.

In the aforementioned New York Times Op-Ed, Olivia Judson opines:

"Many sex differences are not, therefore, the result of his having one gene while she has another. Rather, they are attributable to the way particular genes behave when they find themselves in him instead of her. The magnificent difference between male and female green spoon worms, for example, has nothing to do with their having different genes: each green spoon worm larva could go either way. Which sex it becomes depends on whether it meets a female during its first three weeks of life. If it meets a female, it becomes male and prepares to regurgitate; if it doesn't, it becomes female and settles into a crack on the sea floor."

Yet, certain traits attributed to one's sex are surely better accounted for by the demands of one's environment, by cultural factors, the process of socialization, gender roles, and what George Devereux called "ethnopsychiatry" in "Basic Problems of Ethnopsychiatry" (University of Chicago Press, 1980). He suggested to divide the unconscious into the id (the part that was always instinctual and unconscious) and the "ethnic unconscious" (repressed material that was once conscious). The latter is mostly molded by prevailing cultural mores and includes all our defense mechanisms and most of the superego.

So, how can we tell whether our sexual role is mostly in our blood or in our brains?

The scrutiny of borderline cases of human sexuality - notably the transgendered or intersexed - can yield clues as to the distribution and relative weights of biological, social, and psychological determinants of gender identity formation.

The results of a study conducted by Uwe Hartmann, Hinnerk Becker, and Claudia Rueffer-Hesse in 1997 and titled "Self and Gender: Narcissistic Pathology and Personality Factors in Gender Dysphoric Patients", published in the "International Journal of Transgenderism", "indicate significant psychopathological aspects and narcissistic dysregulation in a substantial proportion of patients." Are these "psychopathological aspects" merely reactions to underlying physiological realities and changes? Could social ostracism and labeling have induced them in the "patients"?

The authors conclude:

"The cumulative evidence of our study ... is consistent with the view that gender dysphoria is a disorder of the sense of self as has been proposed by Beitel (1985) or Pfäfflin (1993). The central problem in our patients is about identity and the self in general and the transsexual wish seems to be an attempt at reassuring and stabilizing the self-coherence which in turn can lead to a further destabilization if the self is already too fragile. In this view the body is instrumentalized to create a sense of identity and the splitting symbolized in the hiatus between the rejected body-self and other parts of the self is more between good and bad objects than between masculine and feminine."

Freud, Kraft-Ebbing, and Fliess suggested that we are all bisexual to a certain degree. As early as 1910, Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld argued, in Berlin, that absolute genders are "abstractions, invented extremes". The consensus today is that one's sexuality is, mostly, a psychological construct which reflects gender role orientation.

Joanne Meyerowitz, a professor of history at Indiana University and the editor of The Journal of American History observes, in her recently published tome, "How

Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States", that the very meaning of masculinity and femininity is in constant flux.

Transgender activists, says Meyerowitz, insist that gender and sexuality represent "distinct analytical categories". The New York Times wrote in its review of the book: "Some male-to-female transsexuals have sex with men and call themselves homosexuals. Some female-to-male transsexuals have sex with women and call themselves lesbians. Some transsexuals call themselves asexual."

So, it is all in the mind, you see.

This would be taking it too far. A large body of scientific evidence points to the genetic and biological underpinnings of sexual behavior and preferences.

The German science magazine, "Geo", reported recently that the males of the fruit fly "*Drosophila melanogaster*" switched from heterosexuality to homosexuality as the temperature in the lab was increased from 19 to 30 degrees Celsius. They reverted to chasing females as it was lowered.

The brain structures of homosexual sheep are different to those of straight sheep, a study conducted recently by the Oregon Health & Science University and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Sheep Experiment Station in Dubois, Idaho, revealed. Similar differences were found between gay men and straight ones in 1995 in Holland and elsewhere. The preoptic area of the hypothalamus was larger in heterosexual men than in both homosexual men and straight women.

According an article, titled "When Sexual Development Goes Awry", by Suzanne Miller, published in the September 2000 issue of the "World and I", various medical conditions give rise to sexual ambiguity. Congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH), involving excessive androgen production by the adrenal cortex, results in mixed genitalia. A person with the complete androgen insensitivity syndrome (AIS) has a vagina, external female genitalia and functioning, androgen-producing, testes - but no uterus or fallopian tubes.

People with the rare 5-alpha reductase deficiency syndrome are born with ambiguous genitalia. They appear at first to be girls. At puberty, such a person develops testicles and his clitoris swells and becomes a penis. Hermaphrodites possess both ovaries and testicles (both, in most cases, rather undeveloped). Sometimes the ovaries and testicles are combined into a chimera called ovotestis.

Most of these individuals have the chromosomal composition of a woman together with traces of the Y, male, chromosome. All hermaphrodites have a sizable penis, though rarely generate sperm. Some hermaphrodites develop breasts during puberty and menstruate. Very few even get pregnant and give birth.

Anne Fausto-Sterling, a developmental geneticist, professor of medical science at Brown University, and author of "Sexing the Body", postulated, in 1993, a continuum of 5 sexes to supplant the current dimorphism: males, merms (male pseudohermaphrodites), herms (true hermaphrodites), fermes (female pseudohermaphrodites), and females.

Intersexuality (hermaphroditism) is a natural human state. We are all conceived with the potential to develop into either sex. The embryonic developmental default is female. A series of triggers during the first weeks of pregnancy places the fetus on the path to maleness.

In rare cases, some women have a male's genetic makeup (XY chromosomes) and vice versa. But, in the vast majority of cases, one of the sexes is clearly selected. Relics of the stifled sex remain, though. Women have the clitoris as a kind of symbolic penis. Men have breasts (mammary glands) and nipples.

The Encyclopedia Britannica 2003 edition describes the formation of ovaries and testes thus:

"In the young embryo a pair of gonads develop that are indifferent or neutral, showing no indication whether they are destined to develop into testes or ovaries. There are also two different duct systems, one of which can develop into the female system of oviducts and related apparatus and the other into the male sperm duct system. As development of the embryo proceeds, either the male or the female reproductive tissue differentiates in the originally neutral gonad of the mammal."

Yet, sexual preferences, genitalia and even secondary sex characteristics, such as facial and pubic hair are first order phenomena. Can genetics and biology account for male and female behavior patterns and social interactions ("gender identity")? Can the multi-tiered complexity and richness of human masculinity and femininity arise from simpler, deterministic, building blocks?

Sociobiologists would have us think so.

For instance: the fact that we are mammals is astonishingly often overlooked. Most mammalian families are composed of mother and offspring. Males are peripatetic absentees. Arguably, high rates of divorce and birth out of wedlock coupled with rising promiscuity merely reinstate this natural "default mode", observes Lionel Tiger, a professor of anthropology at Rutgers University in New Jersey. That three quarters of all divorces are initiated by women tends to support this view.

Furthermore, gender identity is determined during gestation, claim some scholars.

Milton Diamond of the University of Hawaii and Dr. Keith Sigmundson, a practicing psychiatrist, studied the much-celebrated John/Joan case. An accidentally castrated normal male was surgically modified to look female, and raised as a girl but to no avail. He reverted to being a male at puberty.

His gender identity seems to have been inborn (assuming he was not subjected to conflicting cues from his human environment). The case is extensively described in John Colapinto's tome "As Nature Made Him: The Boy Who Was Raised as a Girl".

HealthScoutNews cited a study published in the November 2002 issue of "Child Development". The researchers, from City University of London, found that the level of maternal testosterone during pregnancy affects the behavior of neonatal girls and renders it more masculine. "High testosterone" girls "enjoy activities typically considered male behavior, like playing with trucks or guns". Boys' behavior remains unaltered, according to the study.

Yet, other scholars, like John Money, insist that newborns are a "blank slate" as far as their gender identity is concerned. This is also the prevailing view. Gender and sex-role identities, we are taught, are fully formed in a process of socialization which ends by the third year of life. The Encyclopedia Britannica 2003 edition sums it up thus:

"Like an individual's concept of his or her sex role, gender identity develops by means of parental example, social reinforcement, and language. Parents teach sex-appropriate behavior to their children from an early age, and this behavior is reinforced as the child grows older and enters a wider social world. As the child acquires language, he also learns very early the distinction between 'he' and 'she' and understands which pertains to him- or herself."

So, which is it - nature or nurture? There is no disputing the fact that our sexual physiology and, in all probability, our sexual preferences are determined in the womb. Men and women are different - physiologically and, as a result, also psychologically.

Society, through its agents - foremost amongst which are family, peers, and teachers - represses or encourages these genetic propensities. It does so by propagating "gender roles" - gender-specific lists of alleged traits, permissible behavior patterns, and prescriptive morals and norms. Our "gender identity" or "sex role" is shorthand for the way we make use of our natural genotypic-phenotypic endowments in conformity with social-cultural "gender roles".

Inevitably as the composition and bias of these lists change, so does the meaning of being "male" or "female". Gender roles are constantly redefined by tectonic shifts in the definition and functioning of basic social units, such as the nuclear family

and the workplace. The cross-fertilization of gender-related cultural memes renders "masculinity" and "femininity" fluid concepts.

One's sex equals one's bodily equipment, an objective, finite, and, usually, immutable inventory. But our endowments can be put to many uses, in different cognitive and affective contexts, and subject to varying exegetic frameworks. As opposed to "sex" - "gender" is, therefore, a socio-cultural narrative. Both heterosexual and homosexual men ejaculate. Both straight and lesbian women climax. What distinguishes them from each other are subjective introjects of socio-cultural conventions, not objective, immutable "facts".

In "The New Gender Wars", published in the November/December 2000 issue of "Psychology Today", Sarah Blustein sums up the "bio-social" model proposed by Mice Eagly, a professor of psychology at Northwestern University and a former student of his, Wendy Wood, now a professor at the Texas A&M University:

"Like (the evolutionary psychologists), Eagly and Wood reject social constructionist notions that all gender differences are created by culture. But to the question of where they come from, they answer differently: not our genes but our roles in society. This narrative focuses on how societies respond to the basic biological differences - men's strength and women's reproductive capabilities - and how they encourage men and women to follow certain patterns.

'If you're spending a lot of time nursing your kid', explains Wood, 'then you don't have the opportunity to devote large amounts of time to developing specialized skills and engaging tasks outside of the home'. And, adds Eagly, 'if women are charged with caring for infants, what happens is that women are more nurturing. Societies have to make the adult system work [so] socialization of girls is arranged to give them experience in nurturing'.

According to this interpretation, as the environment changes, so will the range and texture of gender differences. At a time in Western countries when female reproduction is extremely low, nursing is totally optional, childcare alternatives are many, and mechanization lessens the importance of male size and strength, women are no longer restricted as much by their smaller size and by child-bearing. That means, argue Eagly and Wood, that role structures for men and women will change and, not surprisingly, the way we socialize people in these new roles will change too. (Indeed, says Wood, 'sex differences seem to be reduced in societies where men and women have similar status,' she says. If you're looking to live in more gender-neutral environment, try Scandinavia.)"

Film Review: "What to Expect When You Are Expecting" (2012)

Modern pop culture bombards us with gender stereotypes, which by now have become truisms: women are always sensitive, misunderstood, in touch with their

emotions and neglected; men are commitment-phobic, confused, narcissistic, hypersexed, and hell-bent on frustrating the opposite number.

It was, therefore, refreshing to watch the four female protagonists of the film "What to Expect When You Are Expecting" reduce these caricatures to smithereens. The womenfolk in the film are self-centered, dread intimacy and commitment, two of them are workaholics, and all four are rank narcissists.

The men in this otherwise middling movie are romantic, in touch with their emotions, committed, and largely selfless. The only exception is the dysfunctional father of one of them, a throwback to the 1960s when men were still machos and sex meant everything. His youthful wife makes up for his shortcomings, though: she is clear-headed, no-nonsense, determined, sharp-witted, and a strict disciplinarian when needed. But this incongruous couple is the only exception to an otherwise coherent message: men have matured, women should get their act together.

The women are the ones who - not so secretly - abhor the thought of what bearing children would do to their bodies and to their lives (in this order.) The men encourage them to be fruitful and multiply as the ultimate fad in self-fulfillment and self-gratification.

Another striking feature of this film is the fact that none of the women, despite being all over the place, feels the need to seek advice. They live alone and cope in solitude: gone are the tips-dispensing mother; the supportive female soulmate; The effeminate or gay male friend; the recurring old flame; the motherly colleague or avuncular co-worker. It's every woman for herself now. And they are botching the job, says the film, as thoroughly as men ever did.

The Death of Traditional Sex in a Unisex World

Traditional sex – the heady cocktail of lust and emotional bonding - is all but dead. In a culture of casual, almost anonymous hookups, suppressing attendant emerging emotions is the bon ton and women and men drift apart, zerovalent atoms in an ever-shifting, kaleidoscopic world, separated by a yawning expectations gap, their virtual isolation aided and abetted by technologies, collectively misnomered “social media“.

It is increasingly more difficult to both find a mate and keep him or her. One fifth of all American couples are sexless. In Japan, about half of all adolescents are schizoid and prefer technological gadgets to flesh-and-blood peers. A quarter of all males in Britain would rather watch the telly or bar crawl with their friends than garner carnal pleasure. People everywhere increasingly rely on Internet porn and auto-erotic stimulation to relieve themselves. Sex has become the sordid equivalent of other excretory bodily functions, best pursued in solitude.

At the root of this upheaval is the ill-thought and violent subversion of received gender roles. Women sought to become not only equal to men, but identical to them. Rather than encourage a peaceful evolution, they embarked on a series of shattering and disorienting gender wars with men as the demonized enemy. Attempting assertiveness, women found aggression.

Relationships have become virulent battlefields and the zero testing grounds of a brave, new world. No wonder men find women bafflingly masculine and unattractive. They recoil from commitment and bonding because the rules of engagement are fuzzy, the resources required depleting, the rewards scanty, and the risks – pecuniary and emotional – devastating. Birth rates have plunged well below the replacement rate in most industrialized societies: childrearing requires stable arrangements with reasonable prognoses of functional health and longevity.

In short: the typical, chauvinistic male still wants to get married to his grandmother and his narcissistic female counterpart wishes to live happily ever after with a penile reflection of herself. The differences in expectations lead to discrepancies in performance which are all but unbridgeable and irreconcilable. Breakup rates are unprecedented in human history. The lucrative business of divorce is no longer frowned upon and is facilitated by lenient legislation and a veritable cornucopia of institutions. The proliferation of models of pairing and cohabitation is proof positive that the system is broken: it's every man for himself now. Society is even more clueless and impotent than the individuals it is ostensibly comprised of and, therefore, can provide no normative guidance.

People react to this massive rupture in various ways: some abstain from or renounce sex altogether; a few experiment with bi- or homosexuality; others immerse themselves in cybersex in its multifarious forms; many choose one night stands and random encounters rendered riskless by contraceptives and made widely available via modern transportation and telecommunication. Opportunities for all the above abound and, socially well-tolerated, recreational, non-committal, and emotionless sex is on the rise.

But the roots of the crumbling alliance between men and women go deeper and further in time. Long before divorce became a social norm, men and women grew into two disparate, incompatible, and warring subspecies. Traditionalist, conservative, and religious societies put in place behavioural safeguards against the inevitable wrenching torsion that monogamy entailed: no premarital sex (virginity); no multiple intimate partners; no cohabitation prior to tying the knot; no mobility, or equal rights for women; no mixing of the genders. We now know that each of these habits does, indeed, increase the chances for an ultimate divorce. As Jonathan Franzen elucidates in his literary masterpieces, it boils

down to a choice between personal freedoms and the stability of the family: the former decisively preclude the latter.

Consider the very language we use to describe one of the most common interactions between the two genders.

To describe sex with a woman as "penetration" is counterfactual: no barrier is breached (except when the hymen is broken in virgins). Up until recently, most women were virgins when they got married, hence the widely used misnomer. To properly describe the act, one should use words like "insertion" and "engulfment" or "reception".

Penetration is of course the male's aggressive POV and aggressive: the amorous equivalent of laying siege to the woman.

But nowadays women are as assertive and dominant as men (if not more so). They often initiate the sex, aggressively when needs must. This is also reflected in the non-traditional positions that many women assume during sex and in the expanding use of toys and aides.

Sex is totally reciprocal in most cases and the woman's needs and predilections are fully catered to. As a minimum, the parties equally use each others's bodies to climax.

Still, there are objective differences:

Men are invited in: women maintain the exclusive function of gatekeeping. Men are guest, women hosts, anatomically speaking. It is the apex of corporeal intimacy to allow someone into your body.

Men deposit sperm (gametes) in the woman while women only contribute lubrication.

Male latency with same woman is way longer - but not with a different woman! So, psychosexually, man do regard women as "single use" partners and their physiology reflects it. On porn websites, this frame of mind is abundant and women are irredeemably objectified.

Women also secrete bonding and attachment hormones (such as oxytocin) way more than men do and men release copious amounts of conquering aggression hormones, such as testosterone.

There is no such thing as meaningless sex, however cursory and casual. But we have learned to deceive ourselves that such insignificant liaisons do exist. We are paying the ultimate price now, as a species: the complete breakdown in communication between men and women; gender vertigo and wars, fueled by misogyny and misandry; and a unigender world where women increasingly and vociferously emulate psychopathic men and men are lost like never before oscillating between toxic masculinity and effeminate self-negation.

During the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, discreet affairs were an institution of marriage: sexual gratification and emotional intimacy were outsourced while all other domestic functions were shared in partnership. The Industrial Revolution, the Victorian Age, the backlash of the sexual revolution, belligerent feminism, and the advent of socially-atomizing and gender-equalizing transportation, information processing, and telecommunication technologies led inexorably to the hollowing out of family and hearth.

In a civilization centred on brainpower, Men have lost the relative edge that brawn used to provide. Monogamy is increasingly considered as past its expiry date: a historical aberration that reflects the economic and political realities of bygone eras. Moreover: the incidence of lifelong, childfree (or childless) singlehood has skyrocketed as people hope for their potential or actual relationship-partners to provide for all their sexual, emotional, social, and economic needs – and then get sorely disappointed when they fail to meet these highly unrealistic expectations.

In an age of economic self-sufficiency, electronic entertainment, and self-gratification, the art of compromise in relationships is gone. Single motherhood (sometimes via IVF, with no identifiable partner involved) has become the norm in many countries. Even within marriages or committed relationships, solitary pursuits, such as separate vacations, or “girls’/boy’ nights out” have become the norm.

The 20th century was a monument to male fatuity: wars and ideologies almost decimated the species. Forced to acquire masculine skills and fill men’s shoes in factories and fields, women discovered militant self-autonomy, the

superfluousness of men, and the untenability of the male claims to superiority over them.

In an age of malignant individualism, bordering on [narcissism](#), men and women alike put themselves, their fantasies, and their needs first, all else – family included – be damned. And with 5 decades of uninterrupted prosperity, birth control, and feminism/ women's lib most of the female denizens of the West have acquired the financial wherewithal to realize their dreams at the expense and to the detriment of collectives they ostensibly belong to (such as the nuclear family.) Feminism is a movement focused on negatives (obliterating women's age-old bondage) but it offers few constructive ideas regarding women's new roles. By casting men as the enemy, it also failed to educate them and convert them into useful allies.

Owing to the dramatic doubling of life expectancy, modern marriages seem to go through three phases: infatuation (honeymoon); procreation-accumulation (of assets, children, and shared experiences); and exhaustion-outsourcing (bonding with new emotional and sexual partners for rejuvenation or the fulfilment of long-repressed fantasies, needs, and wishes.) Divorces and breakups occur mostly at the seams, the periods of transition between these phases and especially between the stages of accumulation-procreation and exhaustion-outsourcing. This is where family units break down.

With marriage on the decline and infidelity on the rise, the reasonable solution would be swinging (swapping sexual partners) or polyamory (households with multiple partners of both genders all of whom are committed to one another for the long haul, romantically-involved, sexually-shared, and economically united.) Alas, while a perfectly rational development of the traditional marriage and one that is best-suited to modernity, it is an emotionally unstable setup, what with [romantic jealousy](#) ineluctably rearing its ugly head. Very few people are emotionally capable of sharing their life-partner with others.

The question is not why there are so many divorces, but why so few. Surely, serial monogamy is far better, fairer, and more humane than adultery? Couples stay together and tolerate straying owing to inertia; financial or emotional dependence; insecurity (lack of self-confidence or low self-esteem); fear of the unknown and the tedium of dating. Some couples persevere owing to religious conviction or for the sake of appearances. Yet others make a smooth transition to an alternative lifestyle (polyamory, swinging, or consensual adultery).

Indeed, what has changed is not the incidence of adultery, even among women. There are good grounds to assume that it has remained the same throughout human history. The phenomenon - quantitatively and qualitatively - has always been the same, merely underreported. What have changed are the social acceptability of extramarital sex both before and during marriage and the ease of obtaining divorce. People discuss adultery openly where before it was a taboo topic.

Another new development may be the rise of “selfish affairs” among women younger than 35 who are used to multiple sexual partners. “Selfish affairs” are acts of recreational adultery whose sole purpose is to satisfy sexual curiosity and the need for romantic diversity. The emotional component in these usually short-term affairs (one-night stands and the like) is muted. Among women older than 60, adultery has become the accepted way of seeking emotional connection and intimacy outside the marital bond. These are “outsourcing affairs.”

The ancient institution of monogamous marriage is ill-suited to the exigencies of modern Western civilization. People of both genders live and [work longer](#) (which renders monogamy impracticable); travel far and away frequently; and are exposed to tempting romantic alternatives via social networking and in various workplace and social settings.

Thus, even as social monogamy and pair commitment and bonding are still largely intact and more condoned than ever and even as infidelity is fervently condemned, sexual exclusivity (mislabelled “sexual monogamy”) is declining, especially among the young and the old. Monogamy is becoming one alternative among many lifestyles and marriage only one relationship among a few (sometimes, not even a privileged or unique relationship, as it competes for time and resources with work, same-sex friends, friends with benefits, and opposite-sex friends.)

The contractual aspects of marriage are more pronounced than ever with everything on the table: from extramarital sex (allowed or not) to pre-nuptial agreements. The commodification and preponderance of sex – premarital and extramarital - robbed it of its function as a conduit of specialness and intimacy and since childrearing is largely avoided (natality rates are precipitously plummeting everywhere) or outsourced, the family has lost both its *raison d'être*

and its nature as the venue for exclusive sexual and emotional interactions between adults.

Professed values and prevailing social mores and institutions have yet to catch up to this emerging multifarious reality. The consequences of these discrepancies are disastrous: about 40-50% of all first-time marriages end in divorce and the percentage is much higher for second and third attempts at connubial bliss. Open communication about one's sexual needs is tantamount to self-ruination as one's partner is likely to reflexively initiate a divorce. Dishonesty and cheating are definitely the rational choices in such an unforgiving and punitive environment.

Indeed, most surviving marriages have to do with perpetuating the partners' convenience, their access to commonly-owned assets and future streams of income, and the welfare of third parties, most notably their kids. Erstwhile sexual exclusivity often degenerates into celibacy or abstinence on the one hand – or parallel lives with multiple sexual and emotional partners on the other hand.

One night stands for both genders are usually opportunistic. Extra-pair affairs are self-limiting, as emotional involvement and sexual attraction wane over time. Infidelity is, therefore, much less of a threat to the longevity of a dedicated couple than it is made out to be. Most of the damage is caused by culturally-conditioned, albeit deeply and traumatically felt, reactions to conduct that is almost universally decried as deceitful, dishonest, and in breach of vows and promises.

Until recently, couples formed around promises of emotional exclusivity and sexual fidelity, uniqueness in each other's mind and life, and (more common until the 1940s) virginity. Marriage was also a partnership: economic, or related to childrearing, or companionship. It was based on the partners' past and background and geared towards a shared future.

Nowadays, couples coalesce around the twin undertakings of continuity (“I will ALWAYS be there for you”) and availability (“I will always BE there for you.”) Issues of exclusivity, uniqueness, and virginity have been relegated to the back-burner. It is no longer practical to demand of one's spouse to have nothing to do with the opposite sex, not to spend the bulk of his or her time outside the marriage, not to take separate vacations, and, more generally, to be joined at the

hip. Affairs, for instance – both emotional and sexual – are sad certainties in the life of every couple.

Members of the couple are supposed to make themselves continuously available to each other and to provide emotional sustenance and support in an atmosphere of sharing, companionship, and friendship. All the traditional functions of the family can now be – and often are – outsourced, including even sex and emotional intimacy. But, contrary to marriage, outsourcing is frequently haphazard and unpredictable, dependent as it is on outsiders who are committed elsewhere as well. Hence the relative durability of marriage, in its conservative and less-conventional forms alike: it is a convenient and highly practicable arrangement.

Divorce or other forms of marital breakup are not new phenomena. But their precipitants have undergone a revolutionary shift. In the past, families fell apart owing to a breach of exclusivity, mainly in the forms of emotional or sexual infidelity; a deficiency of uniqueness and primacy: divorced women, for instance, were considered “damaged goods” because they used to “belong” to another man and, therefore, could offer neither primacy nor uniqueness; or an egregious violation of the terms of partnership (for example: sloth, dysfunctional childrearing, infertility).

Nowadays, intimate partners bail out when the continuous availability of their significant others is disrupted: sexually, emotionally, or as friends and companions. Marriages are about the present and are being put to the test on a daily basis. Partners who are dissatisfied opt out and team up with other, more promising providers. Children are serially reared by multiple parents and in multiple households.

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The Lifestyle (Swinging)

Click [HERE](#) to Watch the Video

The Lifestyle involves sexual acts performed by more than two participants whether in the same space, or separately. It is also known as “swinging”, “wife-, or spouse-swapping”, “wife-, or spouse-sharing”, “group sex” and, where multiple people interact with a single person, “gangbanging”. Swinging can be soft (engaging in sexual activity with one’s own intimate partner, but in the presence of others, including acts of candaulism), or hard (having sex not with one’s spouse or mate.) Threesomes (commonly male-female-male or MFM) are the most common configuration.

For some people, love and pain are flip sides of the same tortured coin. Intimacy is an agony that leads to lustful ecstasy and to an orgy of self-annihilation. The woman in such couples loves with all her being, her quiddity and essence. When rebuffed, she turns into an untouchable, stone-faced, and cruel Madonna-mistress and an unspeakable whore. The man prostitutes her, shares her with other men because his arousal crucially subsists on her humiliation and degradation. They punish each other via sadistic sex and desired betrayal in a futile attempt to restore justice and sanity to an escalating spiral of obsession and abandonment anxiety. Their love becomes a dungeon, their bodied tools of mutual execution. Those involved describe such relationships thus: “There is nothing that comes close to them in intensity and color. I felt exuberantly alive and profoundly entombed. Such affairs are exhilarating. But not for the fainthearted.”

The psychological background to such unusual pursuits is not clear and has never been studied in depth. Still, thousands of online chats between active and wannabe adherents and fans in various forums reveal 10 psychodynamic strands:

1. Latent and overt **bisexuality and homosexuality**: both men and women (but especially women) adopt swinging as a way to sample same-sex experiences in a tolerant, at times anonymous, and permissive environment;
2. The **Slut-Madonna Complex**: to be sexually attracted to their spouses, some men need to “debase” and “humiliate” them by witnessing their “sluttish” conduct with others. These men find it difficult to have regular, intimate sex with women to whom they are emotionally attached and whose probity is beyond doubt. Sex is “dirty” and demeaning, so it should be mechanical, the preserve of whorish and promiscuous partners;

3. **Voyeurism and exhibitionism** are both rampant in and satisfied by swinging. Oftentimes, those who partake in the Lifestyle document their exploits on video and share photos and saucy verbal descriptions. Amateur porn and public sex (“dogging”) are fixtures of swinging. [Autoeroticism](#) (regarding oneself as one’s sex object) often goes hand in hand with exhibitionism (becoming sexually aroused by another’s objectifying gaze). The more numerous the observers, the more intense the sexual excitatory state. Exhibitionism is also a “conquest”, a power play and can easily become a paraphilia (exposing oneself to unwilling bystanders). That is why the autoerotic - mainly narcissists and psychopaths - gravitate to group sex with total strangers even in early adolescence.

The autoerotic objectify not only themselves but also the partner, whose body they use as a sex toy, to masturbate with.

Thus, the partner’s identity is utterly incidental: he or she could be anonymous strangers encountered only minutes or a few hours before the act.

Casual sex is the autoerotic’s staple: in his committed relationships, s/he is typically sexless.

Sex with the autoerotic is an eerie sensation: disembodied, mechanical, non-reciprocated, infantile, and lonely as the autoerotic partners focus exclusively on their bodies and on their self-gratification.

The intimate partners of the autoerotic invariably develop sex aversion to them. The autoerotic’s solipsistic self-focus, defiance, and oblivion to the partner is also a narcissistic injury and triggers aggression in narcissists and psychopaths.

Paradoxically, precisely because the partner is a mere generic, undifferentiated prop, as long as they are sexually catered to within the relationship, the autoerotic rarely cheat on their mates. At any rate, they are actually making love to themselves.

If s/he is masochistic, the autoerotic’s on the fly sex involves extreme self-trashing: sex with unwanted, little-known, or inappropriate partners in degrading circumstances or environments. Less commonly, cheating serve or even celibacy the same purpose of self-despoiling (“I am a bad, unworthy object”).

The self-trashing autoerotic abuses substances with the aim of disinhibiting

herself and numbing herself to her socially unacceptable conduct and possible unconscious ego dystony.

4. **Vicarious gratification.** “Cuckolds” are (typically male) swingers who masturbate to the sight of their partner having sex with another, usually without actually joining the fray. They derive gratification from and are sexually aroused by the evident pleasure experienced by their significant other: her vocalizations, body language, body fluids, enraptured movements, and orgasm and abandon;
5. **Masochism** is a prime motive for a minority of swingers. They relish in their own agony as they watch their spouse hooking up with others: envy, pain, anxiety, a sense of humiliation, an overpowering feeling of worthlessness and inadequacy, sinfulness, debauchery, depravity, and decadence all conspire to thrill the masochist and delight him;
6. Swinging is also a form of **legitimized cheating**. It spices up the stale sex lives of the players and neutralized the emotional and financial risks and threats associated with furtive extramarital escapades. Many swingers adopt the Lifestyle in order to alleviate boredom, counter routine, realise sexual fantasies, learn new techniques, feel desirable and attractive once more, and cope with discrepancies in sex drive. They insist: “swinging saved my marriage”;
7. Some swingers use the Lifestyle to “display” or “exhibit” their partners, casting them as desired and desirable **trophies**, or **status symbols** (“hotwife”). Others present may sexually “sample the wife” but never own her, a form of restricted access which causes her suitors much envy and frustration. “I am the one who ends up going home with her” – these swingers brag, thus reaffirming their own irresistibility and attractiveness;
8. The Lifestyle is a rollercoaster of serial relationships, mostly with strangers. It is, therefore, thrilling, risky, and exciting and provokes anxiety, romantic jealousy, and guilt (for having dragged the partner into the Lifestyle, or for not having restrained her). There is also a recurrent fear of losing the partner owing to a growing emotional or sexual bond with one of her casual “F-buddies” or “friends with benefits”. Swinging results in an **adrenaline rush**, a high, and in addictive periods of calm after these self-inflicted psychosexual storms;
9. Swinging calls for the **objectification** of sexual partners. Many swingers prefer to remain anonymous in settings like Lifestyle retreats or group sex and orgies. They are thus reduced to genitalia and erogenous zones enmeshed in auto-erotic and [narcissistic](#) acts of masturbatory gratification

with other people's bodies as mere props. Women reported experiencing a new sense of empowerment and mastery as they can finally dictate the terms and conditions of sexual encounters, pick and choose partners, and realize hitherto suppressed sexual fantasies. Other practitioners actually prefer to swing only with close friends, using sex as a form of intimacy-enhancing **recreation**;

10. Nudity has a pronounced **aesthetic dimension** and when multiple naked bodies intertwine, the combination can amount to a work of art, a flesh-and-blood throbbing sculpture. Many swingers find sex to be the most supreme form of artistic experience, an interconnectedness that enhances empathy and communication and provides extreme sensual pleasure. It is also great fun: the ultimate in entertainment, where novelty and familiarity merge to yield a unique journey with each new entrant.

11. **Women feel empowered and in control**, allowed as they often are to choose the men they end up mating with.

Studies have repeatedly revealed that swingers (adherents to the Lifestyle) are happier and in better mental health than monogamous couples.

The psychological roots of [cuckoldry](#) are many and I have written about them extensively (watch my recent video on the topic).

Two much neglected aspects are:

1. The cuck(oid) reclaims his partner after she has had sex with another man (sometimes by copulating with her then and there). After the deed is done, she chooses to return to him. This clear preference for him as her man boosts the cuck's self-esteem and helps him to reframe the situation: he now pities the other guy who just got a taste of what he would be missing henceforth: the cuck's hotwife.

2. The entire choreographed scene is also a test of loyalty taken to an extreme: having bedded another man, will his mate still be faithful and loyal to him - or will she elope? Every time she elects to return to him from her exploits, she is renewing her vow to her dyad with the cuck.

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Homosexuality: The Natural Roots of Sexuality

Recent studies in animal sexuality serve to dispel two common myths: that sex is exclusively about reproduction and that homosexuality is an unnatural sexual preference. It now appears that sex is also about recreation as it frequently occurs out of the mating season. And same-sex copulation and bonding are common in hundreds of species, from bonobo apes to gulls.

Moreover, homosexual couples in the Animal Kingdom are prone to behaviors commonly - and erroneously - attributed only to heterosexuals. The New York Times reported in its February 7, 2004 issue about a couple of gay penguins who are desperately and recurrently seeking to incubate eggs together.

In the same article ("Love that Dare not Squeak its Name"), Bruce Bagemihl, author of the groundbreaking *"Biological Exuberance: Animal Homosexuality and Natural Diversity"*, defines homosexuality as *"any of these behaviors between members of the same sex: long-term bonding, sexual contact, courtship displays or the rearing of young."*

Still, that a certain behavior occurs in nature (is "natural") does not render it moral. Infanticide, patricide, suicide, gender bias, and substance abuse - are all to be found in various animal species. It is futile to argue for homosexuality or against it based on zoological observations. Ethics is about surpassing nature - not about emulating it.

The more perplexing question remains: what are the evolutionary and biological advantages of recreational sex and homosexuality? Surely, both entail the waste of scarce resources.

Convoluting explanations, such as the one proffered by Marlene Zuk (homosexuals contribute to the gene pool by nurturing and raising young relatives) defy common sense, experience, and the calculus of evolution. There are no field studies that show conclusively or even indicate that homosexuals tend to raise and nurture their younger relatives more than straights do.

Moreover, the arithmetic of genetics would rule out such a stratagem. If the aim of life is to pass on one's genes from one generation to the next, the homosexual would have been far better off raising his own children (who carry forward half his DNA) - rather than his nephew or niece (with whom he shares merely one quarter of his genetic material.)

What is more, though genetically-predisposed, homosexuality may be partly acquired, the outcome of environment and nurture, rather than nature.

An oft-overlooked fact is that recreational sex and homosexuality have one thing in common: they do not lead to reproduction. Homosexuality may, therefore, be a form of pleasurable sexual play. It may also enhance same-sex bonding and train the young to form cohesive, purposeful groups (the army and the boarding school come to mind).

Furthermore, homosexuality amounts to the culling of 10-15% of the gene pool in each generation. The genetic material of the homosexual is not propagated and is effectively excluded from the big roulette of life. Growers - of anything from cereals to cattle - similarly use random culling to improve their stock. As mathematical models show, such repeated mass removal of DNA from the common brew seems to optimize the species and increase its resilience and efficiency.

It is ironic to realize that homosexuality and other forms of non-reproductive, pleasure-seeking sex may be key evolutionary mechanisms and integral drivers of population dynamics. Reproduction is but one goal among many, equally important, end results. Heterosexuality is but one strategy among a few optimal solutions. Studying biology may yet lead to greater tolerance for the vast repertory of human sexual foibles, preferences, and predilections. Back to nature, in this case, may be forward to civilization.

Suggested Literature

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Parenting: The Irrational Vocation

The advent of cloning, surrogate motherhood, and the donation of gametes and sperm have shaken the traditional biological definition of parenthood to its foundations. The social roles of parents have similarly been recast by the decline of the nuclear family and the surge of alternative household formats.

Why do people become parents in the first place? Do we have a moral obligation to humanity at large, to ourselves, or to our unborn children? [Hardly](#).

Raising children comprises equal measures of satisfaction and frustration. Parents often employ a psychological defense mechanism - known as "cognitive dissonance" - to suppress the negative aspects of parenting and to deny the unpalatable fact that raising children is time consuming, exhausting, and strains otherwise pleasurable and tranquil relationships to their limits.

Not to mention the fact that the gestational mother experiences ***“considerable discomfort, effort, and risk in the course of pregnancy and childbirth”*** (Narayan, U., and J.J. Bartkowiak (1999) *Having and Raising Children: Unconventional Families, Hard Choices, and the Social Good* University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, Quoted in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy).

Parenting is possibly an irrational vocation, but humanity keeps breeding and procreating. It may well be the call of nature. All living species reproduce and most of them parent. Is maternity (and paternity) proof that, beneath the ephemeral veneer of civilization, we are still merely a kind of beast, subject to the impulses and hard-wired behavior that permeate the rest of the animal kingdom?

In his seminal tome, *"The Selfish Gene"*, Richard Dawkins suggested that we copulate in order to preserve our genetic material by embedding it in the future gene pool. Survival itself - whether in the form of DNA, or, on a higher-level, as a species - determines our parenting instinct. Breeding and nurturing the young are mere safe conduct mechanisms, handing the precious cargo of genetics down generations of "organic containers".

Yet, surely, to ignore the epistemological and emotional realities of parenthood is misleadingly reductionistic. Moreover, Dawkins commits the scientific faux-pas of teleology. Nature has no purpose "in mind", mainly because it has no mind. Things simply are, period. That genes end up being forwarded in time does not entail that Nature (or, for that matter, "God") planned it this way. Arguments from design have long - and convincingly - been refuted by countless philosophers.

Still, human beings do act intentionally. Back to square one: why bring children to the world and burden ourselves with decades of commitment to perfect strangers?

First hypothesis: offspring allow us to "delay" death. Our progeny are the medium through which our genetic material is propagated and immortalized. Additionally, by remembering us, our children "keep us alive" after physical death.

These, of course, are self-delusional, self-serving, illusions.

Our genetic material gets diluted with time. While it constitutes 50% of the first generation - it amounts to a measly 6% three generations later. If the everlastingness of one's unadulterated DNA was the paramount concern – incest would have been the norm.

As for one's enduring memory - well, do you recall or can you name your maternal or paternal great great grandfather? Of course you can't. So much for that. Intellectual feats or architectural monuments are far more potent mementos.

Still, we have been so well-indoctrinated that this misconception - that children equal immortality - yields a baby boom in each post war period. Having been existentially threatened, people multiply in the vain belief that they thus best protect their genetic heritage and their memory.

Let's study another explanation.

The utilitarian view is that one's offspring are an asset - kind of pension plan and insurance policy rolled into one. Children are still treated as a yielding property in many parts of the world. They plough fields and do menial jobs very effectively. People "hedge their bets" by bringing multiple copies of themselves to the world. Indeed, as infant mortality plunges - in the better-educated, higher income parts of the world - so does fecundity.

In the Western world, though, children have long ceased to be a profitable proposition. At present, they are more of an economic drag and a liability. Many continue to live with their parents into their thirties and consume the family's savings in college tuition, sumptuous weddings, expensive divorces, and parasitic habits. Alternatively, increasing mobility breaks families apart at an early stage. Either way, children are not longer the founts of emotional sustenance and monetary support they allegedly used to be.

How about this one then:

Procreation serves to preserve the cohesiveness of the family nucleus. It further bonds father to mother and strengthens the ties between siblings. Or is it the other way around and a cohesive and warm family is conducive to reproduction?

Both statements, alas, are false.

Stable and functional families sport far fewer children than abnormal or dysfunctional ones. Between one third and one half of all children are born in single parent or in other non-traditional, non-nuclear - typically poor and under-educated - households. In such families children are mostly born unwanted and unwelcome - the sad outcomes of accidents and mishaps, wrong fertility planning, lust gone awry and misguided turns of events.

The more sexually active people are and the less safe their desirous exploits – the more they are likely to end up with a bundle of joy (the American saccharine expression for a newborn). Many children are the results of sexual ignorance, bad timing, and a vigorous and undisciplined sexual drive among teenagers, the poor, and the less educated.

Still, there is no denying that most people want their kids and love them. They are attached to them and experience grief and bereavement when they die, depart, or are sick. Most parents find parenthood emotionally fulfilling, happiness-inducing, and highly satisfying. This pertains even to unplanned and initially unwanted new arrivals.

Could this be the missing link? Do fatherhood and motherhood revolve around self-gratification? Does it all boil down to the pleasure principle?

Childrearing may, indeed, be habit forming. Nine months of pregnancy and a host of social positive reinforcements and expectations condition the parents to do the job. Still, a living tot is nothing like the abstract concept. Babies cry, soil themselves and their environment, stink, and severely disrupt the lives of their parents. Nothing too enticing here.

One's spawns are a risky venture. So many things can and do go wrong. So few expectations, wishes, and dreams are realized. So much pain is inflicted on the parents. And then the child runs off and his procreators are left to face the "empty nest". The emotional "returns" on a child are rarely commensurate with the magnitude of the investment.

Sherlock Holmes was fond of saying: "If you eliminate the impossible, what is left - however improbable - must be the truth". People multiply because it provides them with [narcissistic supply](#).

A [Narcissist](#) is a person who projects a (false) image unto others and uses the interest this generates to regulate a labile and grandiose sense of self-worth. The reactions garnered by the narcissist - attention, unconditional acceptance, adulation, admiration, affirmation - are collectively known as "narcissistic supply".

The narcissist objectifies people and treats them as mere instruments of gratification.

Infants go through a phase of unbridled fantasy, tyrannical behavior, and perceived omnipotence. An adult narcissist, in other words, is still stuck in his "terrible twos" and is possessed with the emotional maturity of a toddler. To some degree, we are all narcissists. Yet, as we grow, we learn to empathize and to love ourselves and others.

This edifice of maturity is severely tested by newfound parenthood.

Babies evoke in the parent the most primordial drives, protective, animalistic instincts, the desire to merge with the newborn and a sense of terror generated by such a desire (a fear of vanishing and of being assimilated). Neonates engender in their parents an emotional regression.

The parents find themselves revisiting their own childhood even as they care for the newborn. The crumbling of decades and layers of personal growth is accompanied by a resurgence of the aforementioned early infancy narcissistic defenses. Parents - especially new ones - are gradually transformed into narcissists by this encounter and find in their children the perfect sources of narcissistic supply, euphemistically known as love. Really it is a form of symbiotic codependence of both parties.

Even the most balanced, most mature, most psychodynamically stable of parents finds such a flood of narcissistic supply irresistible and addictive. It enhances his or her self-confidence, buttresses self esteem, regulates the sense of self-worth, and projects a complimentary image of the parent to himself or herself. It fast becomes indispensable, especially in the emotionally vulnerable position in which the parent finds herself, with the reawakening and repetition of all the unresolved conflicts that she had had with her own parents.

This is especially true when the parents hold the Victorian attitude that they are and should at all times appear to be infallible, impeccably virtuous, and omniscient. Later in life, the child's discovery that these representations are false leads to a harrowing, bitter, and traumatic disillusionment coupled with recriminations and regrets aplenty - not unlike the breakups of interpersonal relationships with adult malignant narcissists.

If this theory is true, if breeding is merely about securing prime quality narcissistic supply, then the higher the self confidence, the self esteem, the self worth of the parent, the clearer and more realistic his self image, and the more abundant his other sources of narcissistic supply - the fewer children he will have. These predictions are borne out by reality.

The higher the education and the income of adults – and, consequently, the firmer their sense of self worth - the fewer children they have. Children are perceived as counter-productive: not only is their output (narcissistic supply) redundant, they hinder the parent's professional and pecuniary progress.

The more children people can economically afford – the fewer they have. This gives the lie to the Selfish Gene hypothesis. The more educated they are, the more they know about the world and about themselves, the less they seek to procreate. The more advanced the civilization, the more efforts it invests in preventing the birth of children. Contraceptives, family planning, and abortions are typical of affluent, well informed societies.

The more plentiful the narcissistic supply afforded by other sources – the lesser the emphasis on breeding. Freud described the mechanism of sublimation: the sex drive, the Eros (libido), can be "converted", "sublimated" into other activities. All the sublimatory channels - politics and art, for instance - are narcissistic and yield narcissistic supply. They render children superfluous. Creative people have fewer children than the average or none at all. This is because they are narcissistically self sufficient.

The key to our determination to have children is our wish to experience the same unconditional love that we received from our mothers, this intoxicating feeling of being adored without caveats, for what we are, with no limits, reservations, or calculations. This is the most powerful, crystallized form of narcissistic supply. It nourishes our self-love, self worth and self-confidence. It infuses us with feelings of omnipotence and omniscience. In these and other respects, parenthood is a return to infancy.

In the film “Lucy”, a distinguished scientist proposes that organisms in hostile environments opt for “immortality” while those ensconced in friendly habitats “choose” reproduction as species-wide survival strategies. The opposite is true: when the habitat is welcoming and poses no existential threats, organisms adapt by becoming “immortal” (usually via cloning.) Bacteria and viruses come to mind.

It is when the environment turns nasty and brutish – and thereby short – that life-forms engage in diversity-enhancing sexual reproduction. Parenthood is a defense mechanism and an insurance policy against the more ominous and unsavoury aspects of life, not an affirmation of its blessings. It is intended to conquer time itself, to defeat death, and to render our immanent mortality immaterial.

Note: Parenting as a Moral Obligation

Judging by the panoply of pro-family policies, society feels obligated to assist parents in the tasks of parenthood and child-rearing. Parents are perceived to be society's long arm, its agents, the conduit for its perpetuation and future

preservation: genetic as well as cultural. To some extent, the institutions of marriage, family, and socialization (upbringing) are all “national” and public as much as they are private. Indeed, a substantial portion of the hitherto parental decision-making process and a good great number of heretofore domestic decisions have been expropriated by the state: from vaccines to education.

Do we have a moral obligation to become parents? Some would say: yes. There are three types of arguments to support such a contention:

(i) We owe it to humanity at large to propagate the species or to society to provide manpower for future tasks

(ii) We owe it to ourselves to realize our full potential as human beings and as males or females by becoming parents

(iii) We owe it to our unborn children to give them life.

The first two arguments are easy to dispense with. We have a minimal moral obligation to humanity and society and that is to conduct ourselves so as not to harm others. All other ethical edicts are either derivative or spurious. Similarly, we have a minimal moral obligation to ourselves and that is to be happy (while not harming others). If bringing children to the world makes us happy, all for the better. If we would rather not procreate, it is perfectly within our rights not to do so.

But what about the third argument?

Only living people have rights. There is a debate whether an egg is a living person, but there can be no doubt that it exists. Its rights - whatever they are - derive from the fact that it exists and that it has the potential to develop life. The right to be brought to life (the right to become or to be) pertains to a yet non-alive entity and, therefore, is null and void. Had this right existed, it would have implied an obligation or duty to give life to the unborn and the not yet conceived. No such duty or obligation exist.

“Parasite singles”, “boomerang kids”, and “accordion families”

“One man cannot be a warrior on a battlefield.”
(Russian proverb)

The Japanese call them “parasite singles”, the Americans “boomerang kids”. Sociologists refer to the “accordion family”: it expands and then contracts as children return to what should have been an “empty nest.” With an anemic jobs market (youth unemployment hovers above 20% throughout the industrial world), extended education, and a culture of rampant individualism (not to say

egotistical [narcissism](#)), [parents](#) are forced to continue to bankroll their children and take care of their needs well into their offspring's thirties. Infantilism rocks and rules.

There is no word for it in Russian. Platon Karatayev, the typical "Russian soul" in Tolstoy's "War and Peace", extols, for pages at a time, the virtues of communality and disparages the individual - this otherwise useless part of the greater whole. In Macedonia the words "private" or "privacy" pertain to matters economic. The word "intimacy" is used instead to designate the state of being free of prying, intrusive eyes and acts of meddling. Throughout Central and Eastern Europe, the rise of "individualism" did not give birth to its corollary: "privacy". After decades (and, in most cases, centuries) of cramped, multi-generational shared accommodation, it is no wonder.

To the alienated and schizoid ears of Westerners, the survival of family and community in CEE sounds like an attractive proposition. A dual purpose safety net, both emotional and economic, the family in countries in transition provides its members with unemployment benefits, accommodation, food and psychological advice to boot. Divorced daughters, saddled with little (and not so little) ones, the prodigal sons incapable of finding a job befitting their qualifications, the sick, the unhappy - all are absorbed by the compassionate bosom of the family and, by extension the community. The family, the neighbourhood, the community, the village, the tribe - are units of subversion as well as useful safety valves, releasing and regulating the pressures of contemporary life in the modern, materialistic, crime ridden state. The ancient blood feud laws of the kanoon were handed over through familial lineages in northern Albania, in defiance of the paranoiac Enver Hoxha regime. Criminals hide among their kin in the Balkans, thus effectively evading the long arm of the law (state). Jobs are granted, contracts signed and tenders won on an open and strict nepotistic basis and no one finds it odd or wrong. There is something atavistically heart-warming in all this.

Historically, the rural units of socialization and social organization were the family and the village. As villagers migrated to the cities, these structural and functional patterns were imported by them, en masse. The shortage of urban apartments and the communist invention of the communal apartment (its tiny rooms allocated one per family with kitchen and bathroom common to all) only served to perpetuate these ancient modes of multi-generational huddling. At best, the few available apartments were shared by three generations: parents, married off-spring and their children. In many cases, the living space was also shared by sickly or no-good relatives and even by unrelated families.

These living arrangements - more adapted to rustic open spaces than to high rises - led to severe social and psychological dysfunctions. To this very day, Balkan males are spoiled by the subservience and servitude of their in-house parents and incessantly and compulsively catered to by their submissive wives. Occupying

someone else's home, they are not well acquainted with adult responsibilities. Stunted growth and stagnant immaturity are the hallmarks of an entire generation, stifled by the ominous proximity of suffocating, invasive love. Unable to lead a healthy sex life behind paper thin walls, unable to raise their children and as many children as they see fit, unable to develop emotionally under the anxiously watchful eye of their parents - this greenhouse generation is doomed to a zombie-like existence in the twilight nether land of their parents' caves. Many ever more eagerly await the demise of their caring captors and the promised land of their inherited apartments, free of their parents' presence.

The daily pressures and exigencies of co-existence are enormous. The prying, the gossip, the criticism, the chastising, the small agitating mannerisms, the smells, the incompatible personal habits and preferences, the pusillanimous bookkeeping - all serve to erode the individual and to reduce him or her to the most primitive mode of survival. This is further exacerbated by the need to share expenses, to allocate labour and tasks, to plan ahead for contingencies, to see off threats, to hide information, to pretend and to fend off emotionally injurious behaviour. It is a sweltering tropic of affective cancer.

Newly found materialism brought these territories a malignant form of capitalism coupled with a sub-culture of drugs and crime. The eventuating disintegration of all polities in the ensuing moral vacuum was complete. From the more complex federations or states and their governments, through intermediate municipalities and down to the most primitive of political cells - the family - they all crumbled in a storm of discontent and blood. The mutant frontier-"independence" or pioneer-"individualism" imported from Western B movies led to a functional upheaval unmatched by a structural one. People want privacy and intimacy more than ever - but they still inhabit the same shoddily constructed, congested accommodation and they still earn poorly or are unemployed. This tension between aspiration and perspiration is potentially revolutionary. It is this unaccomplished, uneasy metamorphosis that tore the social fabric of CEE apart, rendering it poisoned and dysfunctional. This is nothing new - it is what brought socialism and its more vicious variants down.

But what is new is inequality. Ever the pathologically envious, the citizens of CEE bathed in common misery. The equal distribution of poverty and hardship guaranteed their peace of mind. A Jewish proverb says: "the trouble of the many is half a consolation". It is this breakdown of symmetry of wretchedness that really shook the social order. The privacy and intimacy and freedom gained by the few are bound to incite the many into acts of desperation. After all, what can be more individualistic, more private, more mind requiring, more tranquillizing than being part of a riotous mob intent of implementing a platform of hate and devastation?

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The Virtual Home

On June 9, 2005 the BBC reported about an unusual project underway in Sheffield (in the United Kingdom). The daily movements and interactions of a family living in a technology-laden, futuristic home are being monitored and recorded. "The aim is to help house builders predict how we will want to use our homes 10 or 20 years from now." - explained the reporter.

The home of the future may be quite a chilling - or uplifting - prospect, depending on one's prejudices and predilections.

Christopher Sanderson, of The Future Laboratory and Richard Brindley, of the Royal Institute of British Architects describe smaller flats with movable walls as a probable response to over-crowding. Home systems will cater to all the entertainment and media needs of the inhabitants further insulating them from their social milieu.

Even hobbies will move indoors. Almost every avocation - from cooking to hiking - can now be indulged at home with pro-am (professional-amateur) equipment. We may become self-sufficient as far as functions we now outsource - such as education and dry cleaning - go. Lastly, in the long-run, [robots](#) are likely to replace some pets and many human interactions.

These technological developments will have grave effects on family cohesion and functioning.

The family is the mainspring of support of every kind. It mobilizes psychological resources and alleviates emotional burdens. It allows for the sharing of tasks, provides material goods together with cognitive training. It is the prime socialization agent and encourages the absorption of information, most of it useful and adaptive.

This division of labour between parents and children is vital both to development and to proper adaptation. The child must feel, in a functional family, that s/he can share his experiences without being defensive and that the feedback that s/he is likely to receive will be open and unbiased. The only "bias" acceptable (because it is consistent with constant outside feedback) is the set of beliefs, values and goals that is internalized via imitation and unconscious identification.

So, the family is the first and the most important source of identity and of emotional support. It is a greenhouse wherein a child feels loved, accepted and

secure - the prerequisites for the development of personal resources. On the material level, the family should provide the basic necessities (and, preferably, beyond), physical care and protection and refuge and shelter during crises.

[Elsewhere, we have discussed the role of the mother \(The Primary Object\)](#). The father's part is mostly neglected, even in professional literature. However, recent research demonstrates his importance to the orderly and healthy development of the child.

He participates in the day to day care, is an intellectual catalyst, who encourages the child to develop his interests and to satisfy his curiosity through the manipulation of various instruments and games. He is a source of authority and discipline, a boundary setter, enforcing and encouraging positive behaviors and eliminating negative ones. He also provides emotional support and economic security, thus stabilizing the family unit. Finally, he is the prime source of masculine orientation and identification to the male child - and gives warmth and love as a male to his daughter, without exceeding the socially permissible limits.

These traditional roles of the family are being eroded from both the inside and the outside. The proper functioning of the classical family was determined, to a large extent, by the geographical proximity of its members. They all huddled together in the "family unit" – an identifiable volume of physical space, distinct and different to other units. The daily friction and interaction between the members of the family molded them, influenced their patterns of behavior and their reactive patterns and determined how successful their adaptation to life would be.

With the introduction of modern, fast transportation and telecommunications, it was no longer possible to confine the members of the family to the household, to the village, or even to the neighborhood. The industrial revolution splintered the classical family and scattered its members.

Still, the result was not the disappearance of the family but the formation of nuclear families: leaner and meaner units of production. The extended family of yore (three or four generations) merely spread its wings over a greater physical distance – but in principle, remained almost intact.

Grandma and grandpa would live in one city with a few of the younger or less successful aunts and uncles. Their other daughters or sons would be married and moved to live either in another part of the same city, or in another geographical location (even in another continent). But contact was maintained by more or less frequent visits, reunions and meetings on opportune or critical occasions.

This was true well into the 1950s.

However, a series of developments in the second half of the twentieth century threatens to completely decouple the family from its physical dimension. We are in the process of experimenting with the family of the future: the virtual family. This is a family devoid of any spatial (geographical) or temporal identity. Its members do not necessarily share the same genetic heritage (the same blood lineage). It is bound mainly by communication, rather than by interests. Its domicile is cyberspace, its residence in the realm of the symbolic.

Urbanization and industrialization pulverized the structure of the family, by placing it under enormous pressures and by causing it to relegate most of its functions to outside agencies: education was taken over by schools, health – by (national or private) health plans, entertainment by television, interpersonal communication by telephony and computers, socialization by the mass media and the school system and so on.

Devoid of its traditional functions, subject to torsion and other elastic forces – the family was torn apart and gradually stripped of its meaning. The main functions left to the family unit were the provision of the comfort of familiarity (shelter) and serving as a physical venue for leisure activities.

The first role - familiarity, comfort, security, and shelter - was eroded by the global brands.

The "Home Away from Home" business concept means that multinational brands such as Coca-Cola and McDonalds foster familiarity where previously there was none. Needless to say that the etymological closeness between "family" and "familiar" is no accident. The estrangement felt by foreigners in a foreign land is, thus, alleviated, as the world is fast becoming mono-cultural.

The "Family of Man" and the "Global Village" have replaced the nuclear family and the physical, historic, village. A businessman feels more at home in any Sheraton or Hilton than in the living room of his ageing parents. An academician feels more comfortable in any faculty in any university than with his own nuclear or immediate family. One's old neighborhood is a source of embarrassment rather than a fount of strength.

The family's second function - leisure activities - fell prey to the advance of the internet and digital and wireless telecommunications.

Whereas the hallmark of the classical family was that it had clear spatial and temporal coordinates – the virtual family has none. Its members can (and often do) live in different continents. They communicate by digital means. They have

electronic mail (rather than the physical post office box). They have a "HOME page". They have a "webSITE".

In other words, they have the virtual equivalents of geographical reality, a "VIRTUAL reality" or "virtual existence". In the not so distant future, people will visit each other electronically and sophisticated cameras will allow them to do so in three-dimensional format.

The temporal dimension, which was hitherto indispensable in human interactions – being at the same place in the same time in order to interact - is also becoming unnecessary. Voicemail and videomail messages will be left in electronic "boxes" to be retrieved at the convenience of the recipient. Meetings in person will be made redundant with the advent of video-conferencing.

The family will not remain unaffected. A clear distinction will emerge between the biological family and the virtual family. A person will be born into the first but will regard this fact as accidental. Blood relations will count less than virtual relations. Individual growth will involve the formation of a virtual family, as well as a biological one (getting married and having children). People will feel equally at ease anywhere in the world for two reasons:

1. There will be no appreciable or discernible difference between geographical locations. Separate will no longer mean disparate. A McDonald's and a Coca-Cola and a Hollywood produced movie are already available everywhere and always. So will the internet treasures of knowledge and entertainment.
2. Interactions with the outside world will be minimized. People will conduct their lives more and more indoors. They will communicate with others (their biological original family included) via telecommunications devices and the internet. They will spend most of their time, work and create in the cyber-world. Their true (really, only) home will be their website. Their only reliably permanent address will be their e-mail address. Their enduring friendships will be with co-chatters. They will work from home, flexibly and independently of others. They will customize their cultural consumption using 500 channel televisions based on video on demand technology.

Hermetic and mutually exclusive universes will be the end result of this process. People will be linked by very few common experiences within the framework of virtual communities. They will haul their world with them as they move about. The miniaturization of storage devices will permit them to carry whole libraries of data and entertainment in their suitcase or backpack or pocket.

It is true that all these predictions are extrapolations of technological breakthroughs and devices, which are in their embryonic stages and are limited to affluent, English-speaking, societies in the West. But the trends are clear and they mean ever-increasing differentiation, isolation and individuation. This is the last assault, which the family will not survive. Already most households consist of "irregular" families (single parents, same sex, etc.). The rise of the virtual family will sweep even these transitory forms aside.

Social Costs of Small Business

Big Business (with 1000 employees or more) and traditional business (central office or factory) provided workers with a network of social contacts and with opportunities to fraternize and befriend others. These workplaces fostered the formation of formal and informal emotional and economic peer-based support groups. These benefits were lost with the advent of the Small Office Home Office (SOHO), flextime, and personal entrepreneurship.

Tens of millions started to work from home, acting as subcontractors for larger corporations and using telecommunications technology (most recently the Internet, laptops, smartphones, and enterprise collaboration software). Transformed by these technological and social upheavals, even Big Business now consists of virtual (cyber), ad-hoc, self-assembling, largely non-hierarchical collaborative webs.

The result is the atomization of the workforce. People rarely see or meet each other in the flesh. No amount of teambuilding, get-togethers, and enterprise social networking can make up for this loss of personal touch and the loneliness and sense of drift that it engenders. Normally, this isolation has had an effect on the work ethic (somewhat negative), productivity (largely positive), and loyalty (very negative.)

Interview granted to [Women's International Perspective](#):

Do you think our social bonds are at a breaking point because of an influx of electronics? Do you think the pervasiveness of technology has lead to increased isolation? How?

Technology had and has a devastating effect on the survival and functioning of core social units, such as the community/neighborhood and, most crucially, the family.

With the introduction of modern, fast transportation and telecommunications, it was no longer possible to confine the members of the family to the household, to the village, or even to the neighborhood. The industrial and, later information revolutions splintered the classical family and scattered its members as they outsourced the family's functions (such as feeding, education, and entertainment).

This process is on-going: interactions with the outside world are being minimized. People conduct their lives more and more indoors. They communicate with others (their biological original family included) via telecommunications devices and the internet. They spend most of their time, work and create in the cyber-world. Their true (really, only) home is their website or page on the social network du jour. Their only reliably permanent address is their e-mail address. Their enduring albeit ersatz friendships are with co-chatters. They work from home, flexibly and independently of others. They customize their cultural consumption using 500 channel televisions based on video on demand technology.

Hermetic and mutually exclusive universes will be the end result of this process. People will be linked by very few common experiences within the framework of virtual communities. They will haul their world with them as they move about. The miniaturization of storage devices will permit them to carry whole libraries of data and entertainment in their suitcase or backpack or pocket. They will no longer need or resort to physical interactions.

Why is it important for humans to 'reach out and touch' fellow human beings?

Modern technology allows us to reach out, but rarely to truly touch. It substitutes kaleidoscopic, brief, and shallow interactions for long, meaningful and deep relationships. Our abilities to empathize and to collaborate with each other are like muscles: they require frequent exercise. Gradually, we are being denied the opportunity to flex them and, thus, we empathize less; we collaborate more fitfully and inefficiently; we act more narcissistically and antisocially. Functioning society is rendered atomized and anomic by technology.

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II. The Pathological

The Pathology of Love

The unpalatable truth is that falling in love is, in some ways, indistinguishable from a severe pathology. Behavior changes are reminiscent of psychosis and, biochemically speaking, passionate love closely imitates substance abuse. Appearing in the BBC series *Body Hits* on December 4, 2002 Dr. John Marsden, the head of the British National Addiction Center, said that love is addictive, akin to cocaine and speed. Sex is a "booby trap", intended to bind the partners long enough to bond.

In experiments on voles, conducted by a German scientist, Dr. Oliver Bosch, males separated from females after 5 days spent together evinced marked signs of the animal equivalent of depression in humans (known as "passive stress coping"). These males had extreme levels of the stress biochemical corticosterone. Their HPA (Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal) axis was so hard at work that their glands hypertrophied.

But when Bosch blocked in their tiny brains receptors for CRF (Corticotropine-releasing Factor), he struck gold: the males remembered their mates and bonded with them, but did not care where they were at the time. Both the voles which remained with their females and the ones who got separated had elevated levels of CRF in the BNST (Bed Nucleus of Stria Terminalis).

Bonding generates CRF but prevents it from acting on the HPA as long as the couple is together. Compulsion or addiction to the mate replaces infatuation (dopamine release). It feels bad to be apart and people seek to ameliorate the misery by restoring their togetherness – or by denying or reframing the separateness. According to Dr. George Koob, Chairman of the Committee on the Neurobiology of Addictive Disorders at the Scripps Research Institute, CRF signals that a loss has to be addressed. The same mechanism is at play in drug addiction and alcoholism.

Using functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI), Andreas Bartels and Semir Zeki of University College in London showed that the same areas of the brain are active when abusing drugs and when in love. The prefrontal cortex - hyperactive in depressed patients - is inactive when besotted. How can this be reconciled with the low levels of serotonin that are the telltale sign of both depression and infatuation - is not known.

Other MRI studies, conducted in 2006-7 by Dr. Lucy Brown, a professor in the department of neurology and neuroscience at the Albert Einstein College of

Medicine in New York, and her colleagues, revealed that the caudate and the ventral tegmental, brain areas involved in cravings (e.g., for food) and the secretion of dopamine, are lit up in subjects who view photos of their loved ones. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that affects pleasure and motivation. It causes a sensation akin to a substance-induced high.

On August 14, 2007, the New Scientist News Service gave the details of a study originally published in the Journal of Adolescent Health earlier that year. Serge Brand of the Psychiatric University Clinics in Basel, Switzerland, and his colleagues interviewed 113 teenagers (17-year old), 65 of whom reported having fallen in love recently.

The conclusion? The love-struck adolescents slept less, acted more compulsively more often, had "lots of ideas and creative energy", and were more likely to engage in risky behavior, such as reckless driving.

"We were able to demonstrate that adolescents in early-stage intense romantic love did not differ from patients during a hypomanic stage," say the researchers. This leads them to conclude that intense romantic love in teenagers is a 'psychopathologically prominent stage'".

But is it erotic lust or is it love that brings about these cerebral upheavals?

As distinct from love, lust is brought on by surges of sex hormones, such as testosterone and estrogen. These induce an indiscriminate scramble for physical gratification. In the brain, the hypothalamus (controls hunger, thirst, and other primordial drives) and the amygdala (the locus of arousal) become active. Attraction transpires once a more-or-less appropriate object is found (with the right body language and speed and tone of voice) and results in a panoply of sleep and eating disorders.

A recent study in the University of Chicago demonstrated that testosterone levels shoot up by one third even during a casual chat with a female stranger. The stronger the hormonal reaction, the more marked the changes in behavior, concluded the authors. This loop may be part of a larger "mating response". In animals, testosterone provokes aggression and recklessness. The hormone's readings in married men and fathers are markedly lower than in single males still "playing the field".

Still, the long-term outcomes of being in love are lustful. Dopamine, heavily secreted while falling in love, triggers the production of testosterone and sexual attraction then kicks in.

Helen Fisher of Rutgers University suggests a three-phased model of falling in love. Each stage involves a distinct set of chemicals. The BBC summed it up succinctly

and sensationally: "Events occurring in the brain when we are in love have similarities with [mental illness](#)".

Moreover, we are attracted to people with the same genetic makeup and smell (pheromones) of our parents. Dr Martha McClintock of the University of Chicago studied feminine attraction to sweaty T-shirts formerly worn by males. The closer the smell resembled her father's, the more attracted and aroused the woman became. Falling in love is, therefore, an exercise in proxy incest and a vindication of Freud's much-maligned Oedipus and Electra complexes.

McClintock's work contradicts other, less conclusive and far more controversial findings regarding the Major Histocompatibility Complex (MHC) or the Human Leukocyte Antigen (HLA). Studies demonstrated either fewer HLA matches than were expected (Ober et al.) – or no such effect (Chaix, Cao, and Donnelly, 2008). Wedekind conducted body odor studies, again with sweaty t-shirts, that demonstrated a female preference for MHC-dissimilarity, especially during ovulation, but only in women who did not use oral contraceptives. Men also preferred MHC-disassortative mate choices.

Writing in the February 2004 issue of the journal *NeuroImage*, Andreas Bartels of University College London's Wellcome Department of Imaging Neuroscience described identical reactions in the brains of young mothers looking at their babies and in the brains of people looking at their lovers.

"Both romantic and maternal love are highly rewarding experiences that are linked to the perpetuation of the species, and consequently have a closely linked biological function of crucial evolutionary importance" - he told Reuters.

This incestuous backdrop of love was further demonstrated by psychologist David Perrett of the University of St Andrews in Scotland. The subjects in his experiments preferred their own faces - in other words, the composite of their two parents - when computer-morphed into the opposite sex.

Body secretions play a major role in the onslaught of love. In results published in February 2007 in the *Journal of Neuroscience*, researchers at the University of California at Berkeley demonstrated convincingly that women who sniffed androstadienone, a signaling chemical found in male sweat, saliva, and semen, experienced higher levels of the hormone cortisol. This results in sexual arousal and improved mood. The effect lasted a whopping one hour.

Still, contrary to prevailing misconceptions, love is mostly about negative emotions. As Professor Arthur Aron from State University of New York at Stonybrook has shown, in the first few meetings, people misinterpret certain physical cues and feelings - notably fear and thrill - as (falling in) love. Thus,

counterintuitively, anxious people - especially those with the "serotonin transporter" gene - are more sexually active (i.e., fall in love more often).

Obsessive thoughts regarding the Loved One and compulsive acts are also common. Perception is distorted as is cognition. "Love is blind" and the lover easily fails the reality test. Falling in love involves the enhanced secretion of b-Phenylethylamine (PEA, or the "love chemical") in the first 2 to 4 years of the relationship.

This natural drug creates an euphoric high and helps obscure the failings and shortcomings of the potential mate. Such oblivion - perceiving only the spouse's good sides while discarding her bad ones - is a pathology akin to the primitive psychological defense mechanism known as "splitting". Narcissists - patients suffering from the [Narcissistic Personality Disorder](#) - also Idealize romantic or intimate partners. A similar cognitive-emotional impairment is common in many mental health conditions.

The activity of a host of neurotransmitters - such as Dopamine, Adrenaline (Norepinephrine), and Serotonin - is heightened (or in the case of Serotonin, lowered) in both paramours. Yet, such irregularities are also associated with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and depression.

It is telling that once attachment is formed and infatuation gives way to a more stable and less exuberant relationship, the levels of these substances return to normal. They are replaced by two hormones (endorphins) which usually play a part in social interactions (including bonding and sex): Oxytocin (the "cuddling chemical") and Vasopressin. Oxytocin facilitates bonding. It is released in the mother during breastfeeding, in the members of the couple when they spend time together - and when they sexually climax. Viagra (sildenafil) seems to facilitate its release, at least in rats.

It seems, therefore, that the distinctions we often make between types of love - motherly love vs. romantic love, for instance - are artificial, as far as human biochemistry goes. As neuroscientist Larry Young's research with prairie voles at the Yerkes National Primate Research Center at Emory University demonstrates:

"(H)uman love is set off by a "biochemical chain of events" that originally evolved in ancient brain circuits involving mother-child bonding, which is stimulated in mammals by the release of oxytocin during labor, delivery and nursing."

He told the New-York Times ("Anti-Love Drug May Be Ticket to Bliss", January 12, 2009):

"Some of our sexuality has evolved to stimulate that same oxytocin system to

create female-male bonds,” Dr. Young said, noting that sexual foreplay and intercourse stimulate the same parts of a woman’s body that are involved in giving birth and nursing. This hormonal hypothesis, which is by no means proven fact, would help explain a couple of differences between humans and less monogamous mammals: females’ desire to have sex even when they are not fertile, and males’ erotic fascination with breasts. More frequent sex and more attention to breasts, Dr. Young said, could help build long-term bonds through a “ cocktail of ancient neuropeptides,” like the oxytocin released during foreplay or orgasm. Researchers have achieved similar results by squirting oxytocin into people’s nostrils...”

Moreover:

"A related hormone, vasopressin, creates urges for bonding and nesting when it is injected in male voles (or naturally activated by sex). After Dr. Young found that male voles with a genetically limited vasopressin response were less likely to find mates, Swedish researchers reported that men with a similar genetic tendency were less likely to get married ... 'If we give an oxytocin blocker to female voles, they become like 95 percent of other mammal species,' Dr. Young said. 'They will not bond no matter how many times they mate with a male or hard how he tries to bond. They mate, it feels really good and they move on if another male comes along. If love is similarly biochemically based, you should in theory be able to suppress it in a similar way.'"

Love, in all its phases and manifestations, is an addiction, probably to the various forms of internally secreted norepinephrine, such as the aforementioned amphetamine-like PEA. Love, in other words, is a form of substance abuse. The withdrawal of romantic love has serious mental health repercussions.

A study conducted by Dr. Kenneth Kendler, professor of psychiatry and director of the Virginia Institute for Psychiatric and Behavioral Genetics, and others, and published in the September 2002 issue of *Archives of General Psychiatry*, revealed that breakups often lead to depression and anxiety. Other, fMRI-based studies, demonstrated how the insular cortex, in charge of experiencing pain, became active when subjects viewed photos of former loved ones.

Love and lust depend on context, as well as psychological makeup, or biochemistry: one can fall in and out love with the very same person (whose biochemistry, presumably, hasn’t changed at all); the vast majority of one-night-standers reported that they did not find their partners sexually alluring: it was the opportunity that beckoned, not any specific attraction; similarly, the very same acts – kissing, hugging, even sexually explicit overtures – can be interpreted as innocuous, depending on who does what to whom and in which circumstances.

Indeed, love cannot be reduced to its biochemical and electrical components. Love is not tantamount to our bodily processes - rather, it is the way we *experience* them. Love is how we interpret these flows and ebbs of compounds using a higher-level language. In other words, love is pure poetry.

We are very rarely in love with a PERSON. Most often we are in love with an IDEA: the idea of being in love (we are in love with love), or the idea of being someone's whore, or someone's child, or someone's healing parent. Or we are in love with what the person stands for (symbolizes): a father figure, our past, a wounded child.

We idealize our loved ones to the point that they vanish as individuals and re-merge as elements in our personal narrative and in our pathologies and wounds. We fall in love with the stories that we construct about ourselves and our environment and we force our loved ones to play scripted and emergent roles in our personal theatre production. In this restricted (and temporary) sense, when we fall in love we are all narcissistic: we fall in love with ourselves via our loved ones.

Interview granted to Readers' Digest - January 2009

"For what qualities in a man," asked the youth, "does a woman most ardently love him?"

"For those qualities in him," replied the old tutor, "which his mother most ardently hates."

(A Book Without A Title, by George Jean Nathan (1918))

Q. The Top 5 Things Women Look for in a Man, the top five qualities (based on an American survey):

1. Good Judgment
2. Intelligence
3. Faithful
4. Affectionate
5. Financially Responsible

Why is this something women look for in men – why is it important?

How does this quality positively affect a relationship or marriage?

How do women recognize it?

A. There are three possible explanations as to why women look for these qualities in men: the evolutionary-biological one, the historical-cultural one, and the psychological-emotional one.

In evolutionary terms, good judgment and intelligence equal survival and the transmission of one's genes across the generations. Faithfulness and a sense of responsibility (financial and otherwise) guarantee that the woman's partner will persevere in the all-important tasks of homebuilding and childrearing. Finally, being affectionate cements the emotional bond between male and female and militates against potentially life-threatening maltreatment and abuse of the latter by the former.

From the historical-cultural point of view, most societies and cultures, well into the previous century, have been male-dominated and patriarchal. The male's judgment prevailed and his decisions dictated the course of the couple's life. An intelligent and financially responsible male provided a secure environment in which to raise children. The woman lived through her man, vicariously: his successes and failures reflected on her and determined her standing in society and her ability to develop and thrive on the personal level. His faithfulness and affections served to prevent competitors from usurping the female's place and thus threatening her male-dependent cosmos.

Granted, evolutionary constraints are anachronistic and social-cultural mores have changed: women, at least in Western societies, are now independent, both emotionally and economically. Yet, millennia of conditioned behavior cannot be eradicated in a few decades. Women continue to look in men for the qualities that used to matter in entirely different circumstances.

Finally, women are more level-headed when it comes to bonding. They tend to emphasize long-term relationships, based on reciprocity and the adhesive qualities of strong emotions. Good judgment, intelligence, and a developed sense of responsibility are crucial to the maintenance and preservation of functional, lasting, and durable couples - and so are faithfulness and being affectionate.

Soaring divorce rates and the rise of single parenthood prove that women are not good at recognizing the qualities they seek in men. It is not easy to tell apart the genuine article from the unctuous pretender. While intelligence (or lack thereof) can be discerned on a first date, it is difficult to predict traits such as faithfulness, good judgment, and reliability. Affections can really be mere affectations and women are sometimes so desperate for a mate that they delude themselves and treat their date as a [blank screen](#) onto which they project their wishes and needs.

Q. What are the top 5 Things Men Look for in a Woman, the top five qualities?

Why is this something men look for in women – why is it important?

How does this quality positively affect a relationship or marriage?

How do men recognize it?

A. From my experience and correspondence with thousands of couples, men seem to place a premium on these qualities in a woman:

1. Physical Attraction and Sexual Availability
2. Good-naturedness
3. Faithfulness
4. Protective Affectionateness
5. Dependability

There are three possible explanations as to why men look for these qualities in women: the evolutionary-biological one, the historical-cultural one, and the psychological-emotional one.

In evolutionary terms, physical attractiveness denotes good underlying health and genetic-immunological compatibility. These guarantee the efficacious transmission of one's genes to future generations. Of course, having sex is a precondition for bearing children and, so, sexual availability is important, but only when it is coupled with faithfulness: men are loth to raise and invest scarce resource in someone else's progeny. Dependable women are more likely to propagate the species, so they are desirable. Finally, men and women are likely to do a better job of raising a family if the woman is good-natured, easy-going, adaptable, affectionate, and mothering. These qualities cement the emotional bond between male and female and prevent potentially life-threatening maltreatment and abuse of the latter by the former.

From the historical-cultural point of view, most societies and cultures, well into the previous century, have been male-dominated and patriarchal. Women were treated as chattels or possessions, an extension of the male. The "ownership" of an attractive female advertised to the world the male's prowess and desirability. Her good nature, affectionateness, and protectiveness proved that her man was a worthwhile "catch" and elevated his social status. Her dependability and faithfulness allowed him to embark on long trips or complex, long-term undertakings without the distractions of emotional uncertainty and the anxieties of letdown and betrayal.

Finally, men are more cavalier when it comes to bonding. They tend to maintain both long-term and short-term relationships and are, therefore, far less exclusive and monogamous than women. They are more concerned with what they are getting out of a relationship than with reciprocity and, though they often feel as strongly as women and can be equally romantic, their emotional landscape and expression are more constrained and they sometimes confuse love with possessiveness or even codependence. Thus, men tend to emphasize the external

(physical attraction) and the functional (good-naturedness, faithfulness, reliability) over the internal and the purely emotional.

Soaring divorce rates and the rise of single parenthood prove that men are not good at recognizing the qualities they seek in women. It is not easy to tell apart the genuine article from the unctuous pretender. While physical attractiveness (or lack thereof) can be discerned on a first date, it is difficult to predict traits such as faithfulness, good-naturedness, and reliability. Affections can really be mere affectations and men are sometimes such [narcissistic](#) navel-gazers that they delude themselves and treat their date as a blank screen onto which they project their wishes and needs.

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On the Incest Taboo:

Incest as an Autoerotic Social and Cultural Act

"...An experience with an adult may seem merely a curious and pointless game, or it may be a hideous trauma leaving lifelong psychic scars. In many cases the reaction of parents and society determines the child's interpretation of the event. What would have been a trivial and soon-forgotten act becomes traumatic if the mother cries, the father rages, and the police interrogate the child."

(Encyclopedia Britannica, 2004 Edition)

In contemporary thought, incest is invariably associated with child abuse and its horrific, long-lasting, and often irreversible consequences. Incest is not such a clear-cut matter as it has been made out to be over millennia of taboo. Many participants claim to have enjoyed the act and its physical and emotional consequences. It is often the result of seduction. In some cases, two consenting and fully informed adults are involved.

Many types of relationships, which are defined as incestuous, are between genetically unrelated parties (a stepfather and a daughter), or between fictive kin or between classificatory kin (that belong to the same matriline or patriline). In certain societies (the Native American or the Chinese) it is sufficient to carry the same family name (=to belong to the same clan) and marriage is forbidden.

Some incest prohibitions relate to sexual acts - others to marriage. In some societies, incest is mandatory or prohibited, according to the social class or particular circumstances (Ugarit, Bali, Papua New Guinea, Polynesian and Melanesian islands). In others, the Royal House started a tradition of incestuous marriages, which was later imitated by lower classes (Ancient Egypt, Hawaii, Pre-Columbian Mixtec). Some societies are more tolerant of consensual incest than others (Japan, India until the 1930's, Australia).

The list is long and it serves to demonstrate the diversity of attitudes towards this most universal of taboos. Generally put, we can say that a prohibition to have sex with or marry a related person should be classified as an incest prohibition.

Perhaps the strongest feature of incest has been hitherto downplayed: that it is, essentially, an *autoerotic act*.

Having sex with a first-degree blood relative is like having sex with oneself. It is a Narcissistic act and like all acts Narcissistic, it involves the objectification of the partner. The incestuous Narcissist over-values and then devalues his sexual

partner. He is devoid of empathy (cannot see the other's point of view or put himself in her shoes).

For an in depth treatment of [narcissism](#) and its psychosexual dimension, see these (click on the links):

[*Narcissistic and Psychopathic Parents and Their Children*](#)

[*Narcissistic Personality Disorder \(NPD\) and Pathological Narcissism FAQs*](#)

[*Personality disorders FAQs*](#)

Paradoxically and ironically, it is the reaction of society that transforms incest into such a disruptive phenomenon. The condemnation, the horror, the revulsion and the attendant social sanctions interfere with the internal processes and dynamics of the incestuous family. It is from society that the child learns that something is horribly wrong, that he should feel guilty, and that the offending parent is a defective role model. Psychologists, from Albert Ellis to Boris Cyrulnik have noted the critical importance of societal response and stigma in cases of both adult and childhood trauma.

As a direct result, the formation of the child's Superego is stunted and it remains infantile, ideal, sadistic, perfectionist, demanding and punishing. The child's Ego, on the other hand, is likely to be replaced by a False Ego version, whose job it is to suffer the social consequences of the hideous act.

To sum up: society's reactions in the case of incest are pathogenic and are most likely to produce a Narcissistic or a Borderline patient. Dysempathic, exploitative, emotionally labile, immature, and in eternal search for Narcissistic Supply – the child becomes a replica of his incestuous and socially-castigated parent.

If so, why did human societies develop such pathogenic responses? In other words, why is incest considered a taboo in all known human collectives and cultures? Why are incestuous liaisons treated so harshly and punitively?

Freud said that incest provokes horror because it touches upon our forbidden, ambivalent emotions towards members of our close family. This ambivalence covers both aggression towards other members (forbidden and punishable) and (sexual) attraction to them (doubly forbidden and punishable).

Edward Westermarck proffered an opposite view that the domestic proximity of the members of the family breeds sexual repulsion (the epigenetic rule known as the Westermarck effect) to counter naturally occurring genetic sexual attraction. The incest taboo simply reflects emotional and biological realities within the

family rather than aiming to restrain the inbred instincts of its members, claimed Westermarck.

Though much-disputed by geneticists, some scholars maintain that the incest taboo may have been originally designed to prevent the degeneration of the genetic stock of the clan or tribe through intra-family breeding (closed endogamy). But, even if true, this no longer applies. In today's world incest rarely results in pregnancy and the transmission of genetic material. Sex today is about recreation as much as procreation.

Good contraceptives should, therefore, encourage incestuous, couples. In many other species inbreeding or straightforward incest are the norm. Finally, in most countries, incest prohibitions apply also to non-genetically-related people.

It seems, therefore, that the incest taboo was and is aimed at one thing in particular: to preserve the family unit and its proper functioning.

Incest is more than a mere manifestation of a given personality disorder or a paraphilia (incest is considered by many to be a subtype of pedophilia). It harks back to the very nature of the family. It is closely entangled with its functions and with its contribution to the development of the individual within it.

The family is an efficient venue for the transmission of accumulated property as well as information - both horizontally (among family members) and vertically (down the generations). The process of socialization largely relies on these familial mechanisms, making the family the most important agent of socialization by far.

The family is a mechanism for the allocation of genetic and material wealth. Worldly goods are passed on from one generation to the next through succession, inheritance and residence. Genetic material is handed down through the sexual act. It is the mandate of the family to increase both by accumulating property and by marrying outside the family (exogamy).

Clearly, incest prevents both. It preserves a limited genetic pool and makes an increase of material possessions through intermarriage all but impossible.

The family's roles are not merely materialistic, though.

One of the main businesses of the family is to teach to its members self control, self regulation and healthy adaptation. Family members share space and resources and siblings share the mother's emotions and attention. Similarly, the family educates its young members to master their drives and to postpone the self-gratification which attaches to acting upon them.

The incest taboo conditions children to control their erotic drive by abstaining from ingratiating themselves with members of the opposite sex within the same family. There could be little question that incest constitutes a lack of control and impedes the proper separation of impulse (or stimulus) from action.

Additionally, incest probably interferes with the defensive aspects of the family's existence. It is through the family that aggression is legitimately channeled, expressed and externalized. By imposing discipline and hierarchy on its members, the family is transformed into a cohesive and efficient war machine. It absorbs economic resources, social status and members of other families. It forms alliances and fights other clans over scarce goods, tangible and intangible.

This efficacy is undermined by incest. It is virtually impossible to maintain discipline and hierarchy in an incestuous family where some members assume sexual roles not normally theirs. Sex is an expression of power – emotional and physical. The members of the family involved in incest surrender power and assume it out of the regular flow patterns that have made the family the formidable apparatus that it is.

These new power politics weaken the family, both internally and externally. Internally, emotive reactions (such as the jealousy of other family members) and clashing authorities and responsibilities are likely to undo the delicate unit. Externally, the family is vulnerable to ostracism and more official forms of intervention and dismantling.

Finally, the family is an identity endowment mechanism. It bestows identity upon its members. Internally, the members of the family derive meaning from their position in the family tree and its "organization chart" (which conform to societal expectations and norms). Externally, through exogamy, by incorporating "strangers", the family absorbs other identities and thus enhances social solidarity (Claude Levy-Strauss) at the expense of the solidarity of the nuclear, original family.

Exogamy, as often noted, allows for the creation of extended alliances. The "identity creep" of the family is in total opposition to incest. The latter increases the solidarity and cohesiveness of the incestuous family – but at the expense of its ability to digest and absorb other identities of other family units. Incest, in other words, adversely affects social cohesion and solidarity.

Lastly, as aforementioned, incest interferes with well-established and rigid patterns of inheritance and property allocation. Such disruption is likely to have led in primitive societies to disputes and conflicts - including armed clashes and deaths. To prevent such recurrent and costly bloodshed was one of the intentions of the incest taboo.

The more primitive the society, the more strict and elaborate the set of incest prohibitions and the fiercer the reactions of society to violations. It appears that the less violent the dispute settlement methods and mechanisms in a given culture – the more lenient the attitude to incest.

The incest taboo is, therefore, a cultural trait. Protective of the efficient mechanism of the family, society sought to minimize disruption to its activities and to the clear flows of authority, responsibilities, material wealth and information horizontally and vertically.

Incest threatened to unravel this magnificent creation - the family. Alarmed by the possible consequences (internal and external feuds, a rise in the level of aggression and violence) – society introduced the taboo. It came replete with physical and emotional sanctions: stigmatization, revulsion and horror, imprisonment, the demolition of the errant and socially mutant family cell.

As long as societies revolve around the relegation of power, its sharing, its acquisition and dispensation – there will always exist an incest taboo. But in a different societal and cultural setting, it is conceivable not to have such a taboo. We can easily imagine a society where incest is extolled, taught, and practiced - and out-breeding is regarded with horror and revulsion.

The incestuous marriages among members of the royal households of Europe were intended to preserve the familial property and expand the clan's territory. They were normative, not aberrant. Marrying an outsider was considered abhorrent.

An incestuous society - where incest is the norm - is conceivable even today.

Two out of many possible scenarios:

1. "The Lot Scenario"

A plague or some other natural disaster decimate the population of planet Earth. People remain alive only in isolated clusters, co-habiting only with their closest kin. Surely incestuous procreation is preferable to virtuous extermination. Incest becomes normative.

Incest is as entrenched a taboo as cannibalism. Yet, it is better to eat the flesh of your dead football team mates than perish high up on the Andes (a harrowing tale of survival recounted in the book and eponymous film, "Alive").

2. The Egyptian Scenario

Resources become so scarce that family units scramble to keep them exclusively within the clan.

Exogamy - marrying outside the clan - amounts to a unilateral transfer of scarce resources to outsiders and strangers. Incest becomes an economic imperative.

An incestuous society would be either utopian or dystopian, depending on the reader's point of view - but that it is possible is doubtless.

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Pedophilia and Fetishism: Sexual Paraphilias

There is no such thing as "perverse" sexuality. Victorian middle-class values aside, if the sexual behavior harms no one (including oneself) and is consensual (between consenting adults), then it is considered by psychologists and psychiatrists alike to be utterly both healthy and normal.

Homosexuality, bisexuality, BDSM (Bondage, Discipline, Dominance, Submission, Sadomasochism), cross-dressing, water sports (golden showers), role playing and fantasy, and group sex or threesomes - all these are nowhere to be found in the two bibles of psychiatry: DSM 5 and ICD 11. Their practitioners claim that these practices have enriched their sex life and rendered it a pleasurable pursuit and an adventure.

Ironically, taken to extreme, such a judgmental, puritanical, and restrictive-normative attitude towards sex IS a sign of mental health problems, IS in the DSM, and is the hallmark of backward societies and arrested personality development or sick upbringing ("some sex is dirty"), or, commonly, both.

What about pedophilia? No consenting adults. Coprophagia? Medically dangerous. But even these are not "perversions". They are paraphilias.

Pedophilia

Click [HERE](#) to [Watch](#) the Video

Pedophiles are attracted to prepubescent children and a minority of them also act on their sexual fantasies. It is a startling fact that the etiology of this paraphilia is unknown. Pedophiles come from all walks of life and have no common socio-economic background. Contrary to media-propagated myths, most of them – between 50-70% - had not been sexually abused in childhood and many pedophiles are also drawn to adults of the opposite sex (are heterosexuals).

Only a few belong to the Exclusive Type - the ones who are tempted solely by kids. Nine tenths of all pedophiles are male. They are fascinated by (mostly) preteen and teenage males, preteen females, or (more rarely) both. Studies have demonstrated some neurological abnormalities and, possibly, some common genetic background.

Moreover, at least one fifth (and probably more) of the population have pedophilic fantasies. The prevalence of child pornography and child prostitution

proves it. Pedophiles start out as "normal" people and are profoundly shocked and distressed to discover their illicit sexual preference for the prepubertal. The process and mechanisms of transition from socially acceptable sexuality to much-condemned (and criminal) pedophilia are still largely mysterious.

Pedophiles seem to have [narcissistic](#) and [antisocial \(psychopathic\)](#) traits. They lack [empathy](#) for their victims and express no remorse for their actions. They are in [denial](#) and, being [pathological confabulators](#), they rationalize their transgressions, claiming that the children were merely being educated for their own good and, anyhow, derived great pleasure from it, or even that their victims initiated and actively sought the sexual act.

The pedophile's ego-syntony rests on his [alloplastic defenses](#). He generally tends to blame others (or the world or the "system") for his misfortunes, failures, and deficiencies. Pedophiles frequently accuse their victims of acting promiscuously, of "coming on to them", of actively tempting, provoking, and luring (or even trapping) them.

The pedophile - similar to the [autistic patient](#) - misinterprets the child's body language and inter-personal cues. His social communication skills are impaired and he fails to adjust information gained to the surrounding circumstances (for instance, to the kid's age and maturity).

Coupled with his lack of empathy, this recurrent inability to truly comprehend others cause the pedophile to objectify the targets of his lasciviousness. Pedophilia is, in essence, auto-erotic. The pedophile uses children's bodies to masturbate with. Hence the success of the Internet among pedophiles: it offers disembodied, anonymous, masturbatory sex. Children in cyberspace are mere representations - often nothing more than erotic photos and screen names.

It is crucial to realize that pedophiles are not enticed by the children themselves, by their bodies, or by their budding and nubile sexuality (remember Nabokov's *Lolita*?). Rather, pedophiles are drawn to what children symbolize, to what preadolescents stand for and represent. With the advent of Feminism and [gender-equality](#), women have lost their traditional role as socially-acceptable and permissible sexual "child-substitutes" (except in Japan). This social upheaval may account for the rise in pedophilia across the world.

To the pedophile ...

I. Sex with children is "free" and "daring"

Sex with subteens implies freedom of action with impunity. It enhances the pedophile's magical sense of [omnipotence](#) and [immunity](#). By defying the authority of the state and the edicts of his culture and society, the pedophile experiences

an [adrenaline rush](#) to which he gradually becomes addicted. Illicit sex becomes the outlet for his urgent need to live [dangerously and recklessly](#).

The pedophile is on a quest to reassert control over his life. Studies have consistently shown that pedophilia is associated with anomic states (war, famine, epidemics) and with major life crises (failure, relocation, infidelity of spouse, separation, divorce, unemployment, bankruptcy, illness, death of the offender's nearest and dearest).

It is likely - though hitherto unsubstantiated by research - that the typical pedophile is depressive and with a borderline personality (low organization and fuzzy personal boundaries). Pedophiles are reckless and emotionally labile. The pedophile's sense of self-worth is volatile and dysregulated. He is likely to suffer from abandonment anxiety and be a [codependent or counterdependent](#).

Paradoxically, it is by seemingly losing control in one aspect of his life (sex) that the pedophile re-acquires a sense of mastery. The same mechanism is at work in the development of [eating disorders](#). An inhibitory deficit is somehow magically perceived as omnipotence.

II. Sex with children is corrupt and decadent

The pedophile makes frequent (though unconscious) use of projection and projective identification in his relationships with children. He makes his victims treat him the way he views himself - or attributes to them traits and behaviors that are truly his.

The pedophile is aware of society's view of his actions as vile, corrupt, forbidden, evil, and decadent (especially if the pedophilic act involves incest). He derives pleasure from the sleazy nature of his pursuits because it tends to sustain his view of himself as "bad", "a failure", "deserving of punishment", and "guilty".

In extreme (mercifully uncommon) cases, the pedophile projects these torturous feelings and self-perceptions onto his victims. The children defiled and abused by his sexual attentions thus become "rotten", "bad objects", guilty and punishable. This leads to [sexual sadism](#), lust rape, and snuff murders.

III. Sex with children is a reenactment of a painful past

Many pedophiles truly bond with their prey. To them, children are the reification of innocence, genuineness, trust, and faithfulness - qualities that the pedophile wishes to nostalgically recapture.

The relationship with the child provides the pedophile with a "safe passage" to his own, repressed and fearful, inner child. Through his victim, the pedophile gains

access to his suppressed and thwarted emotions. It is a fantasy-like second chance to reenact his childhood, this time benignly. The pedophile's dream to make peace with his past comes true transforming the interaction with the child to an exercise in wish fulfillment.

IV. Sex with children is a shared psychosis

The pedophile treats "his" chosen child as an object, an extension of himself, devoid of a separate existence and denuded of distinct needs. He finds the child's submissiveness and gullibility gratifying. He frowns on any sign of personal autonomy and regards it as a threat. By intimidating, cajoling, charming, and making false promises, the abuser isolates his prey from his family, school, peers, and from the rest of society and, thus, makes the child's dependence on him total.

To the pedophile, the child is a "transitional object" - a training ground on which to exercise his adult relationship skills. The pedophile erroneously feels that the child will never betray and abandon him, therefore guaranteeing "object constancy".

The pedophile – stealthily but unfailingly – exploits the vulnerabilities in the psychological makeup of his victim. The child may have low self-esteem, a fluctuating sense of self-worth, primitive defence mechanisms, phobias, mental health problems, a disability, a history of failure, bad relations with parents, siblings, teachers, or peers, or a tendency to blame herself, or to feel inadequate (autoplastic neurosis). The kid may come from an abusive family or environment – which conditioned her or him to expect abuse as inevitable and "normal". In extreme and rare cases – the victim is a masochist, possessed of an urge to seek ill-treatment and pain.

The pedophile is the guru at the center of a cult. Like other gurus, he demands complete obedience from his "partner". He feels entitled to adulation and special treatment by his child-mate. He punishes the wayward and the straying lambs. He enforces discipline.

The child finds himself in a twilight zone. The pedophile imposes on him a shared psychosis, replete with persecutory delusions, "enemies", mythical narratives, and apocalyptic scenarios if he is flouted. The child is rendered the joint guardian of a horrible secret.

The pedophile's control is based on ambiguity, unpredictability, fuzziness, and [ambient abuse](#). His ever-shifting whims exclusively define right versus wrong, desirable and unwanted, what is to be pursued and what to be avoided. He alone determines rights and obligations and alters them at will.

The typical pedophile is a micro-manager. He exerts control over the minutest details and behaviors. He punishes severely and abuses withholders of information and those who fail to conform to his wishes and goals.

The pedophile does not respect the boundaries and privacy of the (often reluctant and terrified) child. He ignores his or her wishes and treats children as objects or instruments of gratification. He seeks to control both situations and people compulsively.

The pedophile acts in a patronizing and condescending manner and criticizes often. He alternates between emphasizing the minutest faults (devalues) and exaggerating the looks, talents, traits, and skills (idealizes) of the child. He is wildly unrealistic in his expectations – which legitimizes his subsequent abusive conduct.

Narcissistic pedophiles claim to be infallible, superior, talented, skillful, omnipotent, and omniscient. They often lie and confabulate to support these unfounded claims and to justify their actions. Most pedophiles suffer from cognitive deficits and reinterpret reality to fit their fantasies.

In extreme cases, the pedophile feels above the law – any kind of law. This grandiose and haughty conviction leads to [criminal acts](#), [incestuous](#) or polygamous relationships, and recurrent friction with the authorities.

V. The pedophile regards sex with children as an ego-booster

Subteen children are, by definition, "inferior". They are physically weaker, dependent on others for the fulfillment of many of their needs, cognitively and emotionally immature, and easily manipulated. Their fund of knowledge is limited and their skills restricted. His relationships with children buttress the pedophile's twin grandiose delusions of omnipotence and omniscience. Compared to his victims, the pedophiles is always the stronger, the wiser, the most skillful and well-informed.

VI. Sex with children guarantees companionship

Inevitably, the pedophile considers his child-victims to be his best friends and companions. Pedophiles are lonely, erotomaniac, people.

The pedophile believes that he is in love with (or simply loves) the child. Sex is merely one way to communicate his affection and caring. But there are other venues.

To show his keen interest, the common pedophile keeps calling the child, dropping by, writing e-mails, giving gifts, providing services, doing unsolicited errands "on the kid's behalf", getting into relationships with the preteen's parents, friends,

teachers, and peers, and, in general, making himself available (stalking) at all times. The pedophile feels free to make legal, financial, and emotional decisions for the child.

The pedophile intrudes on the victim's privacy, disrespects the child's express wishes and personal boundaries and ignores his or her emotions, needs, and preferences. To the pedophile, "[love](#)" means enmeshment and clinging coupled with an overpowering separation anxiety (fear of being abandoned).

Moreover, no amount of denials, chastising, threats, and even outright hostile actions convince the erotomaniac that the child not in love with him. He knows better and will make the world see the light as well. The child and his guardians are simply unaware of what is good for the kid. The pedophile determinedly sees it as his or her task to bring life and happiness into the child's dreary and unhappy existence.

Thus, regardless of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the pedophile is convinced that his feelings are reciprocated - in other words, that the child is equally infatuated with him or her. He interprets everything the child does (or refrains from doing) as [coded messages](#) confessing to and conveying the child's interest in and eternal devotion to the pedophile and to the "relationship".

Some (by no means all) pedophiles are socially-inapt, awkward, [schizoid](#), and suffer from a host of [mood](#) and anxiety disorders. They may also be legitimately involved with the child (e.g., stepfather, former spouse, teacher, gym instructor, sibling) - or with his parents (for instance, a former boyfriend, a one night stand, colleagues or co-workers). They are driven by their all-consuming loneliness and all-pervasive fantasies.

Consequently, pedophiles [react badly](#) to any perceived rejection by their victims. They turn on a dime and become dangerously [vindictive](#), out to destroy the source of their mounting frustration. When the "relationship" looks hopeless, some pedophiles violently embark on a spree of self-destruction.

Pedophilia is to some extent a culture-bound syndrome, defined as it is by the chronological age of the child involved. Ephebophilia, for instance - the exclusive sexual infatuation with teenagers - is not considered to be a form of pedophilia (or even paraphilia). The very idea of impermissible (and, later, illegal) sex with children has emerged in the West hand in hand with the novel concept of childhood. As Western dominance and values spread globally, so did Western mores and ethics.

In some cultures, societies and countries (Afghanistan, for instance) the age of consent is as low as 12. The marriageable age in Britain until the end of the nineteenth century was 10. Sex and genital foreplay with children was common,

encouraged and even medically-prescribed literally all over the world until 150 years ago. Incest and pedophilia were often linked and sanctioned.

Various religious texts – including the Jewish Talmud, surprisingly progressive for its time – permit sexual relations, including [incest](#), as early as age 3 (for a girl) or 8 (for a boy). Pedophilia was and is a common and socially-condoned practice in certain tribal societies and isolated communities (the Island of Pitcairn).

It would, therefore, be wise to redefine pedophilia as an attraction to or sexual acts with prepubescent children or with people of the equivalent mental age (e.g., retarded) in contravention of social, legal, and cultural accepted practices.

The committee that is writing the next edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) is considering to render hebephilia (when adults are sexually attracted to teenagers around the time of puberty) a subtype of pedophilia and to rename it pedohebephilia.

“The rows over hebephilia and paraphilic coercive disorder aren't academic, because 20 US states have passed laws that allow sex offenders who have served their sentences to be detained indefinitely in a secure hospital if they are deemed "sexual predators" ([New Scientist, 24 February 2007, p 6](#)). This can only be done if the offenders have a psychiatric disorder that increases their risk of reoffending - which few do, according to DSM-IV. (A critic) says that if hebephilia and paraphilic coercive disorder make it into DSM-V, they will be seized upon to consign men to a lifetime of incarceration.” (New Scientist, “Psychiatry’s Civil War”, December 2009)

Sexual Fetishism: The Object is Desire

The sexual fetish is like "the fetich in which the savage sees the embodiment of his god"

S. Freud, "Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex" (1905)

A. The Disorder

The propensity to regard and treat other people (caregivers, parents) as objects (to "objectify" them) is an inevitable phase of personal development and growth during the formative years (6 months to 3 years). As psychoanalysis and the [Object Relations school of psychology](#) teach us, we outgrow this immature way of relating to our human environment and instead develop a sense of [empathy](#).

Yet, some of us remain "fixated" and do not progress into full-fledged adulthood. Arguably the most ostentatious manifestation of such retardation is the sexual paraphilia known as fetishism.

There are three types of fetishes:

- I. An [inanimate object](#), usually with a sexual connotation (such as a bra);
- II. A **body part** that is clearly still connected to a complete body, dead or alive (e.g., hair, feet);
- III. A **reified trait**, usually a deformity or idiosyncrasy that implies inferiority, helplessness, or dependence (for instance, a lame, or grotesquely obese, or hunchbacked person).

Consequently, there are three categories of fetishism and fetishists:

- I. **Objective fetishists**, for whom the inanimate fetish stands for and symbolizes a desired whole that is out of reach;
- II. **Somatic fetishists**, for whom the body part stands for and symbolizes a coveted human body (and, by extension, a relationship) that is unattainable;
- III. **Abstract fetishists**, who latch on to a trait or a characteristic as a means to indirectly interact with their "defective" bearer and thus fulfill the fetishist's [grandiose fantasies](#) of omnipotence and innate superiority ([pathological narcissism](#)).

Arguably, people who prefer autoerotic, partialist, necrophilic, coprophilic, urophilic, or anonymous sex are also fetishists with the fetish being their own bodies or the organs or excretions of their sex partners.

Sexual fetishism is predicated on a pathological sexual attachment to a fetish. The fetishist climaxes only in the presence of the fetish and cannot reach orgasm otherwise. In the absence of their fetish, most fetishists are sexually dysfunctional (for instance, they suffer from erectile dysfunction or are sexually hypoactive). Some forms of fetishism involve sado-masochistic and domination/submission fantasies (with fetishes such as feet or boots and shoes).

The circumstances surrounding the sexual encounter are immaterial to the fetishist, as is his environment. Thus, a fetishist who is fixated on bras or feet is unlikely to mind the physical characteristics of the proprietress of either.

This "tunnel vision" is common to other mental health disorders, such as the [autistic spectrum](#), schizophrenic, or somatoform ones. It may indicate the existence of underlying mental health problems or traumas that either give rise or exacerbate fetishism.

Fetishism can be confined to recurrent and intense fantasies and urges, or acted upon (behavioral). It invariably involves masturbation. The fetishist interacts with

his fetish in five ways: by watching it (worn by a sex partner or as an isolated item); by holding it; by rubbing it or against it; by smelling it; and by vividly fantasizing about it.

B. Etiology

The fetish has to be "exactly right" in smell, texture, and appearance. Fetishists often go to great length to make sure that their fetish is just "the way it should be". It would seem that fetishes are "triggers", akin to objects that provoke flashbacks and panic attacks in the [post-traumatic stress disorder](#). It stands to reason, therefore, that the same mental mechanism gives rise to both: association of learning.

Memory has been proven to be [state-dependent](#): information learnt in specific mental, physical, or emotional states is most easily recalled in similar states. Conversely, in a process known as redintegration, mental and emotional states are completely invoked and restored when only a single element is encountered and experienced (a smell, a taste, a sight).

In 1877, the French psychologist Alfred Binet (1857-1911) suggested that fetishism is the outcome of a repeated co-occurrence of an object (the fetish) and sexual arousal. The more frequent the association, the more entrenched, persistent, and enhanced it becomes (i.e., the stronger the allure of the fetish and the more secure its exclusivity as a modus of sexual expression).

Behaviorist psychologists largely concurred with Binet, though they preferred to use the term "conditioning", rather than "association". Others (Wilson, 1981) suggested that fetishism is nothing but faulty imprinting. Yet, imprinting has never been demonstrated in humans and fetishists, whatever we may think of their predilections, are human beings.

Fetishes gain in strength when other avenues of sexual gratification are not available owing to extreme shyness, fear of sex, a physiological dysfunction, or socio-cultural inhibitions. Thus, fetishism should be more prevalent in sexually repressive cultures and societies and among women, homosexuals, and other sexual minorities. Yet, fetishism has been noted mostly among men, both homosexual and heterosexual. The phenomenon may go under-reported among women, though.

Western society encourages what the sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld called "partial attractiveness". Women are taught to emphasize certain organs and areas of their body, particular fashion accessories and clothing items, and [gender-specific traits](#). These serve as "healthy and socially-acceptable fetishes" to which males respond.

Other "explanations" of fetishism are so convoluted that they either defy reason or cannot be regarded as science by any stretch of the word. Thus, Freud suggested (Standard Edition, Vol. 21, pp. 147-157, 1927) that fetishism is the outcome of an unresolved castration anxiety in childhood. The fetishist attempts to ward off the lingering stress by maintaining unconsciously that women are really possessed of an occult penis and are, thus, made "whole". Fetishes, in other words, are symbolic representations of phalli.

In his article "Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defense" (Standard Edition, Vol. 23, pp. 275-8), Freud offered yet another mechanism. He postulated that the fetishist's Ego harbors two coexistent, fully functional, and hermetically sealed "attitudes" towards external reality: one taking the world into account and the other ignoring it.

Adherents of the Object Relations school of psychodynamics, such as Donald Winnicott, consider fetishes to be "transitional objects" that outgrew their usefulness. The fetish originally allowed the child to derive comfort and compensate for the withdrawal of the Primary Object (the mother, or caregiver). Winnicott, too, believes that the fetish amounts to an anxiety-ameliorating substitute for the missing maternal phallus.

C. Apotemnophilia, Acrotomophilia, Body Integrity Dysphoria (BID)

Body Integrity Dysphoria (aka BIID: Body Integrity Identity Disorder) appears only in the ICD 11. It is the overwhelming desire to be rendered disabled (usually by amputating a limb) or the extreme discomfort with being able-bodied. Confusingly, it has several diametrically opposed clinical manifestations, the most prevalent being apotemnophilia (the wish to be amputated) and acrotomophilia (being sexually aroused exclusively with a disabled partner, usually an amputee). Acrotomophiles enjoy dominating the amputee partner during sex and are stimulated by the need to position her and take care of her needs.

BID should not be confused with somatoparaphrenia ("transabled": denying ownership of a limb – usually the left arm - or of an entire half of the body, typically the left one, in the face of evidence to the contrary) or with asomatognosia (loss of recognition of one's limbs and mistaking them for other people's, reversed upon confronting proof of body integralness).

In general, single leg amputations with a stump are preferred to any other intervention, to bilateral disability, or to deafness and blindness. Otherwise ***“(d)evotees adhere to standard conceptions of attractiveness in all other matters outside of amputations”(Solvang, 2007).***

BID patients present with a mismatch between the mental map of the body and its actual layout (possibly an error in proprioception or kinaesthesia mediated via

damage to specific proprioceptors, mechanosensory neurones, or owing to problems with the vestibular system). Sufferers of BID seek to remedy this incongruence by removing the redundant, colonizing, or alien parts thus restoring a sexually exciting (autoerotic), aesthetic, perceived wholeness via self-mutilation (the same way cancer patients resent their tumors and seek to excise them or, maybe, the same as pregnant women who feel whole only when the baby is expelled from their bodies in childbirth). The anger felt towards the superfluous body part gives rise to sexual excitation (sex involves sublimated aggression in multiple ways).

BID may be reconceived as a body dysmorphia. BID patients resort to role play (for example: the use of prostheses or casts) and, in extremely rare cases, self-harm. The preference for the surgical removal of left-sided organs indicates damage to the right parietal lobe. The line of desired amputation remains stable over the life span and skin conductance is markedly different above and below it.

We can only speculate as to the psychology of BID. Modifying our bodies in order to attract mates and to keep them and also to conform to social mores regarding body image is common practice: makeup, diets, and plastic and cosmetic surgeries are all examples. So, the aforementioned restoration of a sense of corporeal completeness may be one important reason.

Controlling a disabled and dependent partner in order to fend off debilitating abandonment anxiety (akin to the psychodynamic of Borderline and Dependent Personality Disorders) may be another. Such etiology may indicate the existence of underlying narcissism: narcissists psychologically objectify their partners, reduce them to body parts or fetishes, and seek to disable them mentally and also by rendering them physically ill.

Pedophilia may be a form of acrotomophilia: children are not yet fully formed and are socially and functionally “disabled”. There is also the issue of infantilization (the wish to be taken care of and to avoid having to grow up to be an adult). In Acrotomophilia, the reverse dynamic applies: parentifying. The acrotomophilic is grandiose (“I can see beyond the body into the soul”) and acts as a benevolent and caring parent to his disabled or deformed intimate partner, perhaps in an attempt to re-enact and resolve early childhood conflicts with caregivers with a hoped-for different outcome.

Finally, the ability and courage to modify the body is an autoerotic “private ritual of self-ownership and freedom of choice”, a reassertion of self-control also witnessed in [eating disorders](#).

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Psychosexual Stages of Personal Development

The Viennese neurologist, Sigmund Freud, was among the first to offer a model of psychological development in early childhood (within the framework of psychoanalysis). He closely linked the sex drive (libido) to the formation of personality and described five psychosexual stages, four of which are centered around various erogenous zones in the body.

The pursuit of pleasure ("the pleasure principle") and the avoidance of pain drive the infant to explore his or her self and the world at large. Pleasure is inextricably linked to sexual gratification. In the oral phase (from birth to 24 months), the baby focuses on the tongue, lips, and mouth and derives gratification from breast feeding, thumb sucking, biting, swallowing, and other oral exploratory activities.

This is naturally followed by the anal stage (24 to 36 months). The baby immensely enjoys defecation and related bowel movements. But it is also the first time in his or her life that the toddler is subjected to the censure and displeasure of caretakers. Hitherto unconditionally adoring adults now demand that the infant delay gratification, relieve himself only in the bathroom, and not play with his feces. This experience - of hitherto unprecedented adult approbation - can be traumatic.

The phallic stage (age 3 to 6 years) involves the discovery of the penis and clitoris as foci of pleasurable experience. This tantalizing novelty is coupled with sexual desire directed at the parent of the opposite sex (boys are attracted to their mothers and girls, to their fathers). The child overtly and covertly competes with the same-sex parent for the desired parent's attention: boys joust with their fathers and girls with their mothers. These are the famous Oedipal and Electra complexes.

If the parent is insufficiently mature or narcissistic and encourages the attentions of the child in acts of covert (emotional) and overt (physical) incest, it could lead to the development of certain mental health disorders, among them the Histrionic, Narcissistic, and Borderline personality disorders. Doting, over-indulgence, and smothering are, therefore, forms of child abuse. Sexual innuendo, treating the child as an adult or substitute partner, or regarding one's

offspring as an extension of one's self also constitute abusive conduct.

The phallic stage is followed by 6 to 7 years of latent sexuality that is rekindled in puberty. Adolescence is a period of personal development labeled by Freud the genital phase. In the previous rungs of psychosexual evolution, the child's own body was the source of sexual pleasure. Hitherto, the adolescent and young adult seeks sexual gratification from and invests sexual energy in others. This object-relatedness is what we call mature love.

The “sexual revolution” of the 1960s was the culmination of a process which started more than two centuries before, when Carolus Linnaeus introduced explicit and “shocking” sexual references into his botanical taxonomy. But Freud was the one who explored our “dirty minds” with the avidity of a treasure-hunting archaeologist. His work rendered legitimate topics of study human sexuality and repressed, socially unacceptable drives. He converted the lowliest fantasies into organizing principles of our inner world, possessed with an explanatory power sufficient to account for our daily conduct and even our dreams.

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Sex and Personality Disorders

Our sexual behavior expresses not only our psychosexual makeup but also the entirety of our personality. Sex is the one realm of conduct which involves the full gamut of emotions, cognitions, socialization, traits, heredity, and learned and acquired behaviors. By observing one's sexual predilections and acts, the trained psychotherapist and diagnostician can learn a lot about the patient.

Inevitably, the sexuality of patients with personality disorders is thwarted and stunted. In the Paranoid Personality Disorder, sex is depersonalized and the sexual partner is dehumanized. The paranoid is besieged by persecutory delusions and equates intimacy with life-threatening vulnerability, a "breach in the defenses" as it were. The paranoid uses sex to reassure himself that he is still in control and to quell his anxiety.

The patient with Schizoid Personality Disorder is asexual. The schizoid is not interested in maintaining any kind of relationship and avoids interactions with others - including sexual encounters. He prefers solitude and solitary activities to any excitement sex can offer. The Schizotypal Personality Disorder and the Avoidant Personality Disorder have a similar effect on the patient but for different reasons: the schizotypal is acutely discomfited by intimacy and avoids close relationships in which his oddness and eccentricity will be revealed and, inevitably, derided or decried. The Avoidant remains aloof and a recluse in order to conceal her self-perceived shortcomings and flaws. The avoidant mortally fears rejection and criticism. The schizoid's asexuality is a result of indifference - the schizotypal's and avoidant's, the outcome of social anxiety.

Patients with Histrionic Personality Disorder (mostly women) leverage their body, appearance, sex appeal, and sexuality to gain narcissistic supply (attention) and to secure attachment, however fleeting. Sex is used by histrionics to prop up their self-esteem and to regulate their labile sense of self-worth. Histrionics are, therefore, "inappropriately seductive" and have multiple sexual liaisons and partners.

The sexual behavior of histrionics is virtually indistinguishable from that of the somatic narcissist (patient with Narcissistic Personality Disorder) and the psychopath (patient with Antisocial Personality Disorder). But while the histrionic is overly-emotional, invested in intimacy, and self-dramatizing ("drama queen"), the somatic narcissist and the psychopath are cold and calculating.

The Somatic narcissist and the psychopath use their partners' bodies to masturbate with and their sexual conquests serve merely to prop up their wavering self-confidence (somatic narcissist) or to satisfy a physiological need (psychopath). The somatic narcissist and psychopath have no sexual playmates - only sexual playthings. Having conquered the target, they discard it, withdraw and move on heartlessly.

The cerebral narcissist is indistinguishable from the schizoid: he is asexual and prefers activities and interactions which emphasize his intelligence or intellectual achievements. Many cerebral narcissists are celibate even when married.

Patients with Borderline Personality Disorder and Dependent Personality Disorder both suffer from abandonment and separation anxieties and are clinging, demanding, and emotionally labile - but their sexual behavior is distinguishable. The borderline uses her sexuality to reward or punish her mate. The dependent uses it to "enslave" and condition her lover or spouse. The borderline withholds sex or offers it in accordance with the ups and downs of her tumultuous and vicissitudinal relationships. The codependent tries to make her mate addicted to her particular brand of sexuality: submissive, faintly masochistic, and experimental.

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Narcissists, Sex and Fidelity:

The Somatic and the Cerebral Narcissist

Question:

Are narcissists mostly hyperactive or hypoactive sexually and to what extent are they likely to be unfaithful in marriage?

Answer:

Broadly speaking, there are two types of narcissists, loosely corresponding to the two categories mentioned in the question: the somatic narcissist and the cerebral narcissist. The cerebral narcissist reduces people to functions and the somatic narcissist regards and treats them as objects.

The somatic narcissist derives [narcissistic supply](#) from other people's reactions to his body: sexual conquests, bodybuilding, youthfulness, athletic prowess, competence in outdoor activities, or mere preening and titivating. Cerebral narcissists flaunt their intellect, intelligence, and knowledge to secure attention and adulation.

Whether one becomes a somatic narcissist or a cerebral one depends on one's upbringing as a child. If the infant is taught that it can secure the parents' love only by being intellectually brilliant - it becomes a cerebral narcissist. If it is conditioned to excel in sports or outdoor activities and to compete for sexual conquests as a prerequisite for being loved, it becomes somatic.

Narcissists are [misogynists](#). They hold women in contempt, they loathe and fear them. They seek to torment and frustrate them (either by debasing them sexually - or by withholding sex from them). They harbor ambiguous feelings towards the sexual act.

The somatic narcissist uses sex to "conquer" and "secure" new sources of [narcissistic supply](#). Consequently, the somatic rarely gets emotionally-involved with his "targets". His is a mechanical act, devoid of intimacy and commitment. The cerebral narcissist feels that sex is demeaning and degrading. Acting on one's sex drive is a primitive, basic, and common impulse. The cerebral narcissist convinces himself that he is above all that, endowed as he is with superior intelligence and [superhuman](#) self-control.

Still, sex for both types of narcissists is an instrument designed to increase the number of Sources of Narcissistic Supply. If it happens to be the most efficient weapon in the narcissist's arsenal, he makes profligate use of it. In other words: if the narcissist cannot obtain adoration, admiration, approval, applause, or any other kind of attention by other means (e.g., intellectually) – he resorts to sex.

He then becomes a satyr (or a nymphomaniac): indiscriminately engages in sex with multiple partners. His sex partners are considered by him to be objects - sources of Narcissistic Supply. It is through the processes of successful seduction and sexual conquest that the narcissist derives his badly needed narcissistic "fix".

The narcissist is likely to perfect his techniques of courting and regard his sexual exploits as a form of art. He usually exposes this side of him – in great detail – to others, to an audience, expecting to win their approval and admiration. Because the Narcissistic Supply in his case is in the very act of conquest and (what he perceives to be) subordination – the narcissist is forced to hop from one partner to another.

Some narcissists prefer "complicated" situations. If men – they prefer virgins, married women, frigid or lesbian women, etc. The more "difficult" the target – the more rewarding the narcissistic outcome. Such a narcissist may be married, but he does not regard his extra-marital affairs as either immoral or a breach of any explicit or implicit contract between him and his spouse.

He keeps explaining to anyone who cares to listen that his other sexual partners are nothing to him, meaningless, that he is merely taking advantage of them and that they do not constitute a threat and should not be taken seriously by his spouse. In his mind a clear separation exists between the honest "woman of his life" (really, a saint) and the whores that he is having sex with.

With the exception of the meaningful women in his life, he tends to view all females in a bad light. His behaviour, thus, achieves a dual purpose: securing Narcissistic Supply, on the one hand – and re-enacting old, unresolved conflicts and traumas (abandonment by Primary Objects and the Oedipal conflict, for instance).

When inevitably abandoned by his spouse – the narcissist is veritably shocked and hurt. This is the sort of crisis, which might drive him to psychotherapy. Still, deep inside, he feels compelled to continue to pursue precisely the same path. His abandonment is cathartic, purifying. Following a period of deep depression and suicidal ideation – the narcissist is likely to feel cleansed, invigorated, unshackled, ready for the next round of hunting.

But there is another type of narcissist. He also has bouts of sexual hyperactivity in which he trades sexual partners and tends to regard them as objects. However, with him, this is a secondary behaviour. It appears mainly after major narcissistic traumas and crises.

A painful divorce, a devastating personal financial upheaval – and this type of narcissist adopts the view that the "old" (intellectual) solutions do not work anymore. He frantically gropes and searches for new ways to attract attention, to restore his False Ego (=his grandiosity) and to secure a subsistence level of Narcissistic Supply.

Sex is handy and is a great source of the right kind of supply: it is immediate, sexual partners are interchangeable, the solution is comprehensive (it encompasses all the aspects of the narcissist's being), natural, highly charged, adventurous, and pleasurable. Thus, following a life crisis, the cerebral narcissist is likely to be deeply involved in sexual activities – very frequently and almost to the exclusion of all other matters.

However, as the memories of the crisis fade, as the narcissistic wounds heal, as the Narcissistic Cycle re-commences and the balance is restored – this second type of narcissist reveals his true colours. He abruptly loses interest in sex and in all his sexual partners. The frequency of his sexual activities deteriorates from a few times a day – to a few times a year. He reverts to intellectual pursuits, sports, politics, voluntary activities – anything but sex.

The cerebral narcissist renders himself unattractive to his partners by gaining weight, neglecting his body and personal hygiene, not attending to his rotting teeth and crumbling health, and dressing shabbily. This self-inflicted and ostentatious abuse has the effect of bringing sexual and physical intimacy to a screeching halt and forcing his mate or spouse into patterns of behavior and lifestyle alien to her nature: if she is a codependent and fears abandonment she abjures sex altogether (becomes asexual) and if she is not, she is forced into adultery and promiscuity.

This kind of narcissist is afraid of encounters with the opposite sex and is even more afraid of emotional involvement or commitment that he fancies himself prone to develop following a sexual encounter. In general, such a narcissist withdraws not only sexually – but also emotionally. If married – he loses all overt interest in his spouse, sexual or otherwise. He confines himself to his world and makes sure that he is sufficiently busy to preclude any interaction with his nearest (and supposedly dearest).

He becomes completely immersed in "big projects", lifelong plans, a vision, or a cause – all very rewarding narcissistically and all very demanding and time

consuming. In such circumstances, sex inevitably becomes an obligation, a necessity, or a maintenance chore reluctantly undertaken to preserve his sources of supply (his family or household).

The cerebral narcissist does not enjoy sex and by far prefers masturbation or "objective", emotionless sex, like consuming porn, or, much more rarely, group sex, or visiting prostitutes. "I practice the safest and most thrilling sex there is: masturbating to pornography". Actually, he uses his mate or spouse as an "alibi", a shield against the attentions of other women, an insurance policy which preserves his virile image while making it socially and morally commendable for him to avoid any intimate or sexual contact with others.

Ostentatiously ignoring women other than his wife (a form of aggression I call "ostentatious fidelity") he feels righteous in saying: "I am a faithful husband". Women who show interest in or approach him are, by definition, immoral [sluttish whores](#) for attempting to break up his marriage. At the same time, he feels hostility towards his spouse for ostensibly preventing him from freely expressing his sexuality, for isolating him from carnal pleasures.

The narcissist's thwarted logic goes something like this: "I am married/attached to this woman. Therefore, I am not allowed to be in any form of contact with other women which might be interpreted as more than casual or businesslike. This is why I refrain from having anything to do with women – because I am being faithful, as opposed to most other immoral men.

However, I do not like this situation. I envy my free peers. They can have as much sex and romance as they want to – while I am confined to this marriage, chained by my wife, my freedom curbed. I am angry at her and I will punish her by abstaining from having sex with her."

To be celibate, rationalizes the cerebral narcissist, is to be *more* human, not less so. To abstain from sex is to set oneself apart from the base desires of the animal kingdom. Many religions proffer the view that celibacy is a requisite step on the path to enlightenment.

Thus frustrated, the narcissist minimises all manner of intercourse with his close circle (spouse, children, parents, siblings, very intimate friends): sexual, verbal, or emotional. He limits himself to the rawest exchanges of information and isolates himself socially.

His reclusion insures against a future hurt and avoids the intimacy that he so dreads. But, again, this way he also secures abandonment and the replay of old, unresolved, conflicts. Finally, he really is left alone by everyone, with no Secondary Sources of Supply.

In his quest to find new sources, he again embarks on ego-mending bouts of sex, followed by the selection of a spouse or a mate (a Secondary Narcissistic Supply Source). Then the cycle re-commence: a sharp drop in sexual activity, emotional absence and cruel detachment leading to abandonment.

The cerebral narcissist is mostly sexually loyal to his spouse. He alternates between what appears to be hyper-sexuality and asexuality (really, forcefully repressed sexuality). In the second phase, he feels no sexual urges, bar the most basic. He is, therefore, not compelled to "cheat" upon his mate, betray her, or violate the marital vows. He is much more interested in preventing a worrisome dwindling of the kind of Narcissistic Supply that really matters. Sex, he says to himself, contentedly, is for those who can do no better.

This is not affected abstinence or grandiose celibacy, though. The repressed libido all but vanishes and, in this sense, the cerebral narcissist is intermittently asexual, albeit never sex-averse. Many cerebral narcissists are also [schizoids](#) and avoid gratuitous social contact as they do sexual congress.

Both types of avoidance have similar psychodynamic roots: fear of loss of control and of escalation as others are seen to dictate the frequency, intensity, and details of sexual or social encounters (the cerebral narcissist may end up being bored out of his mind, or compelled to participate in activities he would rather avoid) and the perception of sex and gregariousness as breaches of personal boundaries: sexual or social partners know no limits and are liable to be all over the cerebral narcissist if he allows them, driving him to defend his privacy aggressively and unpleasantly.

Paradoxically, once forced into the action, the cerebral narcissist finds both sex and socializing to be pleasurable and enjoyable activities. But, he simply lacks the willpower and predilection to initiate or to participate in these interactions unless absolutely coerced to.

Somatic narcissists tend to verbal exhibitionism. They tend to brag in graphic details about their conquests and exploits. In extreme cases, they might introduce "live witnesses" and revert to total, classical exhibitionism. This sits well with their tendency to "objectify" their sexual partners, to engage in emotionally-neutral sex (group sex, for instance) and to indulge in autoerotic sex.

The exhibitionist sees himself reflected in the eyes of the beholders. This constitutes the main sexual stimulus, this is what turns him on. This outside "look" is also what defines the narcissist. There is bound to be a connection. One (the exhibitionist) may be the culmination, the "pure case" of the other (the narcissist).

The narcissist masturbates with and in his partner's body. She is an inert object. He does things to her - never with her. He rarely bothers to ascertain her likes and dislikes. And because narcissists are misogynists, sex with the narcissist is frequently sadistic, painful, repulsive, and humiliating. The partner feels used if not abused. Many describe the encounters as "sick and perverted". Yet, counterfactually, the narcissist considers himself to be the world's greatest lover. Moreover: he coerces his unfortunate sexual partners to uphold this grandiose fantasy and its attendant delusions.

He is likely to enquire if he is the best lover the woman has ever had, how many times she climaxed, if she has had with him experiences she had never had with another man. Sex with the narcissist is akin to an anxiety producing 100 meters dash coupled with a reality TV quiz.

The partner would do well to lie and acquiesce, to tell the narcissist that his was the best sex she has ever had and that he is, by far, the most endowed, creative, accomplished, and skilled of lovers. Narcissists do not take well to being contradicted, criticized, or disagreed with. Advice is not welcome. No equal partnership bladderdash here.

But the deception has to be subtle and convincing because if the narcissist finds out that he had been conned about his sexual prowess it constitutes severe narcissistic injury and produces narcissistic rage or even withdrawal.

Cerebral narcissists go through somatic phases in order to acquire or Hoover new life partners. It is akin to the dynamic of rape: not about sex, but about domination, power, and control in a dyad. The cerebral seeks to leverage spectacular accomplished sex to engender submission, dependence, and addiction in the prospective and actual partner. Like the somatic, the aim is conquest – but, unlike the somatic, the cerebral settles for long-term liaisons.

Once the target is acquired (or if the potential target is deemed unsuitable for the “job”: inadequate, frustrating, demanding, or unavailable), the cerebral reverts to his habitual asexuality or hyposexuality, his libido spent and now sublimated into intellectual pursuits.

This curious motivational pattern also accounts for the cerebral's reaction to being cheated on: not jealousy, but rage at the narcissistic injury, at the loss of control and disempowerment, and at the depleting waste of scarce resources (like time and money) invested in the cheating partner.

The cerebral remains sexually exclusive as long as he keeps getting fed the 3 Ss: Supply (narcissistic or sadistic: adulating companionship), Services (homemaking, secretarial, business), and (rarely) Sex. A potential target and an actual partner should satisfy any 2 out of 3 Ss unobtrusively and uncritically. Cerebrals sometimes resort to maintaining two or more concurrent intimate relationships to meet all 3 Ss.

Cerebrals are transactional (“what’s in it for me”). They find sex boring, repetitive, limited, and medically perilous. Sex requires tedious and grating reciprocity coupled with inordinate amounts of investment - but offers only marginal variability and little ROI.

At best, the cerebral masters some passing arousal while he interacts with an objectified female body, often in kinky or humiliating ways, her submission as confirmatory of his conquest. Typically, deficient in both emotions and empathy – the cerebral is utterly turned off by his profound disinterest in his partner’s humdrum personality and life.

The cerebral perceives sex as a lamentable and repetitive maintenance chore which consumes precious hours better dedicated to truly pleasurable pursuits, like reading or writing, or watching documentaries, or doing research.

Contrary to misinformation online, cerebrals abhor casual sex for several psychodynamic reasons: 1. It is perceived as aimless (no acquisition, only momentary copulation); 2. The fact that the female wants no further contact after the sexual encounter is a severe narcissistic injury, challenging the cerebral’s grandiose sense of uniqueness and addictive irresistibility. Ironically, the cerebral is as faithful as they come owing to this confluence of aforementioned factors.

But the cerebral is not devoid of deceit. He is the epitome of false advertising: In the initial phases of courting, he is invariably hypersexed: pyrotechnic fireworks ensue in bed. But this is merely a show off of yet another superior skill, like the cerebral’s intellect, or his sense of humor. Unfurled, this peacock’s train is merely intended to attract, addict, and dominate before it is retracted. It is not on permanent display.

Cerebrals reject, abuse, and withhold as their three main modes of communication. They absent themselves both emotionally and sexually. No wonder their intimate partners end up with other men, any men: even fractions

of affection, comfort, emotions, attention, and sex are vastly preferable to the inanimate wasteland of the faux and servile togetherness with a cerebral.

Narcissists cheat on their spouses, commit adultery and have extramarital affairs and liaisons for a variety of reasons which reflect disparate psychodynamic processes:

1. In the quest for narcissistic supply, the [somatic narcissist](#) resorts to serial sexual conquests.
2. [Narcissists are easily bored](#) (they have a low boredom threshold) and they have a low tolerance for boredom. Sexual dalliances alleviate this nagging and frustrating ennui. The quest for novelty, diversions, and thrills – a vacation from his own life - is combined with a journey of self-exploration and discovery that involves “filling in the gaps” in the narcissist’s biography: a missed adolescence, an old flame, a new aspect of his personality.
3. Narcissists maintain an island and focus of stability in their life, but all the other dimensions of their existence are chaotic, unstable, and unpredictable. This "twister" formation serves many emotional needs which I expound upon [elsewhere](#). Thus, a narcissist may be a model employee and pursue a career path over decades even as he cheats on his wife and fritters their savings away.
4. Narcissists feel [superior and important](#) and so [entitled](#) to be [above the law](#) and to engage in behaviors that are frowned upon and considered socially unacceptable in others. They reject and vehemently resent all limitations and conditions placed upon them by their partners. They act on their impulses and desires unencumbered by social conventions and strictures.
5. Marriage, monogamy, and child-bearing and rearing are common activities that characterize the average person. The narcissist feels robbed of his uniqueness by these pursuits and coerced into the relationship and into roles - such as a husband and a father - that reduce him to the lowest of common denominators. This narcissistic injury leads him to rebel and reassert his superiority and specialness by maintaining extramarital affairs.
6. Narcissists are control freaks. Having a relationship implies a give-and-take and a train of compromises which the narcissist acutely interprets to mean a loss

of control over his life. To reassert control, the narcissist initiates other relationships in which he dictates the terms of engagement (love affairs).

7. Narcissists are terrified of intimacy. Their behavior is best characterized as an [approach-avoidance repetition compulsion](#). Adultery is an excellent tool in the attempt to retard intimacy and resort to a less threatening mode of interaction.

Narcissists typically claim that they have cheated in order to “put the spark back into the relationship (with the spouse or primary intimate partner.)” Of course, how exactly an act of betrayal and faithlessness can rekindle the embers of a relationship founded initially on trust and sexual and emotional exclusivity is left conveniently unsaid.

In the wake of an affair, the narcissist possesses the perfect alibi: if he does try to revive his sex life with his spouse and fails, he can proudly say: “I left no stone unturned, I even went as far as cheating on my partner – all in order to resurrect our bond!” If he doesn’t try to reanimate his sex life with his spouse, he turns it around and says: “This is proof that the relationship was doomed to start with and what I did was, therefore, not cheating. I was actually FORCED to seek sexual and emotional alternatives by the dead weight of this relationship.”

Sexual Fantasies of Narcissists and Psychopaths

Click [HERE](#) to Watch the Video

Inevitably, the sexual fantasy life of narcissists and psychopaths reflects their psychodynamic landscape: their [fear of intimacy](#), [misogyny](#), control freakiness, auto-eroticism, latent [sadism](#) and masochism, problems of gender identity, and various sexual paraphilias.

Fantasies which reflect a **fear of intimacy** involve the aggressive or violent objectification of a faceless, nameless, and sometimes sexless person, often in impersonal, alien or foreign settings (example: narratives of rape.) These usually coalesce with **misogynistic erotic storylines** in which females are humiliated, coerced into hurtful submission, and subjected to violation and degradation by one or many. Where **sadism-masochism**, [homosexuality](#), or sexual paraphilias such as [pedophilia](#) are present, they are injected into the fantasy and colour its composition and progression.

In his fantasies, the narcissist or psychopath is always in unmitigated **control** of the environment. The assemblages of bodies and limbs which populate his daydreams – his body included - are minutely choreographed to yield maximum titillation. He is like an exhibitionistic and voyeuristic porn director with an endless supply of well-endowed actors either cowed into compliance or craving it. Naturally, the narcissist's fantasies are devoid of any performance anxiety or of the need to reciprocate in the sex act by pleasing his anonymous and robotic partners.

Such imaginarium invariably leads to acts of self-stimulation, the ultimate manifestations of **auto-eroticism**. Even when the narcissist incorporates his real-life partner in his fantasies, he is bound to treat her as a mere prop, a body to masturbate with, in, or on, or an object to be “defiled” in acts such as group sex, swinging (wife-swapping), or outright sexual deviance (examples: urophilia, or coprophilia.) This crude and overt denigration serves to render her a “slut”, or a “whore” in his mind, the kind of woman with whom he can have lustful, emotion-free sex. He reserves love, involvement, and intimacy to sexless “madonna”-type, sexually inaccessible or unattainable women, such as his mother.

The somatic narcissist's and psychopath's sexual promiscuity emerges from underlying problems in **gender identity**. Many of them are closet bisexuals, cross-dressers, and prone to paraphilias such as pedophilia, fetishism, and sexual sadism or masochism. Some of them try to act out their fantasies and get their partners to assume roles commensurate with their propensities and predilections, however outlandish, illegal, or extreme.

A useful test to tell apart healthy sexual fantasies from narcissistic ones is to pose the question: would you be equally satisfied having sex with a sophisticated inflatable robotic doll as with a flesh and blood partner? If the answer is "yes", then, in all likelihood, we are dealing with a narcissist or a psychopath.

Yet, these glimpses into the thwarted and the demented rarely go down well with their significant others. The narcissist's self-exposure often elicits reactions of horror, repulsion, and estrangement. No wonder most narcissists don't even bother to share their fantasies with their “loved” ones. The cerebral narcissist merely retreats to sexual abstinence punctuated by compulsive, porn-fuelled

masturbation. The somatic narcissist compulsively hunts for new feminine prey to sacrifice on the insatiable altar of his False Self.

*Sin of self-love possesseth all mine eye
And all my soul and all my every part;
And for this sin there is no remedy,
It is so grounded inward in my heart.
Methinks no face so gracious is as mine,
No shape so true, no truth of such account;
And for myself mine own worth do define,
As I all other in all worths surmount.
But when my glass shows me myself indeed,
Beated and chopp'd with tann'd antiquity,
Mine own self-love quite contrary I read;
Self so self-loving were iniquity.
'Tis thee, myself, that for myself I praise,
Painting my age with beauty of thy days.*

(Sonnet 62, William Shakespeare)

Interview granted to Vancouver Province, November 2014

Q. Why does narcissism appear with sexual paraphilias?

A. Narcissists are addicted to [narcissistic supply](#): attention, whether positive (adulation, admiration, affirmation), or negative (being feared or hated.) They use narcissistic supply to regulate their labile (volatile) sense of self-worth. [Somatic narcissists](#) derive narcissistic supply from their body and, mainly, from their self-imputed sexual prowess, sexual conquests, and sexual exploits. They objectify their sexual partners: they treat them as mere gadgets to masturbate with and over, as glorified inflatable dolls. In truth, the somatic narcissist is auto-erotic: he makes love to himself via the agency of another person's body. Narcissists are the products of arrested development: mentally, they are children. Consequently, in the sexual act, the partner is a toy: devoid of autonomous existence, age, personal history, boundaries, needs, wishes, or fears. The narcissist plays with his newfound toy: he rattles it, takes it apart, experiments with it, releases aggression, or relates only to parts of it. These sexual behaviors are known as paraphilias.

Q. Would forms of sado-masochist, dominant-submissive sex be a manifestation of narcissism?

A. Not necessarily and not exclusively. True, many narcissists are also sadists. A minority of them are sexual sadists. Still, strictly speaking, sexual sadism is not a psychodynamic dimension of pathological narcissism. Narcissists nurture grandiose fantasies of omnipotence, but these narcissistic power trips, power plays, and mind games rarely manifest sexually and, when they do, they rarely involve or invoke classic sexual sadism.

Q. Would a pathological narcissist think in his mind that it's okay to dominate or injure another person during sex?

A. Narcissists rationalize and intellectualize their misconduct. A narcissist who is inclined to sexual sadism will construct an elaborate narrative to justify his misbehaviour and render it ineluctable, necessary, and even beneficial to the victim! Narcissists are ego-syntonic: they feel good about who they are and how they comport themselves. They firmly believe that their choices are both virtuous and wise.

Q. Do pathological narcissists typically think of themselves as a victim when things go wrong?

A. Paradoxically and ironically, narcissists have an external locus of control (aka alloplastic defenses): they blame other people and the world at large for their failures, misjudgements, defeats, misfortune, bad choices, and misconduct. The narcissist is very likely to feel that he is the victim of both circumstances and human envy-driven malice beyond his control. Most narcissists also harbor persecutory delusions: they are paranoid and ascribe their downfall to vast, elaborate, and intricate conspiracies.

[Return](#)

The Narcissist and His Family

At first, the narcissist treats newborn siblings and children as competitors for scarce narcissistic supply.

Gradually, though, he converts them into sources of attention and adulation (at this phase, incest is a distinct danger)

As they grow up and become more discerning, judgmental, and critical, the narcissist regains his erstwhile hostility towards his offspring.

Question:

Is there a "typical" relationship between the narcissist and his family?

Answer:

We are all members of a few families in our lifetime: the one that we are born to and the one(s) that we create. We all transfer hurts, attitudes, fears, hopes and desires – a whole emotional baggage – from the former to the latter. The narcissist is no exception.

The narcissist has a dichotomous view of humanity: humans are either Sources of Narcissistic Supply (and, then, idealised and over-valued) or do not fulfil this function (and, therefore, are valueless, devalued). The narcissist gets all the love that he needs from himself. From the outside he needs approval, affirmation, admiration, adoration, attention – in other words, externalised Ego boundary functions.

He does not require – nor does he seek – his parents' or his siblings' love, or to be loved by his children. He casts them as the audience in the theatre of his inflated grandiosity. He wishes to impress them, shock them, threaten them, infuse them with awe, inspire them, attract their attention, subjugate them, or manipulate them.

He emulates and simulates an entire range of emotions and employs every means to achieve these effects. He lies (narcissists are pathological liars – their very self is a false one). He acts the pitiful, or, its opposite, the resilient and reliable. He stuns and shines with outstanding intellectual, or physical capacities and achievements, or behavior patterns appreciated by the members of the family. When confronted with (younger) siblings or with his own children, the narcissist is likely to go through three phases:

At first, he perceives his offspring or siblings as a threat to his Narcissistic Supply, such as the attention of his spouse, or mother, as the case may be. They intrude on his turf and invade the Pathological Narcissistic Space. The narcissist does his best to belittle them, hurt (even physically) and humiliate them and then, when these reactions prove ineffective or counter-productive, he retreats into an imaginary world of omnipotence. A period of emotional absence and detachment ensues.

His aggression having failed to elicit Narcissistic Supply, the narcissist proceeds to indulge himself in daydreaming, delusions of grandeur, planning of future coups, nostalgia and hurt (the Lost Paradise Syndrome). The narcissist reacts this way to the birth of his children or to the introduction of new foci of attention to the family cell (even to a new pet!).

Whoever the narcissist perceives to be in competition for scarce Narcissistic Supply is relegated to the role of the enemy. Where the uninhibited expression of the aggression and hostility aroused by this predicament is illegitimate or impossible – the narcissist prefers to stay away. Rather than attack his offspring or siblings, he sometimes immediately disconnects, detaches himself emotionally, becomes cold and uninterested, or directs transformed anger at his mate or at his parents (the more "legitimate" targets).

Other narcissists see the opportunity in the "mishap". They seek to manipulate their parents (or their mate) by "taking over" the newcomer. Such narcissists monopolise their siblings or their newborn children. This way, indirectly, they benefit from the attention directed at the infants. The sibling or offspring become vicarious sources of Narcissistic Supply and proxies for the narcissist.

An example: by being closely identified with his offspring, a narcissistic father secures the grateful admiration of the mother ("What an outstanding father/brother he is"). He also assumes part of or all the credit for baby's/sibling's achievements. This is a process of annexation and assimilation of the other, a strategy that the narcissist makes use of in most of his relationships.

As siblings or progeny grow older, the narcissist begins to see their potential to be edifying, reliable and satisfactory Sources of Narcissistic Supply. His attitude, then, is completely transformed. The former threats have now become promising potentials. He cultivates those whom he trusts to be the most rewarding. Often, he inculcates in them a competitive team spirit, a xenophobic we-ness, a [cultish](#) and defensive, or even paranoid stance.

He may single out one of his children and encourage the "golden" or "sunshine" child to idolise him, to adore him, to be awed by him, to admire his deeds and capabilities, to learn to blindly trust and obey him, in short to surrender to his charisma and to become submerged in his follies-de-grandeur. The remains of the litter – the chosen one's brothers and sisters - are ignored, neglected, left to fend

off for themselves, or worse: relegated to the role of much-maligned, ridiculed, thwarted, stunted, and hated scapegoats (**watch the video [HERE](#)**).

Sometimes, the narcissistic parent uses the scapegoated offspring as a “coin” to bribe the golden child with: by humiliating and mocking the one, the parent secures the affection, bonding, and allegiance of the other. The black sheep is made to serve the golden child, to cater to his/her every need or whim, and to surrender his/her possessions and income to his/her preferred, privileged sibling.

Such discriminatory conduct emanates from the narcissistic parent’s **projected splitting**: a confluence of two psychological defense mechanisms (projection and splitting).

Splitting is a "primitive" defense mechanism. It involves the inability to integrate contradictory qualities, behaviors, and attributes of the same object into a coherent picture. The narcissist regards people around him as either all bad or all good, irredeemably black or lustrously white, implacable foes or undying friends. Splitting results in [cycles of idealization followed by devaluation](#).

But, splitting can also be applied to one's self. Patients with [personality disorders](#) often idealize themselves fantastically and grandiosely, only to harshly devalue, hate, and even harm themselves when they fail or are otherwise frustrated.

Projection is another psychological defense mechanism. We all have an image of how we "should be". Freud called it the "Ego Ideal". But sometimes we experience emotions and drives or have personal qualities which don't sit well with this idealized construct. Projection is when we attribute to others these unacceptable, discomfiting, and ill-fitting feelings and traits that we possess. This way we disown these discordant features and secure the right to criticize and chastise others for having or displaying them.

The narcissistic parent splits her personality into good and bad traits, qualities, and dimensions. She projects his or her good aspects, the ones she finds to be acceptable (ego-syntonic) or even desirable onto the golden child who then embodies and reifies everything that’s right and proper in the parent’s personality, an extension of the parent’s [grandiosity](#).

In contradistinction, the traits and qualities of himself or herself that the narcissistic parent finds bad, unacceptable, rejected, or shame-inducing are projected onto and attributed to the scapegoat child, the black sheep of the family, the reject and the outcast who is then rendered a constant reminder of the parent’s shortcomings, a challenge to her fantastic self-perception and, therefore, a permanent narcissistic injury. Such emergent roles – of scapegoat and of sunshine child – persist throughout the parent’s life and devolve even to the offspring of his children, to the grandkids. It becomes entrenched across generations.

It is at this stage that the risk of child abuse - from emotional incest and up to and including outright incest - is heightened. The narcissist is auto-erotic. He is the preferred object of his own sexual attraction. His siblings and his children share his genetic material. Molesting or having intercourse with them is as close as the narcissist gets to having sex with himself.

Moreover, the narcissist perceives sex in terms of annexation. The partner is "assimilated" and becomes an extension of the narcissist, a fully controlled and manipulated object. Sex, to the narcissist, is the ultimate act of depersonalization and objectification of the other. He actually masturbates with other people's bodies.

Minors pose little danger of criticizing the narcissist or confronting him. They are perfect, malleable and abundant sources of Narcissistic Supply. The narcissist derives gratification from having coital relations with adulating, physically and mentally inferior, inexperienced and dependent "bodies".

These roles – allocated to them explicitly and demandingly or implicitly and perniciously by the narcissist – are best fulfilled by ones whose mind is not yet fully formed and independent. The older the siblings or offspring, the more they become critical, even judgemental, of the narcissist. They are better able to put into context and perspective his actions, to question his motives, to anticipate his moves.

As they mature, they often refuse to continue to play the mindless pawns in his chess game. They hold grudges against him for what he has done to them in the past, when they were less capable of resistance. They can gauge his true stature, talents and achievements – which, usually, lag far behind the claims that he makes.

This brings the narcissist a full cycle back to the first phase. Again, he perceives his siblings or sons/daughters as threats. He quickly becomes disillusioned and devaluing. He loses all interest, becomes emotionally remote, absent and cold, rejects any effort to communicate with him, citing life pressures and the preciousness and scarceness of his time.

He feels burdened, cornered, besieged, suffocated, and claustrophobic. He wants to get away, to abandon his commitments to people who have become totally useless (or even damaging) to him. He does not understand why he has to support them, or to suffer their company and he believes himself to have been deliberately and ruthlessly trapped.

He rebels either passively-aggressively (by refusing to act or by intentionally sabotaging the relationships) or actively (by being overly critical, aggressive, unpleasant, verbally and psychologically abusive and so on). Slowly – to justify his acts to himself – he gets immersed in conspiracy theories with clear paranoid hues.

To his mind, the members of the family conspire against him, seek to belittle or humiliate or subordinate him, do not understand him, or stymie his growth. The narcissist usually finally gets what he wants and the family that he has created disintegrates to his great sorrow (due to the loss of the Narcissistic Space) – but also to his great relief and surprise (how could they have let go someone as unique as he?).

This is the cycle: the narcissist feels threatened by arrival of new family members – he tries to assimilate or annex of siblings or offspring – he obtains Narcissistic Supply from them – he overvalues and idealizes these newfound sources – as sources grow older and independent, they adopt anti narcissistic behaviours – the narcissist devalues them – the narcissist feels stifled and trapped – the narcissist becomes paranoid – the narcissist rebels and the family disintegrates.

This cycle characterises not only the family life of the narcissist. It is to be found in other realms of his life (his career, for instance). At work, the narcissist, initially, feels threatened (no one knows him, he is a nobody). Then, he develops a circle of admirers, cronies and friends which he "nurtures and cultivates" in order to obtain Narcissistic Supply from them. He overvalues them (to him, they are the brightest, the most loyal, with the biggest chances to climb the corporate ladder and other superlatives).

But following some anti-narcissistic behaviours on their part (a critical remark, a disagreement, a refusal, however polite) – the narcissist devalues all these previously idealized individuals. Now that they have dared oppose him - they are judged by him to be stupid, cowardly, lacking in ambition, skills and talents, common (the worst expletive in the narcissist's vocabulary), with an unspectacular career ahead of them.

The narcissist feels that he is misallocating his scarce and invaluable resources (for instance, his time). He feels besieged and suffocated. He rebels and erupts in a series of self-defeating and self-destructive behaviours, which lead to the disintegration of his life.

Doomed to build and ruin, attach and detach, appreciate and depreciate, the narcissist is predictable in his "death wish". What sets him apart from other suicidal types is that his wish is granted to him in small, tormenting doses throughout his anguished life.

Custody and Visitation

Click [HERE](#) to Watch the Video

[Presentation Paper](#) at the 11th Annual and First International Battered Mothers Custody Conference

The narcissist regards his children as extensions of himself, mere avatars of his inner constructs, pawns in the grand chess game that is his Life, props in the theatre of his False Self (sources of narcissistic supply), potential competitors, and bargaining chips in the inevitable showdown with a hostile world as reified by his reneging, traitorous spouse. In a custody battle, all these figments of his psychodynamics need to be adroitly addressed to achieve a favourable outcome as far as the children involved are concerned.

A parent diagnosed with full-fledged [Narcissistic Personality Disorder \(NPD\)](#) should be denied custody and be granted only restricted rights of visitation under supervision.

Narcissists accord the same treatment to children and adults. They regard both as sources of narcissistic supply, mere instruments of gratification - idealize them at first and then devalue them in favour of alternative, safer and more subservient, sources. Such treatment is traumatic and can have long-lasting emotional effects.

The narcissist's inability to acknowledge and abide by the personal boundaries set by others puts the child at heightened risk of abuse - verbal, emotional, physical, and, often, sexual. His possessiveness and panoply of indiscriminate negative emotions - transformations of aggression, such as rage and envy - hinder his ability to act as a "good enough" parent. His propensities for reckless behaviour, substance abuse, and sexual deviance endanger the child's welfare, or even his or her life.

Disabled and Challenged Children

Click [HERE](#) to Watch the Video

The narcissist regards his disabled or challenged child as an insult, a direct challenge to his self-perceived [perfection and omnipotence](#), a constant, nagging source of [negative narcissistic supply](#), and the reification and embodiment of a malevolent and hostile world which tirelessly conspires to render him a victim through misfortune and catastrophe. The precarious foundations of his [False Self](#) – and, therefore, his ability to function - are undermined by this miscegenation.

Relentlessly challenged by his defective offspring's very existence and by the persistence of its attendant painful reminders, the narcissist lashes out, seeking to persecute and penalize the sources of his excruciating frustration: the child and his mother. The narcissist holds her responsible for this failure, not himself. She brought this shame and perturbation into his otherwise fantastic life. It was she who gave issue to this new fount of torment, this permanent reminder of fallibility, imperfection, mortality, impotence, guilt, disgrace, and fear.

To rectify this wrong, to restore the interrupted balance, and to firmly regain an assured sense of his grandiosity, the narcissist resort to devaluation. He humiliates, belittles, and demeans both the unfortunate child and his suffering mother. He compares their failings unfavourably to his own wholeness. He berates and mocks them for their combined disability, frailty, weakness, meekness, and resourcelessness. He transforms then into the captive butts of his unbridled [sadism](#) and the cowed adherents of a [cult-like shared psychosis](#). Serves them well for having thus ruined his life, figures the narcissist.

Casting himself as a compassionate proponent of “tough love”, the narcissist eggs his charges on mercilessly. He contrasts their slowness with his self-imputed alacrity, their limitations with his infinite grasp, their mediocrity with his genius and acuity, and their defeats with his triumphant life, real or imagined. He harps on and leverages their insecurities and he displays his hateful contempt for this mother-child dyad with a fiery vengeance whenever he is confronted, criticized, or resisted. He may even turn violent in order to enforce the discipline of his distorted worldview and delusional exegesis of reality. By reducing them, he feels elevated yet again.

Bonding and attachment in infancy are critical determinants and predictors of well-being in adulthood. A small minority of children are born with dysfunctions – such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or [Asperger’s Disorder](#) – which prevent them from properly bonding with or attaching to the primary caregiver (mother, in most cases). Environmental factors - such as an unstable home, parental absenteeism, or a disintegrating family unit - also play a role and can lead to the emergence of Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD). Toddlers adapt to this sterile and hostile emotional landscape by regressing to an earlier phase of unbridled, self-sufficient, and solipsistic [primary narcissism](#). Disabled and challenged children of narcissistic parents may well end up being narcissists themselves, a sad but inescapable irony.

The Seriously Ill child and Munchausen by Proxy Syndrome

Click [HERE](#) to Watch the Video

Narcissistic parents of seriously ill children derive narcissistic supply from onlookers, friends, family, colleagues, and community by attracting attention to their role as saintly caretakers. They are demonstratively and ostentatiously patient, compassionate, suffering heroically, and dedicated to the child, its welfare, and ultimate healing. They flaunt the child’s sickness as a kind of a hard-won but well-deserved medal, down in the trenches with their tortured offspring, doing desperate battle with a pitiless enemy: the disease. It is an intoxicating part in the unfolding [film that is the narcissist’s life](#).

But this irresistible craving for attention should be demarcated from the sinister affliction colloquially known as Munchausen by Proxy Syndrome.

Patients afflicted with the Factitious Disorder colloquially known as “Munchausen Syndrome” seek to attract the attention of medical personnel by feigning or by self-inflicting serious illness or injury. “Munchausen by Proxy Syndrome” (Factitious Illness or Disorder by Proxy, or Imposed by Another, or FII – Fabricated or Induced Illness by Carers) involves the patient inducing illness in or causing injury to a dependent (child, old parent) in order to gain, in her capacity as a caretaker, the attention, praise, and sympathy of medical care providers. Both syndromes are forms of shared psychosis (folie a deux or a plusieurs) and “crazy-making” with hospital staff as unwilling and unwitting participants in the drama.

Superficially, this overwhelming need for consideration by figures of authority and role models (doctors, nurses, clergy, social workers) resembles the [narcissist’s](#) relentless and compulsive pursuit of [narcissistic supply](#) (which consists of attention, adulation, admiration, being feared or noted, etc.) But, there are some important differences.

To start with, the narcissist – especially the [somatic](#) variety – worships his body and cherishes his health. If anything, narcissists tend to be hypochondriacs. They are loath to self-harm and self-mutilate, let alone fake laboratory tests and consume potentially deleterious substances and medications. They are also unlikely to seriously “damage” their sources of supply (e.g., children) as long as they are compliant and adulating.

As opposed to narcissists, people with both Munchausen Syndromes desire acceptance, love, caring, relationships, and nurturing, not merely attention: theirs is an emotional need that amounts to more than the mere regulation of their sense of self-worth. They have no full-fledged [False Self](#), only a clinging, insecure, traumatized, deceitful, and needy True Self. Munchausen Syndrome may be comorbid (can be diagnosed with) personality disorders, though and the patients are [pathological liars](#), [schizoid](#), [paranoid](#), hypervigilant, and [aggressive](#) (especially when confronted.)

While narcissists are indiscriminate and “promiscuous” when it comes to their sources of narcissistic supply – anyone would do – patients with the Munchausen Syndromes derive emotional nurturance and sustenance mainly from healthcare practitioners.

Narcissistic Parents

[Narcissistic parents treat their children](#) as extensions, or mere instruments of gratification. They disrespect the child’s emerging boundaries and are, thus, abusive.

Narcissistic parents control and emotionally blackmail their offspring and instill in them [guilt, shame](#) and [codependence](#).

Question:

What are the effects that narcissistic parents have on their offspring?

Answer:

At the risk of over-simplification: narcissism tends to breed narcissism - but only a minority of the children of narcissistic parents become narcissists. This may be due to a [genetic predisposition](#) or to different life circumstances (like not being the firstborn). But **MOST** narcissists have one or more narcissistic parents or caregivers.

The narcissistic parent regards his or her child as a multi-faceted Source of Narcissistic Supply. The child is considered and treated as an extension of the narcissist. It is through the child that the narcissist seeks to settle "open scores" with the world. The child is supposed to realise the unfulfilled dreams, wishes, and fantasies of the narcissistic parent.

This "life by proxy" can develop in two ways: the narcissist can either merge with his child or be ambivalent about him. The ambivalence is the result of a conflict between the narcissist's wish to attain his narcissistic goals through the child and his pathological (destructive) envy of the child and his accomplishments.

To ameliorate the unease bred by this emotional ambivalence, the narcissistic parent resorts to a myriad of control mechanisms. These can be grouped into: **guilt-driven** ("I sacrificed my life for you"), **codependent** ("I need you, I cannot cope without you"), **goal-driven** ("We have a common goal which we can and must achieve"), **shared psychosis** or **emotional incest** ("You and I are united against the whole world, or at least against your monstrous, no-good father ...", "You are my one and only true love and passion") and **explicit** ("If you do not adhere to my principles, beliefs, ideology, religion, values, if you do not obey my instructions, I will punish you").

As Lidija Rangelovska observed, the narcissistic parent often regards himself or herself as a martyr and uses her/his alleged "suffering" as a currency, a mode of communication, an explanatory and organizing principle, which endows the lives of the parent and of his nearest and dearest with meaning, direction, message, and mission. Being introduced into the narcissist's drama is a privilege, an honor, an initiation, and the true hallmark of intimacy.

The guilt trip induced by the narcissistic parent is not time-limited because it is not linked to a specific action of the "perpetrator"; it is intended to elicit never-ending

“compensation”; and is not designed to bring on a restoration of the relationship, or a rehabilitation of the “offender.” It is a tool of control and an instrument of manipulation: the “culprit” is meant to feel guilty for merely existing and for as long as s/he exists.

This exercise of control helps to sustain the illusion that the child is a part of the narcissist. But maintaining the illusion calls for extraordinary levels of control (on the part of the parent) and obedience (on the part of the child). The relationship is typically symbiotic and emotionally turbulent.

The child fulfils another important narcissistic function – the provision of Narcissistic Supply. There is no denying the implied (though imaginary) immortality in having a child. The early (natural) dependence of the child on his caregivers, serves to assuage their fear of abandonment.

The narcissist tries to perpetuate this dependence, using the aforementioned control mechanisms. The child is the ultimate Secondary Narcissistic Source of Supply. He is always present, he admires the narcissist, he witnesses the narcissist's moments of triumph and grandeur.

Owing to his wish to be loved he can be extorted into constant giving. To the narcissist, a child is a dream come true, but only in the most egotistical sense. When the child is perceived as "reneging" on his main obligation (to provide his narcissistic parent with a constant supply of attention) – the parent's emotional reaction is harsh and revealing.

It is when the narcissistic parent is disenchanted with his child that we see the true nature of this pathological relationship. The child is totally objectified. The narcissist reacts to a breach in this unwritten contract with wells of aggression and aggressive transformations: contempt, rage, emotional and psychological abuse, and even physical violence. He tries to annihilate the real "disobedient" child and substitute it with the subservient, edifying, former version.

Interview granted to Samantha Cleaver for YourTango.com

Q. What are some common ways that a mother's narcissism can affect her daughter's relationships?

A. Depends on [how narcissistic](#) the [mother](#) is. Narcissistic parents fail to recognize and accept the personal autonomy and boundaries of [their offspring](#). They treat them as instruments of gratification or extensions of themselves. Their love is conditioned on the "performance" of their children and on how well they cater to the needs, wishes, and priorities of the parent.

Consequently, narcissistic parents oscillate between clingy emotional blackmail when they seek the child's attention, adulation, and compliance (known as "[narcissistic supply](#)") and steely [devaluation](#) and silent treatment when they wish to punish the child for refusing to toe the line.

Such inconstancy and unpredictability render the child [insecure and codependent](#). When in relationships as adults, these children feel that they have to "earn" each and every morsel of love; that they will be instantly and facily abandoned if they "underperform"; that their primary role is to "take care" of their spouse, mate, partner, or friend; and that they are less important, less endowed, less skilled, and less deserving than their significant others.

Q. What are the top concerns when daughters of narcissistic mothers start relationships? When their relationships move forward? When their relationships end?

A. Children of narcissistic parents are ill-adapted; their personality is rigid and they are prone to deploy [psychological defense mechanisms](#). Consequently, they display the same behaviors throughout the relationship, from start to finish and irrespective of changing circumstances.

As adults, offspring of narcissists tend to perpetuate the pathological primary relationship (with their narcissistic parents). They depend on other people for their emotional gratification and the performance of Ego or daily functions. They are needy, demanding, and submissive. They fear abandonment, cling and display immature behaviours in their effort to maintain the "relationship" with their companion or mate upon whom they depend. No matter what abuse is inflicted upon them – they remain in the relationship. By eagerly becoming victims, codependents seek to control their abusers.

Some of them end up as [inverted narcissists](#).

Also called "covert narcissist", this is a co-dependent who depends exclusively on narcissists (narcissist-co-dependent). If you are living with a narcissist, have a relationship with one, if you are married to one, if you are working with a narcissist, etc. – it does **NOT** mean that you are an inverted narcissist.

To "qualify" as an inverted narcissist, you must **CRAVE** to be in a relationship with a narcissist, regardless of any abuse inflicted on you by him/her. You must **ACTIVELY** seek relationships with narcissists and **ONLY** with narcissists, no matter what your (bitter and traumatic) past experience has been. You must feel **EMPTY** and **UNHAPPY** in relationships with **ANY OTHER** kind of person. Only then, and if you satisfy the other diagnostic criteria of a Dependent Personality Disorder, can you be safely labelled an "inverted narcissist".

A small minority end up being counterdependent and narcissistic, emulating and imitating their parents traits and conduct. The emotions of these children of narcissists emotions and needs are buried under "scar tissue" which had formed, coalesced, and hardened during years of one form of abuse or another. Grandiosity, a sense of [entitlement](#), a lack of [empathy](#), and overweening haughtiness usually hide gnawing insecurity and a fluctuating sense of self-worth.

Counterdependents are contumacious ([reject and despise authority](#)), fiercely independent, controlling, self-centered, and [aggressive](#). They fear intimacy and are locked into cycles of hesitant approach followed by avoidance of commitment. They are "lone wolves" and bad team players.

Counterdependence is a reaction formation. The counterdependent dreads his own weaknesses. He seeks to overcome them by projecting an image of omnipotence, omniscience, success, self-sufficiency, and superiority.

Q. How do narcissistic mothers interfere (or get involved) with their daughters' love/dating lives? How does this compare to typical mothers?

A. The narcissistic mother is a control freak and does not easily relinquish good and reliable sources of "narcissistic supply" (admiration, adulation, attention of any kind). It is the role of her children to replenish this supply, the children owe it to her. To make sure that the child does not develop boundaries, and does not become independent, or autonomous, the narcissistic parent micromanages the child's life and encourages dependent and infantile behaviors in her offspring.

Such a parent bribes the child (by offering free lodging or financial support or "help" with daily tasks) or emotionally blackmails the child (by constantly demanding help and imposing chores, claiming to be ill or disabled) or even threatens the child (for instance: to disinherit her if she does not comply with the parent's wishes). The narcissistic mother also does her best to scare away anyone who may upset this symbiotic relationship or otherwise threaten the delicate, unspoken contract. She sabotages any budding relationship her child develops with lies, deceit, and scorn.

Q. Are there any statistics that you know of that would shed light on how many people are dealing with either narcissism or a parent with narcissism?

A. According to the DSM IV-TR, Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) is diagnosed in between 2% and 16% of the population in clinical settings (between 0.5-1% of the general population). The DSM-IV-TR proceeds to tell us that most narcissists (50-75% of all patients) are men.

"The lifetime prevalence rate of NPD is approximately 0.5-1 percent; however, the estimated prevalence in clinical settings is approximately 2-16 percent.

Almost 75 percent of individuals diagnosed with NPD are male (APA, DSM IV-TR 2000)."

From the Abstract of Psychotherapeutic Assessment and Treatment of Narcissistic Personality Disorder By Robert C. Schwartz, Ph.D., DAPA and Shannon D. Smith, Ph.D., DAPA (American Psychotherapy Association, Article #3004 Annals July/August 2002)

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The Unstable Narcissist

Dependent on and addicted to fluctuating narcissistic supply, the narcissist's life and mood are volatile.

The classic narcissist maintains an island of stability in his life while the other dimensions of his existence wallow in chaos and unpredictability.

The borderline narcissist reacts to instability in one area of his life by introducing chaos into all the others.

Question:

Is the narcissist characterised by simultaneous instabilities in all the important aspects of his life?

Answer:

The narcissist is a person who derives his Ego (and Ego functions) from other people's reactions to an image he invents and projects, called the False Self (Narcissistic Supply). Since no absolute control over the quantity and quality of Narcissistic Supply is possible – it is bound to fluctuate – the narcissist's view of himself and of his world is correspondingly and equally volatile. As "public opinion" ebbs and flows, so do the narcissist's self-confidence, self-esteem, sense of self-worth, or, in other words, so does his Self. Even the narcissist's convictions are subject to a never-ending process of vetting by others.

The narcissistic personality is unstable in each and every one of its dimensions. It is the ultimate hybrid: rigidly amorphous, devoutly flexible, reliant for its sustenance on the opinion of people, whom the narcissist undervalues. A large part of this instability is subsumed under the Emotional Involvement Prevention Measures (EIPM) that I describe in the Essay. The narcissist's lability is so ubiquitous and so dominant – that it might well be described as the **ONLY** stable feature of his personality.

The narcissist does everything with one goal in mind: to attract Narcissistic Supply (attention).

An example of this kind of behaviour:

The narcissist may study a given subject diligently and in great depth in order to impress people later with this newly acquired erudition. But, having served its purpose, the narcissist lets the knowledge thus acquired evaporate. The narcissist maintains a sort of a "short-term" cell or warehouse where he stores whatever may come handy in the pursuit of Narcissistic Supply. But he is almost never really interested in what he does, studies, and experiences.

From the outside, this might be perceived as instability. But think about it this way: the narcissist is constantly preparing for life's "exams" and feels that he is on a permanent trial. It is common to forget material studied only in preparation for an exam or for a court appearance.

Short-term memory is perfectly normal. What sets the narcissist apart is the fact that, with him, this short-termism is a **CONSTANT** state of affairs and affects **ALL** his functions, not only those directly related to learning, or to emotions, or to experience, or to any single dimension of his life.

Thus, the narcissist learns, remembers and forgets not in line with his real interests or hobbies, he loves and hates not the real subjects of his emotions but one dimensional, utilitarian, cartoons constructed by him. He judges, praises and condemns – all from the narrowest possible point of view: the potential to extract Narcissistic Supply.

He asks not what he can do with the world and in it – but what can the world do for him as far as Narcissistic Supply goes. He falls in and out of love with people, workplaces, residences, vocations, hobbies, interests – because they seem to be able to provide more or less Narcissistic Supply and for no other reason.

Still, narcissists belong to two broad categories: the "compensatory stability" and the "enhancing instability" types.

I. Compensatory Stability ("Classic") Narcissists

These narcissists concentrate on one or more (but never most) aspects of their lives and "make them stable". But, they do not really invest themselves. This stability is maintained by and bought with artificial means: money, celebrity, power, thrills, or fear. These narcissists also believe that their oft-demonstrated uniqueness and superiority guarantee the unswerving loyalty and longevity of their sources of supply.

A typical example is a narcissist who changes numerous workplaces, a few careers, a myriad of hobbies, value systems or faiths. At the same time, he maintains (preserves) a relationship with a single woman (and even remains

faithful to her). She is his "island of stability". To fulfil this role, she just needs to be there for him physically.

The narcissist is dependent upon "his" woman to maintain the stability lacking in all other areas of his life (to compensate for his instability). Yet, emotional closeness is bound to threaten the narcissist. Thus, he is likely to distance himself from her and to remain detached and indifferent to most of her needs.

Despite this cruel emotional treatment, the narcissist considers her to be a point of exit, a form of sustenance, a fountain of empowerment. This mismatch between what he wishes to receive and what he is able to give, the narcissist prefers to deny, repress and bury deep in his unconscious.

This is why he is always shocked and devastated to learn of his wife's estrangement, infidelity, or intentions to divorce him. Possessed of no emotional depth, being completely one track minded – he cannot fathom the needs of others. In other words, he cannot [empathise](#).

Another – even more common – case is the "career narcissist". This narcissist marries, divorces and remarries with dizzying speed. Everything in his life is in constant flux: friends, emotions, judgements, values, beliefs, place of residence, affiliations, hobbies. Everything, that is, except his work.

His career is the island of compensating stability in his otherwise mercurial existence. This kind of narcissist is dogged by unmitigated ambition and devotion. He perseveres in one workplace or one job, patiently, persistently and blindly climbing up the corporate ladder and treading the career path. In his pursuit of job fulfilment and achievements, the narcissist is ruthless and unscrupulous – and, very often, successful.

II. Enhancing Instability ("Borderline") Narcissist

The other kind of narcissist enhances instability in one aspect or dimension of his life – by introducing instability in others. Thus, if such a narcissist resigns (or, more likely, is made redundant) – he also relocates to another city or country. If he divorces, he is also likely to resign his job.

This added instability gives this type of narcissist the feeling that all the dimensions of his life are changing simultaneously, that he is being "unshackled", that a transformation is in progress. This, of course, is an illusion. Those who know the narcissist, no longer trust his frequent "conversions", "decisions", "crises", "transformations", "developments" and "periods". They see through his pretensions, protestations, and solemn declarations into the core

of his instability. They know that he is not to be relied upon. They know that with narcissists, temporariness is the only permanence.

Narcissists hate routine. When a narcissist finds himself doing the same things over and over again, he gets depressed. He oversleeps, over-eats, over-drinks and, in general, engages in addictive, impulsive, [reckless](#), and [compulsive](#) behaviours. This is his way of re-introducing risk and excitement into what he (emotionally) perceives to be a barren life.

The problem is that even the most exciting and varied existence becomes routine after a while. Living in the same country or apartment, meeting the same people, doing essentially the same things (even with changing content) – all "qualify", in the eyes of the narcissist, as stultifying rote.

The narcissist [feels entitled](#). He feels it is his right – due to his intellectual or physical superiority – to lead a thrilling, rewarding, kaleidoscopic life. He wants to force life itself, or at least people around him, to yield to his wishes and needs, supreme among them the need for stimulating variety.

This rejection of [habit](#) is part of a larger pattern of aggressive entitlement. The narcissist feels that the very existence of a sublime intellect (such as his) warrants concessions and allowances by others.

Thus, standing in line is a waste of time better spent pursuing knowledge, inventing and creating. The narcissist should avail himself of the best medical treatment proffered by the most prominent medical authorities – lest the precious asset that is the narcissist is lost to Mankind. He should not be bothered with trivial pursuits – these lowly functions are best assigned to the less gifted. The devil is in paying precious attention to detail.

Entitlement is sometimes justified in a Picasso or an Einstein. But few narcissists are either. Their achievements are grotesquely incommensurate with their overwhelming sense of entitlement and with their grandiose self-image.

Of course, this overpowering sense of superiority often serves to mask and compensate for a cancerous complex of inferiority. Moreover, the narcissist infects others with his projected grandiosity and their feedback constitutes the edifice upon which he constructs his self-esteem. He regulates his sense of self worth by rigidly insisting that he is above the madding crowd while deriving his Narcissistic Supply from the very people he holds in deep contempt.

But there is a second angle to this abhorrence of the predictable. Narcissists employ a host of [Emotional Involvement Prevention Measures \(EIPM's\)](#). Despising routine and avoiding it is one of these mechanisms. Their function is

to prevent the narcissist from getting emotionally involved and, subsequently, hurt.

Their application results in an "approach-avoidance repetition complex". The narcissist, fearing and loathing intimacy, stability and security – yet craving them – approaches and then avoids significant others or important tasks in a rapid succession of apparently inconsistent and disconnected cycles.

Narcissist of Substance vs. Narcissist of Appearances

Click [HERE](#) to Watch the Video

Why do some narcissists end up being over-achievers, pillars of the community, and accomplished professionals - while their brethren fade into obscurity, having done little of note with their lives?

There seem to be two types of narcissists: those who derive ample [narcissistic supply](#) from mere appearances and those whose narcissistic supply consists of doing substantial deeds, of acting as change-agents, of making a difference, and of creating and producing things of value. The former aim for celebrity (defined as "being famous for being famous"), the latter aim for careers in the limelight.

The [celebrity narcissist](#) has a short attention span. He rapidly cycles between the [idealization and devaluation](#) of ideas, ventures, places, and people. This renders him unfit for team work. Though energetic and manic, he is indolent: he prefers the path of least resistance and adheres to shoddy standards of production. His lack of work ethic can partly be attributed to his overpowering sense of entitlement and to his magical thinking, both of which give rise to unrealistic expectations of effortless outcomes.

The [life of the celebrity narcissist is chaotic](#) and characterized by inconsistency and by a dire lack of long-term planning and commitment. He is not really interested in people (except in their roles as instruments of instant gratification and sources of narcissistic supply). His learning and affected erudition are designed solely to impress and are, therefore, shallow and anecdotal. His actions are not geared towards creating works of lasting value, effecting change, or making a difference. All he cares about is attention: provoking and garnering it in copious quantities. The celebrity narcissist is, therefore, not above [confabulating](#), plagiarizing, and otherwise using short-cuts to obtain his fix.

The other strain of narcissist, the [career narcissist](#), is very concerned with leaving his mark and stamp on the world. He feels a calling, often of cosmic significance. He is busy reforming his environment, transforming his milieu, making a difference, and producing and creating an oeuvre of standing value. His is a grandiose idée fixe which he cathezes. To scale these lofty self-imputed peaks and to realize his goals, the career narcissist acts with unswerving passion and commitment. He plans and inexorably and ruthlessly implements his schemes and stratagems, a workaholic in pursuit of glory and fame.

The career narcissist does not recoil from cutting the odd corner, proffering the occasional confabulation, or absconding with the fruits of someone else's labor. But while these amount to the entire arsenal and the exclusive modus operandi of the celebrity narcissist, they are auxiliary as far as the career narcissist is concerned. His main weapon is toil.

The career narcissist is a natural-born [leader](#). When not a [guru at the center of a cult](#), he operates as the first among equals in a team. This is where the differences between the celebrity narcissist and the career narcissist are most pronounced: the relationships maintained by the former are manipulative, exploitative, and ephemeral. The career narcissist, by comparison, is willing and able to negotiate, compromise, give-and-take, motivate others, induce loyalty, forge alliances and coalitions and benefit from these in the long-term. It is this capacity to network that guarantees him a place in the common memory and an abiding reputation among his peers.

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The Extra-Marital Narcissist

Somatic narcissists use sexual conquests and ostentatious sexual prowess as narcissistic supply. Hence their serial extramarital affairs, cheating, and infidelity.

If you can't or won't leave him, promulgate clear rules and sanctions and penalties when these are violated. Be fair, but merciless.

Question:

My husband has a liaison with another woman. He has been diagnosed as suffering from a Narcissistic Personality Disorder. What should I do?

Answer:

Narcissists are people who fail to maintain a stable sense of self-worth. Very often somatic narcissists (narcissistic who use their bodies and their sexuality to secure Narcissistic Supply) tend to get involved in extra-marital affairs. The new "conquests" sustain their grandiose fantasies and their distorted and unrealistic self-image.

It is, therefore, nigh impossible to alter this particular behaviour of a somatic narcissist. Sexual interactions serve as a constant, reliable, easy to obtain Source of Narcissistic Supply. It is the only source of such supply if the narcissist is not cerebral (=does not rely on his intellect, intelligence, or professional achievements for Narcissistic Supply).

You should set up rigid, strict and **VERY WELL DEFINED** rules of engagement. Ideally, all contacts between your spouse and his lover should be immediately and irrevocably severed. But this is usually too much to ask for. So, you should make crystal clear when is she allowed to call, whether she is allowed to write to him at all and in which circumstances, what are the subjects she is allowed to broach in her correspondence and phone calls, when is he allowed to see her and what other modes of interaction are permissible.

CLEAR AND PAINFUL SANCTIONS must be defined in case the above rules are violated. Both rules and sanctions **MUST BE APPLIED RIGOROUSLY AND MERCILESSLY** and **MUST BE SET IN WRITING IN UNEQUIVOCAL TERMS**.

The problem is that the narcissist never really separates from his Sources of Narcissistic Supply until and unless they cease to be ones. Narcissists never really

say [good-bye](#). His lover is likely to still have an emotional hold on him. Your husband must first have his day of reckoning.

Help him by telling him what will be the price that he stands to pay if he does not obey the rules and sanctions you have agreed on. Tell him that you cannot live like this any longer. That if he does not get rid of this presence – of the echoes of his past, really – he will be squandering his present, he will be forfeiting you. Don't be afraid to lose him. If he prefers this woman to you – it is important for you to know it. If he prefers you to her – your nightmare is over.

If you insist on staying with him – you must also be prepared to serve as a Source of Narcissistic Supply, an alternative to the supply provided by his former lover. You must brace yourself: serving as a Narcissistic Supply Source is an onerous task, a full time job and a very ungrateful one at that. The narcissist's thirst for adulation, admiration, worship, approval, and attention can never be quenched. It is a Sisyphean, mind-numbing effort, which heralds only additional demands and disgruntled, critical, humiliating tirades by the narcissist.

That you are afraid to confront reality is normal. You are afraid to set clear alternatives. You are afraid that he will leave you. You are afraid that he will prefer her to you. **AND YOU MAY WELL BE RIGHT.** But if this is the case and you go on living with him and tormenting yourself – it is unhealthy.

If you have find it difficult to confront the fact that it is all over between you, that your relationship is an empty shell, that your husband is with another woman – do not hesitate to seek help from professionals and non-professionals alike. But do not let this situation fester into psychological gangrene. Amputate now while you can.

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Narcissistic Couples and Narcissistic Types:

The Double Reflection

Two [narcissists](#) of the same type ([somatic](#), [cerebral](#), [inverted](#)) are bound to be at each other's throat in no time.

Two narcissists of different types can make each other very happy indeed as serve as each other's perfect [sources of narcissistic supply](#).

Question:

Can two narcissists establish a long-term, stable relationship?

Answer:

Two narcissists of the same type ([somatic](#), [cerebral](#), classic, compensatory, [inverted](#), etc.) cannot maintain a [stable](#), long-term full-fledged, and functional relationship.

There are two types of narcissists: the somatic narcissist and the cerebral narcissist. The somatic type relies on his body and sexuality as Sources of Narcissistic Supply. The cerebral narcissist uses his intellect, his intelligence and his professional achievements to obtain the same.

Narcissists are either predominantly cerebral or overwhelmingly somatic. In other words, they either generate their Narcissistic Supply by using their bodies or by flaunting their minds.

The somatic narcissist flashes his sexual conquests, parades his possessions, puts his muscles on ostentatious display, brags about his physical aesthetics or sexual prowess or exploits, is often a health freak and a hypochondriac. The cerebral narcissist is a know-it-all, haughty and intelligent "[computer](#)". He uses his awesome intellect, or knowledge (real or pretended) to secure adoration, adulation and admiration. To him, his body and its maintenance are a burden and a distraction.

Both types are autoerotic (psychosexually in love with themselves, with their bodies or with their brains). Both types prefer masturbation to adult, mature, interactive, multi-dimensional and emotion-laden sex.

The cerebral narcissist is often celibate (even when he has a girlfriend or a spouse). He prefers pornography and sexual auto-stimulation to the real thing. The cerebral narcissist is sometimes a latent (hidden, not yet outed) homosexual.

The somatic narcissist uses other people's bodies to masturbate. Sex with him – pyrotechnics and acrobatics aside – is likely to be an impersonal and emotionally alienating and draining experience. The partner is often treated as an object, an extension of the somatic narcissist, a toy, a warm and pulsating vibrator.

It is a mistake to assume type-constancy. In other words, all narcissists are both cerebral and somatic. In each narcissist, one of the types is dominant. So, the narcissist is either largely cerebral – or dominantly somatic. But the other, recessive (manifested less frequently) type, is there. It is lurking, waiting to erupt. The narcissist swings between his dominant type and his recessive type which manifests mainly after a major narcissistic injury or life crisis.

The cerebral narcissist brandishes his brainpower, exhibits his intellectual achievements, basks in the attention given to his mind and to its products. He [hates his body](#) and neglects it. It is a nuisance, a burden, a derided appendix, an inconvenience, a punishment. The cerebral narcissist is asexual (rarely has sex, often years apart). He masturbates regularly and very mechanically. His fantasies are homosexual or paedophilic or tend to objectify his partner (rape, group sex). He stays away from women because he perceives them to be ruthless predators who are out to consume him.

The cerebral narcissist typically goes through a few major life crises. He gets divorced, goes bankrupt, does time in prison, is threatened, harassed and stalked, is often devalued, betrayed, denigrated and insulted. He is prone to all manner of chronic illnesses.

Invariably, following every life crisis, the somatic narcissist in him takes over. The cerebral narcissist [suddenly becomes](#) a lascivious lecher. When this happens, he maintains a few relationships – replete with abundant and addictive sex – going simultaneously. He sometimes participates in and initiates group sex and mass orgies. He exercises, loses weight and hones his body into an irresistible proposition.

This outburst of unrestrained, primordial lust wanes in a few months and he settles back into his cerebral ways. No sex, no women, no body.

These total reversals of character stun his mates. His girlfriend or spouse finds it impossible to digest this eerie transformation from the gregarious, darkly handsome, well-built and sexually insatiable person that swept her off her feet – to the bodiless, bookwormish hermit with not an inkling of interest in either sex or other carnal pleasures.

The cerebral narcissist misses his somatic half, but finding a balance is a doomed quest. The satyre that is the somatic narcissist is forever trapped in the intellectual cage of the cerebral one, the Brain.

Thus, if both members of the couple are cerebral narcissists, for instance if both of them are scholars – the resulting competition prevents them from serving as ample Sources of Narcissistic Supply to each other. Finally the mutual admiration society crumbles.

Consumed by the pursuit of their own narcissistic gratification, they have no time or energy or will left to cater to the narcissistic needs of their partner. Moreover, the partner is perceived as a dangerous and vicious contender for a scarce resource: Sources of Narcissistic Supply. This may be less true if the two narcissists work in totally unrelated academic or intellectual fields.

But if the narcissists involved are of different types, if one of them is cerebral and the other one somatic, a long-term partnership based on the mutual provision of Narcissistic Supply can definitely survive.

Example: if one of the narcissists is somatic (uses his/her body as a source of narcissistic gratification) and the other one cerebral (uses his intellect or his professional achievements as such a source), there is nothing to destabilise such collaboration. It is even potentially emotionally rewarding.

The relationship between these two narcissists resembles the one that exists between an artist and his art or a collector and his collection. This can and does change, of course, as the narcissists involved grow older, flabbier and less agile intellectually. The somatic narcissist is also prone to multiple sexual relationships and encounters intended to support his somatic and sexual self-image. These may subject the relationship to fracturing strains. But, all in all, a stable and enduring relationship can – and often does – develop between dissimilar narcissists.

This rule of thumb (“opposites attract”) does not apply to classic-inverted pairing. Cerebral narcissists tend to pair with inverted cerebral narcissists who can appreciate their intellectual accomplishments and appropriate them as, vicariously, their own. Similarly, somatic narcissists bond with their inverted-somatic counterparts.

Though content to derive her narcissistic supply from the awed reactions to her intimate partner’s achievements, the inverted narcissist – being of the same type – still feels envious and frustrated by her relative obscurity. In the long run, she succumbs to her self-defeating urges and seeks to ruin the fount of her frustration despite the fact that he also serves as her prime source of narcissistic supply.

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The Two Loves of the Narcissist

Narcissists "love" their spouses or other significant others – as long as they continue to reliably provide them with Narcissistic Supply (in one word, with attention). Inevitably, they regard others as mere "sources", objects, or functions. Lacking empathy and emotional maturity, the narcissist's love is pathological. But the precise locus of the pathology depends on the narcissist's stability or instability in different parts of his life.

We are, therefore, faced with two pathological forms of narcissistic "love".

One type of narcissist "loves" others as one would attach to objects. He "loves" his spouse, for instance, simply because she exists and is available to provide him with Narcissistic Supply. He "loves" his children because they are part of his self-image as a successful husband and father. He "loves" his "friends" because – and only as long as – he can exploit them.

Such a narcissist reacts with alarm and rage to any sign of independence and autonomy in his "charges". He tries to "freeze" everyone around him in their "allocated" positions and "assigned roles". His world is rigid and immovable, predictable and static, fully under his control. He punishes for "transgressions" against this ordained order. He thus stifles life as a dynamic process of compromising and growing – rendering it instead a mere theatre, a *tableau vivant*.

The other type of narcissist abhors monotony and constancy, equating them, in his mind, with death. He seeks upheaval, drama, and change – but only when they conform to his plans, designs, and views of the world and of himself. Thus, he does not encourage growth in his nearest and dearest. By monopolizing their lives, he, like the other kind of narcissist, also reduces them to mere objects, props in the exciting drama of his life.

This narcissist likewise rages at any sign of rebellion and disagreement. But, as opposed to the first sub-species, he seeks to animate others with his demented energy, grandiose plans, and megalomaniacal self-perception. An adrenaline junkie, his world is a whirlwind of comings and goings, reunions and separations, loves and hates, vocations adopted and discarded, schemes erected and dismantled, enemies turned friends and vice versa. His Universe is equally a theatre, but a more ferocious and chaotic one.

Where is love in all this? Where is the commitment to the loved one's welfare, the discipline, the extension of oneself to incorporate the beloved, the mutual growth?

Nowhere to be seen. The narcissist's "love" is hate and fear disguised – fear of losing control and hatred of the very people his precariously balanced personality so depends on. The narcissist is egotistically committed only to his own well-being. To him, the objects of his "love" are interchangeable and inferior.

He idealizes his nearest and dearest not because he is smitten by emotion – but because he needs to captivate them and to convince himself that they are worthy Sources of Supply, despite their flaws and mediocrity. Once he deems them useless, he discards and devalues them similarly cold-bloodedly. A predator, always on the lookout, he debases the coin of "love" as he corrupts everything else in himself and around him.

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Narcissists, Love and Healing

The narcissist hates to be loved because he hates women (is a misogynist); because he fears intimacy (which would render him less unique and less mysterious); and because he cannot believe that an intelligent, perceptive mate would find him loveable.

Question:

Why do narcissists react with rage to gestures or statements of love?

Answer:

Nothing is more hated by the narcissist than the sentence "*I Love You*". It evokes in him almost primordial reactions. It provokes him to uncontrollable rage. Why is that?

- a. The narcissist hates women virulently and vehemently. A misogynist, he identifies being loved with being possessed, encroached upon, shackled, transformed, reduced, exploited, weakened, engulfed, digested and excreted. To him love is a dangerous pursuit, fickle and labile. He believes in fear and hate as immutable, reliable motivations, not in love. He gets married only so as to secure the services of his "partner" as homemaker, audience, personal assistant, and companion. He, therefore, is rarely possessive and jealous: he doesn't care what she does, when, and with whom, as long as his needs and expectations are impeccably met. He avoids intimacy also because it demands reciprocity and, thus, a waste of his scarce and precious resources on the tedious chore of maintaining a relationship when all he wants is a business-like, contractual arrangement.

When a woman tries to pick up a narcissist, flirt with him, or court him, he is likely to react by subjecting her to humiliating and cool disdain (if he is a cerebral narcissist) or by dumping her after having sex with her (somatic narcissist). In both cases the abusive message is: you have no power over me because I am unique, omnipotent, not your typical run-of-the-mill sap; you are nothing to me but a pitiful parasite or an object to be violated. Your very approach and attempt to seduce me is proof of your imbecility, blindness, or maliciousness for how could you not have noticed that I am different and superior?

- b. Being loved means being known intimately. The narcissist likes to think that he is so unique and deep that he can never be fathomed. The narcissist believes that he is above mere human understanding and empathy, that he is one of a kind (*sui generis*). To say to him "I love you", means to negate this feeling, to try to drag him to the lowest common denominator, to threaten his sense of uniqueness. After all, everyone is capable of loving and everyone, even the basest human beings, [fall in love](#). To the narcissist loving is an animalistic and pathological behaviour – exactly like sex.
- c. The narcissist knows that he is a con artist, a fraud, an elaborate hoax, a script, hollow and really non-existent. The person who claims to love him is either lying (what is there to love in a narcissist?) – or a self-deceiving, clinging, and immature codependent. The narcissist cannot tolerate the thought that he has chosen a liar or an idiot for a mate. Indirectly, her declaration of love is a devastating critique of the narcissist's own powers of judgement.

The narcissist hates love – however and wherever it is manifested.

Thus, for instance, when his spouse demonstrates her love to their [children](#), he wishes them all ill. He is so pathologically envious of his spouse that he wishes she never existed. Being a tad paranoid, he also nurtures the growing conviction that she is showing love to her children demonstrably and on purpose, to remind him how miserable he is, how deficient, how deprived and discriminated against.

He regards her interaction with their children to be a provocation, an assault on his emotional welfare and balance. Seething envy, boiling rage and violent thoughts form the flammable concoction in the narcissist's mind whenever he sees other people happy.

Many people naively believe that they can cure the narcissist by engulfing him with love, acceptance, compassion and [empathy](#). This is not so. The only time a transformative healing process occurs is when the narcissist experiences a severe narcissistic injury, a life crisis.

Forced to shed his malfunctioning defences, an ephemeral window of vulnerability is formed through which therapeutic intervention can try and sneak in.

The narcissist is susceptible to treatment only when his defences are down because they had failed to secure a steady stream of Narcissistic Supply. The narcissist's therapy aims to wean him off Narcissistic Supply.

But the narcissist perceives other people's love and compassion as forms of Narcissistic Supply!

It is a lose-lose proposition:

If therapy is successful and the narcissist is rid of his addiction to narcissistic supply - he is rendered incapable of giving and receiving love, which he regards as a variety of said supply.

The roles of Narcissistic Supply should be clearly distinguished from those of an emotional bond (such as love), though.

Narcissistic Supply has to do with the functioning of the narcissist's primitive defence mechanisms. The emotional component in the narcissist's psyche is repressed, dysfunctional, and deformed. It is subconscious - the narcissist is not aware of his own emotions and is out of touch with his feelings.

The narcissist pursues Narcissistic Supply as a junkie seeks drugs. Junkies can form emotional "bonds" but these are always subordinate to their habit. Their emotional interactions are the victims of their habits, as their children and spouses can attest.

It is impossible to have any real, meaningful, or lasting emotional relationship with the narcissist until his primitive defence mechanisms crumble and are discarded. Dysfunctional interpersonal relationships are one of the hallmarks of other personality disorders as well.

To help the narcissist:

1. Cut him from his Sources of Supply and thus precipitate a narcissistic crisis or injury;
2. Use this window of opportunity and convince the narcissist to attend structured therapy in order to help him mature emotionally;
3. Encourage him in his emotional, self-forming baby steps.

"Emotional" liaisons which co-exist with the narcissist's narcissistic defence mechanisms are part of the narcissistic theatrical repertoire, fake and doomed. The narcissist's defence mechanisms render him a serial monogamist or a non-committal playboy.

The narcissist is unlikely to get rid of his defence mechanisms on his own. He does not employ them because he needs them – but because he knows no

different. They proved useful in his infancy. They were adaptive in an abusive environment. Old tricks and old habits die hard.

The narcissist has a disorganised personality [Kernberg]. He may improve and emotionally mature in order to avoid the pain of certain or recurrent narcissistic injuries.

When narcissists do come to therapy, it is to try and alleviate some of what has become an intolerable pain. None of them goes to therapy because he wants to better interact with others. Love is important – but to fully enjoy its emotional benefits, first the narcissist must heal.

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Intimacy and Abuse

It is an [established fact](#) that abuse – verbal, psychological, emotional, physical, and sexual – co-occurs with intimacy. Most reported offenses are between intimate partners and between parents and children. This defies common sense. Emotionally, it should be easier to batter, molest, assault, or humiliate a total stranger. It's as if intimacy **CAUSES** abuse, incubates and nurtures it.

And, in a way, it does.

Many abusers believe that their abusive conduct fosters, enhances, and cements their intimate relationships. To them, pathological jealousy is proof of love, possessiveness replaces mature bonding, and battering is a form of paying attention to the partner and communicating with her. Psychopaths and narcissists possess "[cold empathy](#)": the ability to "see through" people and instantly discern their vulnerabilities, fears, and needs. They leverage this knowledge to foster faux-intimacy with a select few.

This "targeted intimacy" helps to condition the abuser's nearest, dearest, and closest and transform them into a "flock" or an "audience": members of his mini- [cult](#). Targeted intimacy is exclusionary (excludes everyone outside the "cult"); ephemeral (waned when no longer useful); and utilitarian (intended to manipulate the recipient of the intimacy and its ostensible beneficiary.)

Targeted intimacy is triggered when the abuser sets a goal and embarks on a charm offensive intended to re-acquire a potential source of narcissistic supply or of material benefits by idealizing her. His needs satisfied, the abuser's warm interest in his target abruptly dissipates and he turns cold and distant, devalues and discards. He blames his prey for this startling about-face: she made him withdraw with her nagging, insensitivity, dumbness, insufferable character, hypocrisy, evil designs, and so on.

Such habitual offenders do not know any better. They were often raised in [families, societies, and cultures](#) where abuse is condoned outright – or, at least, not frowned upon. Maltreatment of one's significant others is part of daily life, as inevitable as the weather, a force of nature.

Intimacy is often perceived to include a license to abuse. The abuser treats his nearest, dearest, and closest as mere objects, instruments of gratification, utilities, or extensions of himself. He feels that he "owns" his spouse, girlfriend,

lovers, children, parents, siblings, or colleagues. As the owner, he has the right to "damage the goods" or even dispose of them altogether.

Some abusers are scared of real intimacy and deep commitment, afraid of the intolerable hurt wrought by an eventual and inevitable abandonment. They have been taught to consider themselves unlovable and unworthy of being loved. Being hated and feared is within their comfort zone: they know the ropes of intimidation and alienation as means of controlling their environment and rendering it less threatening.

These abusers lead a "pretend", [confabulated life](#). Their "love" and "relationships" are gaudy, fake imitations. Such an abuser seeks to put a distance between himself and those who truly love him, who cherish and value him as a human being, who enjoy his company, and who strive to establish a long-term, meaningful relationship with him. He becomes emotionally or physically absent, or "ghosts".

Some abusers even turn a blind eye to their intimate partner's sexual or emotional liaisons with others, allowing her to develop and maintain a parallel life as long as she continues to observe her "contractual" obligations to provide services and companionship. Such emotional absenting can take many forms: from [workaholism](#) to [sexual swinging](#).

Abuse, in other words, is a reaction to the perceived threat of looming intimacy, aimed at fending it off, intended to decimate closeness, tenderness, affection, and compassion before they thrive and consume the abuser. Abuse is a panic reaction. The batterer, or the molester, are scared out of their wits: they feel entrapped, imprisoned, shackled, and insidiously altered. By dishing out egregious maltreatment, they seek to both shatter the impending intimacy and to stress-test the partner's commitment to the non-intimate form of relationship on offer.

Lashing out in blind and violent rage they punish the perceived perpetrators of intimacy. The more obnoxiously they behave, the less the risk of lifelong bondage. The more heinous their acts, the safer they feel. Battering, molesting, raping, berating, taunting are all forms of reasserting lost control. In the abuser's thwarted mind, abuse equals mastery and continued, painless, emotionally numbed, survival.

Early in life, the abuser had been abused by the very people who were supposed to "love" him. As an adult, he abuses the people who truly love him! This is his way of righting this wrong and restoring symmetric justice.

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Dr. Jackal and Mr. Hide:

The Cerebral vs. the Somatic Narcissist

Narcissists are either cerebral or somatic. In other words, they either generate their Narcissistic Supply by applying their bodies or by applying their minds.

The somatic narcissist flaunts his sexual conquests, parades his possessions, exhibits his muscles, brags about his physical aesthetics, youthfulness, sexual prowess or exploits, and is often a health freak and a hypochondriac. Like most males, somatic narcissists are plagued with a sexual overperception bias, but in a more pronounced way than normal: they tend to interpret every female behavior, utterance, and gesture as an unambiguous invitation to have sex.

The somatic narcissist regards his body as an object to be sculpted and honed (via extreme diets, multiple cosmetic surgeries, bodybuilding, or weightlifting). When coupled with psychopathic tendencies, the somatic appropriates other people's bodies and treats these as "raw materials" to be dismembered, tampered with, altered, invaded, or otherwise abused.

Somatic narcissists are often portrayed as sex addicts or [histrionic](#). They are thought to possess "manic defenses" (avoidance of feelings of discomfort, loneliness, and inadequacy by seeking states of hyperactivity, arousal, and excitement). They are also prone to cognitive biases such as sexual overperception (misinterpreting even innocuous female behaviors as indications of sexual interest and flirtation, a mild form of [erotomania](#)).

But really somatic narcissists derive their [narcissistic supply](#) not so much from the sex act as from the process of securing it: the conspiracies and assignations, the chase and conquest, the subjugation and habituation of their targets, and even from dumping and discarding their prey, once having extracted the attention and admiration they had sought. These extracurricular activities endow them with a sense of omnipotence and all-pervasive control. Their sway over their paramours and would-be lovers proves to them (and to others) their uniqueness, desirability and irresistibility.

Somatic narcissists also seek almost compulsively to induce their partners to climax. Orgasms – their frequency, duration, and intensity - are a measure of virility and "success" and, therefore, a form of narcissistic supply.

The cerebral narcissist is a know-it-all, haughty and intelligent "computer". He uses his awesome intellect, or knowledge (real or pretended) to secure adoration, adulation and admiration. To him, his body and its maintenance are a burden and a distraction.

Both types are auto-erotic (psychosexually in love with themselves, with their bodies and with their brain). Both types prefer masturbation to adult, mature, interactive, multi-dimensional and emotion-laden sex.

The cerebral narcissist is often celibate (even when he has a girlfriend or a spouse). He prefers pornography and sexual auto-stimulation to the real thing. The cerebral narcissist is sometimes a latent (hidden, not yet outed) homosexual.

The somatic narcissist uses other people's bodies to masturbate with, on, and in. Sex with him - pyrotechnics and acrobatics aside - is likely to be an impersonal and emotionally alienating and draining experience. The partner is often treated as an object, an extension of the somatic narcissist, a toy, a warm and pulsating vibrator.

It is a mistake to assume type-constancy. In other words, all narcissists are BOTH cerebral and somatic. In each narcissist, one of the types is dominant. So, the narcissist is either **OVERWHELMINGLY** cerebral - or **DOMINANTLY** somatic. But the other type, the recessive (manifested less frequently) type, is there. It is lurking, waiting to erupt.

The narcissist swings between his dominant type and his recessive type. The latter is expressed mainly as a result of a major narcissistic injury or life crisis. Cerebral narcissism is also a form of [passive-aggressive behavior](#) intended to punish the narcissist's intimate partner for her transgressions or mere incompatibility with the narcissist by withholding sex and intimacy.

In the case of the cerebral narcissist, there are several triggers that facilitate the transition from the dominant to the recessive type (to somatic narcissism) and back:

I. A **life crisis** that causes the narcissist to hit **rock bottom** and to exhaust all his options. In need of a quick fix of narcissistic supply, the cerebral resorts to sex with its immediate gratification and palpable, measurable outcomes ("conquests"). Sex is also the narcissist's way of roping in a new intimate partner and of maintaining her presence and loyalty to him;

II. [Deficient narcissistic supply](#): When the cerebral's source of secondary supply (his intimate partner) "quits" and no longer fulfils her function as a repository of and a voluble witness to the narcissist's past triumphs and accomplishments, when she becomes critical [of him or disagrees with him](#), no longer follows his leadership and ignores his commands - the narcissist switches from somatic to cerebral. In the

narcissist, [narcissistic supply](#) is intimately linked and directly proportional to his libido (and more particularly to his sex drive): the dwindling of the former results in the abolition of the latter and in [depression](#);

III. When the narcissist's partner refuses to partake in [his sexual fantasies](#) and to collaborate in their execution, he experiences it as rejection, the most extreme form of narcissistic injury and he withdraws and becomes cerebral.

Personal example:

I am a cerebral narcissist. I brandish my brainpower, exhibit my intellectual achievements, bask in the attention given to my mind and its products. I hate my body and neglect it. It is a nuisance, a burden, a derided appendix, an inconvenience, a punishment. Needless to add that I rarely have sex (often decades apart). I masturbate regularly, very mechanically, as one would change water in an aquarium. I stay away from women because I perceive them to be ruthless predators who are out to consume me and mine.

When I am [depressed](#), my libido is gone, so sexlessness is a moot point. When I am manic and grandiose, I am also sadistic. I then seek to frustrate, humiliate, and discomfort people (and [women in particular](#)) as a way of upholding my sense of omnipotence. By denying myself sex, my grandiose and glorified celibacy serves both to taunt and torment women around me, to defang and disempower them, and to buttress my conviction that I am superior and unique. Only supreme beings do not succumb to the irresistible allure of sex.

I have had quite a few major life crises. I got divorced, lost millions a few times, did time in one of the worst prisons in the world, fled countries as a political refugee, was threatened, harassed and stalked by powerful people and groups. I have been devalued, betrayed, denigrated and insulted.

Invariably, following every life crisis, the somatic narcissist in me took over. I became a lascivious lecher. When this happened, I had a few relationships - replete with abundant and addictive sex - going simultaneously. I participated in and initiated group sex and mass orgies. I exercised, lost weight and honed my body into an irresistible proposition. The aim was to "acquire" the next woman in line to serve as a [source of secondary narcissistic supply](#). This accomplished, the outburst of unrestrained, primordial lust waned in a few months and I settled back into my cerebral ways. No sex, no women, no body.

These total reversals of character stun my mates. My girlfriends and spouses found it impossible to digest this eerie transformation from the gregarious, darkly handsome, well-built and sexually insatiable person that swept them off their feet - to the bodiless, flabby, bookwormish hermit with not an inkling of interest in either sex or other carnal pleasures.

I miss my somatic half. I wish I could find a balance, but I know it is a doomed quest. This sexual beast of mine will forever be trapped in the intellectual cage that is I, Sam Vaknin, the Brain.

*Sin of self-love possesseth all mine eye
And all my soul and all my every part;
And for this sin there is no remedy,
It is so grounded inward in my heart.
Methinks no face so gracious is as mine,
No shape so true, no truth of such account;
And for myself mine own worth do define,
As I all other in all worths surmount.
But when my glass shows me myself indeed,
Beated and chopp'd with tann'd antiquity,
Mine own self-love quite contrary I read;
Self so self-loving were iniquity.
'Tis thee, myself, that for myself I praise,
Painting my age with beauty of thy days.*

(Sonnet 62, William Shakespeare)

*Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,
A Being darkly wise, and rudely great:
With too much knowledge for the Sceptic side,
With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,
He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;
In doubt to deem himself a God, or Beast;
In doubt his mind or body to prefer;
Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err;
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
Whether he thinks too little, or too much;
Chaos of Thought and Passion, all confus'd;
Still by himself, abus'd or disabus'd;
Created half to rise and half to fall;
Great Lord of all things, yet a prey to all,
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl'd;
The glory, jest and riddle of the world.*

(Essay on Man, Alexander Pope)

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Female Narcissists: Gender and the Narcissist

The psychodynamics of male and female [narcissists](#) are the same.

Women narcissists differ only in the choice of sources of [narcissistic supply](#) which often conforms to traditional [gender roles](#) and in the willingness to attend [therapy](#).

Question:

Are female narcissists any different? You seem to talk only about male narcissists!

Answer:

I keep using the male third person singular because most narcissists (75%) are males and more so because there is little difference between the male and female narcissists.

In the manifestation of their narcissism, female and male narcissists, inevitably, do tend to differ. They emphasise different things. They transform different elements of their personalities and of their lives into the cornerstones of their disorder.

Women concentrate on their body (many also suffer from [eating disorders](#): Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa). They flaunt and exploit their physical charms, their sexuality, their socially and culturally determined "femininity". They secure their Narcissistic Supply through their more traditional gender role: the home, children, suitable careers, their husbands ("the wife of..."), their feminine traits, their role in society, etc.

It is no wonder that narcissists – both men and women – are chauvinistic and conservative. They depend to such an extent on the opinions of people around them – that, with time, they are transformed into ultra-sensitive seismographs of public opinion, barometers of prevailing social fashions, and guardians of conformity. The narcissist cannot afford to seriously alienate his "constituency", those people who reflect his False Self back to him. The very proper and on-going functioning of the narcissist's Ego depends on the goodwill and the collaboration of his human environment.

True, besieged and consumed by pernicious guilt feelings – many a narcissist finally seek to be punished. The self-destructive narcissist then plays the role of

the "bad guy" (or "bad girl"). But even then it is within the traditional socially allocated roles. To ensure social opprobrium (read: attention), the narcissist exaggerates these roles to a caricature.

A woman is likely to label herself a "whore" and a male narcissist to self-style himself a "vicious, unrepentant criminal". Yet, these again are traditional social roles. Men are likely to emphasise intellect, power, aggression, money, or social status. Women are likely to emphasise body, looks, charm, sexuality, feminine "traits", homemaking, children and childrearing – even as they seek their masochistic punishment.

Another difference is in the way the genders react to treatment. Women are more likely to resort to therapy because they are more likely to admit to psychological problems. But while men may be less inclined to *DISCLOSE* or to expose their problems to others (the macho-man factor) – it does not necessarily imply that they are less prone to admit it to themselves. Women are also more likely to ask for help than men.

Yet, the prime rule of narcissism must never be forgotten: the narcissist uses everything around him or her to obtain his (or her) Narcissistic Supply. Children happen to be more attached to the female narcissist due to the way our society is still structured and to the fact that women are the ones to give birth. It is easier for a woman to think of her children as her extensions because they once indeed were her physical extensions and because her on-going interaction with them is both more intensive and more extensive.

This means that the male narcissist is more likely to regard his [children as a nuisance](#) than as a source of rewarding Narcissist Supply – especially as they grow older and become autonomous. Devoid of the diversity of alternatives available to men – the narcissistic woman fights to maintain her most reliable Source of Supply: her children. Through insidious indoctrination, guilt formation, emotional sanctions, deprivation and other psychological mechanisms, she tries to induce in them a dependence, which cannot be easily unravelled.

But, there is no psychodynamic difference between children, money, or intellect, as Sources of Narcissistic Supply. So, there is no psychodynamic difference between male and female narcissist. The only difference is in their choices of Sources of Narcissistic Supply.

There are mental disorders, which afflict a specific sex more often. This has to do with hormonal or other physiological dispositions, with social and cultural conditioning through the socialisation process, and with role assignment through the gender differentiation process. None of these seem to be strongly

correlated to the formation of malignant narcissism. The [Narcissistic Personality Disorder](#) (as opposed, for instance, to the [Borderline or the Histrionic Personality Disorders](#), which afflict women more than men) seems to conform to [social mores](#) and to the prevailing ethos of capitalism. Social thinkers like [Lasch](#) speculated that modern American culture – a narcissistic, self-centred one – increases the rate of incidence of the Narcissistic Personality Disorder. As Kernberg observed:

"The most I would be willing to say is that society can make serious psychological abnormalities, which already exist in some percentage of the population, seem to be at least superficially appropriate."

Quotes from the Literature

"Specifically, past research suggests that exploitive tendencies and open displays of feelings of entitlement will be less integral to narcissism for females than for males. For females such displays may carry a greater possibility of negative social sanctions because they would violate stereotypical gender-role expectancies for women, who are expected to engage in such positive social behavior as being tender, compassionate, warm, sympathetic, sensitive, and understanding.

In females, Exploiteness/Entitlement is less well-integrated with the other components of narcissism as measured by the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) - Leadership/Authority, Self-absorption/Self-admiration, and Superiority/Arrogance- than in males - though 'male and female narcissists in general showed striking similarities in the manner in which most of the facets of narcissism were integrated with each other'."

[Gender differences in the structure of narcissism: a multi-sample analysis of the narcissistic personality inventory](#) - Brian T. Tschanz, Carolyn C. Morf, Charles W. Turner - *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research* - Issue: May, 1998

"Women leaders are evaluated negatively if they exercise their authority and are perceived as autocratic."

Eagly, A. H., Makhijani, M. G., & Klonsky, B. G. (1992). Gender and the evaluation of leaders: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 111, 3-22, and ...

Butler, D., & Gels, F. L. (1990). Nonverbal affect responses to male and female leaders: Implications for leadership evaluations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 58, 48-59.

"Competent women must also appear to be sociable and likable in order to influence men - men must only appear to be competent to achieve the same results with both genders."

Carli, L. L., Lafleur, S. J., & Loeber, C. C. (1995). Nonverbal behavior, gender, and influence. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 68, 1030-1041.

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Gender Bias in Diagnosing Personality Disorders

Ever since Freud, more women than men sought therapy. Consequently, terms like 'hysteria' are intimately connected to female physiology and alleged female psychology. The DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, the bible of the psychiatric profession) expressly professes gender bias: personality disorders such as Borderline and Histrionic are supposed to be more common among women. but the DSM is rather even-handed: other personality disorders (e.g., the Narcissistic and Antisocial as well as the Schizotypal, Obsessive-Compulsive, Schizoid, and Paranoid) are more prevalent among men.

Why this gender disparity? There are a few possible answers:

Maybe personality disorders are not objective clinical entities, but culture-bound syndromes. In other words, perhaps they reflect biases and value judgments. Some patriarchal societies are also narcissistic. They emphasize qualities such as individualism and ambition, often identified with virility. Hence the preponderance of pathological narcissism among men. Women, on the other hand, are widely believed to be emotionally labile and clinging. This is why most Borderlines and Dependents are females.

Upbringing and environment, the process of socialization and cultural mores all play an important role in the pathogenesis of personality disorders. These views are not fringe: serious scholars (e.g., Kaplan and Pantony, 1991) claim that the mental health profession is inherently sexist.

Then again, genetics may be at work. Men and women do differ genetically. This may account for the variability of the occurrence of specific personality disorders in men and women.

Some of the diagnostic criteria are ambiguous or even considered "normal" by the majority of the population. Histrionics "consistently use physical appearance to draw attention to self." Well, who doesn't in Western society? Why when a woman clings to a man it is labeled "codependence", but when a man relies on a woman to maintain his home, take care of his children, choose his attire, and prop his ego it is "companionship" (Walker, 1994)?

The less structured the interview and the more fuzzy the diagnostic criteria, the more the diagnostician relies on stereotypes (Widiger, 1998).

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Homosexual and Transsexual Narcissists

Homosexual narcissists are auto-erotic and somatic: they leverage their body and sexuality to obtain [narcissistic supply](#).

Transsexual narcissists feel [entitled to special treatment](#) and cossetting.

Question:

What is the typical profile of a homosexual narcissist? Why is he always on a lookout for new victims? Is he lying or is he telling the truth when he says that he "wants to get laid" by one and all? If he is not suicidal, is he not afraid of AIDS?

Answer:

[Research failed to find](#) any substantive difference between the psychological make-up of a narcissist who happens to have homosexual preferences – and a heterosexual narcissist.

They both are predators, devouring Narcissistic Supply Sources as they go. Narcissists look for new victims, the way tigers look for prey – they are hungry. Hungry for adoration, admiration, acceptance, approval, and any other kind of attention. Old sources die easy – once taken for granted, the narcissistic element of conquest vanishes.

Conquest is important because it proves the superiority of the narcissist. The very act of subduing, subjugating, or acquiring the power to influence someone provides the narcissist with Narcissistic Supply. The newly conquered idolise the narcissist and serve as a trophies.

The act of conquering and subordinating is epitomized by the sexual encounter - an objective and atavistic interaction. Making love to someone means that the consenting partner finds the narcissist (or one or more of his traits, such as his intelligence, his physique, even his money) irresistible.

The distinction between passive and active sexual partners is mechanical, false, superfluous and superficial. Penetration does not make one of the parties "the stronger one". To cause someone to have sex with you is a powerful stimulus – and always provokes a sensation of omnipotence. Whether one is physically passive or active – one is always psychosexually active.

Anyone who has unsafe sex is gambling with his life – though the odds are much smaller than public hysteria would have us believe. Reality does not matter, though – it is the perception of reality that matters. Getting this close to (perceived) danger

is the equivalent of engaging in self-destruction (suicide). Narcissists are, at times, suicidal and are always [self-destructive](#).

There is, however, one element, which might be unique to homosexuals: the fact that their self-definition hinges on their sexual identity. I know of no heterosexual who would use his sexual preferences to define himself almost fully.

Homosexuality has been inflated to the level of a sub-culture, a separate psychology, or a myth. This is typical of persecuted minorities. However, it does have an influence on the individual. Preoccupation with body and sex makes most homosexual narcissists **SOMATIC** narcissists.

Moreover, the homosexual makes love to a person of the **SAME** sex – in a way, to his **REFLECTION**. In this respect, homosexual relations are highly narcissistic and autoerotic affairs.

The somatic narcissist directs his libido at his body (as opposed to the cerebral narcissist, who concentrates upon his intellect). He cultivates it, nourishes and nurtures it, is often an hypochondriac, dedicates an inordinate amount of time to its needs (real and imaginary). It is through his body that this type of narcissist tracks down and captures his Supply Sources.

The supply that the somatic narcissist so badly requires is derived from his form, his shape, his build, his profile, his beauty, his physical attractiveness, his health, his age. He downplays Narcissistic Supply directed at other traits. He uses sex to reaffirm his prowess, his attractiveness, or his youth. Love, to him, is synonymous with sex and he focuses his learning skills on the sexual act, the foreplay and the coital aftermath.

Seduction becomes addictive because it leads to a quick succession of Supply Sources. Naturally, boredom (a form of transmuted aggression) sets in once the going gets routine. [Routine is counter-narcissistic](#) by definition because it threatens the narcissist's sense of [uniqueness](#).

An interesting side issue relates to transsexuals.

Philosophically, there is little difference between a narcissist who seeks to avoid his True Self (and positively to become his False Self) – and a transsexual who seeks to discard his true gender. But this similarity, though superficially appealing, is questionable.

People sometimes seek sex reassignment because of advantages and opportunities which, they believe, are enjoyed by the other sex. This rather unrealistic (fantastic) view of the other is faintly narcissistic. It includes elements of idealised over-valuation, of self-preoccupation, and of objectification of one's self. It demonstrates a deficient ability to empathise and some grandiose sense of

entitlement ("I deserve to be taken care of") and omnipotence ("I can be whatever I want to be – despite nature/God").

This feeling of entitlement is especially manifest in some gender dysphoric individuals who aggressively pursue hormonal or surgical treatment. They feel that it is their inalienable right to receive it on demand and without any strictures or restrictions. For instance, they oftentimes refuse to undergo psychological evaluation or treatment as a condition for the hormonal or surgical treatment.

It is interesting to note that both narcissism and gender dysphoria are early childhood phenomena. This could be explained by problematic Primary Objects, dysfunctional families, or a common genetic or biochemical problem. It is too early to say which. As yet, there isn't even an agreed typology of gender identity disorders – let alone an in-depth comprehension of their sources.

A radical view, proffered by Ray Blanchard, seems to indicate that pathological narcissism is more likely to be found among non-core, ego-dystonic, autogynephilic transsexuals and among heterosexual transvestites. It is less manifest in core, ego-syntonic, homosexual transsexuals.

Autogynephilic transsexuals are subject to an intense urge to become the opposite sex and, thus, to be rendered the sexual object of their own desire. In other words, they are so sexually attracted to themselves that they wish to become both lovers in the romantic equation - the male and the female. It is the fulfilment of the ultimate narcissistic fantasy with the False Self as a fetish ("narcissistic fetish").

Autogynephilic transsexuals start off as heterosexuals and end up as either bisexual or homosexual. By shifting his/her attentions to men, the male autogynephilic transsexual "proves" to himself that he has finally become a "true" and desirable woman.

Asexual – or Autosexual?

The label “asexual” has come to signify anyone who does not feel the need to engage in partnered sex. This is misleading. People who avoid having sex with others, but masturbate on a regular basis and as an exclusive sexual outlet are not asexual – they are autosexual.

All autosexuals are autoerotic, but only a minority of autoerotics are autosexual. Autoeroticism more frequently finds expression via activities such as same-sex partnerships (homosexuality) or [incest](#) (which is sex with the living expression of one's own genetic makeup).

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Narcissists and Women

Narcissists are misogynists, woman-haters. Women represent [sex](#), [intimacy](#), and [family](#) and, therefore, [mediocrity](#).

The narcissist divides [all women](#) into sluttish huntresses and sexless saints. He aims to frustrate and subjugate them.

Question:

Do narcissists hate women?

Answer:

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Women are sources of narcissistic supply (which the narcissist craves) and of intimacy (which the narcissist fears).

Narcissists are addicted to a drug called “[narcissistic supply](#)”. Primary Narcissistic Supply (PNS) is any kind of NS provided by people who are not "meaningful" or "significant" others. Adulation, attention, affirmation, fame, notoriety, sexual conquests are all forms of PNS. Secondary NS (SNS) emanates from people who are in repetitive or continuous touch with the narcissist (such as his female spouse or lover). Secondary Narcissistic Supply includes the important roles of narcissistic accumulation (remembering and witnessing the narcissist’s “moments of glory”) and narcissistic regulation (reminding the narcissist of these moments when he is [running low on narcissistic supply](#)). Narcissists, therefore, need women to carry out these functions. They are dependent on women.

But narcissists also [abhor and dread getting emotionally intimate](#). Sex is perceived as the ultimate act of intimacy. Hence, narcissists try to either avoid sex altogether or transform it into an impersonal act. Cerebral narcissists regard [sex](#) as a maintenance chore, something they have to do in order to keep their Source of Secondary Supply content and around. The somatic narcissist treats women as objects and sex as a means to obtaining [Narcissistic Supply](#). Thus, the narcissist’s frame of mind is reminiscent of that of the European male well into the 18th century: [women](#) and [children](#) are perceived as property (chattel), their role is the unconditional and prompt gratification of the narcissist.

Narcissists (and not only narcissists) use the terms "slut/whore", "sex addict/nymphomaniac", and "promiscuous" interchangeably - and wrongly so.

Slut/whore is an epithet reserved - usually by men - to sexually assertive women with a healthy libido. To satisfy their needs, urges, desires, and hunger such women do not hesitate to outsource sex, intimacy, and love if their intimate partner fails to provide or withholds them. They are usually disinhibited but in full control of their choices of partners, locations, and settings. Their conduct is not pathological though it may defiantly contravene the norms and mores - or even laws - of their cultures and societies.

A promiscuous woman is disinhibited and indiscriminate as far as the quality and the attributes of her sexual partners. She simply has no standards and filters when it comes to copulation but this is an issue of vulgarity and bad taste - not of any mental health problem. They are in full control of their choices and actions - they simply love to fuck.

If the woman is compulsive about the quantity and frequency of her sexual liaisons, or if she engages in a sex act because she feels that she cannot do otherwise, or if she dissociates during sex (on "auto-pilot"), she may be addicted to sex.

But such behavior may indicate other psychological issues or even the wish to conform to social expectations ("if I date a man and he spends money on me, I have to return the favor"). Some women with certain personality disorders act out: they sexualize frustration and anger at the partner and punish him by having sex with other men.

Moreover, many narcissists tend to frustrate women. They refrain from having sex with them, tease them and then leave them, resist flirtatious and seductive behaviours and so on. Often, they invoke the existence of a girlfriend/fiancée/spouse as the "reason" why they cannot have sex or develop a relationship. But this is not out of loyalty and fidelity in the empathic and loving sense. This is because they wish (and often succeed) to sadistically frustrate the interested party.

But, this pertains only to cerebral narcissists - not to somatic narcissists and to Histrionics (Histrionic Personality Disorder - HPD) who use their body, sexuality, and seduction/flirtation to extract Narcissistic Supply from others.

Narcissists are misogynists. They team up with women who serve as Sources of SNS (Secondary Narcissistic Supply). The woman's chores are to accumulate past Narcissistic Supply (by witnessing the narcissist's "moments of glory") and release it in an orderly manner to regulate the fluctuating flow of primary supply and compensate in times of deficient supply.

The sadistic woman-lover (philogynist) is drawn to women, desires them, covets their traits, admires them, and, generally, prefers to spend his time with them. But it is precisely this inexorable pull that terrifies him: he is awed by women's hold over him and mortified by his own resultant women-centred obsessions and compulsions. He is poorly equipped to deal with and is overwhelmed by the emotions that women provoke in him. In a desperate attempt to extricate himself, he adopts avoidant behaviors, shuns women and frustrates them, abuses them, tortures and humiliates them. This panoply of behaviors restores his sense of control, power, and superiority.

The sadistic woman-hater (misogynist) holds women in utter contempt, detests them, wishes them ill, and seeks to punish them. He displays the same range of behaviors as the sadistic woman-lover but for an entirely different reason. The sadistic woman-lover seeks to restore a semblance of balance of potency between himself and the women he finds so irresistible. The sadistic woman-hater aims to annihilate women, remove them from his life, penalize them harshly for daring to intrude on his being with their demands for love, sex, and intimacy, (which he perceives as women's self-interested manipulation).

Otherwise, cerebral narcissists are not interested in women.

Most of them are asexual (desire sex very rarely, if at all). They hold women in contempt and abhor the thought of being really intimate with them. Usually, they choose for partners submissive women whom they disdain for being well below their intellectual level.

This leads to a vicious cycle of neediness and self-contempt ("How come I am dependent on this inferior woman"). Hence the abuse. When Primary NS is available, the woman is hardly tolerated, as one would reluctantly pay the premium of an insurance policy.

Narcissists of all stripes do regard the "subjugation" of an attractive woman to be a Source of Narcissistic Supply, though.

Such conquests are status symbols, proofs of virility, and they allow the narcissist to engage in "vicarious" narcissistic behaviours, to express his narcissism through the "conquered" women, transforming them into instruments

at the service of his narcissism, into his extensions. This is done by employing defence mechanisms such as projective identification.

The narcissist believes that being in love is actually merely going through the motions. To him, [emotions](#) are mimicry and pretence.

He says: "I am a conscious misogynist. I fear and loathe women and tend to ignore them to the best of my ability. To me they are a mixture of hunter and parasite."

Most male narcissists are misogynists. After all, they are the warped creations of women. Women gave birth to them and moulded them into what they are: dysfunctional, maladaptive, and emotionally dead. They are angry at their mothers and, by extension at all women.

The narcissist's attitude to women is, naturally, complex and multi-layered but it can be described using four axes:

1. The Holy Whore
2. The Hunter Parasite
3. The Frustrating Object of Desire
4. Uniqueness Roles

The narcissist divides all women to saints and whores. He finds it difficult to have sex ("dirty", "forbidden", "punishable", "degrading") with feminine significant others (spouse, intimate girlfriend). To him, sex and intimacy are mutually exclusive rather than mutually expressive propositions.

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Sex is reserved to "whores" (all other women in the world). This division resolves the narcissist's constant cognitive dissonance ("I want her but ...", "I don't need anyone but ..."). It also legitimises his sadistic urges (abstaining from sex is a major and recurrent narcissistic "penalty" inflicted on female "transgressors"). It tallies well with the frequent idealisation-devaluation cycles the narcissist goes through. The idealised females are sexless, the devalued ones – "deserving" of their degradation (sex) and the contempt that, inevitably, follows thereafter.

Sigmund Freud wrote: ***“Where they love they do not desire and where they desire they cannot love ... The main protective measure ... consists in a psychical debasement of the sexual object, the overvaluation ... being reserved for the incestuous object (mother-like spouse or girlfriend – SV) ...***

As soon as the condition of debasement is fulfilled, sensuality can be freely expressed and important sexual capacities and a high degree of pleasure can develop.” (S. Freud, “On the Universal Tendency to Debasement in the Sphere of Love”, 1912.)

The narcissist believes firmly that women are out to "hunt" men by genetic predisposition. As a result, he feels threatened (as any prey would). This, of course, is an intellectualisation of the real state of affairs: the narcissist feels threatened by women and tries to justify this irrational fear by imbuing them with "objective", menacing qualities. This is a small detail in a larger canvass. The narcissist "pathologises" others in order to control them.

The narcissist believes that, once their prey is secured, women assume the role of "body snatchers". They abscond with the male's sperm, generate an endless stream of demanding and nose dripping children, financially bleed the men in their lives to cater to their needs and to the needs of their dependants.

Put differently, women are parasites, leeches, whose sole function is to suck dry every man they find and tarantula-like decapitate him once no longer useful. This, of course, is exactly what the narcissist does to people. Thus, his view of women is a projection.

Heterosexual narcissists desire women as any other red-blooded male does or even more so due to their special symbolic nature in the narcissist's life. Humbling a woman in acts of faintly sado-masochistic sex is a way of getting back at mother. But the narcissist is frustrated by his inability to meaningfully interact with women, by their apparent emotional depth and powers of psychological penetration (real or attributed) and by their sexuality.

Women's incessant demands for intimacy are perceived by the narcissist as a threat. He recoils instead of getting closer. The cerebral narcissist also despises and derides sex, as we said before. Thus, caught in a seemingly intractable repetition complex, in approach-avoidance cycles, the narcissist becomes furious at the source of his frustration. Some narcissists set out to do some frustrating of their own. They tease (passively or actively), or they pretend to be asexual and, in any case, they turn down, rather cruelly, any feminine attempt to court them and to get closer.

Sadistically, they tremendously enjoy their ability to frustrate the desires, passions and sexual wishes of women. It makes them feel omnipotent and self-righteous. Narcissists regularly frustrate all women sexually – and significant women in their lives both sexually and emotionally.

Somatic narcissists simply use women as objects and then discard them. They masturbate, using women as "flesh and blood aides". The emotional background is identical. While the cerebral narcissist punishes through abstention – the somatic narcissist penalises through excess.

The narcissist's mother kept behaving as though the narcissist was and is not special (to her). The narcissist's whole life is a pathetic and pitiful effort to prove her wrong. The narcissist constantly seeks confirmation from others that he is special – in other words that he is, that he actually exists.

Women threaten this quest. Sex is "bestial" and "common". There is nothing "special or unique" about sex. Women's sexual needs threaten to reduce the narcissist to the lowest common denominator: intimacy, sex and human emotions. Everybody and anybody can feel, copulate and breed. There is nothing in these activities to set the narcissist apart and above others. And yet women seem to be interested only in these pursuits. Thus, the narcissist emotionally believes that women are the continuation of his mother by other means and in different guises.

The narcissist hates women virulently, passionately and uncompromisingly. His hate is primal, irrational, the progeny of mortal fear and sustained abuse. Granted, most narcissists learn how to disguise, even repress these untoward feelings. But their hatred does swing out of control and erupt from time to time.

To live with a narcissist is an arduous and eroding task. Narcissists are infinitely pessimistic, bad-tempered, paranoid and sadistic in an absent-minded and indifferent manner. Their daily routine is a rigmarole of threats, complaints, hurts, eruptions, moodiness and rage.

The narcissist rails against slights true and imagined. He alienates people. He humiliates them because this is his only weapon against his own humiliation wrought by their indifference. Gradually, wherever he is, the narcissist's social circle dwindles and then vanishes. Every narcissist is also a [schizoid](#), to some extent. A schizoid is not a [misanthrope](#). The narcissist does not necessarily hate people – he simply does not need them. He regards social interactions as a nuisance to be minimised.

The narcissist is torn between his need to obtain Narcissistic Supply (from human beings) – and his fervent wish to be left alone. This wish springs from contempt and overwhelming feelings of superiority.

There are fundamental conflicts between dependence, counter-dependence and contempt, neediness and devaluation, seeking and avoiding, turning on the charm to attract adulation and reacting wrathfully to the minutest

"provocations". These conflicts lead to rapid cycling between gregariousness and self-imposed ascetic seclusion.

Such an unpredictable but always bilious and festering ambience, typical of the narcissist's "romantic" liaisons is hardly conducive to love or sex. Gradually, both become extinct. Relationships are hollowed out. Imperceptibly, the narcissist switches to asexual co-habitation.

But the vitriolic environment that the narcissist creates is only one hand of the equation. The other hand involves the woman herself.

As we said, heterosexual narcissists are attracted to women, but simultaneously repelled, horrified, bewitched and provoked by them. They seek to frustrate and humiliate them. Psychodynamically, the narcissist probably visits upon them his mother's sins – but such simplistic explanation does the subject great injustice.

Most narcissists are misogynists. Their sexual and emotional lives are perturbed and chaotic. They are unable to love in any true sense of the word – nor are they capable of developing any measure of intimacy. Lacking empathy, they are unable to offer to their partners emotional sustenance.

Do narcissists miss loving, would they have liked to love and are they angry with their parents for crippling them in this respect?

To the narcissist, these questions are incomprehensible. There is no way they can answer them. Narcissists have never loved. They do not know what is it that they are supposedly missing. Observing it from the outside, love seems to them to be a risible [pathology](#).

Narcissists equate love with weakness. They hate being weak and they hate and despise weak people (and, therefore, the sick, the old and the young). They do not tolerate what they consider to be stupidity, disease and dependence – and love seems to consist of all three. These are not sour grapes. They really feel this way.

Narcissists are angry men – but not because they never experienced love and probably never will. They are angry because they are not as powerful, awe inspiring and successful as they wish they were and, to their mind, deserve to be. Because their daydreams refuse so stubbornly to come true. Because they are their worst enemy. And because, in their unmitigated paranoia, they see adversaries plotting everywhere and feel discriminated against and contemptuously ignored.

Many of them (the borderline narcissists) cannot conceive of life in one place with one set of people, doing the same thing, in the same field with one goal within a decades-old game plan. To them, this is the equivalent of death. They are most terrified of boredom and whenever faced with its daunting prospect, they inject drama or even danger into their lives. This way they feel alive.

The narcissist is a lonely wolf. He is a shaky platform, indeed, on which to base a family, or plans for the future.

The Narcissist and the Opposite Sex

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This chapter deals with the male narcissist and with his "relationships" with women.

It would be correct to substitute one gender for another. Female narcissists treat the men in their lives in a manner indistinguishable from the way male narcissists treat "their" women. I believe that this is the case with same sex narcissist partners.

A good point of departure would be jealousy, or rather, its pathological form, envy.

The narcissist becomes anxious when he grows aware of how romantically jealous (possessive) he is. This is a peculiar response. Normally, anxiety is characteristic of other kinds of interactions with the opposite sex where the possibility of rejection exists. Most men, for instance, feel anxious before they ask a woman to have sex with them.

The narcissist, in contrast, has a limited and underdeveloped spectrum of emotional reactions. Anxiety characterizes all his interactions with the opposite sex and any situation in which there is a remote possibility that he be rejected or abandoned.

Anxiety is an adaptive mechanism. It is the internal reaction to conflict. When the narcissist envies his female mate he is experiencing precisely such an unconscious conflict.

Jealousy is (justly) perceived as a form of transformed aggression. To direct it at the narcissist's female partner (who stands in for the primary object, his Mother) is to direct it at a forbidden object. It triggers a strong feeling of imminent punishment - a likely abandonment (physical or emotional).

But this is merely the "surface" conflict. There is yet another layer, much harder to reach and to decipher.

To feed his envy, the narcissist exercises his imagination. He imagines situations, which justify his negative emotions. If his mate is sexually promiscuous this justifies romantic jealousy – he unconsciously "thinks".

The narcissist is a con artist. He easily substitutes fiction for truth. What commences as an elaborate daydream ends up in the narcissist's mind as a plausible scenario. But, then, if his suspicions are true (they are bound to be - otherwise, why is he jealous?), there is no way he can accept his partner back, says the narcissist to himself. If she is unfaithful - how could the relationship continue?

Infidelity and lack of exclusivity violate the first and last commandment of narcissism: uniqueness.

The narcissist tends to regard his partner's cheating in absolute terms. The "other" guy must be better and more special than he is. Since the narcissist is nothing but a reflection, a glint in the eyes of others, when cast aside by his spouse or mate, he feels annulled and wrecked.

His partner, in this single (real or imagined) act of adultery, is perceived by the narcissist to have passed judgment upon him as a whole - not merely upon this or that aspect of his personality and not merely in connection with the issue of sexual or emotional compatibility.

This perceived negation of his uniqueness makes it impossible for the narcissist to survive in a relationship tainted by jealousy. Yet, there is nothing more dreadful to a narcissist than the ending of a relationship, or abandonment.

Many narcissists strike an unhealthy balance. Being emotionally (and physically or sexually) absent, they drive the partner to find emotional and physical gratification outside the bond. This achieved, they feel vindicated - they are proven right in being jealous.

The narcissist is then able to accept the partner back and to forgive her. After all – he argues - her two-timing was precipitated by the narcissist's own absence and was always under his control. The narcissist experiences a kind of sadistic satisfaction that he possesses such power over his partner.

In provoking the partner to adopt a socially aberrant behavior he sees proof of his mastery. He reads into the subsequent scene of forgiveness and

reconciliation the same meaning. It proves both his magnanimity and how addicted to him his partner has become.

The more severe the extramarital affair, the more it provides the narcissist with the means to control his partner through her guilt. His ability to manipulate his partner increases the more forgiving and magnanimous he is. He never forgets to mention to her (or, at least, to himself) how wonderful he is for having thus sacrificed himself.

Here he is - with his unique, superior traits - willing to accept back a disloyal, inconsiderate, disinterested, self centred, sadistic (and, entre nous, most ordinary) partner back. True, henceforth he is likely to invest less in the relationship, to become non-committal, and, probably, to be full of rage and hatred. Still, she is the narcissist's one and only. The more voluptuous, tumultuous, inane the relationship, the better it suits the narcissist's self image.

After all, aren't such tortuous relationships the stuff Oscar winning movies are made of? Shouldn't the narcissist's life be special in this sense, too? Aren't the biographies of great men adorned with such abysses of emotions?

If an emotional or sexual infidelity does occur (and very often it does), it is usually a cry for help by the narcissist's mate. A forlorn cause: this rigidly deformed personality structure is incapable of change.

Usually, the partner is the dependent or avoidant type and is equally inherently incapable of changing anything in her life. Such couples have no common narrative or agenda and only their psychopathologies are compatible. They hold each other hostage and vie for the ransom.

The dependent partner can determine for the narcissist what is right and virtuous and what is wrong and evil as well as enhance and maintain his feeling of uniqueness (by wanting him). She, therefore, possesses the power to manipulate him. Sometimes she does so because years of emotional deprivation and humiliation by the narcissist have made her hate him.

The narcissist - forever "rational", forever afraid to get in touch with his emotions – often divides his relationships with humans to "contractual" and "non contractual", multiplying the former at the expense of the latter. By doing so he drowns the immediate, identifiable, emotional problems (with his partner) in a torrent of irrelevant frivolities (his obligation within numerous other "contractual" "relationships").

The narcissist likes to believe that he is the maker of the decision which type of relationship he establishes with whom. He doesn't even bother to be explicit

about it. Sometimes people believe that they have a "contractual" (binding and long-term) relationship with the narcissist, while he entertains an entirely different notion without informing them. These, naturally, are grounds for innumerable disappointments and misunderstandings.

The narcissist often says that he has a contract with his girlfriend/spouse. This contract has emotional articles and administrative-economic articles.

One of the substantive clauses of this contract is emotional and sexual exclusivity.

But the narcissist feels that the fulfillment of his contracts - especially with his female partner - is asymmetrical. He is firmly convinced that he gives and contributes to his relationships more than he receives from them. The narcissist needs to feel deprived and punished, thus upholding the guilty verdict rendered by the primary and all important object in his life (usually, his mother).

The narcissist, though highly amoral (and at times, immoral), holds himself, morally, in high regard. He describes contracts as "sacred" and feels averse to canceling or violating them even if they had expired or are invalidated by the behavior of the other parties.

But the narcissist is not constant and predictable in his judgments. Thus, a violation of the contract by his romantic partner is deemed to be either trivial or nothing less than earth-shattering. If a contract is violated by the narcissist he is invariably tormented by his conscience to the extent of calling the contract (the relationship) off even if the partner judges the violation to be trivial or explicitly forgives the narcissist.

In other words, sometimes the narcissist feels compelled to cancel a contract just because he violated it and in order not to be tormented by his conscience (by his Superego, the internalized voices of his parents and other meaningful adults in his childhood).

But things get even more complex.

The narcissist acts asymmetrically as long as he feels bound by the contract. He tends to judge himself more severely than he judges the other parties to the contract. He forces himself to comply more strenuously than his partners do with the terms of the contract.

But this is because he needs the contract - the relationship - more than the others do.

The annulment or the termination of a contract represent rejection and abandonment, which the narcissist fears most. The narcissist would rather pretend that a contract is still valid than admit to the demise of a relationship. He never violates contracts because he is afraid of the reprisals and of the emotional consequences. But this is not to be confused with developed morals. When confronted with better alternatives - which more efficiently cater to his needs - the narcissist annuls or violates his contracts without thinking twice.

Moreover, not all contracts were created equal in the narcissistic twilight zone. It is the narcissist who retains the power to decide which contracts are to be scrupulously observed and which offhandedly ignored. The narcissist determines which laws (social contracts) to obey and which to break.

He expects society, his partners, his colleagues, his spouse, his children, his parents, his students, his teachers – in short: absolutely everyone – to abide by his rulebook. [White collar narcissist criminals](#), for instance, see nothing wrong with their [misconduct](#). They regard themselves as law-abiding, God-fearing, community-members. Their acts are committed in a mental enclave, a psychological no man's land, where no laws or contracts are binding.

The narcissist is sometimes perceived as whimsical, traitorous, posing and double crossing. The truth is that he is predictable and consistent. He follows one over-riding principle: the principle of [Narcissistic Supply](#).

The narcissist had internalized a bad object. He feels corrupt, deserving to fail, to be disgraced and punished. He is forever surprised and thankful when good things happen to him. Out of touch with his own emotions and with his capabilities, he either exaggerates them or underestimates them.

He is likely to be grateful to his partner - and berate her! - for having chosen him to be her mate. Deep inside, he thinks that no one else would have been (or will be) as foolish, blind, or ignorant to have made this choice. The purported stupidity and blindness of his mate or spouse is substantiated by the very fact that she *is* his mate or spouse. Only a stupid and blind person would have preferred the narcissist, with his myriad deficiencies, to others.

This feeling of a "lucky break" is the true source of the asymmetry in the narcissist's relationships. The partner, having made this incredible choice to live with the narcissist (to bear this cross) is worthy of special consideration in compensation. The narcissist's willing partner - a rarity - warrants special treatment and a special (double) standard. The partner can be unfaithful, withholding (emotionally, financially), be dependent, be abusive, critical and so on - and, yet, be forgiven unconditionally.

This, no doubt, is the direct result of the narcissist's very flawed sense of self worth and of an overpowering sense of inferiority.

This asymmetry is also an effective barrier against the expression of anger, even legitimate anger.

Instead, the narcissist accumulates his grievances every time that the partner takes advantage of the asymmetry (or is perceived by the narcissist to be doing so). The narcissist tries to convince himself that such abuse is an expected result of the daily friction of cohabitation, especially by partners with radically different personalities.

Some of the anger is passively-aggressively expressed. The frequency of sexual relations is reduced. Less sex, less talk, less touch. Sometimes the pent-up aggression erupts explosively in the form of rage attacks. These are usually followed by panicky reactions intended to restore the balance and to reassure the narcissist that he is not about to be abandoned.

Following such rage attacks, the narcissist regresses to passiveness, maudlin tenderness, appeasing gestures, or to wimpish, saccharine, and infantile behavior. The narcissist does not expect or accept same behavior from his partner. She is allowed to be cantankerous to her heart's content without as much as apologizing.

Another hurdle on the narcissist's way to establishing lasting (if not healthy) relationships is his excess rationality and, chiefly, his tendency to generalize on the basis of tenuous and flimsy evidence (hyper-inductiveness).

The narcissist regards abandonment or rejection by his emotional-sexual partners as a final verdict concerning his very ability to have such relationships in the future. Because of the mechanisms of self-denigration I have described, the narcissist is likely to idealize his mate and believe that she must have been uniquely predisposed and "equipped" to cope with him.

He "remembers" the way his partner sacrificed herself on the altar of the relationship. The more convinced the narcissist is that his partner invested extraordinarily in the relationship and the more assured he is that she was uniquely equipped to succeed in it - the more frightened he becomes.

Why the fear?

Because if this partner, as qualified as she was, as desirous of him as she was, failed to sustain the relationship - surely, no one else is likely to succeed. The narcissist believes that he is doomed to an existence of loneliness and

destitution. He stands no chance of ever having a resilient, healthy relationship with another partner.

The narcissist would do anything to avoid this conclusion. He begs his partner to return and re-establish the relationship, no matter what transpired. Her very return proves to him that he is worthy, the preferred alternative, someone with whom maintaining a relationship is possible.

The partner, in other words, is the narcissist's equivalent of market research. That he was chosen by the partner is tantamount to receiving a quality award.

This dyad comprised of a "quality inspector" and a "chosen product" is only one of the pairs of roles adopted by the narcissist and his partner. Others include: "the sick" and "the healthy", "the doctor/psychologist" and "the patient", "the poor, underprivileged girl" and "the white knight in shining armor" dyads.

Both roles - the narcissist's and the one willingly (or unwillingly) adopted by the partner - are facets of the narcissist's personality. Through complex projective identification processes and other projective defence mechanisms the narcissist fosters a dialogue between parts of his self, using his partner as a mirror and a communication conduit.

Thus, by fostering such dialogs, the narcissist's relationships have a highly therapeutic value on the one hand. On the other hand they suffer from all the problems of a regime of psychotherapy: transference, counter-transference and the like.

Let us briefly study the pair of roles "sick-healthy" or "patient-doctor". The narcissist can assume either role in this pair.

If the narcissist is the "healthy" one, he attributes to his "sick" partner his own inability to form long-standing, emotion-infused couple relationships. This would be because she is "sick" (sexually hyperactive, "Nymphomaniac", frigid, unable to commit, to be intimate, unjust, moody, or traumatized by events in her past).

The narcissist, on the other hand, judges himself to be homely and striving to establish a "healthy" couple. He interprets the behavior of his partner to support this "theory". His partner displays emergent behaviors, which conform with her role. Sometimes, the narcissist invests less in such a relationship because he regards his mere existence - sane, strong, omnipotent, and omniscient - to be a sufficient investment (a gift, really), voiding the need to add "maintenance efforts" to it.

In the other, converse case, the narcissist labels many of his behavior patterns as "sick". This usually coincides with latent or open hypochondriasis. The partner's health is idealized to form the background with which the narcissist's purported sickness is contrasted. This is a responsibility shifting mechanism. If the narcissist's pathology is deep seated and irreversible - then he cannot be held responsible for his actions, past and future.

This role playing is the narcissist's ways of coping with an insoluble dilemma.

The narcissist is mortally terrified of being abandoned by his partner. This fear drives him to minimize his interactions with his partner to avoid the inevitable pain of rejection. This, in turn, leads exactly to the feared abandonment. The narcissist knows that his behavior instigates that which he is so afraid of.

In a way he is happy about it, because it gives him the illusion that he is in exclusive control of the relationship and of his own fate. His alleged "sickness" helps to explain his unusual conduct.

Ultimately, the narcissist loses his partners in all his relationships. He hates himself for it and is enraged. It is because of the life-threatening magnitude of these negative emotions that they are repressed. Every conceivable psychological defence mechanism is employed to sublimate, transform (through cognitive dissonance), dissociate or re-direct this self-mutilating wrath.

This constant inner turmoil generates unremitting fear manifested in the form of anxiety attacks, or an Anxiety Disorder. In the course of such life crises, the narcissist briefly believes that he is intrinsically deformed and defective and that he is irreparably dysfunctional when it comes to establishing and to maintaining relationships (which is true!).

The narcissist - especially during a life crisis - loses touch with reality. Defective reality tests and even psychotic micro-episodes are common. Narcissists interpret the (fairly common) mismatch between personalities that doomed the relationships in an apocalyptic manner. Dependence, a symbiotic interaction, raises doubts regarding the narcissist's very ability to form relationships.

But throughout all this, the narcissist needs a collaborative partner. He needs someone to serve as a sounding board, a mirror, and a victim. In other words, he needs a Polyandric woman.

The narcissist thinks of all women as either Monoandric or Polyandric.

The Monoandric woman is psychologically mature. She is usually older and sexually sated. She prefers intimacy and companionship to sexual satisfaction. She is in possession of a mental blueprint, which dictates her short-term goals. In her relationships, she emphasizes compatibility and is predominantly verbal.

The narcissist reacts with fear and repulsion (mixed with rage and the wish to frustrate) to the Monoandric woman. Consciously, though, he realizes that intimacy can be created only with this kind of woman.

The Polyandric woman is young (if not of age, then at heart). She is still sexually curious and varies her sexual partners. She is not adept at creating intimacy and emotional rapport. Because she is more interested in the accumulation of experiences - her life is not guided by a "master plan", or even by medium-term goals.

The narcissist is aware of the transience of his relationship with the Polyandric woman. So, he is attracted to her while being devoured by his fear of abandonment.

The narcissist, almost always, finds himself paired with Polyandric women. They pose no threat of getting emotionally close to him (of being intimate). The incompatibility between the narcissist and Polyandric women is so high and the probability of abandonment and rejection so great - that intimacy is all but excluded.

Moreover, this consuming fear of being left behind leads to a re-enactment of the primordial Oedipal conflict and to a whole set of transference relations with the Polyandric woman. This inevitably results in the very abandonment the narcissist so dreads. Serious psychological crises follow such relationships (narcissistic trauma or injury).

The narcissist knows (or, if less self-aware, feels) all this. He is not as much attracted to the Polyandric woman as he is repelled by the Monoandric variety. Monoandric women threaten him with two things deemed by the narcissist to be even worse than abandonment: intimacy and a loss of uniqueness. Monoandric women are the venue through which the narcissist can communicate with his very threatening inner world. Last but not least, they want him to settle into a molded non-unique way of life common to virtually all humanity: marriage, children, a career.

On the one hand, there is nothing like children to make the narcissist feel [threatened](#). They are the embodiment of commonness, a reminder of his own, dark, childhood, and an infringement upon his privileges. They compete with him for scarce Narcissistic Supply.

On the other hand, there is nothing like children to boost an habitually flagging ego. In short, nothing like children to create conflict in the tormented soul of the narcissist.

The narcissist does not react to people (or interact with them) as individuals. Rather, he generalizes and tends to treat people as symbols or "classes". This is also true in his relationships with "his" women. Women resent this kind of treatment and, gradually, the narcissist finds it more and more difficult to be himself with them.

Women analyze his [body language](#), his [verbal and non-verbal communication](#) and compare their own pathologies to his. They study his behavior patterns and his interactions with his (human) milieu and (non-human) environment. They test their sexual compatibility by having sex with him.

They examine other types of compatibility by cohabiting or by prolonged dating. Their mating decision is based on the data they thus glean plus some "evolutionary survival parameters": the narcissist's genotype (genetic and chemical makeup), his phenotype (his looks and constitution), as well as his access to economic resources.

This is a standard mating procedure with standard mating checklists. The narcissist usually passes the genotype and phenotype reviews. Many narcissists, however, fail the third test: their ability to support themselves and their dependants economically. Narcissism is a very unstable mental condition and it complicates the narcissist's functioning in daily life.

Most narcissists tend to move between numerous positions and jobs, to gamble away their savings, and to become heavily indebted. The narcissist rarely accumulates wealth, property, assets, or possessions. The narcissist prefers to fake knowledge rather than to acquire it and to compromise rather to fight.

He usually finds himself engaged in capacities far below his intellectual ability. Women notice this as well as his pompous, inflated body language, haughtiness, rage attacks and severe acting out. Finally, the closer they get to the narcissist, the more they are able to discern antisocial, abnormal, and a-normative behaviors.

The narcissist turns out to be a crook, an adventurer, a crisis-prone, [danger seeking](#), emotionally cold, sexually abstaining or hyperactive individual. He might be self-destructive, self-defeating, success-fearing, and media-addicted. His turbulent biography is likely to include abnormal sexual and emotional relationships, prison terms, bankruptcies and divorces. Hardly the ideal partner.

Even worse, the narcissist is likely to be a misogynist. He regards women as a direct threat to his uniqueness, and a potential for degradation. To him, they are the conformity agents of society, the domesticating whips. By forcing him into homemaking, child rearing and the assumption of long term consumer credits (and mortgages), women are likely to reduce the narcissist to a Common Man, an anathema. Women represent an invasion of the narcissist's privacy, unmasking his defence mechanisms by "X-raying" his soul (the narcissist attributes paranormal powers of penetration to women).

They possess the ability to hurt him through abandonment and rejection. The narcissist feels that women are very "business-like, use and discard" type of people. They exploit their capacities for deep psychological insight to further their goals. In other words, they are sinister and are not to be trusted. Their motives should always be questioned.

This is the old fear of intimacy disguised. These are the old phobias: of being controlled, of being assimilated, of losing control, of being hurt, of being vulnerable. This is the deep-rooted feeling of emotional inadequacy. The narcissist believes that, upon closer scrutiny, he will be found lacking emotionally and, thus, unlovable.

It is part of the narcissist's "Con-Artist Effect". The narcissist feels an objective and thorough scrutiny is bound to expose him for what he is: a fake, an impostor, a con man. The narcissist is the chameleon-like "Zelig" - everything to everyone, no one to himself.

Narcissists interact with women emotionally (and later, sexually), or only physically.

When the interaction is emotional, the narcissist feels that he is risking the loss of his uniqueness, that his privacy is invaded, that his defence mechanisms are being unraveled, and that information divulged by him (following the collapse of his defenses) might be abused through destructive criticism or extortion.

The narcissist constantly feels that he is rejected. Even if such rejection is the normal outcome of incompatibility, without any comparative judgment and "rating" – the feeling persists. The narcissist just "knows" that she is not sexually or emotionally exclusive (others preceded him and others will succeed him).

During the initial phases of emotional involvement the narcissist is likely to be told that there was no one like him in the partner's life before. He judges this to be a false and hypocritical statement simply because it is likely to have been

uttered before, to others. This prevailing sense of falsity permeates the relationship from the very start.

In the back of his mind the narcissist always remembers that he is "different" (sick). He recognizes that this deformity is likely to thwart any relationship and to lead to abandonment, or at least to rejection. The seeds of abandonment are embedded in every nascent interaction with a woman. The narcissist has to cope with his special predicament as well as with social changes and the disintegration of the social fabric, which anyhow make sustaining relationship an ever more difficult achievement in today's world.

The alternative, mere corporeal contact, the narcissist finds repellant. There, uniqueness and exclusivity – what the narcissist relishes most - are definitely absent.

This is especially true if an emotional dimension does exist in the relationship. Whereas the narcissist can always convince himself that both his emotions and their background are unique and unprecedented - he is hard pressed to do so concerning the sexual aspect of the relationship. Surely, he hasn't been his lover's first sexual partner and sex is a common and vulgar pursuit.

Still, some narcissists prefer less complicated and less threatening sex: devoid of all emotion, anonymous (group sex, prostitution) or autoerotic (homosexual or masturbation). The sexual partner, in these conditions, lacks identity, is objectified and dehumanized. Exclusivity cannot be demanded of objects and the potential risk of unfaithfulness is happily allayed.

An example that I always use: a narcissist, eating in a restaurant, would rarely feel that his uniqueness is threatened by the fact that thousands of people ate there before him and are likely to do so after his departure. Eating in a restaurant is an impersonal, objectified, routine.

The notion of his own uniqueness is so fragile that the narcissist requires "total compliance" in order to be able to maintain it.

Thus, the emotional and sexual exclusivity of his partner (a pillar in the temple of his uniqueness) must be both spatial and temporal. To satisfy the narcissist, the partner must be sexually and emotionally exclusive in both her past and her present. This sounds highly possessive - and it is. The narcissist shivers at the thought of his partner's past lovers and her exploits with them. He is even jealous of movie actors, whom his partner finds appealing.

This need not deteriorate into active, violent jealousy. In most cases, it is an insidious form of envy, which poisons the relationship through mutated [forms of aggression](#).

The narcissist's possessiveness is geared to safeguard his self-imputed uniqueness. The partner's exclusivity enhances the narcissist's sensation of uniqueness. But why can't the narcissist be unique to his partner today as others have been to her in the past?

Because serial uniqueness is a contradiction in terms, uniqueness means ultimate compatibility, enzyme and substrate, protein and receptor, antigen and antibody, almost immunological specificity. The likelihood of serially enjoying precisely such compatibility with successive partners is very low.

For serial compatibility to occur the following conditions have to be met (believes the narcissist):

- a. That one (or both) of the partners will have changed so radically that the former specifications of compatibility are replaced by new ones. This radical change can come from the inside (endogenous) or from the outside (exogenous).
Such a dramatic shift must, therefore, occur with every new partner.
- b. Or that each partner is even more specifically compatible than its predecessor – a highly unlikely occurrence.
- c. Or that compatibility is never achieved and one (or both) partners react badly to some of the specifications and initiates separation in order to move on to a more suitable partner
- d. Or that compatibility is never achieved and any claim to the contrary (especially the sentence "I love you") is false. The relationship, in this case, is contaminated by major hypocrisy.

Yet, narcissists do get married. They do try to have lifetime partners. This is because they distinguish "their" women from all other. The narcissist's occasional girlfriend (however "permanent") and his permanent partner (however randomly chosen) must satisfy different requirements .

The permanent partner (wife, usually) must meet four conditions:

She must act as the narcissist's companion but on highly unequal terms. She must be submissive and motherly, sufficiently intelligent to admire and admiring enough never to criticize, critical enough to assist him and helpful enough to make a good friend. This contradictory equation can never be solved and leads to bouts of frustration and rage staged by the narcissist if any of his demands or expectations goes unheeded.

The narcissist's partner has to share quarters with him. But the narcissist, with an inflated sense of privacy and what can be best described as spatial paranoia, is very hard to live with. He regards her presence in his space as intrusion. The fragile or non-existent boundaries of his ego force him to define rigid outer boundaries for fear of being "invaded".

He enforces his brand of compulsive orderliness and his code of conduct on his entire physical space in the most tyrannical manner.

It is a hybrid, almost transcendental existence led by the narcissist's mate or spouse. There when required by him, making herself absent at all other times. Rarely can she define her own space or impress her personal preferences and tastes upon it.

The cerebral narcissist's partner is usually his only sexual mate. Cerebral narcissists are normally very faithful because they are mortally afraid of the repercussions if found out cheating. But, being purely [Sexual Communicators](#), they get bored very easily and find it ever more taxing to maintain regular (let alone exciting) sexual relations with the same partner.

They are under-stimulated and for want of alternatives, they develop a vicious frustration-aggression cycle, leading to emotional absence and coldness and to sexual intercourse decreasing in both quality and quantity. This could drive the partner to having extramarital sexual (or, even emotional) affairs.

It provides the narcissist with the justification that he needs to do the same. However, the narcissist rarely uses this license. Instead he leverages the partner's inevitable guilt feelings to deepen his control over her and to place himself in a morally superior position.

Often, the narcissist destabilizes the relationship and keeps his partner off-balance, in constant uncertainty and insecurity by suggesting an open marriage, possible participation in group sex and so on. Or, he constantly alludes to sexual opportunities available to him. This he might do jokingly but he ignores his partner's avid protestations. By provoking her jealousy, the narcissist believes that he endears himself to her and furthers his control.

Last - but definitely not least - is the issue of procreation and of having offspring.

[Narcissists like children](#) only as unlimited sources of Narcissistic Supply. Put simply: children unconditionally admire the father-narcissist, they succumb to his every wish, submit to his every whim, obey his every command, and are deliciously malleable.

All other aspects of child-rearing are considered by the narcissist to be repulsive: the noises, the smells, the invasion of his space, the nuisance, the dangers, the long term commitment and, above all, the diversion of attention and admiration from the narcissist to his offspring. The narcissist envies his successful offspring as he would any other competitor for adulation and attention.

A profile of the narcissist's spouse emerges:

She must value the narcissist's companionship sufficiently to sacrifice any independent expression of her personality. She must usually endure confinement in her own home. She either refrains from bringing children to the world altogether or sacrifices them to the narcissist as instruments of his gratification. She must endure long spells of sexual abstinence or be sexually molested by the narcissist.

This is a vicious cycle. The narcissist is likely to devalue such a submissive partner. The narcissist detests self-sacrifice and self-effacement. He scorns such behavior in others. He humiliates his partner until she leaves him and, thus, proves that she is assertive and autonomous. Then, of course, he idealizes her and wants her back.

The narcissist is interested in the kind of woman that he is able to drive to abandon him by sadistically berating and humiliating her (on what could be regarded as justified grounds).

In his internal dialogues, the narcissist mulls over his problematic experience with the opposite sex.

As far as he is concerned, women are emotional objects, instant narcissistic solutions. As long as they are indiscriminately supportive, adoring and admiring they fulfill the critical role of source of narcissistic supply.

We are on safe ground, therefore, when we say that mentally stable and healthy women refrain from having relationships with narcissists.

The narcissist's lifestyle, his reactions, in short: his disorder, prevent the development of a mature love, of real sharing, of empathy. The narcissist's mate, spouse, or partner is treated as an object. She is the subject of projections, projective identifications and a source of adulation.

Moreover, the narcissist himself is unlikely to cultivate a long-term relationship with a psychologically healthy, independent, and mature woman. He seeks her dependence within a relationship of superiority and inferiority (teacher-student,

guru-disciple, idol-admirer, therapist-patient, doctor-patient, father-daughter, adult-adolescent or young girl, etc.).

The narcissist is an anachronism. He is a Victorian arch conservative, even if he denies it vehemently. He rejects feminism. He feels ill at ease in today's modern world and is seldom self-conscious enough to understand why. He pretends to be a liberal. But this conviction does not sit well with his envy, an integral element of his narcissistic personality.

His conservatism and jealousy combine to yield extreme possessiveness and a powerful fear of abandonment. The latter can (and does) bring about [self-defeating and self-destructive behaviors](#). These, in turn, encourage the partner to abandon the narcissist. The narcissist, thus, feels that he has aided and abetted the process, that he facilitated his own abandonment.

This is all part of a facade whose genesis can only be partially attributed to repression or denial mechanisms. This fake front is coherent, consistent, ubiquitous and completely misleading. The narcissist uses it to project both his cognition (the results of conscious thought processes) and his affect (emotions).

The narcissist, for instance, would adopt the role of a warm, sensitive, considerate and empathic person - while, in truth, he is likely to be emotionally shallow, to have attention deficits, to be inordinately self centred, insensitive and unaware of what is happening around him and to other people.

He makes promises casually, plagiarizes with abandon, and pathologically (compulsively and unnecessarily) lies - all part of the same phenomenon: a promising, impressive front behind, which are concealed psychical "Potemkin Villages". This makes him the target of strong frustration, hate, hostility and even verbal, physical or legal violence.

The same scenario applies to matters of the heart. The narcissist employs the same tactics with women.

The narcissist lies because he thinks his reality is too "grey" and unattractive. He feels that his skills, traits, and experience are lacking, that his biography is boring, that many aspects of his life call for improvement. The narcissist desperately wants to be loved - and modifies and mends himself to render himself loveable.

To this there is only one exception.

The Sociologist Erving Goffman coined the phrase "Total Institutions". He was referring to institutions with total regulation of the totality of life within them.

The army is such an institution and so is a hospital, or a prison. To some extent, any alien environment is total. Living outside one's country, in a foreign, somewhat xenophobic and hostile, society, is reminiscent of living in a Total Institution ("Total Situation").

The mental health problems of some narcissists grow worse in such institutions - and this is understandable. There is nothing like a total institution to negate uniqueness.

But others feel relaxed and secure. How come?

This is an enigma the solution to which provides us with important insights regarding the codes, which control the narcissist's attitudes towards women.

Total Institutions and Total Situations have a few common denominators:

- a. They eliminate the individual's idiosyncratic identity through external measures such as donning uniforms, sleeping in dormitories, using numbers instead of names. In hospitals the patients are identified by their organs or conditions, for instance. But this is counterweighed by a sense of emerging, compensatory uniqueness, the result of belonging to a mysterious select few, an order of suffering or guilt, a brotherhood of endurance.
- b. People in these places have no past or future. They live in an infinite present.
- c. The starting conditions of all the inmates are identical. There are no relative or absolute advantages, no value judgments, no rating of worthiness, no competition, no inferiority or superiority complexes induced from the outside. This, naturally, is a gross oversimplification, even, to some extent, a misstatement of the facts - but we need to idealize in order to analyze.
- d. The Total Institution offers no frame of reference or of comparison which might foster feelings of failure or of inferiority.
- e. The constant threat of sanctions restrains and constrains destructive behaviors.
A heightened awareness of reality is necessary for survival. Any self-injury or sabotage is punished more severely than in the outside, "relative", world.

Thus, the narcissist can attribute any failure to his new environment.

If his new environment is the outcome of a voluntary choice (for instance, emigration) the narcissist can say that it was he who chose failure over success - a choice that indeed he made.

Otherwise, the failure is ascribed to overriding external imperatives ("force majeure"). The narcissist has an alternative in this case. He doesn't have to identify with his failures or to internalize them because he can convincingly argue (mainly to himself) that they are not his, that success was impossible under the objective circumstances.

Coping with recurrent failure is a figment of the narcissist's inner life. The narcissist would tend to regard himself as a failure. He doesn't say: "I failed" - but "I am a failure". Whenever he fails - and he is predisposed to fail - he "assimilates" the failure and identifies with it in an act of transubstantiation.

Narcissists are more prone to failure because of their built-in precariousness, instability and their tendency for brinkmanship. The schism between their rational apparatus and their emotional one doesn't help, either. While, usually, highly talented and intelligent - narcissists are emotionally immature and pathological.

Narcissists know that they are inferior to other people in that they are self-defeating and self-destructive. They solve this gap between their grandiose fantasies and their sordid and drab reality (the Grandiosity Gap) by manufacturing and designing their own failures. This way they feel that they control their misfortune.

Obviously, this apparently ingenious mechanism is, in itself, destructive.

On the one hand, it succeeds to make the narcissist feel that he is in control of his failures (if not of his life). On the other hand, the fact that the failure directly and unequivocally emanates from the narcissist - makes it an inseparable part of him. Thus, the narcissist feels not only that he is the author of his own failures (which, in some cases, he, indeed, is) - but that failure forms an integral part of himself (which, gradually, becomes true).

It is due to this identification with his failures, defeats and mishaps, that the narcissist finds it hard to "market" himself, be it to a potential employer or to a woman he desires. T

The narcissist holds himself to be a total (systemic) failure. His self-esteem and self-image are always crippled. He feels that he doesn't have "anything to offer". When he tries to derive consolation from the memory of past successes - the comparison depresses him even further, making him feel that he is in at a nadir.

As it is, the narcissist regards any need to promote himself as demeaning. One promotes oneself because one needs others, because one is inferior (however temporarily). This reliance on others is both external (economic, for example)

and internal (emotional). The narcissist is also afraid of the possibility of being rejected, of failing at his self-promotion. This kind of failure may have the worst effect, compounding the narcissist's feeling of worthlessness.

No wonder that the narcissist regards any necessity to self-promote as humiliating, as negating his self-respect in a cold, alienated, transactional universe. The narcissist fails to understand why he needs to promote himself when his uniqueness is so self-evident. He envies the successes and the happiness of others (their successful self-promotion).

None of these problems arises in a Total Institution or outside the narcissist's natural milieu (abroad, for instance), or in a Total Situation.

In these settings, failure can be explained away by being attributed to poor starting conditions inherent in a new environment. The narcissist does not have to internalize the failure or to identify with it. The act of self-promotion is also made much easier. It is understandable why one has to promote oneself if one is rendered inferior or unknown by circumstances of one's choice.

In total situations, the need to market oneself is understandable, external, and objective, a force majeure, really, though brought about by the narcissist himself. The narcissist compares the situation to a game of chess: you select which game to play but once you have done so, you have to abide by the rules, however disadvantageous.

In these circumstances failure can be attributed to outside forces - including the failure to promote oneself. The act of self-promotion cannot, by definition, dehumanize the narcissist or humiliate him. In a Total Institution (or in a Total Situation) the narcissist is no longer a human being - he has nothing.

The positive aspect of total situations is that the narcissist is rendered special and mysterious by virtue of being a stranger and even by the enigma of his prior identity. The narcissist cannot envy the natives' successes and happiness - clearly they had a head start. They belong, they control, they dictate, they are supported by social networks and codes.

The narcissist cannot accept that anyone is more knowledgeable than he is. He is likely to argue vehemently with the medical staff attending him over his treatment, for instance. But he succumbs to force (the more brutal and explicit - the better). And while doing so, the narcissist feels a great relief: the race is over and responsibility has been shifted to the outside. He is almost euphoric when relieved of the need to make decisions, or when he finds himself in a bad spot because this vindicates his internal voices, which keep telling him that he is bad and should be punished.

It is this fear of failure - especially the fear of failing to promote himself - that thwarts the narcissist's relationships with women and with other figures of authority or of import in his life.

It is really the old fear of being abandoned in one of its endless guises. The narcissist envies his deserting partner. He knows how difficult and emotionally wrenching it is to live with him. He realizes that his partner will be much better off without him - and this makes him sad (that he was unable to offer her an acceptable alternative) and envious (that her lot is likely to be better than his.) Of course, he displaces some of his emotions, blaming his partner, then blaming himself, angry at her and afraid to feel this (forbidden) anger (at his mother's substitute).

The narcissist does not feel sorry because a specific individual - his partner - abandoned him. He feels sorry because he was abandoned. It is the act of abandonment, which matters - the abandoning figures (his mother, his partners) are interchangeable.

The narcissist always shares his life with a fantasy, an idealization, with an ideal phantasm he imposes upon his real life partner. Abandonment is only the rebellion of the real life partner against this fiction invented and compulsively enforced by the narcissist, against the humiliation thus suffered - verbal and behavioral.

For the narcissist, to be abandoned means to be judged and found wanting. To be deserted means to be deemed replaceable. At its extreme, it can come to mean the emotional annihilation of the narcissist. He feels that when a woman leaves him she does so because there it is emotionally easy to get away from him and never to see him again. There is no problem to bid farewell to someone who just is not there (at least emotionally). The narcissist feels annulled, rendered transparent, abused, exploited, and objectified.

Put differently, the narcissist experiences through abandonment (even through the mere risk of abandonment) a re-enactment of the very mistreatment and abuses, which, earlier in his life, transformed him into the deformed creature that he is. He gets a taste of the medicine (rather poison) that he often ruthlessly administers to others. At the same time he relives his harrowing childhood experiences.

This mirror matrix of forces is too much for the narcissist to bear. He begins to disintegrate and veers into utter and complete dysfunction. At this late stage, he is likely to entertain suicidal ideation. An encounter with the opposite sex holds

mortal risks for the narcissist - more ominous than the risks normally associated with it.

[Return](#)

Spouse / Mate / Partner of the Narcissist

The narcissist's mate or spouse may be a warm, independent woman – but she may also be a codependent or an inverted narcissist.

The narcissist abuses his intimate partner in numerous ways: overtly, covertly, by being unpredictable, reacting disproportionately, dehumanizing, objectifying, and leveraging personal information.

He may also use ambient abuse (gaslighting) or abuse her by proxy, via third parties.

Question:

What kind of a spouse/mate/partner is likely to be attracted to a narcissist, or to attract a narcissist?

Answer:

The Victims

On the face of it, there is no (emotional) partner or mate, who typically "binds" with a narcissist. They come in all shapes and sizes. The initial phases of attraction, infatuation and falling in love are pretty normal. The narcissist puts on his best face – the other party is blinded by budding love. A natural selection process occurs only much later, as the relationship develops and is put to the test.

Living with a narcissist can be exhilarating, is always onerous, often harrowing. Surviving a relationship with a narcissist indicates, therefore, the parameters of the personality of the survivor. She (or, more rarely, he) is moulded by the relationship into The Typical Narcissistic Mate/Partner/Spouse.

First and foremost, the narcissist's partner must have a deficient or a distorted grasp of her self and of reality. Otherwise, she (or he) is bound to abandon the narcissist's ship early on. The cognitive distortion is likely to consist of belittling and demeaning herself – while aggrandising and adoring the narcissist.

The partner is, thus, placing herself in the position of the eternal victim: undeserving, punishable, a scapegoat. Sometimes, it is very important to the partner to appear moral, sacrificial and victimised. At other times, she is not

even aware of this predicament. The narcissist is perceived by the partner to be a person in the position to demand these sacrifices from her because he is superior in many ways (intellectually, emotionally, morally, professionally, or financially).

The status of professional victim sits well with the partner's tendency to punish herself, namely: with her masochistic streak. The tormented life with the narcissist is just what she deserves.

In this respect, the partner is the mirror image of the narcissist. By maintaining a symbiotic relationship with him, by being totally dependent upon her source of masochistic supply (which the narcissist most reliably constitutes and most amply provides) the partner enhances certain traits and encourages certain behaviours, which are at the very core of narcissism.

The narcissist is never whole without an adoring, submissive, available, self-denigrating partner. His very sense of superiority, indeed his False Self, depends on it. His sadistic Superego switches its attentions from the narcissist (in whom it often provokes suicidal ideation) to the partner, thus finally obtaining an alternative source of sadistic satisfaction.

It is through self-denial that the partner survives. She denies her wishes, hopes, dreams, aspirations, sexual, psychological and material needs, choices, preferences, values, and much else besides. She perceives her needs as threatening because they might engender the wrath of the narcissist's God-like supreme figure.

The narcissist is rendered in her eyes even more superior through and because of this self-denial. Self-denial undertaken to facilitate and ease the life of a "great man" is more palatable. The "greater" the man (=the narcissist), the easier it is for the partner to ignore her own self, to dwindle, to degenerate, to turn into an appendix of the narcissist and, finally, to become nothing but an extension, to merge with the narcissist to the point of oblivion and of merely dim memories of herself.

The two collaborate in this [macabre dance](#). The narcissist is formed by his partner inasmuch as he forms her. Submission breeds superiority and masochism breeds sadism. The relationships are characterised by emergentism: roles are allocated almost from the start and any deviation meets with an aggressive, even violent reaction.

The predominant state of the partner's mind is utter confusion. Even the most basic relationships – with husband, children, or parents – remain bafflingly obscured by the giant shadow cast by the intensive interaction with the

narcissist. A suspension of judgement is part and parcel of a suspension of individuality, which is both a prerequisite to and the result of living with a narcissist. The partner no longer knows what is true and right and what is wrong and forbidden.

The pathologies, dysfunctions, attachment styles and wounds of the narcissist and his partner converse, interact, and feed on each other. The narcissist recreates for the partner the sort of emotional ambience that led to his own formation in the first place: capriciousness, fickleness, arbitrariness, emotional (and physical or sexual) abandonment (trauma bonding). The world becomes hostile and ominous and the partner has only one thing left to cling to: the narcissist.

And cling she does. If there is anything which can safely be said about those who emotionally team up with narcissists, it is that they are overtly and overly dependent.

The partner doesn't know what to do – and this is only too natural in the mayhem that is the relationship with the narcissist. But the typical partner also does not know what she wants and, to a large extent, who she is and what she wishes to become.

These unanswered questions hamper the partner's ability to gauge reality. Her primordial sin is that she fell in love with an image, not with a real person. It is the voiding of the image that is mourned when the relationship ends.

The break-up of a relationship with a narcissist is, therefore, very emotionally charged. It is the culmination of a long chain of humiliations and of subjugation. It is the rebellion of the functioning and healthy parts of the partner's personality against the tyranny of the narcissist.

The partner is likely to have totally misread and misinterpreted the whole interaction (I hesitate to call it a relationship). This lack of proper interface with reality might be (erroneously) labelled "pathological".

Why is it that the partner seeks to prolong her pain? What is the source and purpose of this masochistic streak? Upon the break-up of the relationship, the partner (but not the narcissist, who usually refuses to provide closure) engages in a tortuous and drawn out post mortem.

Sometimes, the breakup is initiated by the long-suffering spouse or intimate partner. As she develops and matures, gaining in self-confidence and a modicum of self-esteem (ironically, at the narcissist's behest in his capacity as her "guru" and "father figure"), she acquires more personal autonomy and

refuses to cater to the energy-draining neediness of her narcissist: she no longer provides him with all-important [secondary narcissistic supply](#) (ostentatious respect, owe, adulation, undivided attention admiration, and the rehashed memories of past successes and triumphs) and she ceases to provide the narcissist with the social cues and directions that he so sorely lacks.

Typically, the roles are then reversed and the narcissist displays [codependent behaviors](#), such as clinging, in a desperate attempt to hang-on to his “creation”, his hitherto veteran and reliable source of quality supply. These are further exacerbated by the [ageing](#) narcissist’s increasing [social isolation](#), psychological disintegration ([decompensation](#)), and [recurrent failures and defeats](#).

Paradoxically, as [Lidija Rangelovska](#) notes, the narcissist craves and may be initially attracted to an intimate partner with clear boundaries, who insists on her rights even at the price of a confrontation. This is because such a partner is perceived by him as a strong, stable, and predictable presence – the very opposite of his parents and of the abusive, capricious, and objectifying environment which fostered his pathology in the first place. But, then he tries to denude her of these “assets” by rendering her submissive and codependent.

But the question who did what to whom (and even why) is irrelevant. What is relevant is to stop mourning oneself, start smiling again and love in a less subservient, hopeless, and pain-inflicting manner.

The cerebral narcissist strikes a deal with his intimate partner: I will be your Father - You will be my Mother.

1. "I will be your Father"

I will provide for you, educate and guide you, help you, protect you, and discipline you. I will always be there for you, forgiving with unconditional parental love, no matter what and even if and when you misbehave.

As your Father, we cannot have sex, but you can have it with others. Like every possessive father, I will react with rage and pain to this betrayal, but will do nothing to prevent you from cheating on me, or even encourage you to do so in order to keep you in my life and under my control.

2. "You will be my Mother"

You will love and accept me unconditionally, regardless of my egregious abuse.

You will take care of all my needs. You will not expect me to behave as an

adult or shoehorn me into adult roles, chores, and obligations.

You will never abandon me, but will not demand sex and intimacy (both of which I find threatening).

A cerebral narcissist wrote this to me (in parentheses, my comments, signed SV):

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“I guess I am a throwback to the men of the 18th or 19th century: patriarchal and transactional (compare this statement to findings by Keller et al. - SV) I have had several serious relationships, including one engagement to be married and three marriages.

The pattern had always been the same: having selected a woman far inferior to my position in life (and, thus, less likely to abandon ship) and following a brief period of rampant sex (to demonstrate to her that I am ‘normal’ and to make her look forward to years of great physical and emotional intimacy – false advertising, I admit), I subside into this recluse, interested only in my studies, reading, writing, and the universe of the mind. Zero sex, no love, no intimacy, physical or emotional, no children, no home (always lived in rented flats), and no family. Take it or leave it and minimal nuisance value.

Her roles are: (1) to admire me; (2) to remind me of my past accomplishments and ‘glory’; (3) to act as a glorified housemaid and do the chores; (4) to serve as my companion, available on the spur of the moment to do my bidding and adhere to my plans and decisions; (5) to reflect well on me by not shaming me in public with her ignorance, promiscuity, or idleness.

As long as she fulfilled the aforementioned functions, I didn’t really care what else she did with her time and with whom. Nothing stirred in me, not even a hint of jealousy, when all my women told me that they had cheated on me with other men, some of them multiply. But, when they showed clear signs of bolting, when they became disenchanted, bitterly disappointed, disaffected, disillusioned, cold, aloof, weary, demonstratively absent, lost all interest in me and my work, verbally and psychologically abused me, and refused to do things together anymore, I panicked because I was afraid to lose their valued services.

I dreaded the time, effort, and resources required to ‘break in’, train, ‘domesticate’, and habituate another woman to my needs and particular requirements (convert them to sources of secondary narcissistic supply - SV.) I was also tired of having my women abscond with half my assets time and again. After all: I only married them only to secure their presence in my life and I did

provide them with a lifestyle which they could never have attained by themselves, inferior as they were to start with!

Faced with such a daunting prospect, I embarked on a charm offensive and I again offered them sex, intimacy, love, attention, and, if needed, adulation. Only, usually, at this stage, it was too late and definitely too little. She was already far-gone. She bolted all the same.

All my women felt that something was wrong with me, that something was missing in the relationship such as it was, but they couldn't quite place their collective finger on it. I simply absented myself because I regarded full-fledged intimate relationships as both a colossal waste of my precious time and the manifestation of socially-sanctioned mediocrity. There had always been a discrepancy in expectations which led to inevitable breakups and acrimony.”

What happens when a male narcissist targets a female psychopath as his source of secondary supply ("intimate" partner)? He ends up being traumatized by her. Why & how?

The psychopath challenges & obliterates the narcissist's grandiose self-perceptions & assumptions, especially his fantasy of being unique.

The psychopath's promiscuity, risk-seeking reckless behaviors, & addictions to novelty & thrills ("adrenaline junkie") render the narcissist just one of her many sexual conquests. She never gets emotionally attached to him or misses him. To her, he is just another notch in her belt, a mere casualty of her cockteasing power plays with men, road kill. He is soon forgotten as she moves on - often by cheating on him as she had done to all her previous men.

The narcissist believes in his unique ability to detect lying & takes pride in his intelligence & resistance to being duped. But narcissists are very gullible. The psychopathic female uses their thirst for narcissistic supply to manipulate them with half-truths & outright lies. She tells them what they want to hear, flatters them, rewrites her own history to render them unique, & deceives them repeatedly, faking everything from emotions through tears to orgasms. The narcissist gets taken in. When he discovers the truth, his grandiosity is devastated.

Finally: the narcissist holds himself to be irresistible. But the psychopath is not interested in him! She is goal-oriented: she wants his money, contacts, protection, or prestige. She is a golddigger, or a social climber, or sleeps her way to the top. When the narcissist finds out that he had merely been used as an instrument, he is wounded to the quick.

These narcissistic injuries often evolve into a form of ruminative obsession or stalking as the narcissist tries in vain to integrate the painful experiences into his view of himself as godlike, omniscient, and desirable. The psychopath gives the narcissist a taste of his own medicine and it is bitter and sometimes threatens what is left of his sanity and even life.

A narcissist wrote this:

“My mother was a frustrating, withholding, & sadistic borderline & I am trying to regain her love (resolve early conflicts) via my women.

Relationships with labile borderlines are very intense & I equate intensity & lability with authenticity & depth. I also associate being loved with withholding, pain, betrayal, & frustration. Only a borderline can deliver this package of emotions & behaviors on a constant basis. The whole relationship is a protracted trauma bond. "Normal" women do not interest me as WOMEN at least. Still: I am very threatened & I hate certain behaviors and traits associated with Borderline: they make me feel insecure, abandoned, & tortured.

In other words: loved?

No. Some behaviors make me feel abandoned, not loved. Promiscuity & cheating, for example. Or lack of empathy & a lack of interest in me & in my life. Or pathological lying & constant deception. These behaviors make me want to walk away because they provoke my abandonment anxiety to the maximum.

I feel LOVED when my Borderline partner is totally faithful to me, jealous, obsessed with me - when I am her only focus and reason for life. The INTENSITY of her dependence on me & clinging turns me on. At the same time, she tortures me & betrays me by withholding her love (but not her interest in me & addiction to me), by playing mind games, & by causing me excruciating pain as she watches me suffer (example: in threesomes). But for me to be even interested in her, let alone love her, the Borderline MUST show no interest in other men, be thoroughly preoccupied with me, addicted to my presence in her life & truthful to a fault. I must be her only reason to live, she will literally die if I leave her. She must cling to me ferociously & scrutinize every aspect of my being relentlessly & ceaselessly. This power that I have over her is the key.

Feeling LOVED attracts me inexorably and irresistibly. Feeling abandoned

drives me away. Borderlines evoke both emotions in me. This is the source of my approach-avoidance repetition compulsion.

With women, I maintain four types of relationships, depending exclusively on what I get from them.

When a woman grants me access to her body and consents to have regular and kinky sex with me and when she also adulates and admires me unconditionally and unthinkingly - I am intoxicated by her. I become her codependent slave, at her beck and call, ready to sacrifice everything, from my values to my time.

When a woman offers me only sex, I have a good time with her and trust her with the most intimate pathways of my inner world. But I am a lot more reserved and calculated when it comes to the allocation of my resources. I am businesslike and focused on the transaction: sex against a fun, adventurous time together.

When sex is excluded from the relationship, for whatever reason, the woman can still offer me unbounded attention and adulation, but I expect her to supplement these offerings with other services rendered to me as a personal assistant or a homemaker. I am likely to be less inclined to spend intimate alone time with her.

Finally, some women offer me only auxiliary services at home and at work. I treat them as I would relate to an employee: perfunctorily, as an object, provider, or prop. I am a lot more demanding, critical, and aggressive with such women.”

Narcissists find it nearly impossible to locate willing sources of secondary supply (admiring and subservient "intimate" partners). For two reasons:

1. The rising awareness of narcissistic abuse which, ironically, started with my pioneering work in 1995.

Women have been given a toolkit to spot narcissists and avoid them. They were also advised to go no contact with narcissists already in their lives.

2. Women themselves have become much more grandiose and narcissistic. They compete with male narcissists for narcissistic supply and mistreat narcissistic men in the same ways these men had abused them previously.

The result is a sea of solitary narcissists in desperate search online and in developing countries for willing and submissive counterparts. In vain: the

Internet has rendered the entire world a global village. This is one time the narcissist regrets that his reputation precedes him.

But there is another type of narcissist: the guru, fixer, savior, or messiah.

In one narcissist's words:

“My mother was broken, I now realize from the hindsight vantage point of my 58 years. She tortured me physically and psychologically as both toddler and teen, for 12 harrowing horror years in unspeakable ways.

I remember vividly that, even as a 4 year old, I wanted to save her, to fix her, to put her back together, to make her whole and happy. She had such a beautiful smile and a way with storytelling and fun games. In between her monster phases. Gradually, the darkness took over and there was nothing left of her and I failed to rescue the first significant woman in my life. I haven't seen her since 1995.

Since then, I have been trying to mend broken women in all my Humpty-Dumpty relationships. Trying to undo the damage and salvage the goods. Trying to salve their gaping wounds with affection, attention, love, patience, and hope. Save them from their jagged selves.

But, of course, it was and is all hopeless. These women keep shattering my heart, sometimes to the point of suicidal ideation. They cannot help it. They are not evil. They are just not all there, no self to control, bundles of raw impulses and tidal emotions in which they drown silently, like a frozen scream.

I pick up the shards - mine and theirs - and move on in my Quixotic quest, a knight errant in an arrant night, my weapons rusted and crumbling, my step heavy with years, my vision clouded with tears. But I keep trying because what else can I do? My mother needs me, trapped in her abysmal soul, distressed. I cannot ignore her siren call. Even when it ineluctably spells doom.”

Some narcissists focus on, cultivate, and groom much [younger women with daddy issues](#) that define both their personality and their emotional needs. These narcissists act avuncular, strict, and disciplinarian, but also caring and supportive, a fount of sagacity and perspicacity, always available with wide-ranging knowledge and life-altering advice. At once guru, intimate partner, and parent, they insinuate themselves into the minds and lives of their quarries, rendering their presence addictive and themselves indispensable.

But, as time passes, this very mentoring transforms the young woman: she

becomes more self-aware, mature, experienced, and driven by a long-term healthy impulse for self-actualization. She is likely to abandon the narcissist and seek a healthier relationship. In extreme cases, she resorts to blatantly cheating on the narcissist and ostentatiously betraying him in order to break the surrealistic spell of the shared psychosis, burn all the bridges, and set herself free.

Having lost yet another mate, the narcissist then embarks on a frantic effort to find his next Galatea: a malleable female he could mould into a sex slave, source of secondary narcissistic supply, and service provider. He knows full well that it will not last and will result in a catastrophic heartbreak all around. Shattering loss is guaranteed. But what choice does he have?

The narcissist has 3 essential demands from his partner and companion, 3 Ss: Sex, Supply, Services. If she provides any 2 of these 3, he is pacified and ignores her: she is a captive and he is indifferent to her emotions, needs, and wishes. He takes her silent, acquiescing presence in his life for granted: an inert, lifeless, and objectified or even mummified fixture. The narcissist acts similarly towards a frustrating partner who provides only 1 or none of the 3 Ss: by withdrawing and disinvesting, absenting himself and cutting off all meaningful communication.

In both cases, the narcissist reacts with extreme abuse and rejection to any attempt to invade or control his personal space or time. To attract his attention and gain access to him, the partner needs to escalate, dramatize, render unpredictable, and exaggerate her behaviors.

Many partners react to this apathetic negation of their being by self-trashing (for example: by drinking to oblivion and having unprotected sex with a lowlife stranger, falling into bad company, self-harming with drugs or otherwise, or by engaging in other reckless and self-destructive behaviors)

The aim of these maneuvers is to [communicate distress](#): "By ignoring and rejecting me, you are hurting me so much that I want to destroy myself. I hope the pain I am causing you now will be sufficiently potent to pierce the veil, to make you care about me, to penetrate your formidable firewall and stupor. I am also furious at myself for having trusted you, for having been so naive and gullible to fall for your manipulation. I deserve to be punished for this lapse in judgment."

Usually, only the threat of abandonment or actual loss can convey this harrowing and heartbreaking message. Overt, ostentatious, purposeful and weaponized cheating is the sole way open to the partner to get through to the neglectful and oblivious other.

Ironically, this escalated cry for help is rarely restorative and often irrevocably terminal and destructive: it dooms the relationship. Half measures like triangulation are useless: all out egregious in your face infidelity is the only efficacious wake up call. But it is a last hurrah.

Why do [victims and survivors keep partnering with narcissists and psychopaths](#), despite all the horrors they have endured?

Freud called it Repetition Compulsion: people keep reenacting unresolved conflicts in the hope of resolving them next time around and with a different party.

Joan Lachkar suggested, for example, that Borderlines and Narcissists team up in order to salve "archaic wounds", which she later dubbed "V spots"

Both experiential and cognitive data coalesce into rigid schemas, mental representations of relationships, starting with early childhood and primary objects (mother, typically). It seems that we are doomed to revisiting our mistakes. We even behave in ways which guarantee the same deleterious or detrimental outcomes.

Why do [victims of narcissistic abuse](#) insist that the narcissist is possessed of such thespian talents that he succeeded to deceive them into thinking that he is nothing of the sort? Because it absolves them from personal responsibility: "Not my fault! He misled me! He made me fall in love with him before I had realized what I was getting myself into!" and other such self-deceiving, alloplastic, and, dare I say, narcissistic excuses.

The truth is that it takes a massive amount of denial to ignore the red flags and warning signs that the narcissist gives out in plenitude within the first ten minutes of meeting him for the first time. There is even a name for the

primordial frisson reaction that these predators provoke in their tremulous prey: "uncanny valley"

Actually, victims are attracted precisely to these signals irresistibly and inexorably. But they want plausible deniability and someone else to blame when it ineluctably ends with horrific, life shattering abuse. It seems that narcissism is contagious from the first moment of exposure: "It is not my fault, he made me do it" is a classic narcissistic refrain, after all.

Psychopaths abuse empathic mirroring to insinuate themselves into their victims's lives as a long lost soulmate and veritable Doppelgänger.

When he targets you, the psychopath laughs at your jokes, imitates your speech patterns, replicates your body language, resonates with your values and beliefs, compliments your behaviors, upholds your choices and decisions, tells you only and exactly what you want to hear, caters to your self-image, buttresses your self-perception, takes care of your needs, flatters and idealizes you.

In short: the psychopath usurps your identity and becomes you. Psychopathic grooming is a form of identity theft and is, therefore, highly addictive: it feels like self-infatuation, irresistibly and inexorably falling in love with that most perfect being: with you.

Brainwashing in relationships with narcissists is real and starts with grooming and lovebombing.

The narcissist engenders in his victim a dissociative state, like akin to a hypnotic trance.

This is especially easy to accomplish with Borderlines and Codependents who relegate the regulation of their emotions and moods to their intimate partner.

The narcissist is able to entrain (brainwash into a hypnotic trance via resonance) the codependent because they share common roots.

Women are irresistibly attracted to [mysterious, enigmatic men](#). But not all mysteries are created equal.

Actually, women are repelled, frightened, and get irritated by a man who withholds biographical and pecuniary information or sports a murky, occult, and confabulated life story. They regard such deliberate obfuscation as manipulative or sinister.

But women are also inexorably drawn to a man whose essence is inaccessible and obscure, his identity uncertain, and what makes him tick unclear. Ostentatious self-sufficiency and dignified reticence render a man this rare combination: a challenge to be overcome and the promise of adventure as the woman explores and uncovers the terra incognita of his inner landscape.

Men who are too transparent and forthcoming regarding their psychology, men who bare their souls and carry their emotions on their sleeve - are boring and dull and assiduously avoided as immature weirdoes.

“Who is he really” attracts hordes of obsessed women. “Why won’t he say what he does for a living” pushes them away equally forcefully.

Intimate partners of narcissists often remain in the relationship because they pity the narcissist or mother him or can't find the strength to hurt him by abandoning the ghost ship.

But even the most loving and dedicated spouses and mates give up at some point, confronted by ceaseless rejection and abuse that undermine their sanity and threaten their survival. They develop what I call "[escape velocity](#)" and break free from the gravitational pull of their absent and painful companion.

No amount of sobbing or charm can reverse the partner's decision to eject once the escape velocity had been attained. Sometimes the partners act out - cheat on the narcissist promiscuously, or otherwise betray his trust publicly, ostentatiously, and egregiously - just to make sure that there is no way back.

My way or the highway! Take it or leave it! That's the way I am and I am not going to change. The narcissist's favorite stock phrases.

One reason for such rigid and defensive intransigence is the narcissist's inability to access positive emotions or otherwise process them. Everything is filtered via the [narcissist's cognitive deficits](#).

When the narcissist comes across a beautiful woman, he gauges her endowments using comparative statistics and aesthetic judgment (very much the way neurotypicals do with an inanimate work of art). He immediately reduces her to the set of potential benefits and outcomes that she reifies: sex, money, power, access as forms of narcissistic supply.

If she - a goddess even - cannot provide him with 2 of 3 Ss (autoerotic sex, sadistic or narcissistic supply, services/income/power), he instantly loses all interest in her and finds her about as alluring as a used spittoon - gorgeous, intelligent and enigmatic as she may be to all other men. Even more astounding: he sees nothing abnormal or infantile in his (lack of) reaction.

Similarly, when a narcissist comes across a broken, sad, grieving man, she notes his vulnerability using her cold empathy scanning radar. Her first thought would be: What's in it for me? How can I leverage his state of mind to obtain sex or money as forms of narcissistic supply?

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The Abuse

Abuse is an integral, inseparable part of the Narcissistic Personality Disorder.

The narcissist idealises and then **DEVALUES** and discards the object of his initial idealisation. This abrupt, heartless devaluation **IS** abuse. **ALL** narcissists idealise and then devalue. This is **THE** core narcissistic behaviour. The narcissist exploits, lies, insults, demeans, ignores (the "silent treatment"), manipulates, controls. All these are forms of abuse.

There are a million ways to abuse. To love too much is to abuse. It is tantamount to treating someone as one's extension, an object, or an instrument of gratification. To be over-protective, not to respect privacy, to be brutally

honest, with a morbid sense of humour, or consistently tactless – is to abuse. To expect too much, to denigrate, to ignore – are all modes of abuse. There is physical abuse, verbal abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse. The list is long.

Narcissists are masters of abusing surreptitiously ("[ambient abuse](#)"). They are "stealth abusers". You have to actually live with one in order to witness the abuse.

There are three important categories of abuse:

1. ***Overt Abuse*** – The open and explicit abuse of another person. Threatening, coercing, battering, lying, berating, demeaning, chastising, insulting, humiliating, exploiting, ignoring ("silent treatment"), devaluing, unceremoniously discarding, verbal abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse are all forms of overt abuse.
2. ***Covert or Controlling Abuse*** – Narcissism is almost entirely about control. It is a primitive and immature reaction to the circumstances of a life in which the narcissist (usually in his childhood) was rendered helpless. It is about re-asserting one's identity, re-establishing predictability, mastering the environment – human and physical.
3. The bulk of narcissistic behaviours can be traced to this panicky reaction to the potential for loss of control. Narcissists are hypochondriacs (and difficult patients) because they are afraid to lose control over their body, its looks and its proper functioning. They are obsessive-compulsive in their efforts to subdue their physical habitat and render it foreseeable. They stalk people and harass them as a means of "being in touch" – another form of narcissistic control.

But why the panic?

The narcissist is a solipsist. To him, nothing exists except himself. Meaningful others are his extensions, assimilated by him, they are internal objects – not external ones. Thus, losing control of a significant other is equivalent to losing the use of a limb, or of one's brain. It is terrifying.

Independent or disobedient people evoke in the narcissist the realisation that something is wrong with his worldview, that he is not the centre of the world or its cause and that he cannot control what, to him, are internal representations.

To the narcissist, losing control means going insane. Because other people are mere elements in the narcissist's mind – being unable to manipulate them literally means losing it (his mind). Imagine, if you suddenly were to find out

that you cannot manipulate your memories or control your thoughts...
Nightmarish!

Moreover, it is often only through manipulation and extortion that the narcissist can secure his [Narcissistic Supply \(NS\)](#). Controlling his Sources of Narcissistic Supply is a (mental) life or death question for the narcissist. The narcissist is a drug addict (his drug being the NS) and he would go to any length to obtain the next dose.

In his frantic efforts to maintain control or re-assert it, the narcissist resorts to a myriad of fiendishly inventive stratagems and mechanisms. Here is a partial list:

Unpredictability

The narcissist acts unpredictably, capriciously, inconsistently and irrationally. This serves to demolish in others their carefully crafted worldview. They become dependent upon the next twist and turn of the narcissist, his inexplicable whims, his outbursts, denial, or smiles.

In other words: the narcissist makes sure that *HE* is the only stable entity in the lives of others – by shattering the rest of their world through his seemingly insane behaviour. He guarantees his presence in their lives – by destabilising them.

In the absence of a self, there are no likes or dislikes, preferences, predictable behaviour or characteristics. It is not possible to know the narcissist. There is no one there.

The narcissist was conditioned – from an early age of abuse and trauma – to expect the unexpected. His was a world in which (sometimes sadistic) capricious caretakers and peers often behaved arbitrarily. He was trained to deny his True Self and nurture a False one.

Having invented himself, the narcissist sees no problem in re-inventing that which he designed in the first place. The narcissist is his own creator.

Hence his grandiosity.

Moreover, the narcissist is a man for all seasons, forever adaptable, constantly imitating and emulating, a human sponge, a perfect mirror, a chameleon, a non-entity that is, at the same time, all entities combined. The narcissist is best described by Heidegger's phrase: "Being and Nothingness". Into this reflective vacuum, this sucking black hole, the narcissist attracts the Sources of his Narcissistic Supply.

To an observer, the narcissist appears to be fractured or discontinuous.

Pathological narcissism has been compared to the Dissociative Identity Disorder (formerly the Multiple Personality Disorder). By definition, the narcissist has at least two selves, the True and False ones. His personality is very primitive and disorganised. Living with a narcissist is a nauseating experience not only because of what he is – but because of what he is *NOT*. He is not a fully formed human – but a dizzyingly kaleidoscopic gallery of ephemeral images, which melt into each other seamlessly. It is incredibly disorienting.

It is also exceedingly problematic. Promises made by the narcissist are easily disowned by him. His plans are transient. His emotional ties – a simulacrum. Most narcissists have one [island of stability](#) in their life (spouse, family, their career, a hobby, their religion, country, or idol) – pounded by the turbulent currents of a dishevelled existence.

The narcissist does not keep agreements, does not adhere to laws or social norms, and regards consistency and predictability as demeaning traits.

Thus, to invest in a narcissist is a purposeless, futile and meaningless activity. To the narcissist, every day is a new beginning, a hunt, a new cycle of idealisation or devaluation, a newly invented self. There is no accumulation of credits or goodwill because the narcissist has no past and no future. He occupies an eternal and [timeless present](#). He is a fossil caught in the frozen ashes of a volcanic childhood.

TIP

Refuse to accept such behaviour. Demand reasonably predictable and rational actions and reactions. Insist on respect for your boundaries, predilections, preferences, and priorities.

Disproportional Reactions

One of the favourite tools of manipulation in the narcissist's arsenal is the disproportionality of his reactions. He reacts with supreme rage to the slightest slight. He punishes severely for what he perceives to be an offence against him, no matter how minor. He throws a temper tantrum over any discord or disagreement, however gently and considerately expressed. Or he may act attentive, charming and seductive (even over-sexed, if need be). This ever-shifting emotional landscape ("affective dunes") coupled with an inordinately harsh and arbitrarily applied "penal code" are both promulgated by the narcissist. Neediness and dependence on the source of all justice meted – on the narcissist – are thus guaranteed.

TIP

Demand a just and proportional treatment. Reject or ignore unjust and capricious behaviour.

If you are up to the inevitable confrontation, react in kind. Let him taste some of his own medicine.

Dehumanization and Objectification

People have a need to believe in the empathic skills and basic good-heartedness of others. By dehumanising and objectifying people – the narcissist attacks the very foundations of the social treaty. This is the "alien" aspect of narcissists – they may be excellent imitations of fully formed adults but they are emotionally non-existent, or, at best, immature.

This is so horrid, so repulsive, so phantasmagoric – that people recoil in terror. It is then, with their defences absolutely down, that they are the most susceptible and vulnerable to the narcissist's control. Physical, psychological, verbal and sexual abuse are all forms of dehumanisation and objectification.

TIP

Never show your abuser that you are afraid of him. Do not negotiate with bullies. They are insatiable. Do not succumb to blackmail.

If things get rough- disengage, involve law enforcement officers, friends and colleagues, or threaten him (legally).

Do not keep your abuse a secret. Secrecy is the abuser's weapon.

Never give him a second chance. React with your full arsenal to the first transgression.

Abuse of Information

From the first moments of an encounter with another person, the narcissist is on the prowl. He collects information with the intention of applying it later to extract Narcissistic Supply. The more he knows about his potential Source of Supply – the better able he is to coerce, manipulate, charm, extort or convert it "to the cause". The narcissist does not hesitate to abuse the information he gleaned, regardless of its intimate nature or the circumstances in which he obtained it. This is a powerful tool in his armoury.

TIP

Be guarded. Don't be too forthcoming in a first or casual meeting. Gather intelligence.

Be yourself. Don't misrepresent your wishes, boundaries, preferences, priorities, and red lines.

Do not behave inconsistently. Do not go back on your word. Be firm and resolute.

Impossible Situations

The narcissist engineers impossible, dangerous, unpredictable, unprecedented, or highly specific situations in which he is sorely and indispensably needed. The narcissist, his knowledge, his skills or his traits become the only ones applicable, or the most useful to coping with these artificial predicaments. It is a form of [control by proxy](#).

TIP

Stay away from such quagmires. Scrutinize every offer and suggestion, no matter how innocuous.

Prepare backup plans. Keep others informed of your whereabouts and appraised of your situation.

Be vigilant and doubting. Do not be gullible and suggestible. Better safe than sorry.

[Control by Proxy](#)

If all else fails, the narcissist recruits friends, colleagues, mates, family members, the authorities, institutions, neighbours, or the media – in short, third parties – to do his bidding. He uses them to cajole, coerce, threaten, stalk, offer, retreat, tempt, convince, harass, communicate and otherwise manipulate his target. He controls these unaware instruments exactly as he plans to control his ultimate prey. He employs the same mechanisms and devices. And he dumps his props unceremoniously when the job is done.

Another form of control by proxy is to engineer situations in which abuse is inflicted upon another person. Such carefully crafted scenarios involve embarrassment and humiliation as well as social sanctions (condemnation, opprobrium, or even physical punishment). Society, or a social group become the instruments of the narcissist.

TIP

Often the abuser's proxies are unaware of their role. Expose him. Inform them. Demonstrate to them how they are being abused, misused, and plain used by the abuser.

Trap your abuser. Treat him as he treats you. Involve others. Bring it into the open. Nothing like sunshine to disinfect abuse.

Ambient Abuse

The fostering, propagation and enhancement of an atmosphere of fear, intimidation, instability, unpredictability and irritation. There are no acts of traceable or provable explicit abuse, nor any manipulative settings of control. Yet, the irksome feeling remains, a disagreeable foreboding, a premonition, a bad omen. This is sometimes called "gaslighting".

In the long-term, such an environment erodes one's sense of self-worth and self-esteem. Self-confidence is shaken badly. Often, the victims go a paranoid or schizoid and thus are exposed even more to criticism and judgement. The roles are thus reversed: the victim is considered mentally disordered and the narcissist – the suffering soul or the victim.

TIP

Run! Get away! Ambient abuse often develops into overt and violent abuse.

You don't owe anyone an explanation – but you owe yourself a life. Bail out of the relationship.

The Malignant Optimism of the Abused

I often come across sad examples of the powers of self-delusion that the narcissist provokes in his victims. It is what I call "malignant optimism". People refuse to believe that some questions are unsolvable, some diseases incurable, some disasters inevitable. They see a sign of hope in every fluctuation. They read meaning and patterns into every random occurrence, utterance, or slip. They are deceived by their own pressing need to believe in the ultimate victory of good over evil, health over sickness, order over disorder. Life appears otherwise so meaningless, so unjust and so arbitrary...

So, they impose upon it a design, progress, aims, and paths. This is magical thinking.

"If only he tried hard enough", "If he only really wanted to heal", "If only we found the right therapy", "If only his defences were down", "There **MUST** be something good and worthy under the hideous facade", "**NO ONE** can be that evil and destructive", "He must have meant it differently", "God, or a higher being, or the spirit, or the soul is the solution and the answer to our prayers", "He is not responsible for what he is - his narcissism is the product of a difficult childhood, of abuse, and of his monstrous parents."

The Pollyanna defences of the abused are aimed against the emerging and horrible understanding that humans are mere specks of dust in a totally indifferent universe, the playthings of evil and sadistic forces, of which the narcissist is one - and that finally their pain means nothing to anyone but themselves. Nothing whatsoever. It has all been in vain.

The narcissist holds such thinking in barely undisguised contempt. To him, it is a sign of weakness, the scent of prey, a gaping vulnerability. He uses and abuses this human need for order, good, and meaning – as he uses and abuses all other human needs. Gullibility, selective blindness, malignant optimism – these are the weapons of the beast. And the abused are hard at work to provide it with its arsenal.

The mentally ill form dyads or couples. Pathologies attract each other and resonate in alliances of pain, fused relationships.

Such partnerships are suffused with torment: the mentally ill spouses or intimate partners engage in mutually hurtful conduct. It is also heartbreaking to watch your loved one's inexorable decline.

Gradually, the parties settle on coping strategies that are either "approach" or "avoidance" oriented.

The "approach" strategies include active denial of the problem often via a shared psychosis which renders the mental illness something to espouse, encourage, or be proud of.

Another strategy involves enabling. The enabler collaborates with the mentally sick partner so as to accommodate his or her disability.

Sometimes one of the partners assumes the role and mantle of guru, teacher, coach, guide, or father or mother. He or she suppresses dissent and re-molds the mentally ill partner to conform to some ideal. This could involve harsh or even sadistic criticism and humiliation on a daily basis as well as intermittent reinforcement.

But more often the mentally ill members of the dyad end up avoiding each other and the pain that they cause one another. This hurt aversion leads to extreme estrangement and cruel disengagement. Being ignored and neglected results in decompensation and acting out. The mentally ill partner tries to provoke attention and punish his or her avoidant counterpart by engaging in promiscuous and reckless behaviors.

In extreme cases the wayward partner internalizes and accepts the harsh judgment of her significant other. This can lead to major depressive episodes, psychotic disorders, and suicide.

The tendency to remain in bad relationships - abusive, hopeless, sexless, loveless, doomed - is known as the Sunk Cost (Concorde) Fallacy (or bias). Co-owning a business or property, shared memories, and especially co-parenting tend to cement this bias and pile it on top of traumatic bonding and a fused relationship.

We throw good money after bad just because “we are already invested” in a project. We watch an atrocious movie to the end because we have already spent an hour doing so. We eat food we have ordered even if it sucks. We keep clothes we never wear because we have paid for them. It is a particularly pernicious brand of loss aversion (proclivity to avoid waste). This utterly irrational behavior is motivated by malignant optimism: overestimation of the probabilities of positive outcomes if we just keep going or do something differently.

We are also afraid to look foolish if we admit to having made the wrong decisions consistently (“narcissistic injury”). We sometimes feel responsible and guilty for having made these decisions in the first place.

Of course the rational thing to do is to cut your losses and abandon the dysfunctional relationship. But - divorce statistics aside - surprisingly few do so in time. The results? Wrecked marriages, hateful exes, bruised children, and crumbling enterprises.

[Return](#)

Codependency and Dependent Personality Disorder

There is great confusion regarding the terms co-dependent, counter-dependent, and dependent. Before we proceed to study Dependent Personality Disorder in our next article, we would do well to clarify these terms.

As [Lidija Rangelovska](#) observes, we all need to be needed. We all want to feel useful and able to give. People resent the narcissist partly because his [False Self](#) – the facade he puts to the world – is so self-sufficient. But, codependents take this to a whole different level.

Codependents

Like dependents (people with Dependent Personality Disorder), codependents depend on other people for their emotional gratification and the performance of both inconsequential and crucial daily and psychological (“ego”) functions. They seek to fuse or merge with their significant others. By “becoming one” with their intimate partners, codependents are able to actually [love themselves](#) via loving others.

Codependents are needy, demanding, and submissive. They suffer from [abandonment anxiety](#) and, to avoid being overwhelmed by it they cling to others and act immaturely. These behaviours are intended to elicit protective responses and to safeguard the "relationship" with their companion or mate upon whom they depend. Codependents appear to be impervious to abuse. No matter how badly they are mistreated, they remain committed. In extreme codependence, this fusion and merger with the significant other lead to “in-house” stalking by the codependent as she strives to preserve the integrity and cohesion of her personality and the representations of her loved ones within it.

This is where the "co" in "co-dependence" comes into play. By accepting the role of victims, codependents seek to control their abusers and manipulate them. It is a danse macabre in which both members of the dyad collaborate.

The codependent sometimes claims to pity her abuser and cast herself in the grandiose roles of his saviour and redeemer. Her overwhelming [empathy](#) imprisons the codependent in these dysfunctional relationships and she feels guilt either because she believes that she had driven the abuser to maltreat her or because she contemplates abandoning him.

There are two possible pathological reactions to childhood abuse and trauma: codependence and narcissism. They both involve fantasy as a defense mechanism: the codependent has a pretty realistic assessment of herself, but her view of others

is fantastic; the narcissist's self-image and self-perception are delusional and grandiose, but his penetrating view of others is bloodcurdlingly accurate ("cold empathy"). Pathological narcissism is a form of addiction to narcissistic supply.

The narcissist is caught in a conundrum of his own making: on the one hand he considers himself superior and godlike. On the other hand, to maintain his inflated, grandiose, and fantastic sense of self-worth, the narcissist is abjectly and humiliatingly dependent on constant input from people whom he considers vastly inferior to him. He clings to them but hates and resents them and himself for his dependence. This leads to bouts of approach followed by avoidance, a repetition complex.

Typology of Codependents

Codependency is a complex, multi-faceted, and multi-dimensional defence against the codependent's fears and needs. There are five categories of codependence, stemming from their respective aetiologies:

(i) Codependency that aims to fend off anxieties related to abandonment. These codependents are clingy, smothering, and prone to panic, are plagued with [ideas of reference](#) (referential ideation), and display self-negating submissiveness. Their main concern is to prevent their victims (friends, spouses, family members) from deserting them or from attaining [true autonomy and independence](#). These codependents merge with their "loved" ones and experience any sign of abandonment (actual, threatened, or even imagined) as a form of self-annihilation or "amputation".

(ii) Codependency that is geared to cope with the codependent's fear of losing control. By feigning helplessness and neediness such codependents coerce their environment into ceaselessly catering to their needs, wishes, and requirements. These codependents are labile "[drama queens](#)" and their life is a kaleidoscope of [instability](#) and chaos. They [refuse to grow up](#) and force their nearest and dearest to treat them as emotional and/or physical invalids. They deploy their self-imputed deficiencies and disabilities as weapons.

Both these types of codependents use emotional blackmail and, when necessary, threats to secure the presence and blind compliance of their "[suppliers](#)".

(iii) Vicarious codependents live through others. They "sacrifice" themselves in order to glory in the accomplishments of their chosen targets. They subsist on reflected light, on second-hand applause, and on derivative achievements. They have no personal history, having suspended their lives, wishes, preferences, and dreams in favour of another's.

From my book ["Malignant Self Love - Narcissism Revisited"](#):

"Inverted Narcissist"

A subtype of "covert narcissist", this is a co-dependent who depends exclusively on narcissists (narcissist-co-dependent). If you are living with a narcissist, have a relationship with one, if you are married to one, if you are working with a narcissist, etc. – it does NOT mean that you are an inverted narcissist.

To "qualify" as an inverted narcissist, you must CRAVE to be in a relationship with a narcissist, regardless of any abuse inflicted on you by him/her. You must ACTIVELY seek relationships with narcissists and ONLY with narcissists, no matter what your (bitter and traumatic) past experience has been. You must feel EMPTY and UNHAPPY in relationships with ANY OTHER kind of person. Only then, and if you satisfy the other diagnostic criteria of a Dependent Personality Disorder, can you be safely labelled an 'inverted narcissist'.

(iv) **"Codependent or Borderline narcissists"** oscillate between periods of clinging and other codependent behavior patterns (which they interpret as "intimacy") and eras of aloofness, detachment, and emotional neglect and abandonment (which they regard as legitimate and the only possible manifestations of their personal autonomy and space.) They also tend to form with their intimate partner a shared psychosis (folie a deux). These are all the outcomes of their overwhelming and all-pervasive abandonment anxiety: they either smother their partner in an attempt to forestall desertion – or they [pre-emptively abandon](#) ship, thus avoiding hurt and maintaining an illusion of control over the situation ("I walked out on her and dumped her, not the other way around.")

The codependent deploys strategies such as merger (becoming one with her intimate partner while renouncing all personal autonomy and independence of both of them, up to a point of shared psychosis); coextensivity (the "ventriloquist defense": insisting that the partner mind-reads her and acts in ways that reflect her inner psychological states and moods); and shifting boundaries (using behavioural unpredictability and ambient uncertainty to induce paralysing dependence in the partner.)

(v) Finally, there is another form of dependence that is so subtle that it eluded detection until very recently.

Counterdependents

Counterdependents reject and despise authority (are contumacious) and often clash with [authority figures](#) (parents, boss, the Law). Their sense of self-worth and their very self-identity are premised on and derived from (in other words, are dependent on) these acts of bravura and defiance. They are "personal autonomy militants".

Counterdependents are fiercely, uncompromisingly independent; controlling; self-centered; and aggressive. Many of them are antisocial and use [Projective Identification](#) (i.e. force people to behave in ways that buttresses and affirm the counterdependent's view of the world and his expectations).

These behavior patterns are often the result of a deep-seated [fear of intimacy](#). In an intimate relationship, the counterdependent feels enslaved, ensnared, and captive. Counterdependents are locked into "approach-avoidance repetition compulsion" cycles. Hesitant approach is followed by avoidance of commitment. They are "lone wolves" and bad team players.

From my book ["Malignant Self Love - Narcissism Revisited"](#):

"Counterdependence is a reaction formation. The counterdependent dreads his own weaknesses. He seeks to overcome them by projecting an image of omnipotence, omniscience, success, self-sufficiency, and superiority.

Most "classical" (overt) narcissists are counterdependent. Their emotions and needs are buried under "scar tissue" which had formed, coalesced, and hardened during years of one form of abuse or another. Grandiosity, a sense of entitlement, a lack of empathy, and overweening haughtiness usually hide gnawing insecurity and a fluctuating sense of self-worth."

Situational Codependence

Click [HERE](#) to Watch the Video

Some patients develop codependent behaviors and traits in the wake of a life crisis, especially if it involves an abandonment and resulting solitude (e.g. divorce, or an empty nest: when one's children embark on their own, autonomous lives, or leave home altogether.)

Such late-onset codependence fosters a complex emotional and behavioral chain reaction whose role is to resolve the inner conflict by ridding oneself of the emergent, undesirable codependent conduct.

Consciously, such a patient may, at first, feel liberated. But, unconsciously, being abruptly "dumped" and lonesome has a disorienting and disconcerting effect (akin to intoxication). Many patients rush headlong and indiscriminately into new relationships. Deep inside, this kind of patient has always dreaded being lonely (lonely, not alone!). Following a divorce, the death of a significant other or intimate partner, the passing away of parents or other loved ones, children relocating to college, and similar episodes of dislocation, she suppresses this dread because she possesses no real, effective solutions and

antidotes to her sudden solitude and has developed no meaningful ways to cope with it.

We are taught that denied and repressed emotions often re-emerge in camouflage, as it were. The dread of ending up all alone is such that the patient becomes codependent in order to make sure that she never finds herself in a similar situation. Her codependence is a series of dysfunctional behaviors that are intended to fend off abandonment.

Still, patients who develop situational codependence (unlike classic, lifelong codependents) are fundamentally balanced and strong personalities who cherish their self-control. So, they always keep all their options open, including the vital option of going it alone yet again. They make sure to choose the wrong partner and then they spectacularly "expose" his egregious misconduct so that they can get rid of him and of the newly-acquired codependence in good conscience and at the same time.

To reiterate:

- The situational codependent is characterized by a deep-set fear of being lonely (abandonment anxiety, a form of attachment disorder) as an underlying, dormant inner landscape;

- This lurking abandonment anxiety is awakened by life's tribulations: divorce, an empty nest, death of one's nearest and dearest.

- At first, the newly-found freedom is exhilarating and intoxicating. But this "feel-good" factor actually serves to enhance the anxiety! The inner dialog goes something like this: "What if it feels so good that I will opt to remain by myself for the rest of my days? This prospect is terrifying!"

- Thus, a conflict erupts between conscious emotions and behaviors (liberation, joy, pleasure-seeking, etc.) and a nagging unconscious anxiety ("I am not getting any younger", "This can't go on forever", "I've got to settle down, to find an appropriate mate, not to be left alone", etc.)

- To allay this internal tension, the patient comes up with situational codependence as a coping strategy: to attract and bond with a mate, so as to forestall abandonment.

- Yet, the situational codependent is ego-dystonic. She is very unhappy with her codependence (though, at this stage, she is utterly unaware of all these dynamics.) It runs contrary to her primary nature as accomplished, assertive,

self-confident person with a well-regulated sense of self-worth. She feels the need to frustrate this new set of compulsive addictions (codependence) and to get rid of it because it threatens who she is and who she thinks she is (her self-perception.) Surely, she is not the clinging, maudlin, weak, out of control type! All her life, she has known herself to be a strong, good judge of character, intelligent, and in control. Codependence doesn't become her!

But how could she get rid of it? In three easy steps:

- She chooses the wrong partner (unconsciously);
- She proves to her satisfaction that he is the wrong partner for her;
- She gets rid of him, thus re-establishing her autonomy, resilience, self-control and demonstrating credibly that she is codependent no more!

Dependent Personality Disorder is a much disputed mental health diagnosis.

We are all dependent to some degree. We all like to be taken care of. When is this need judged to be pathological, compulsive, pervasive, and excessive? Clinicians who contributed to the study of this disorder use words such as "craving", "clinging", "stifling" (both the dependent and her partner), and "humiliating", or "submissive". But these are all subjective terms, open to disagreement and differences of opinion.

Moreover, virtually all cultures encourage dependency to varying degrees. Even in developed countries, many women, the very old, the very young, the sick, the criminal, and the mentally-handicapped are denied personal autonomy and are legally and economically dependent on others (or on the authorities). Thus, Dependent Personality Disorder is diagnosed only when such behavior does not conform to social or cultural norms.

Codependents, as they are sometimes known, are possessed with fantastic worries and concerns and are paralyzed by their abandonment anxiety and fear of separation. This inner turmoil renders them indecisive. Even the simplest everyday decision becomes an excruciating ordeal. This is why codependents rarely initiate projects or do things on their own.

Dependents typically go around eliciting constant and repeated reassurances and advice from myriad sources. This recurrent solicitation of succour is proof that the codependent seeks to transfer responsibility for his or her life to others, whether they have agreed to assume it or not.

This recoil and studious avoidance of challenges may give the wrong impression that the Dependent is indolent or insipid. Yet, most Dependents are neither. They are often fired by repressed ambition, energy, and imagination. It is their lack self-confidence that holds them back. They don't trust their own abilities and judgment.

Absent an inner compass and a realistic assessment of their positive qualities on the one hand and limitations on the other hand, Dependents are forced to rely on crucial input from the outside. Realizing this, their behavior becomes self-negating: they never disagree with meaningful others or criticize them. They are afraid to lose their support and emotional nurturance.

Consequently, as I have written in the [Open Site Encyclopedia](#) entry on this disorder:

"The codependent moulds himself/herself and bends over backward to cater to the needs of his nearest and dearest and satisfy their every whim, wish, expectation, and demand. Nothing is too unpleasant or unacceptable if it serves to secure the uninterrupted presence of the codependent's family and friends and the emotional sustenance s/he can extract (or extort) from them.

The codependent does not feel fully alive when alone. S/he feels helpless, threatened, ill-at-ease, and child-like. This acute discomfort drives the codependent to hop from one relationship to another. The sources of nurturance are interchangeable. To the codependent, being with someone, with anyone, no matter who, is always preferable to solitude."

Read [Notes from the therapy of a Dependent \(Codependent\) Patient](#)

The Codependent's Inner Mother and Child

Click [HERE](#) to Watch the Video

Parents of codependents teach their offspring to expect only conditional, transactional love: the child is supposed to render a service, perform, fulfil the parent's wishes, or realize the narcissistic parent's dreams in return for affection and compassion, attention and emotion. Ineluctably, the hurt child reacts with rage to this unjust mistreatment.

With no recourse to the offending parent, this fury is either directed outwardly, at others (who stand in for the bad parent) - or inwardly. The former solution yields in adulthood a [psychopath](#), or a [passive-aggressive \(negativistic\)](#) - the latter solution, a [masochist](#) or someone with a depressive illness. Similarly, with

an unavailable parent, the child's reserve of love can be directed inward, at himself (to yield a [narcissist](#)), or outward, towards others (and, thus, form a [codependent](#).)

All these choices retard personal growth, arrest development, and are self-defeating. In all four paths the adult plays the dual roles of a [punitive parent](#) and an [eternal vulnerable child](#), who is unable and unwilling to grow up for fear of incurring the wrath of the parent with whom she had merged so thoroughly early on.

When the codependent merges with a love object, she interprets her newfound attachment and bond as a betrayal of the punitive parent. She fully anticipates the internalized parent's disapproval and dreads its (self-)destructive disciplinarian measures. In an attempt to placate this implacable divinity she turns on her partner and lashes out at him, thus establishing where her true loyalties and affiliation lie (i.e., with the parent.) Concurrently, she punishes herself as she tries to pre-empt the merciless onslaught of her sadistic parental introjects and superego: she engages in a panoply of self-destructive and self-defeating behaviours.

Acutely aware of the risk of losing her partner owing to her abusive misconduct, the codependent experiences extreme abandonment anxiety. She swings wildly between self-effacing and clinging ("doormat") behaviours on the one hand and explosive, vituperative invective on the other hand: the former being the manifestations of her "eternal child" and the latter expressions of her "punitive parent".

Such abrupt shifts in affect and conduct are often misdiagnosed as the hallmarks of a mood disorder, especially Bipolar Disorder. But where Dependent Personality Disorder is diagnosed, these pendular tectonic upheavals are indicative of an underlying personality structure rather than of any biochemically-induced perturbations.

"I Can't Live Without Him/Her"

Click [HERE](#) to watch the video

Akin to addiction, dependence on other people fulfils important mental health functions. First, it is an organizing principle: it serves to explain behaviours and events within a coherent "narrative" (fictional story) or frame of reference ("I acted this way because ..."). Second, it gives meaning to life. Third: the constant

ups and downs satisfy your need for excitement and thrills. Fourth, and most crucially, your addiction and emotional lability place you at the center of attention and allow you to manipulate people around you to do your bidding.

Indeed, you are convinced that you cannot live without your dependence.

This is a subtle and important distinction: you can survive without him or her, but you believe profoundly (erroneously as it happens) that you cannot go on living without your addiction to your partner. You experience your dependence as your best friend, your comfort zone, as familiar and warm and fitting as an old pair of slippers. You are addicted to and dependent on your dependence, but you attribute its source to boyfriends, mates, spouses, children, parents - anyone who happens to fit the bill and the plot of your narrative. They come and go - your addiction remains intact; they are interchangeable - your dependence is immutable.

So, what can you do about it?

Extreme cases of codependence (such as Dependent or [Borderline Personality Disorders](#)) require professional help. Luckily, dependence is a spectrum and most people with dependent traits and behaviours are clustered somewhere in the middle. Help yourself by realizing that the world never comes to end when relationships do: it is your dependence which reacts with desperation, not you. Next, analyze your addiction: what are the stories and narratives that underlie it? Do you tend to idealize your intimate partner? If so, can you see him or her in a more realistic light? Are you anxious about being abandoned? Why? Have you been traumatically abandoned in the past, as a child, perhaps? Write down the worst possible scenario: the relationship is over and s/he leaves you. Is your physical survival at stake? Of course not. Make a list of the consequences of the breakup and write, next to each one what you can and intend to do about it. Armed with this plan of action, you are bound to feel safer and more confident.

Finally, make sure to share your thoughts, fears, and emotions with friends and family. Social support is indispensable. One good friend is worth a hundred therapy sessions.

Clinging and smothering behaviours are the unsavoury consequences of a deep-set existential, almost mortal fear of abandonment and separation. For the codependent to maintain a long-term, healthy relationship, she must first confront her anxieties head on. This can be done via psychotherapy: the therapeutic alliance is a contract between patient and therapist which provides for a safe environment, where abandonment is not an option and, thus, where the client can resume personal growth and form a modicum of self-autonomy. In extremis, a psychiatrist may wish to prescribe anti-anxiety medication.

Self-help is also an option, though; meditation, yoga, and the elimination of any and all addictions, such as workaholism, or binge eating. Feelings of emptiness and loneliness – at the core of abandonment anxiety and other dysfunctional attachment styles – can be countered with meaningful activities (mainly altruistic and charitable) and true, stable friends, who provide a safe haven and are unlikely to abandon her and, therefore, constitute a holding, supportive, and nourishing environment.

The codependent's reflexive responses to her inner turmoil are self-defeating and counterproductive. They often bring about the very outcomes she fears most. But these outcomes also tend to buttress her worldview ("the world is hostile, I am bound to get hurt") and sustain her comfort zone ("abuse and abandonment are familiar to me; at least I know the ropes and how to cope with them.")

This is why she needs to exit this realm of mirrored fears and fearsome mental tumult. She should adopt new avocations and hobbies, meet new people, engage in non-committal, dispensable relationships, and, in general, take life more lightly.

Some codependents develop a type of "militant independence" as a defense against their own sorely felt vulnerability (their dependence.) But even these daring "rebels" tend to view their relationships in terms of "black and white" (an infantile psychological defense mechanism known as "splitting".) They tend to regard their relationships as either doomed to failure or everlasting and their mates as both unique and indispensable ("soulmate", "twin") or completely interchangeable (objectified.)

These, of course, are misperceptions; cognitive deficits grounded in emotional immaturity and thwarted personal development. All relationships have a life expectancy, a "sell by", "good before", or expiry date. No one is irreplaceable or completely interchangeable. The codependent's problems are rooted in a profound lack of self-love and an absence of object constancy (she regards herself as unloved and unlovable when she is all by herself.)

Yet, clinging, codependent, and counterdependent (fiercely independent, defiant, and intimacy-retarding) behaviours can be modified. If you fear abandonment to the point of a phobia, here's my advice:

Compile a written, very detailed "mission statement" regarding all the aspects of your romantic relationships: how would you like them to look like and how would you go about securing the best outcomes. Revisit and revise this "charter" regularly.

List your 3 most important mate choice criteria: what would you be looking for in a first date and without which there will be no second date. This list is your filter, your proverbial selective membrane. Revisit and revise it regularly as your taste and preferences change.

Conduct a thorough background check on your prospective intimate partner. Go online and Google his name; visit his social networking accounts; ask friends and family for information and an appraisal of his character, temperament, and personality. This preparatory research will put you in control and empower you. It will serve as an antidote to uncertainty and the anxiety attendant upon it.

Next use the “Volatility Threshold” and the “Threat Monitoring” tools.

The “Volatility Threshold” instrument is a compilation of 1-3 types of behaviours that you consider critically desirable (“deal-makers”) in your partner. Observe him and add up the number of times he had acted inconsistently and, thus, reversed these crucial aspects of his behavior substantially and essentially. Decide in advance how many “strikes” would constitute a “deal-breaker” and when he reaches this number – simply leave. Do not share with him either the existence or the content of this “test” lest it might affect his performance and cause him to playact and prevaricate.

As a codependent, you tend to jump to conclusions and then “jump the gun”: you greatly exaggerate the significance of even minor infractions and disagreements and you are always unduly fatalistic and pessimistic about the survival chances of your relationships. The “Threat Monitoring” tool is comprised of an inventory of warning signs and red flags that, in your view and from your experience, herald and portend abandonment. The aim is to falsify this list: to prove to you that, more often than not, you are wrong in predicting a breakup.

In general, try to act as though you were a scientist: construct alternative hypotheses (interpretations of behaviours and events) to account for what you regard as transgressions and bad omens. Test these hypotheses before you decide to end it all with a grand gesture, a dramatic exit, or a decisive finale. Preemptive abandonment is based more on your insecurities than on facts, so make sure to test your hypotheses – and your partner - in a variety of settings before you call it a day and before you prophesy doom and gloom.

This “scientific” approach to your intimate relationship has the added benefit of delaying the instant alleviation of your anxiety which consists of impulsive, ill-thought actions. It takes time to form hypotheses and test them. This lapse

between trigger and reaction is all you need. By the time you have formed your informed opinion, your anxiety will have abated and you will no longer feel the urge to “do something now, whatever it may be!”

Armed with these “weapons” you should feel a lot more confident as you enter a new romantic liaison. But, the secret of the longevity of long-term relationships lies in being who you are, in acting transparently, in externalizing your internal dialog and inner voices. In short: if you want your relationships to last, you should express your emotions and concerns on a regular basis. You should knowingly and willingly assume all the risks associated with doing so: of exposing the chinks in your armour; of your vulnerabilities and blind spots being abused, exploited, and leveraged; of being misunderstood, even mocked. But the rewards of being open with your partner (without being naive or gullible) are enormous and multifarious: stronger bonding often results in long-lasting relationships.

Early on you should confer with your intimate partner and inform him of what, to you, constitutes a threat: what types of conduct he should avoid and what modes of communication he should eschew. You should both agree on protocols of communication: fears, needs, triggers, wishes, boundaries, requests, priorities, and preferences should all be shared on a regular basis and in a structured and predictable manner. Remember: structure, predictability, even formality are great antidotes to anxiety.

But there is only that much that your partner can do to ameliorate your mental anguish. You can and should help him in this oft-Herculean task. You can start by using drama to desensitize yourself to your phobia. In your mind imagine and rehearse, in excruciating detail, both the worst-case and best-case scenarios (abandonment in the wake of adultery versus blissful marriage, for instance.)

In these reveries, do not act as an observer: place yourself firmly at the scene of the action and prepare detailed responses within these impromptu plays. At first, this pseudo-theatre may prove agonizing, but the more you exercise your capacity for daydreaming the more you will find yourself immune to abandonment. You may even end up laughing out loud during the more egregious scenes!

Similarly, prepare highly-detailed contingency plans of action for every eventuality, including the various ways in which your relationship can disintegrate. Be prepared for anything and everything, thoroughly and well in advance. Planning equals control and control means lessened dread.

Issues and Goals in the Treatment of Dependent Personality Disorder (Codependence, or Codependency)

ISSUE 1

The patient has alloplastic defenses and an external locus of control. Though she believes that she is in full control of her life, her behavior is mostly reactive and she is buffeted by circumstances and decisions made by other people - hence her tendency to blame the outside world for every misfortune, mishap, and defeat she endures. She rarely takes responsibility for her choices and actions and is frequently surprised and resentful when faced with the consequences of her misconduct.

The patient is convinced that she is worthless and bad, a loser and no-good. She is masochistically self-destructive and self-defeating in her romantic relationships. These propensities are compounded by a predilection to decompensate and act out, sometimes violently, when her defences fail her.

GOAL 1

To develop autoplasic defences and an internal locus of control: to learn to assume responsibility for her actions and refrain from self-destructive and self-defeating behaviors.

ISSUE 2

Having been deprived of it in her childhood, the patient is on a perpetual quest for ideal love: motherly, protective, engulfing, omnipresent, and responsive. Her mate should be handsome, sexy, and should draw attention from and elicit envy. He should be fun to be with and intelligent, although passive, malleable, compliant, and subservient.

Yet, the typical codependent has been exposed only to transactional and conditional love from her parents: love was granted in return for meeting their unrealistic and, therefore, inevitably frustrating expectations.

Such patients resort to fantasy and develop a deficient reality test when it comes to their romantic liaisons. The patient lacks self-awareness and sets conflicting goals for her intimate partners: they are supposed to provide sex, intimacy, companionship and friendship - but also agree to be objectified and to self-deny in order to fulfil their roles in the codependent's "film".

GOAL 2

To develop realistic expectations regarding love, romance, and relationships as well as relationship skills.

ISSUE 3

The narcissistic codependent idealizes her intimate romantic partners and then devalues them. She seeks to "mold" and "sculpt" them to conform to her vision of the relationship. She deprives them of their self-autonomy and makes all decisions for them. In other words: she treats them as objects, she objectifies them. Such a patient is also a verbal and, at times, physical abuser. This impoverishes her relationships and hinders the development of real intimacy and love: there is no real sharing, no discourse, common interests, or joint personal growth.

Owing to the patient's insecure attachment style and abandonment/separation anxiety, she tends to cling to her partner, monopolize his time, smother him, and secure his presence and affection with material gifts (she is a [compulsive giver](#).) As she holds herself worthless and a loser, she finds it hard to believe that any man would attach to her voluntarily, without being bribed or coerced to do so. She tends to suspect her partner's motives and is somewhat paranoid. She is possessive and romantically jealous, though not exceedingly so. This environment tends to foster aversions in her romantic partners.

GOAL 3

To develop a productive and healthy attachment style and learn relationship skills.

ISSUE 4

The codependent's proclaimed desire for stability, safety, predictability, and reliability conflicts with her lifestyle which is itinerant, labile, chaotic, and involves addictive and reckless behaviors. Her need for drama, excitement, and

thrill ([adrenaline junkie](#)) extends to her romantic relationships. Owing to her low threshold for boredom and multiple depressive, dysphoric, anhedonic, and anergic episodes, she seeks distractions and the partner to provide them. She, therefore, shows a marked preference for men with mental health issues who are likely to lead disorganized lives and to react to her abuse dramatically and theatrically.

GOAL 4

Learn how to choose partners who would bring stability and safety into the relationship and how to interact with them constructively. Learn anger management skills.

ISSUE 5

The narcissistic codependent has strong narcissistic defences, especially when it comes to maintaining her grandiosity with the aid of narcissistic supply. She needs to feel chosen and desired (a flip coin of and antidote to her fear of rejection); be the centre of attention (vicariously, via her intimate partner); and to conform to expectations, values, of judgments or her peer group, relatives, and other role models and reference figures. See: [Inverted Narcissist](#).

GOAL 5

To develop a more realistic assessment of herself and her romantic partners and, thus, reduce her dependence on narcissistic defences and narcissistic supply.

Note on the Significant Other as a Persecutory Object

When the same person is diagnosed with Dependent and with [Borderline Personality Disorder](#) (a common comorbidity), the psychodynamic landscape is rendered more intractable.

The Significant Other (SI) of such a Compounded Patient (CP) is sometimes her *conscience*, her *inner voice or critic* (introject), and her *compass* in the chaotic, stormy, and dangerous ocean that is her inner world. When CP is with her SI, she is the Good Person.

When she is away from him - or he is away from her – she loses her self-control and becomes the bad, evil, and promiscuous or perverted object who is a danger to herself and to others and who is “sinful” in her own eyes.

The SI is a *rock* because he loves the Good Person and because he is a *sane* and *stable voice* in her life. Only with him can she be the Good Person.

The CP is terrified and loth to leave her SI because then the Evil, Worthless Object – her other, darker side – will take over. She is very afraid of the bad, psychopathic, person lurking inside her. She is worried that she might abrogate all governance over herself and over her life. The SI provides her with the self-control that she so misses and regulates her emotions and her ego functions.

On his part, the SI pities the CP and sees her as a wounded and broken child in need of help and protection (which, in some ways, she truly is).

The CP is projecting: she sees her SI exactly the same way that he sees her: she pities him and regards him as a broken child.

No other person had ever succeeded to bring out the Good Person or to provide the CP with even a modicum of self-control. Only the SI accomplishes these two feats. The CP interprets this fact as proof that only the SI has ever truly loved her.

In the meantime, the Evil Worthless Object is unhappy. To motivate the Good Person to abandon the SI (i.e. to commit psychological suicide), she convinces the Good Person that the core problem in the relationship is a lack of love, intimacy, and sex. But Evil Worthless Object does not need or want love, intimacy, or even sex. She is just deceiving the Good Person in order to convince her to dump the SI. By ridding herself of the SI's oversight, Evil Worthless Object aspires to disentangle herself from the Good Person and be free finally!

Evil Worthless Object perceives SI as a Persecutory Object in order to achieve two goals: 1. Justify her promiscuity and cheating (“he is abusive, hence my misconduct”); and 2. Ruin any intimacy between Good Person and SI.

[Return](#)

III. Observations on Gender

1.

In Russia, "love" is measured by how many expensive gifts the woman extorts from her man. Relationships between men and women there are so hopelessly dysfunctional and antagonistic that the men have to bribe the women to stay with them. It is a part of the general culture of bribery and corruption in Russia. See my book on sex, monogamy, and relationships <http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/sexmonogamy.pdf>

2.

If your husband or boyfriend bullies you, he does not love you. Bullying and abuse can never coexist or go together. They are mutually exclusive because bullying ruins intimacy and engenders sex aversion - and there is no love without intimacy. If he bullies you and then buys you flowers for your birthday - it is not an act of love but a crude attempt to bribe you to not abandon him and thus collaborate in your own abuse. Throw these poisoned flowers back in his face. Do not succumb to intermittent reinforcement (hot and cold, approach and then avoidance, torture and then gestures of "love"). Of course, some women explicitly make the trade: they consent to being mistreated in return for a generous expense account. Such women say: "I'd rather be miserable in a Mercedes than happy on a bicycle." To each her own, I guess. More here: <http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/intimacyabuse.html>

3.

In the movie "Roman J. Israel, Esq.", the eponymous character, a savant civil rights lawyer, is savagely verbally abused by two women as "sexist and patronizing". His sin? He suggested that 2 men in the audience vacate their seats and, in an act of chivalry, offer them to the standing "ladies".

Many #metoo claims of sexual harassment made by women in the West would be considered laudatory compliments in countries such as Russia. Women there regard such male macho gestures as proof positive of their own irresistibility. They are devastated when they are ignored by men. "Better inappropriate attention and behavior - then no attention at all", they exclaim. They expect the men in their lives - husbands and lovers, even one night stands or hookups - to defray all their costs, treat them to expensive restaurants, hotels, and trips and shower them with gifts. They are not shy about their precise wishes either.

I grew up, was educated and worked in many countries in the West. Women's

Lib rendered women there more manly. Gender roles have blurred to the point of vanishing. Everyone is unisex.

In the West, women "go Dutch": they pay their share of the bills in restaurants, their rooms in hotels. They believe that only prostitutes let men pay their expenses and then fuck them. They reject gifts: only cheap whores expect, accept or even demand gifts after sex or in an affair. Even flowers in abundance are suspect and smarmy.

These women of the West would never dream of being the recipients of special treatment (opening doors and such). They are emancipated and equal to men in every way.

The women of the East regard the women of the West with disdain: as too masculine, too aggressive, tasteless, charmless, even repellent. "They are not women at all!" The women of the West regard the women of the East as glorified prostitutes, always on sale to the highest bidder, slaves in disguise, their tawdry and often vulgar femininity and sex a mere weapon.

I wrote this about the women of eastern and central Europe 20 years ago: <https://samvak.tripod.com/pp70.html>

4.

Divorce in modern times constitutes one of the biggest transfers of wealth in the annals of Mankind. Amounts of cash and assets, which dwarf anything OPEC used to have in its heyday, pass between spouses yearly. Most of the beneficiaries are women. Because the earning power of men is almost double that of women (depending on the country) – most of the wealth accumulated by any couple is directly traceable to the husband's income. A divorce, therefore, constitutes a transfer of part of the husband's wealth to his wife. Because the cumulative disparities over years of income differentials are great – the wealth transferred is enormous.

Consider a husband that makes an average of US \$40,000 after-tax annually throughout his working years. He is likely to save c. \$1,000 annually (net savings in the USA prior to 1995 averaged 2.5% of disposable income). This is close to US \$8,000 in 7 years with interest and dividends reinvested and

assuming no appreciation in the prices of financial assets.

His wife stands to receive half of these savings (c. \$4,000) if the marriage is dissolved after 7 years. Had she started to work at the same time as her husband and continued to do so for 7 years as well – on average, she will have earned 60% of his income.

Assuming an identical savings rate for her, she would have saved only US \$5,000 and her husband would be entitled to US \$2,500 of it. Thus, a net transfer of US \$1,500 in cash from husband to wife is one of the the likely outcomes of the divorce of this very typical couple.

But this ignores the transfer of tangible and intangible assets from husband to wife. A seven year old couple in the West typically owns \$100,000 in assets. When they divorce, by splitting the assets right down the middle, the man actually transfers to the woman about \$10,000 in assets, taking their income differential into account.

An average of 45% of the couples in the Western hemisphere end up divorcing within 7 years. Divorce is, by far, the most powerful re-distributive mechanism in modern society.

More here: <https://samvak.tripod.com/nm057.html>

5.

What kind of a [spouse/mate/partner is likely to be attracted to a narcissist, or to attract a narcissist?](#)

On the face of it, there is no (emotional) partner or mate, who typically "binds" with a narcissist. They come in all shapes and sizes. The initial phases of attraction, infatuation and falling in love are pretty normal. The narcissist puts on his best face – the other party is blinded by budding love. The narcissist is indiscriminate: if you are capable and willing to provide secondary narcissistic supply - you "qualify" as his partner.

Living with a narcissist can be exhilarating, is always onerous, often harrowing.

First and foremost, the narcissist's partner must have a deficient or a distorted grasp of her self and of reality. Otherwise, she (or he) is bound to abandon the narcissist's ship early on. The cognitive distortion is likely to consist of belittling and demeaning herself – while aggrandising and adoring the narcissist.

The partner is, thus, placing herself in the position of the eternal victim: undeserving, punishable, a scapegoat. Sometimes, it is very important to the partner to appear moral, sacrificial and victimised. At other times, she is not even aware of this predicament. The narcissist is perceived by the partner to be a person in the position to demand these sacrifices from her because he is superior in many ways (intellectually, emotionally, morally, professionally, or financially). The status of professional victim sits well with the partner's tendency to punish herself, namely: with her masochistic streak. The tormented life with the narcissist is just what she deserves.

In this respect, the partner is the mirror image of the narcissist:

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/faq6.html>

The codependent, covert narcissist, and inverted narcissist: <http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/faq66.html>

6.

In contemporary thought, [incest](#) is invariably associated with child abuse and its horrific, long-lasting, and often irreversible consequences. Incest is not such a clear-cut matter as it has been made out to be over millennia of taboo. Many participants claim to have enjoyed the act and its physical and emotional consequences. It is often the result of seduction. In some cases, two consenting and fully informed adults are involved.

Many types of relationships, which are defined as incestuous, are between genetically unrelated parties (a stepfather and a daughter), or between fictive kin or between classificatory kin (that belong to the same matriline or patriline). In certain societies (the Native American or the Chinese) it is sufficient to carry the same family name (=to belong to the same clan) and marriage is forbidden.

Some incest prohibitions relate to sexual acts - others to marriage. In some

societies, incest is mandatory or prohibited, according to the social class or particular circumstances (Ugarit, Bali, Papua New Guinea, Polynesian and Melanesian islands). In others, the Royal House started a tradition of incestuous marriages, which was later imitated by lower classes (Ancient Egypt, Hawaii, Pre-Columbian Mixtec). Some societies are more tolerant of consensual incest than others (Japan, India until the 1930's, Australia). Perhaps the strongest feature of incest has been hitherto downplayed: it is, essentially, an autoerotic act.

Having sex with a first-degree blood relative is like having sex with oneself. It is a Narcissistic act and like all acts Narcissistic, it involves the objectification of the partner. The incestuous Narcissist over-values and then devalues his sexual partner. He is devoid of empathy.

But it is the reaction of society that transforms incest into such a disruptive phenomenon. The condemnation, the horror, the revulsion and the attendant social sanctions interfere with the internal processes and dynamics of the incestuous family. It is from society that the child learns that something is horribly wrong.

More: <https://samvak.tripod.com/incest.html>

7.

It is common knowledge among [unicorns](#) that even the THOUGHT of a cake - especially a wedding cake - is enough to induce the most profound slumber, safe and at peace in the arms of Hypnos and Morpheus. But I have yet to meet a unicorn who could resist taking a bite of anything syrupy and sweet, perfect and luscious, and so promisingly round.

Having sunk her tiny teeth into the ambrosia, content, the unicorn rests her horny head on the roundness that so gratified her, her mark discernible in her besotted floury prey.

There, surrounded by smells and tastes and textures, she dreams of other lands and mighty adventures and of Love itself.

And when she wakes up, as all unicorns do, she finds that it is all reality, all true. Thus happy, she rushes to take another bite.

The older I get the better I can spot them. They typically pretend to be human, you know.

8.

The majority of women in the world still live in male-dominated patriarchal societies replete with sex aversion, male chauvinism & misogyny.

Such a societal mindset is the effluence of backward religiosity, oppressive economic & legal circumstances, and, in some parts of the globe, a numerical surplus of women over men.

Women in such environments encounter the same problems as women everywhere: loveless & sexless marriages, pay gaps, glass ceilings, sexual harassment, & economic hardship. They react in largely the same ways: they resort to lovers, for example. Or they enter the workforce. Or they focus on their offspring.

But there are major differences, too: women in patriarchal societies are fierce supporters and defenders of the social order and its attendant values of male superiority. Men are expected to be the primary providers, the sole decision-makers, the leaders. Women are eminences grise: the power behind the throne and behind the scenes. Western mores and solutions to inter-gender problems are frowned upon as both decadent & unworkable, destructive & dangerous.

In traditionalist cultures, women channel their rebellion and are passive-aggressive & manipulative rather than being openly defiant. In such societies men initiate divorces, not women. By comparison, in the West most divorces are the initiative of disgruntled & disheartened women.

Even women who maintain long-term extramarital affairs will bear children only to their estranged, alienated, hateful, and hated husbands. Most businesses are family owned. The family - however dysfunctional - is sacred, an organizing principle, & renders life itself meaningful.

So, most women in these backward communities lead double lives. They have a hidden, occult inner world to which they retreat. They are unhealthily and incestuously obsessed with their children. Homo-eroticism between women is rife & rampant. Some of these women find love with other men but never as viable options or substitutes to husband or family. They lead compartmentalized, sad - indeed, tragic - lives.

9.

As Eric Berne noted in the founding text of [Transactional Analysis](#), human relationships are "games people play". There are two types of people who adamantly and proudly refuse to partake of such ludic exchanges: the narcissist and the psychopath.

When they would not play "sex" or "intimacy" or "family" with a woman, she resorts to other playmates. When they decline to play "business" or "friendship" with someone, the rejected parties revert to another partner. These ineluctable self-inflicted losses warp, thwart, and stunt the minds and the lives of narcissists and psychopaths. In his seminal survey of grandiose psychopathy, "The Mask of Sanity", Hervey Cleckley branded it a "rejection of life itself".

The only game the narcissist will participate in is "let us all pretend that this is for real": a delusional shared fantasy with limited longevity and guaranteed expiry. The psychopath's only concession to human intercourse is a zero-sum "let's play my game: you give it all and I take everything you have and then some."

10.

From a correspondence:

"I think that there is a schism between men and women. I am sorry but I am neo-Weiningerian. I fear women and loathe them viscerally - while, in the abstract, I recognize that they are members of the human species and eligible to the same rights as men do. Still, the biological, biochemical and psychological differences between us (men versus women) are so profound - that I think that a good case can be made in favour of a theory which will assign them to another (perhaps even more advanced) species. I am heterosexual, so it has nothing to do with sexual preferences. Also I know that what I have to say will alienate and anger you. Still, I believe - as does Dr. Grey - that cross-gender communication is all but impossible. We are separated by biology, by history, by culture, by chemistry, by genetics, in short: by too much. Where we see cruelty they see communication, where we see communication they see indifference, where we see a future they see a threat, where we see a threat they see an opportunity, where we see stagnation they see security and where we see safety they see death, where we get excited they get alarmed, where we get alarmed they get bored, we love with our senses, they love with their wombs and mind, they tend to replicate, we tend to assimilate, they are Trojan horses,

we are dumb Herculeses, they succumb in order to triumph, we triumph in order to succumb.

And I see no difference between the three terms that you all used. "Love", "cruelty" and "impotence" are to me three sides of the same coin. We love in order to overcome our (perceived) impotence. We burden our love with impossible dreams: to become children again. We want to be unconditionally loved and omnipotent. No wonder love invariably ends in disappointment and disillusionment. It can never fulfil our inflated expectations. This is when we become cruel. We avenge our paradise lost. We inflict upon our lover the hell that he or she fostered in us. We do so impotently because we still love, even as we fervently hate (Freudian ambivalence). Thus we always love cruelly, impotently and desperately, the desperation of the doomed."

11.

Dances are thinly disguised simulations of sex acts. But there's more to dancing than bawdy ribaldry. The sweaty proximity allows the partners to exchange an enormous amount of information about their respective bodies: from joint suppleness, through spatial orientation and coordination, and down to the fine details of their immunological systems (such as the major histocompatibility complex MHC) carried by their body odours. In this sense, dancing aids and abets the forces of natural selection and eugenic breeding. Indeed, in many 16th and 17th century textbooks dancing is grouped with hunting, fighting, wrestling, and running.

In times past, the dance-hall was the only venue open to prospective partners to gather such fitness data. Indeed, there is reason to believe that dancing was consciously invented and designed to do precisely that. Capriol, a protagonist in Thoinot Arbeau's dance manual "Orchesography", complains: "(W)ithout knowledge of dancing, I could not please the damsels." Arbeau himself is nothing if not brutally explicit:

"Dancing is practised to reveal whether lovers are in good health and sound of limb, after which they are permitted to kiss their mistresses in order that they may touch and savour one another, thus to ascertain if they are shapely or emit an unpleasant odour as of bad meat."

Arbeau and dance masters such as Caroso actually named dances to reflect the underlying amorous, matchmaking process. Inevitably, Puritans and other spoilsports targeted the practice and its purveyors repeatedly in both England and its overseas colonies.

But dancing, as a form of health-enhancing strenuous exercise, also serves to perpetuate the species. This aspect of dancing was especially important when and where women's movements were restricted by tradition, social mores, and religion: allowed to indulge in dances, even with their own sex, women have thus secured a modicum of sanitary locomotion.

Nowadays, dancing is often thought of as a couple's activity. But, this is a recent development. Until the nineteenth century, dancing was a social act and the vast majority of dances involved frequently switched multiple partners, as demanded by ballroom etiquette. Thus, dancing and saltation yielded social cohesion; increased social interaction; and enhanced the opportunities for mating and cooperation.

12.

Is it wrong to marry just for money? [Gigolos & goldiggers](#) are roundly condemned by their envious & less fortunate peers. But, ethically & rationally, there is nothing amiss in choosing your life partner based on his or her bank account.

Good looks, intelligence, an agreeable or reliable personality, even one's domicile or abode & other personal attributes are all deemed acceptable as mating criteria. But they are all mutable & passing. Good looks fade, one's personality changes. *Panta rei*. Nothing lasts.

The capacity to make money is directly & strongly correlated with innate intelligence, resilience, perseverance, gregariousness, curiosity, creativity, educational level, good mental & physical health, generosity, & a host of other excellent personal traits. It is a useful shorthand & proxy for the entirety of the (rich) individual. Rich people are indeed superior quality material in many ways: they are the fittest survivors. Money also often comes with power which guarantees personal safety & access to critical goods & services, such as healthcare.

It, therefore, makes a lot of sense to choose someone as a spouse or intimate partner based on how much money they have made. Their wealth is an integral part of who they are, their identity. It is an attractive feature precisely because it tells us so much about the potential mate. It is much more salient than any other evaluative criterion.

Finally, the poor console themselves with the thought that the rich may have lucre but are not happy. Studies show exactly the opposite: by virtue of their dollops, the wealthy are much more content than the less endowed.

Even if you are not in love with your intimate partner & the sex sucks (or is absent altogether), there is nothing that a stay in a truly luxury hotel or a yacht cannot fix. Shopping is a potent form of self-medication as is travel. And lovers are never in short supply when you can afford them. Both the poor & the rich end up stuck in dysfunctional marriages - but the rich can do something about it!

13.

Like the optimal toilet paper, men should be both strong and soft. It is here that narcissists fail: they are brittle and aggressive rather than soft and strong. There is no balance - only an ever-swinging pendulum.

The narcissist's personality is precariously poised, his access to and intimations of his positive emotions restricted and ambiguous, and his overpowering negative emotions so rampant that he needs to compensate for his vulnerabilities with a pyrotechnic display of dominance and abuse ("alpha male" and bullying). But such antisocial maltreatment of others - especially of his "nearest and dearest" - does not render the narcissist strong either in reality or in the eyes of others. It does however endow him with a reputation for obnoxiousness and even repellent clownishness.

Similarly, when the narcissist does his thwarted imitation of "being soft", the thespian effort strains the seams of his affected conduct. He becomes maudlin, exaggerates, goes over the top with demonstrations of gratuitous and smarmy courtesy or feigned pity, goal-oriented charity, and his version of deformed pseudo-empathy.

The narcissist comes across as a badly programmed humanoid robot with an insufficient table of data on how to act human. He immediately fosters unease and trepidation in people around him (the uncanny valley). He is incapable of true intimacy and emoting because deep inside, where a human being should have been, the abode is empty, the flag at half mast. The narcissist walks and talks, but otherwise he is long dead, like the zombies and vampires of yore.

14.

Why did butt-ugly, far from intelligent, and septuagenarian Trump end up with drop dead gorgeous considerably younger Melania? Because he could.

There are two major lies in modern education: 1. If you only put your mind to it, you can accomplish anything (not true: most people are between retards and average); and 2. There are no leagues and, therefore, no one is out of your league.

News flash: there are leagues and you are likely to end up being married to someone who is as ugly and impoverished and ignorant as you are. Your children will wind up even worse off. Social class and status are uncompromisingly harsh and rigid cross-generational realities.

This is known as the matching hypothesis: people end up in committed relationships with partners who are equally socially desirable - or undesirable. This politically incorrect tenet of social psychology has been around since 1966.

The whole phenomenon is natural (read: genetic). It is called assortative mating. Like mate with like: the rich, powerful, and well-educated tend to intermarry. Look up homogamy.

So, if she is a traffic-stopping beauty, has money, and her shoes cost more than your annual income - don't bother. You may end up banging her as her entertainment du jour - but it will never amount to anything more serious. And she will dump you the second you ask for more - or begin to bore her. Toys and pets should never aspire to usurp their owners. Know your place, boy!

15.

I guess I am a throwback to the men of the 18th or 19th century: patriarchal and transactional. I have had several serious relationships, including two engagements to be married and two marriages.

The pattern had always been the same: having selected a woman far inferior to my position in life (and, thus, less likely to abandon ship) and following a brief period of rampant sex (to demonstrate to her that I am 'normal' and to make her look forward to years of great physical and emotional intimacy – false

advertising, I admit), I subside into this recluse, interested only in my studies, reading, writing, and the universe of the mind. Zero sex, no love, no intimacy, physical or emotional, no children, no home (lived in rented flats most of my life), and no family. Take it or leave it and minimal nuisance value.

Her roles are: (1) to admire me; (2) to remind me of my past accomplishments and 'glory'; (3) to act as a glorified housemaid and do the chores; (4) to serve as my companion, available on the spur of the moment to do my bidding and adhere to my plans and decisions; (5) to reflect well on me by not shaming me in public with her ignorance, promiscuity, or idleness.

As long as she fulfilled the aforementioned functions, I didn't really care what else she did with her time and with whom. Nothing stirred in me, not even a hint of jealousy, when my women told me that they had cheated on me with other men, some of them multiply. Women went to incredible lengths to extricate themselves from their addiction to me. To no avail: I never cared.

But, when they showed clear signs of bolting, when they became disenchanted, bitterly disappointed, disaffected, disillusioned, cold, aloof, weary, demonstratively absent, lost all interest in me and my work, verbally and psychologically abused me, and refused to do things together anymore, I panicked because I was afraid to lose their valued services.

How did I behave then? Read about it here: <https://samvak.tripod.com/faq6.html>

16.

There is a surging global [subculture of misogyny](#) (woman hatred) that women have been ignoring at their peril: incels (involuntary celibates), MGTOW (Men Going Their Own Way), pickup artists, redpillers (men who "realize" that women rule the world and are cruelly manipulating men), blackpillers (men who give up on ever having any sexual or romantic relationship with women), and so on.

Many in these groups espouse militancy and even violence against women.

Such strident misogyny is new. Woman hatred is not (see the works of Otto Weininger and August Strindberg a century ago).

I wrote this when I was 19 anticipating recent developments by more than four decades:

"I think that there is a schism between men and women. I am sorry but I am neo-Weiningerian. I fear women and loathe them viscerally - while, in the abstract, I recognize that they are members of the human species and eligible to the same rights as men do. Still, the biological, biochemical and psychological differences between us (men versus women) are so profound that I think that a good case can be made in favour of a theory which will assign them to another (perhaps even more advanced) species. I am heterosexual, so it has nothing to do with sexual preferences. Also I know that what I have to say will alienate and anger you. Still, I believe - as does Dr. Grey - that cross-gender communication is all but impossible. We are separated by biology, by history, by culture, by chemistry, by genetics, in short: by too much. Where we see cruelty they see communication, where we see communication they see indifference, where we see a future they see a threat, where we see a threat they see an opportunity, where we see stagnation they see security and where we see safety they see death, where we get excited they get alarmed, where we get alarmed they get bored, we love with our senses, they love with their wombs and mind, they tend to replicate, we tend to assimilate, they are Trojan horses, we are dumb Herculeses, they succumb in order to triumph, we triumph in order to succumb."

17.

There are three types of women: homemakers, backpack adventurers, and luxury cruisers. All women, including career women, belong to one of these three encampments.

The homemaker derives happiness from home and hearth, children and kitchen. Recent studies show that ever more women revert to these traditional roles as a refuge from an increasingly more menacing world. They value stability and intimacy more than success, thrills, and wealth.

The backpack adventurer is itinerant and peripatetic. She dreads stagnation and feels suffocated in familiar settings and with too much intimacy. She travels light and sometimes alone. She is frugal and abstemious. She may choose professions such as war correspondent, diplomat, sales executive, or volunteer in a charity. She answers to no one. She is very curious and cherishes her liberty and autonomy above all else. Many of these women are single or single mothers.

The luxury cruiser loves comfort and opulence. She can be vulgar or have a refined taste. She can run her own business empire or be a serial golddigger. But her happiness consists in the freedom and safety that unlimited dollops of money and what it can buy afford her. She is into brands and status symbols and is very competitive and envious. She climbs the social ladder one bed at a time. She is a huntress and a predator, often s femme fatale. Family, emotions, attachment, and other such trappings pale in significance besides her addiction to sumptuous consumption.

18.

Men come in a bewildering array of shapes, sizes, and colors. Yet, they relate to women in one of four ways:

1. The Idealizer-Mystifier

Regards women as mythical, mystical, magical creatures, endowed with supernatural powers to mother, mend hearts and break them. These men, when rebuffed, become stalkers and erotomaniacs.

2. The Woman Lover

Loves and adores everything feminine. Truly interested in women as persons: their lives, interests, emotions, and thoughts. Considers women exotic and alluring but not alien and irresistible.

3. The Woman Hater (misogynist)

Regards all women as rapacious, merciless, dangerous, and narcissistic predators, devoid of true emotions and loyalties. Fears women and loathes them or holds them in unmitigated contempt. All women are for sale to the highest bidder (whores) and best avoided or enslaved as a precautionary measure.

4. The User

Considers women as mere utilitarian functions: uses their bodies to masturbate with; demands and expects to be worshipped by them; absconds with their money; leverages their business contacts. Their role in his life is to serve obediently and unthinkingly in a variety of roles: sex slave, cook, maid, punching beg, witness to glorious accomplishment, acolyte, student.

19.

Women regard all men as raw materials: coarse, at times fatuous, unnecessarily aggressive, and invariably puerile. Inevitably, they end up being frustrated, disappointed, and enraged when they fail to shape, mould, educate, reform, direct, manipulate, or teach the men in their lives.

Men regard all women as hopelessly finished products, beyond logic, growth, or transformation. They accept the women in their lives as frivolous, flawed, inexplicable, enigmatic, irrational, manipulative, and capricious beings. They do their best to work around the true, rigid, and fully-formed nature of their females.

Both misperceptions yield inefficient coping strategies and lead to erroneous decisions. The hostile gap between men and women has never yawned bigger. As women encroach on traditionally male territory and adopt male roles and behaviors, the misunderstandings multiply. We are very near a tipping point of a total disconnect between men and women. This is one thing our species will not survive.

20.

This was the ideal of beauty in Persia 120 years ago. Or so they say. In Russia, women are supposed to look anorectic. In the Arab world, full, curvaceous, and saftig. The aristocracy well into the end of the 19th century regarded chalk white skin as the ideal because it was proof positive that you were not tilling the fields all day. A century later, a suntanned hide was de rigueur because it indicated that you were well-off and could afford your leisure time in the sun.

Evolutionary explanations of our aesthetic standards are dead wrong. If they were right, the ideals of beauty in the same place and civilization would have remained by and large constant over extended periods of time. They do not.

A far better source is sociocultural. Different mores and expectations, fads and circumstances yield changing beauty practices and discourses.

Women and men alter their looks to conform and belong, wield influence and manipulate, buttress their self-esteem and self-confidence, or signal to peers and potential mates. As the language between genders changes and as social, cultural, and technological winds blow hither and thither, so do the ways we see and then mold ourselves. It is all one gigantic, everlasting body dysmorphic disorder.

21.

These are four dysfunctional attitudes to women:

1. The Woman Lover idealizes women and regards them as an enigmatic force of nature, a mysterious fount of fascinating magical otherness and of womblike immersion. He is addicted to women: their aesthetic, smells, voices, rituals, quirks, and emotions. Places each woman he meets at the crosshairs of his undivided, rapturous, and breathless attention.

2. The Woman Hater regards women as menacing, manipulative, dark, evil, scheming, and heartless sorceresses out to pulverize his heart and deplete his wallet. He treats women with hostility and contempt that often morph into aggressive animosity.

3. The Nerdish Drone treats women as men with a different set of genitalia. To him, all women are strictly potential partners in the startup that is his life: toiling accomplices in family, business, and social functions. All work and no play. Relationships with them are tedious and grinding, though could also be companionable and friendly. Not much fire there. Life is an endless stream of analyses, negotiations, rules, and transactions till death them do part.

4. The Narcissist homes in and captures women to be his slaves: sex dolls, service providers, and captive audience to his grandiose schemes and fantastic exploits. Abhors, fears, and is enraged by independent-minded women who pursue their own self-actualization and refuse to adulate him uncritically. He is the center of attention, the star - and women are his mere peripheral satellites.

22.

Some heterosexual women intensely dislike and reject their gender and even sex. This usually has to do with a developed sense of competitiveness with other women and with internalized misogyny. Identifying with woman-haters, especially in sexist and chauvinistic families or societies, has an adaptative value and guarantees favorable outcomes.

Women are reified by the vagina which is described by misogynists as dark, wet, deep, contaminated and minacious (like the medieval vagina dentata). Even children - women's main and prized distinction - do not appeal to women who hate women and are perceived as a freedom-denying burden.

Female misogynists like men a lot, identify with them, and seek to emulate them. Men are epitomized by the penis which is viewed by such women as clean, erect, visible, and proud. Masculine qualities are praiseworthy: men are protectors and providers.

The sexual style of female misogynists is also closer to the stereotype of man than woman: they hunt for men, cocktease aggressively, fuck perfunctorily and selfishly, get up and leave. Their sex involves infatuation and idealization, but rarely any true, deep, and lasting emotion. They are interested in things and pursuits that typically interest men.

Still, the female misogynist is a woman. So, she hates this aspect of herself and casts her femininity as whorish, bad, labile, and risky. She would tend to be sociosexually unrestrictive (promiscuous). The female misogynist tends to pair with a male woman-hater. After all, they share the same view of women. Yet, she believes that he should treat her as the only exception. But when he does treat her as the exception, when he relates to her as the only woman who is as good as a man (and therefore avoids having sex with her or refrains from courting her) - she resents him. She takes revenge on him, and punishes him, behaving exactly like a "typical woman" and further justifying his misogyny!

23.

Contrary to appearances, [sapiosexuals](#) - people who are sexually turned on by intelligence - are a dying breed.

In the 1950s, Albert Einstein was a rock star and a sex symbol. Nowadays, these roles are reserved to brawny footballers, not brainiac nerds.

The very word "sapiosexual" reflects the malaise of our age: it is a pretentious molestation of a Latin verb. It is about poseur nescient appearance, not true substance or erudition.

Why is sapiosexuality going extinct? Three reasons.

Malignant egalitarianism and truthiness imply that everyone is at least as intelligent, capable, and knowledgeable as everyone else about every subject under the sun;

A soundbite, 144 characters only skimming and browsing mentality resulted in the amputated truncation of our attention span. We have no time for true learning because it requires more than 10 seconds and the suspension of both dichotomous thinking and grandiose fantasies of omniscience.

Finally, in a hookup and celebrity culture, emphasis shifted to looks: the only information instantly accessible as the foundation for sexual decision-making. Narcissistic and histrionic preoccupation with image and appearances precludes the deep dives which are a prerequisite to appreciating the mind in all its splendid complexity - and attractiveness.

24.

A man can give a woman total freedom - but with little security. Or total security at the price of her freedom.

Only one man in a million - an extreme codependent with an all-consuming abandonment anxiety - gives his woman both: total freedom to do as she pleases with the total security that - never mind what she does, even if she shatters his heart and mind to smithereens time and again - he will always be there for her and take care of her needs.

All the benefits of a committed relationship, without a single one of its costs.

Total entitlement on the receiving end and utter self-negation on the other pole.

Usually, such a man whose pecuniary generosity is unlimited, even profligate and reckless, believes that he has nothing else to share but his money and what his money can buy: he bribes his woman to stay with him, thereby commodifying the relationship.

Of course, this fully applies across genders. Simply switch the pronouns.

25.

Many self-styled "empaths" are actually codependent enablers. There is a difference between being compassionate or empathic and enabling.

Compassion means that you hold a realistic view of your partner, but refuse to participate in his shared psychosis (his paranoia, mind games, power plays).

Enabling means that you aid and abet your significant other: together with him, you descend into his madness, his personal Hades, his mental purgatory, and his fantasies and ideation.

Compassion is about providing your counterpart with external boundaries, checks and balances, control, and a realistic feedback.

Enabling involves fusing and merging with the other, erasing all the boundaries, helping to fend off hurtful reality by becoming delusional jointly.

26.

[Women are from Venus, Men are from Mars](#)? This video seems to prove the point.

USA Today Magazine reported the findings of a survey of 1000 girls in grades three to twelve conducted by Harris Interactive for "Girls". Roughly half the respondents thought that boys and girls have the same abilities - compared to less than one third of boys. A small majority of the girls felt that "people think we are only interested in love and romance". Somewhat less than two thirds of the girls were told not to brag about things they do well and were expected to spend the bulk of their time on housework and taking care of younger children. Stereotypical thinking had a practical effect: girls who believe that they are as able as boys and face the same opportunities are way more likely to plan to go to college.

But do boys and girls have the same abilities? Absolutely not. Boys are better at spatial orientation and math. Girls are better at emotions and relationships. And do girls face the same opportunities as boys? It would be perplexing if they did, taking into account physiological, cognitive, emotional, and reproductive disparities - not to mention historical and cultural handicaps. It boils down to this politically incorrect statement: girls are not boys and never will be.

Still, there is a long stretch from "girls are not boys" to "girls are inferior to boys" and thence to "girls should be discriminated against or confined". Much separates stereotypes and generalizations from discriminatory practice.

More: <https://samvak.tripod.com/stereotype.html>

27.

The sometimes severe crises experienced by persons of both sexes in middle age (a.k.a. the "[midlife crisis](#)" or the "change of life") is a much discussed though little understood phenomenon. It is not even certain that the beast exists.

Women go through menopause between the ages of 42-55 (the average age of onset in the USA is 51.3). The amount of the hormone oestrogen in their bodies decreases sharply, important parts of the reproductive system shrink and menstruation ceases. Many women suffer from "hot flashes" and a thinning and fracturing of the bones (osteoporosis). The "male menopause" is a more contentious issue.

Men do experience a gradual decline in testosterone levels but nothing as sharp as the woman's deterioration of her oestrogen supply. No link has been found between these physiological and hormonal developments and the mythical "midlife crisis". This fabled turning point has to do with the gap between earlier plans, dreams and aspirations and one's drab and hopeless reality. Come middle age, men are supposed to be less satisfied with life, career, or spouse. People get more disappointed and disillusioned with age. They understand that they are not likely to have a second chance, that they largely missed the train, that their dreams will remain just that. They have nothing to look forward to. They feel spent, bored, fatigued and trapped.

Some adults embark on a transition. They define new goals, look for new partners, form new families, engage in new hobbies, change vocation and avocation alike, or relocate. They regenerate and reinvent themselves and the structures of their lives. Others just grow bitter. Unable to face the shambles, they resort to alcoholism, workaholism, emotional absence, abandonment, escapism, degeneration, or a sedentary lifestyle.

Another pillar of discontent is the predictability of adult life. Following a brief flurry, in early adulthood, of excitement and vigour, of dreams and hopes, fantasies and aspirations, we succumb to and sink into the mire of mediocrity. Routines consume our energy and leave us dilapidated and empty.

More: <https://samvak.tripod.com/faq62.html>

28.

[Tinkerbell](#): she fell in love with and was the lifelong companion of a man who wouldn't grow up, Peter Pan.

Boyish charm is irresistible. A childlike man harps on the maternal heartstrings

of every woman, rendering her protective and subservient.

Like every toddler, he is delightful, innocent, funny, unpredictable, and pure. They both find Neverland: a realm of fantasy that suspends a melancholic and ugly reality.

But then life happens: adults chores and responsibilities beckon. A partnership of equal adults is the only recipe for coping with the vagaries and exigencies of life. Women then dump the thrilling but immature in favor of the staid but reliable. Commitment trumps infatuation every time.

These ineluctable breakups are traumatic: the woman feels that she had abandoned and dumped her son, the infantile man is yet again discarded as a forsaken child.

29.

We idealize stereotypical gender roles: women are magic embodied in beauty and strength disguised as frailty. They originate life and sustain it through love. They are Nature. They are empathic and communicative. They form networks facilely.

I have been observing Mankind for 24 years now. I find women to be far tougher, far less romantic, and less empathic than men. They have to be: in a majority of cases, women are still their children's primary caregivers.

Millennia of suppression by men and their patriarchies led women to resort to the weapons of the weak and the stratagems of the underdog: underhanded goal-oriented manipulation, deception, and passive-aggression. Women are transactional: they habitually trade love and sex for economic security.

Studies show that women also intensely dislike other women, regard them as threats, and compete with them overtly and covertly. In the presence of men, though, they close ranks, fake solidarity, and defer to the males.

Now, ostensibly, the paradigm is shifting: women are no longer owned (though a majority of them are dependent on men as primary or sole breadwinners). Men are fighting back, terrified of the terra incognita of feminism.

But old habits die hard and inter-generational coping strategies are here to stay. Women be women and men be men for a while longer.

30.

Relationships between men and women are at an all-time nadir and begin to border on open hostility and hatred. But people remain married to cheating spouses (adultery is rarely given as a cause in divorce cases). And they keep bringing children to the world. How come?

If you don't want to go single, it is rational to choose to stay with your current cheating partner: there is a 56% chance that your next partner will also cheat on you and a 73% chance that s/he will divorce you.

Cheating and deception are the new normal, trust a thing of the distant past. Marriages have become zero sum wrestling matches. Hence prenups and the burgeoning industries of couple therapists and divorce attorneys.

But why have kids with someone you cannot stand (the opposite sex)? Because of the signaling value of having kids. Parenthood is used to send a series of messages to oneself and to one's social milieu:

I am a proper man/woman;

I am not a psychosexual or social "deviant" or "pervert", I am "normal" and conform to the values and mores of my society (I am not a homosexual, for example)

I am accomplished, I have a family, I am leaving something behind me to prove that I have existed;

I am not immature or selfish, I am a responsible, functional adult.

Kids are also used as currency in transactional marriages: a way for the man to exert control over the woman and inhibit her behaviors - and a way for the woman to bind the man to her and to her offspring as a form of financial annuity.

31.

The widespread use of the word "she" as the female singular pronoun is astoundingly new.

The word "she" existed in both Middle English, where it was written as "scae", or "sche" and in Old English where it was "sio", or (as in Norsk-Viking languages) "seo", or, in the accusative, sie.

But women simply did not deserve a pronoun all their own.

Prior to the 12 century - when the English language was already 400 years old - the female pronoun was "heo" ("hye", or "hie" in Middle English). "Heo" was also was the plural of all genders. "She" as a noun (she-cousin) was not in acceptable use prior to the 14th century.

Even today, the plurals of all genders in English have no feminine forms, as opposed, for instance, to Semitic languages. "We" and "they" in English are unisex. In Hebrew, for example, "hem" is the male plural and "hen" the female plural (naturally). "He" derives from the Indo-European word for "this (here)". Hence here, her, and ... hence.

32.

In this topsy-turvy world, women prefer and meek weak men, weasels, and losers to alpha males who are well-accomplished and supremely self-confident. How come?

An inferior man is far less likely to reject a woman's sexual and romantic advances - the type of rejection that, in most women, causes emotional dysregulation amidst a plummeting sense of self-worth and self-esteem.

A weakling allows the woman to occupy center stage as the life of the party, and garner attention from others to her heart's content while he remains silent, obsequious, and acquiescent.

A weasel commonly grants the woman in his life the latitude to misbehave. Owing to his abandonment anxiety and limited options, he is far more tolerant of abuse and lets the woman make all the decisions by herself - including egregiously immoral, bad, or wrong decisions -without consulting him or seeking his opinion or approval.

As a tsunami of wounded women emerge from abusive and dysfunctional relationships, they seek mates and intimate partners who would not abuse them all over and who allow them to assert control and exert dominance, do not threaten them or their cherished victim stance, their sense of unbounded entitlement, their alloplastic defenses ("I cheated, but it was the men's fault, not mine"), and their elevated narcissistic defenses.

Finally, some women choose precisely such unattractive men because they are feeling self-destructive and want to trash themselves as bad, worthless, and slutty.

33.

In a study published in 2018 women found men with an IQ higher than 120 "unattractive".

[My IQ - 190](#) - is literally off any known chart. There are only 8 people in the entire world with this level of intelligence and I am one of them.

I used to be so proud of this fact. Now I realize that I am cursed. My IQ is a rare incurable disease that scares away people - especially women - and isolates me socially, romantically, and sexually as effectively as if I had Ebola.

I have a meteoric career in my field (see the link in my Instagram profile), but my personal life is in shambles and ruination. I failed miserably and irredeemably as a husband and a lover. I have no children or friends. I am as lonely and cratered and gloomy as the darkest side of any moon.

When people - most notably women - get to know me even slightly, they recoil in horror, panic, and flee, sometimes at a great personal cost: anything and anyone else is preferable to the genius chimera that is Sam Vaknin: part artificial, part intelligence and to the sickening radiation that emanates from him.

And in this narcissistic age of oneupmanship, my IQ is also a narcissistic injury in and of itself.

When they come across me, people - men and more so women - feel instantly

intellectually inferior, inadequate, rejected, scrutinized, set up for failure, like specimen in a lab founded by an alien race.

So, they avoid me like the plague, overwhelmed by the penumbral omnipresence of my superhuman mind. Or they end up punishing me viciously, sadistically, lashing out at me in what can only be described as malevolence.

My profession as a psychologist does not help: people - again mostly women - feel naked and transparent. They find this experience of demystification creepy.

But I am far from faultless.

Jeff Bezos said that people who fail are those who choose to be "clever at the expense of others rather than kind". I have been misusing my IQ to abuse people all my life. The chickens are now coming home to roost.

34.

Feminism caricatured men into a one-dimensional stereotype and women now aspire to become that caricature: they drink heavily, curse profusely, are "in your face, fuck you" antisocial and defiant, promiscuously and indiscriminately engage in emotionless one night stands, become workaholics, cheat on their intimate partners, and, generally act as grandiose and entitled narcissists, devoid of any hint of empathy.

When confronted about their egregious misconduct, women respond indignantly with the "double standard" standard argument: "This is what men also do, no?" The answer is: absolutely not. Only some men behave this way and they are widely frowned upon, decried, and held in contempt by the vast majority of males.

Men and women should be utterly equal when it comes to all public goods (education, healthcare), all manner of rights, access, wages paid, economic opportunities, the law, treatment by the authorities, and in society.

Equal but different.

Gender differences are the poetry and engine of life itself: sexual attraction,

family formation, procreation, romantic love.

But now women want to be IDENTICAL to men, not merely EQUAL and this threatens the very existence of the species.

What is much worse:

In their attempts to emulate men, women use the feminist sexist caricature of the "typical" male as a template: a drunk and vulgar man-whore womanizer who cheats on his spouse and works himself to death in a jungle hostile universe.

Women have learned to mistrust men: about half them are bitter and broken victims of abuse, divorced, single mothers, impoverished, and hopeless.

Men Go Their Own Way (MGTOW) - a movement in the manosphere of men who renounce all contact with women - is merely a reaction to the fact that women have gone their own way a long time ago. There are no women left, only narcissists with a different genital apparatus. How tragic that we have lost each other, men and women. How heartbreaking.

35.

A lot of strife and heartbreak between men and women can be avoided with [honest communication of values, expectations, and cultural-societal backgrounds](#).

This need to compare notes is rendered even more urgent by kaleidoscopic gender roles (it is called "gender vertigo")

Example:

In a recent study, a whopping 10% of British women aged 18-40 said that they are PLANNING to get drunk senseless and bed a total stranger in a one night stand whenever they are in a new city

Another 15% said that they are LIKELY to have sex with someone they got acquainted with it for longer than a few hours. A majority of them said that they will not use condoms. About 40% allowed total strangers to ejaculate inside them in a drunk one night stand.

So, while such behavior appears to have become normative among women, many men still find it unacceptable and offputting

Following a drunk bout of casual sex, most women regret the choice of sexual partner (made attractive via beer goggles). But not one woman involved in such escapades accepted that it was **WRONG**. These women - a growing hefty minority - nowadays consider such adventures **DESIRABLE**, not **WRONG**.

Another example:

Women completely fail to see the problem if they - while in a relationship - go out alone at night, have drinks with a stranger, talk, socialize, have a good time, slow dance or just dance with him.

Put differently: women today regard it as totally acceptable to date (=have a night out alone with) other men - including strangers they have just met - while in a relationship.

All women surveyed used the exact phrase: "You have to trust your partner. I am doing nothing wrong."

And in another wide survey:

73% of women aged 18-29 saw nothing wrong or flirtatious in sharing a drink (=drinking from the same glass) with a stranger in a bar or in a restaurant. The commonest response: "It shows curiosity as to the taste of the drink sampled"

Many men find all the above behaviors wrong or even dealbreakers. They should communicate this to their partners in advance and reach detailed and mutually accepted behavioral agreements and rules.

36.

With women, I maintain four types of relationships, depending exclusively on what I get from them.

When a woman grants me access to her body and consents to have regular and kinky sex with me and when she also adulates and admires me unconditionally and unthinkingly - I am intoxicated by her. I become her codependent slave, at her beck and call, ready to sacrifice everything, from my values to my time.

When a woman offers me only sex, I have a good time with her and trust her with the most intimate pathways of my inner world. But I am a lot more reserved and calculated when it comes to the allocation of my resources. I am businesslike and focused on the transaction: sex against a fun, adventurous time together.

When sex is excluded from the relationship, for whatever reason, the woman can still offer me unbounded attention and adulation, but I expect her to supplement these offerings with other services rendered to me as a personal assistant or a homemaker. I am likely to be less inclined to spend intimate alone time with her.

Finally, some women offer me only auxiliary services at home and at work. I treat them as I would relate to an employee: perfunctorily, as an object, provider, or prop. I am a lot more demanding, critical, and aggressive with such women.

37.

Women who are traumatized by past abusive relationships (CPTSD), or suffer from emotional dysregulation owing to personality or mood disorders have very low tolerance for situations & circumstances which are ambiguous, vague, uncertain, or unpredictable.

The abuser's intermittent reinforcement (hot-cold, approach-avoidance) & rejection create exactly such an ambient environment.

Broken and wounded women cannot cope with ambivalence (love-hate relationships), cognitive dissonance (simultaneously holding two conflicting thoughts or beliefs), or frustration, or boredom & inner emptiness.

They react to all the above with overwhelming anxiety & panic & ultimately, with debilitating depression.

To extricate themselves from this relationship morass, to put an end to their increasing misery, such women act out recklessly. In most cases, they end up cheating on their men ostentatiously & flagrantly.

The message to their abusive intimate partners implicit or explicit in their egregious misbehavior is: "I cannot leave you because I do not have the courage & the heart to hurt the needy & tortured child that I see in you. But, can't you see that I am damaged goods & you should dump me?"

By behaving dissolutely & cruelly, the injured woman also convinces herself that breaking up with her partner is for his own good: she is so corrupt and hopelessly shattered that she would be doing him a service by exiting his life or a disservice by staying in it. Her misbehavior legitimizes initiating the breakup & strengthens her resolve: "I am doing it for his sake, because I love him and want him to be happy with a good woman which he deserves!"

It is easy to lose sight of the chain of events as we engage in a morally righteous judgment of the infidelity. It is the abusive partner who triggers such women & causes them to disintegrate, decompensate, and bed a stranger in a desperate attempt to flee what had become a torture chamber, a prison cell, and a madhouse combined.

His rejection and denigration drive his weak & disordered partner to suspend her values, boundaries, rules of conduct, & commitments to herself - indeed, her very identity - and reduce herself to behaviors that shock even her.

She is fighting for her survival and self-preservation, attempting to square the circle: flee without guilt, abandon without hurt, cheat without shame, do the right thing.

She ends up deceiving and breaking hearts and minds all around.

38.

[Investing in a relationship](#) may have become an irrational strategy in this day and age:

Prenups made communal property obsolete.

Divorce is the not so new normal and is much easier than it used to be. Children are accustomed to it and have learned to expect and accept breakups as an ineluctable and preordained part of life.

Sex is cost-free and has been reduced to mutual masturbation, stripped of all its attendant emotional and cognitive components. Hookups and other forms of casual sex as well as porn rule.

The pool of available partners is practically infinite. Mate selection is no longer affected by scarcity and the fear of remaining alone. People have become disposable, dispensable, and interchangeable.

Digital identities on social media and dating sites are largely fake: people flood

each other with accurate information on the trifling aspects of their lives - but lie egregiously about all critical issues, from their appearance to STDs. It renders intimacy all but impossible.

39.

"For what qualities in a man," asked the youth, "does a woman most ardently love him?"

"For those qualities in him," replied the old tutor, "which his mother most ardently hates." (A Book Without A Title, by George Jean Nathan (1918))

Women look for FIVE qualities in men for a long-term relationship: 1. Good Judgment; 2. Intelligence; 3. Faithfulness; 4. Affectionate behavior; 5. Financial responsibility and wherewithal.

Women look for TEN qualities in a male partner for casual sex or a sexual affair: 1. Nice body (but not too muscular); 2. Has money and not stingy; 3. Kindness; 4. Interested in them (finds them interesting); 5. Sexually desires the woman and shows it with flirting or small touches - but not aggressively; 6. Protective (but not possessive or jealous); 7. Attentive (puts the woman and her needs at the center of attention, doesn't overshadow her, compete with her, or ignore her); 8. Has a sense of humor; 9. Loves life and finds people interesting: knows to have a good, adventurous time, fun, and quick to socialize; 10. Easy going, not brooding, or overly serious and nerdy, not too intelligent or scholarly "boring"

Men seem to place a premium on these FIVE qualities in a woman for all purposes: 1. Physical attractiveness and sexual availability; 2. Good-naturedness; 3. Faithfulness; 4. Protective Affectionateness; 5. Dependability.

40.

Male vibe is not the same as man vibe.

Some men have problems dating women or getting laid because even when women find them irresistible - they find women excruciatingly boring

The only thing they want to do with a woman is to fuck her. A huge turn off for many women (though not all)

Such men are willing to invest some time to pretend that they are interested in the woman, to woo and to court her - but not too much. They want to get to business ASAP.

Women feel that they do not interest these men and that all these men want is to fuck them.

So, they do not get the "MAN vibe" from these men - only the "MALE vibe"

Most men ARE interested in women, love to spend time with them, get to know them, talk to them, have a good time with them, and so on. Most men find women fascinating and love their company. This is the MAN vibe.

The "MALE vibe" men are different. If they cannot fuck the woman or are not sexually attracted - they lose all interest and would never spend even one additional minute with her. They make women feel objectified and dehumanized. They come across as dishonest and painfully rejecting.

41.

Feminism aside, women are still defined by the male gaze. They leverage it to derive a sense of feminine identity and to regulate their self-esteem. This is a narcissistic-histrionic feature that is common to all women, no matter how vehemently they deny it

When a woman doesn't get this critical affirmation from one man, when she is thoroughly ignored and rejected, she moves on - sometimes swiftly - to another man who does "see" her

The most extreme form of abuse by far is to deny a woman this gaze: to look through her, as though she were made of air, transparent, non-existent. To negate, erase, and delete her as an autonomous person and a woman by steadfastly pretending that she does not exist and by not catering to her deepest psychological needs and anxieties

To fight and to argue - even to actively mistreat a woman - is to acknowledge her existence. It is survivable and human and women adapt to such unfortunate

circumstances

But the disdainful, chilling, reptilian x-ray vision of the psychopathic narcissist evaporates his partner, layer by layer. She starts to doubt not only her sanity, but her very existence

Subjected to such vitiation, most women seek to reaffirm and reassert their autonomy and being via another man - any man

To restore their shattered sense of wellbeing, they act out, desperate to regain a foothold in a reality rendered surreal and shifting by the psychopathic narcissist's devastating combination of soul-destroying contempt and all-pervasive non-acknowledgment: the absence of his gaze.

42.

Traumas with the same structure or emotional content resonate with and either amplify or ameliorate each other ("[trauma resonance](#)"). This is even more pronounced if the traumas involve the same person and are proximate in time

Typically, the traumatized person reacts with "[trauma displacement](#)": she reprocesses the more inactive or less recent experience (via flashbacks, nightmares, obsessive or intrusive thoughts, various emotions, anger, sadness, rumination, and so on). This way, she represses or reframes the new trauma, especially if there is no other effective way to cope with it.

Avoiding triggers is very counterproductive. On the contrary: healing is predicated on obtaining desensitization and closure via repeated exposure to the people or circumstances who caused the trauma, even to the point of controlled retraumatization (a technique in Cold Therapy).

More here: <http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/trauma.html>

43.

Some women have a predominant metaphor of their lives, very resounding and powerful:

I am hurt, tortured, and broken. I am looking for a man, a knight in shining armor, a savior to support me, comfort me, and heal me.

These women broadcast, implicitly and explicitly, to everyone, but especially to

men:

I am the sleeping beauty, the damsel in distress, the princess in the tower, held hostage and mistreated by callous, cruel, evil, or insane men. I need help and rescue!

Men - protectors and competitors by nature - react very powerfully to this message and chivalrously rush to their aid.

When a man refuses to play this game, insists that the woman acts as an adult, assumes full responsibilities and makes timely decisions - it is often perceived as cold-hearted abuse by such women. "Princesses" get cold feet and are overwhelmed to the point of acting out when they are treated as equals and are expected to perform with no allowances for their rescue fantasies.

They reject, abuse, and punish men who decline to participate in their dramas, the theatre productions of their lives. They have no idea how to cope with men who do not respond to their distress cues.

More generally, women actually hate being treated as MEN who happen to have vaginas and when they are expected to behave as men do and to perform to the same standards and with the same alacrity.

Women perceive this as abuse because, feminism aside, they still need to feel small and protected.

44.

Cold feet: the remorse that accompanies a - usually major - decision (like getting married or acquiring a home). It often leads to passive-aggressive, reckless, immoral, or destructive behaviors intended to undermine further action and reverse course.

The recipient of such mistreatment is traumatized: he feels rejected or abandoned or betrayed or cruelly and unjustly abused or damaged. Trust is shattered.

But cold feet have little to do with the target: the jilted fiancée or the dumped lover or the defaulted seller. Cold feet represent complex inner dynamics of avoidance, repetition compulsion, prior traumas, low self-esteem, a labile sense of self-worth and inadequacy, fear of the unknown, and emotional dysregulation (being overwhelmed)

However, if you keep attracting into your life people who get cold feet, there could be a problem with your selection criteria - or with you. It behoves you to look into why you keep choosing the wrong folks - or what in you gives them cold feet.

45.

Children have a right to know the overall state of affairs between their parents.

They have a right not to be cheated and deluded into thinking that "everything is basically OK" – or that the separation is reversible. Both parents are under a moral obligation to tell their offspring the truth: the relationship is over for good.

Younger kids tend to believe that they are somehow responsible or guilty for the breakdown of the marriage. They must be disabused of this notion. Both parents would do best to explain to them, in straightforward terms, what led to the dissolution of the bond. If spousal abuse is wholly or partly to blame – it should be brought out to the open and discussed honestly.

In such conversations it is best not to allocate blame. But this does not mean that wrong behaviors should be condoned or whitewashed. The victimized parent should tell the child that abusive conduct is wrong and must be avoided. The child should be taught how to identify the warning signs of impending abuse – sexual, verbal, psychological, and physical.

Moreover, a responsible parent should teach the child how to resist inappropriate and hurtful actions. The child should be brought up to insist on being respected by the other parent, on having him or her observe the child's boundaries and accept the child's needs and emotions, choices, and preferences.

The child should learn to say "no" and to walk away from potentially compromising situations with the abusive parent. The child should be brought up not to feel guilty for protecting himself or herself and for demanding his or her rights.

Remember this: An abusive parent IS DANGEROUS TO THE CHILD.

Continued: <https://samvak.tripod.com/abuse13.html>

The abuser often recruits his children to do his bidding. He uses them to tempt, convince, communicate, threaten, and otherwise manipulate his target, the children's other parent or a devoted relative (e.g., grandparents). He controls his

- often gullible and unsuspecting - offspring exactly as he plans to control his ultimate prey. He employs the same mechanisms and devices. And he dumps his props unceremoniously when the job is done - which causes tremendous (and, typically, irreversible) emotional hurt.

Co-opting

Some offenders - mainly in patriarchal and misogynist societies – co-opt their children into aiding and abetting their abusive conduct. The couple's children are used as bargaining chips or leverage. They are instructed and encouraged by the abuser to shun the victim, criticize and disagree with her, withhold their love or affection, and inflict on her various forms of ambient abuse.

Threatening

Abusers are insatiable and vindictive. They always feel deprived and unfairly treated. Some of them are paranoid and sadistic. If they fail to manipulate their common children into abandoning the other parent, they begin treating the kids as enemies. They are not above threatening the children, abducting them, abusing them (sexually, physically, or psychologically), or even outright harming them - in order to get back at the erstwhile partner or in order to make her do something.

Most victims attempt to present to their children a "balanced" picture of the relationship and of the abusive spouse. In a vain attempt to avoid the notorious (and controversial) Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS), they do not besmirch the abusive parent and, on the contrary, encourage the semblance of a normal, functional, liaison. This is the wrong approach. Not only is it counterproductive - it sometimes proves outright dangerous.

Continued: <https://samvak.tripod.com/abuse12.html>

46.

Even the most militant feminist emancipated career woman is, at heart, a [medieval princess](#), awaiting for the knight in shining armor (or the modern equivalent) to awaken her from her solitary slumber.

To curry sexual favor with women - let alone gain emotional access and leverage - men have to withstand the onerous tests of courtship and mating rituals. Men have to act attentive, courteous, fawning (but not too overtly), desirous (but not too vulgar), always available, and almost singlemindedly obsessed with their quarry at all times.

This ostentatious dedication, the breathless pursuit and relentless chase serve a few evolutionary goals. Mainly, this obstacle course provides the woman with invaluable information about the qualities of the eligible male as a protector and provider, a potential husband and a father: is he persistent, reliable, resilient, a patient hunter, committed, devoted, besotted, sexual, strategizes cleverly, willing to fend off encroaching males, competitive, assertive, supportive, emotive, and so on. It is a form of “virtue signalling”.

These evolutionary imperatives and reflexes are ingrained and are at play even in one night stands or during casual sex. Women often end up bedding men they consider "wrong" or even "repulsive" the morning after precisely because millions of years of nature took over and trumped nurture, environment, and societal mores.

47.

Damaged, broken women develop low self-esteem. They are afraid to be judged by potential mates as wanting, dysfunctional, and defective. They are sure that they are bound to disappoint and frustrate otherwise eligible partners. The "nice guy" is a constant hurtful and infuriating reminder of their inadequacies and broken dreams.

It is a self-fulfilling prophecy, of course. The woman's anxiety, emotional dysregulation, and catastrophizing translate into despair, aggression, and acting out.

She may preemptively abandon her loving, kind, and generous partner and elope with a "bad guy" that she both deserves and knows how to handle. She may trash herself and engage in reckless behaviors. Or she may act passive-aggressively and undermine any incipient intimacy and budding relationship, precipitating the very rejection that she so dreads (approach-avoidance repetition compulsion)

I thought if I have a good and beautiful wife and nice kids and a comfortable house, I will be at peace ... But I've got too much damage, and too many needs. Putting a picket fence around me won't make me into a whole person." ("Magic Hour" by Susan Isaacs)

48.

The Madonna-Whore Complex is more aptly renamed: The Mother-Slut Complex. It is well documented: some men relate to some women as saintly,

immaculate, dignified, and supremely moral homemakers and childbearers. In short: mothers who should never be subjected to sex, defiling and incestuous as it is. They crave the constant presence of these women, but not their bodies. They feel repelled and threatened when these women demand their due. While they often abuse these women, both verbally and otherwise, they are committed to them financially and emotionally in the long run and form stable, albeit sexless dyads and families with them.

The same men view all other women as sluts and whores, worthy of the degradation inherent in sex. They fantasize about them and lust after them. They coerce them into sex if they cannot get their way with these females otherwise. But they would rather just dispense with the intercourse and be gone. The post-coital presence of these women is an embarrassing reminder of the human frailties of these men and of their "corruption" and "fall from grace". They invest only the minimum necessary in these women, both financially and emotionally ("maintenance level") and are not committed to the resultant relationships. Still, they are rarely abusive to them gratuitously.

49.

POLL QUESTION

If there were ONLY two types of men in the world - NO OTHERS! - which would you prefer:

1. A good financial provider but ignores you, criticizes you, and devalues you, especially when you are down. Shows no interest in you as long as you service him to his satisfaction. Lets you be and is totally indifferent and bored with you except when he needs something from you. Demands rare or no sex at all - may even be asexual.

OR

2. Though not your intimate partner, just an acquaintance, he provides attention and empathy, friendship, compassion and support - but then assaults you sexually or insists on having sex with you regardless of your lack of attraction to him, lack of consent, resistance, and objections. Having sex is his condition to spending time with you.

Remember: you MUST choose only ONE of these TWO types of men

Which type of man would you prefer? 1 or 2?

50.

When it comes to sexual assault, there are no "[safe men](#)". On the contrary, most sexual transgressions are committed by male "friends", "brothers", colleagues, or acquaintances. This is because men misinterpret all female behavior as sexually inviting (sexual overperception bias), respond aggressively to teasing (overt flirting and signalling), use sex to communicate (to comfort, console, protect, commiserate, and hold), and are preoccupied with possessing the woman and competing with other men (often "stealing" her from her boyfriend or husband).

Women, listen up: If a man has ever expressed sexual interest in you, he is never "safe" to be alone with. This is doubly true if his advances had been rebuffed in the past. He would interpret the continued contact following his rejection as a change of heart and mind and would pursue you even more vigorously in order to assuage the humiliating narcissistic injury you had inflicted on him by turning him down.

Women know all that, of course. So, why do they keep exposing themselves to the very same risks? Why do they repeatedly engineer circumstances that are conducive to coercive, non-consensual sex? Because they have a recurrent pipedream: they want to be lusted after, desired, and attended to - but "safely" so, without having to go all the way. They also use other men to triangulate (provoke jealousy in an indifferent partner or break up with him). Innocuous, sexless, flirting is way to restore the woman's sense of femininity and battered self-esteem.

These needs are so overpowering that women sometimes drink senseless and do drugs with total strangers or with casual "friends", ending up raped in dingy hotel rooms or apartments. There is another reason that so very few assaults get reported: women feel that what had happened was their fault, that they had led the guy on, that they owed him the sex. This is the price they have had to pay for his company, attention, and support and for finding them irresistible. The politically incorrect fact is that many women find this deal - unwanted sex for restorative companionship - perfectly worth it. Which is why they keep repeating the pattern: most sexually assaulted women have endured more than one such incident in almost identical situations of their own making.

51.

[Women initiate the majority of breakups and divorces](#). When men end relationships, they just walk away. Women tend to be more circumspect: they

misbehave with other men, act passive-aggressively, and undermine intimacy in a variety of indirect ways.

To generalize, women tend to rupture the bond only in four cases:

1. Extreme abuse and rejection by the intimate partner
2. Chaotic dysfunction of the dyad leading to unfavorable and ineffectual outcomes;
3. The partner's clinging, abandonment/separation anxiety, and demands for suspension of the woman's personal autonomy within the relationship
4. Some women are terrified of intimacy, are pain averse, and commitment phobes. When the partner demands a dedicated joint future with increasing closeness, they recoil in horror and act out, sabotaging the budding togetherness.

Dysregulated emotions and approach-avoidance repetition compulsions are prevalent among women traumatized by previous liaisons or with mental health disorders such as Borderline Personality Disorder or mood disorders.

52.

Women willingly enter relationships with - or give their bodies to - evident, clearly visible [male scum](#) only because these lowlifes had never ADMITTED publicly to being narcissists, or owned up to it. On the contrary: they make themselves out to be the victims and women are all over them, offering maternal healing and love and sex.

I am being punished because of my HONESTY: I had informed women of WHO and WHAT I am. They know that they may be able to hurt me - but they have no power over me: they have nothing I either need or want. My total aloofness, self-sufficiency, and independence drives women nuts. It threatens and infuriates them.

So, women - documentarists, "friends", collaborators, wannabe lovers - are terrified of me, rage at me, and hate my guts just because they KNOW WHO I AM. And who told them who I am? I DID!

Women see that the men they started dating or fucking are sick and dangerous trash but they keep hoping that they may be wrong about these men. Or they keep deluding themselves that they will control, manipulate, co-opt, "fix" and

"heal" these bad boys. They keep convincing themselves that these men are safe, will damage only others. Malignant optimism.

But in my case, women cannot lie to themselves and deceive themselves because I have told them repeatedly that I am a monster who can never be tamed or healed. They know that I will be with them only as long as they function and are useful to me. Not a second longer. I invest in women only a fraction of what I can extract from them. Not an ounce more. Ever. Never. So they set out to annihilate me, often by "in your face" cheating with the aforementioned scum.

Many men are my facsimile, my soulmates. But these men pretend to be empathic, loving, supportive, and caring. And women lap it up, lock, stock, and barrel, to mix my metaphors. It is repulsive to behold.

Lesson: Men! Never out yourselves. Women crave fantasy and deceit. So, tell them what they want to hear, pretend profusely, and they will become your codependent slaves or your one night stand sluts or worse. It works every time. The opposite strategy - of being truthful about who you are - sucks. Male authenticity only renders women rabid, virulent and sadistic enemies.

53.

[Heterosexual Men](#) with sex and gender identities which are full-fledged and fully developed react holistically to the totality of a member of the opposite sex: her bodily attributes to start with, but also her intelligence, sense of humor, vibe, company, life experience, traits, personality, accomplishments and conversation. They are irresistibly attracted to the entire offering: the sex, of course - but the rest as well.

Narcissists and psychopaths effectively fake such immersion in their targets. They emulate the behaviors of the healthy male. They are very convincing and misleading thespians, giving the impression that they are truly "into the woman". But really, in the recesses of their cesspooled and diseased minds, narcissists abstract a single aspect or dimension of the prey on which they focus. They are goal-oriented and women are just instruments, means to an end (narcissistic supply, sex, money, contacts, and so on). Narcissists and psychopaths reduce other people - women included - to assemblages of functions and transact with them: I will give you my attention, time, and faux affection and you will give me sex, for example.

This one dimensionality of the interaction is at the core of the discard part of the cycle (idealize-devalue-discard-replace): once and if the woman has nothing to

offer (for example: she is unattractive or no longer available for sex), the narcissist and psychopath has no further use for her. It is wasteful to invest scarce resources with no return on the investment. The woman's other assets and aspects are irrelevant: they do nothing to further the narcopath's agenda or to secure his aims.

Real, fully evolved men love and adore women and revel in female company. Narcissists and psychopaths love and adore what women can give to them and revel in female absence: apart from her assigned roles, they consider the woman to be a contemptible underdeveloped nuisance, sometimes even a hate object.

54.

Women have been called "The Fairer Sex" for good reason: their [beauty](#) inspired and motivated, soothed and aroused, and made the world both a more bearable and hopeful place.

By preserving this pulchritude and enhancing it, a woman cherishes her feminine essence and buttresses her wellbeing: the external and the internal are inextricably intertwined in our gender.

We should all - men and women - seek to maintain and improve this temple, the body: it is a marvel of creation, a sacred deposit, and a message we convey to others.

In beauty salons and clinics throughout the world, day in and day out, workers are dedicated to this mission of feminine aesthetics and resulting happiness. Using the latest technologies, in depth education and training, as well as leading industry brands, the best among these establishments offer a complete and holistic solution to all your needs in this sphere.

55.

There is a tectonic shift in [mate selection](#) preferences among humans. As women become more independent, grandiose, and entitled, they adopt behaviors hitherto associated exclusively with psychopathic men. They also opt for "beta" males (weak, tame, dependent, underaccomplished, less intelligent and less handsome) as sexual and romantic partners.

This is accompanied by a revolution in sexual and behavioral signalling as the semantics and semiotics of types of social conduct are reversed for the first time since the inception of the agricultural revolution and urbanization, thousands of years ago. No wonder feelings of dislocation and disorientation regarding

gender roles (gender vertigo) are so high and rampant.

Drinking, smoking, the loud use of profane language, defiance, promiscuity, novelty and thrill seeking, avoidant attachment, impulsiveness, masculine attire and body, little makeup or grooming, overt seductiveness and flirtatiousness, abuse of multiple substances, recklessness, loss of control in public, impetuosity, and frequent changes of partners in interpersonal relationships were considered until the 1960s negative hallmarks of a mentally disturbed or desperate "bad news" woman best avoided.

Today, these very same character traits and behaviors render a woman MORE attractive because they indicate to men her sexual availability, personal autonomy, emancipated mindset, strength, financial wherewithal, absence of demanding neediness or long-term expectations, and fun loving ambience.

In this hookup age of ubiquitous antisocial or asocial narcissism and atomization (schizoid loneliness as a way of life), such women are treasured and courted assiduously by emasculated men, usually for the casual sex and noncommittal non-relationships that have come to typify our dystopian, post-modern, thanatic, materialistic world.

56.

The common wisdom when I was growing up was that as men get older, they have a greater number of potential partners (age hypergamy)

As women age, they have a shrinking pool of possible mates ([age hypogamy](#)). This evolutionary asymmetry had always had profound social implications: it affected the structure of our societies as well our institutions and the ways they functioned, both formal (codified mores and norms) and informal.

All this is beginning to change for the first time since the agricultural revolution, thousands of years ago. Women are emancipated sexually and financially and are gradually taking over the reins. They are adopting hitherto exclusively masculine - even defiantly antisocial - behaviors, including ones pertaining to mate choice and selection.

Sex hypogamy is the new normal: women prefer to stay single and childless, wedded to their careers and self-actualization as they sleep only with beta, weak, emasculated men, usually in hookups or short-term "relationships". Our dystopian reality is unigender: it is a world without women, only two types of men with different genitalia.

Sex hypergamy - a preference for accomplished strong alpha males even for casual sex - is out the window. Women want to be on top in every possible way

So, red pillers are right about the 80/20 Pareto principle: 80 percent of women do want to sleep with only 20 percent of all men. But they got the 20 percent wrong: women want to copulate with the 20 percent who are beta males! Women assiduously avoid the intimidating and challenging alpha men whose success and prowess constitute an unbearable narcissistic injury to the competitive, independent female.

57.

More and more [financially emancipated women mimic psychopathic men](#), adopting both their misbehaviors and their traits. A curious gender inversion seems to be occurring: men are assuming hitherto feminine roles and reactive patterns.

For example: judging by numerous reports from the crowded clinics of couple therapists, men are now more sex averse ("frigid") than women (they compensate with porn), they are more romantic, and are more likely to be infatuated and to suggest to transition to a committed relationship after a bout of casual sex (women overwhelmingly decline such overtures for further contact after one night stands). Many men are stay at home dads as women become primary breadwinners.

Women are catching up to men in the frequency of cheating on their intimate partners and the number of one night stands, especially when these involve drinking or other forms of substance abuse.

In many places, more women than men frequent singles bars and dives and women are surging on dating apps where three quarters of them admit to scouting for anonymous sex partners or infidelity accomplices. Women sue for 73% of all divorces.

The floodgates are wide open: in a unigender world, gender roles are fluid and often inverted. Gender vertigo ensued followed by male avoidance in a misogynistic manosphere (MGTOW, red-pillers, incels)

This is part and parcel of a bigger trend: the ascent of aloneness. More and more people of both genders - since 2016 in the West, at least, the majority - choose to live alone: they find their own exclusive company irresistible. Technology rendered us utterly self-sufficient, so why be bothered with the quirks, moods, emotions, and expectations of others? Procreation, marriage, and family are

phased out. Sex is gradually displaced by porn and occasional casual masturbation with other people's bodies. When it comes to relationships, the prize is just not worth the price.

58.

[Women are newly emancipated slaves](#): mistreated as chattel property by men since the agricultural and urban revolutions thousands of years ago, they have rebelled and prevailed. But a collective psychology shaped over millennia cannot be undone or modified within a few decades: society and its agents - parents foremost - had brainwashed girls and inculcated in them rigid, stereotypical gender roles, replete with coping and survival strategies in a male-dominated world.

Women were conditioned to make use of the surreptitious weapons of the weak: to manipulate; undermine passive-aggressively; feign weakness, clinging, and codependent neediness; and extort economic benefits, often by triangulating or by getting pregnant.

Having acquired civil rights and economic prowess, women lacked a credible behavioral-social model to introject and follow. Instead, they started to emulate and imitate male caricatures which comprise pronounced psychopathic features: dysempathic machoism, promiscuity, defiant reactance, recklessness, infidelity, antisocial conduct, and substance abuse. In a way, women are pathetically trying to be more men than men.

Such abrupt discarding of traditional gender roles in a unigender universe has led to gender vertigo, gender alienation, gender dysphoria, misogyny, misandry, and a tsunami of auto-eroticism (masturbation with porn, incest, and homosexuality, for instance). A decline in births to below the replacement rate and the collapse of inter-gender communication and institutions (family, marriage) and behaviors (dating, meaningless sex) followed ineluctably.

59.

The [contemporary dating scene](#) is fragmented and baffling. But recent studies help to make sense of it.

Men and women who are in pursuit of casual sex (one to two night stands) find it in bars or parties (60%), pubs, restaurants, resorts, and clubs (another 20%), and dating apps and sites (the remaining 20%). About 30% of users of technology are looking for meaningless, emotionless romps or accomplices to adultery. Many first dates end in sex, but it is not considered casual because it

incorporates intimacy and rudimentary emotions.

In the middle tier, men and women have self-limiting (the median is 6 months) love affairs (as playmates, fuck buddies, friends with benefits). They find partners on dating sites and apps but, more frequently, via social media and at work.

Finally, many singles (bachelors, separated, divorced) are looking for life companions within a committed relationship. Friends and family introduce them to potentials, or they join activities, venues, and institutions with like minded people.

Oddly, people keep looking for the wrong kinds of partners in the wrong types of places and this mismatch is the main reason for protracted dating and relationship failures. If you go to a bar to look for the love of your life or to church to pick up a one night stander, you are bound to be bitterly disappointed.

60.

It is amazing to observe how women sense a real man even if he looks like a much rehashed roadkill or yesterday's unsorted trash.

If a man loves and adores women and finds their company and sex irresistible - he can do anything he wants with them and to them.

Women find the idea of [being irresistible](#) - irresistible!

That's why some women enjoy being touched even inappropriately: it proves to them that they are irresistible.

And that is also why many women have RAPE fantasies: because in such phantasmagorias, the male perpetrator finds them irresistible, cannot stop himself.

But this is true solely on one crucial condition:

That the man finds the woman irresistible in all her dimensions: looks, personality, her company, sense of humor, intelligence, personal history - as well as sexuality.

If the man finds the woman irresistible ONLY as a SEX OBJECT, to be used to grope, poke, and masturbate with - it is a major turn off for the woman and she

finds such a man revolting and to be avoided. His actions are then perceived as sexual harassment and worse.

61.

If a woman goes mountaineering with a man and borrows his tough muscles to help her through a rough pass - she is an athlete.

If a woman crams for an exam together with a man, tapping his brain for his knowledge - she is a scholar.

When a woman picks up a stranger in a bar and makes use of his penis to reach orgasm - [she is a slut](#).

When a man sells access to his brain for 300 euros an hour (yes, this is my going rate) - he is a consultant or a counsellor.

But when a woman charges 300 euros to access her vagina - she is a cheap whore.

And guess just WHO wrote all these rules!

62.

In the penultimate scene of the heartrending film, "The Song of Names", a wife confesses to her husband after decades of deception, that she had slept with his best friend. He smiles at her benevolently, holds her hand lovingly, and they revert to the conjugal bed as though nothing much had transpired between them.

The message? [Adultery and sex are no big deal](#), a mere body function, like grabbing a bite or a few drinks with someone else, no cause for hurt or pain, zero risk of loss, jealousy or injury, all in a day's - or a night's - work.

Even more shocking is that the woman is presented as an eminently positive, caring, and empathic character. Her cheating is the fault of the cad, her seducer, a quintessentially bad guy. She bears no responsibility or blame and shows no hint of guilt or remorse for her act of intimacy and sex with her spouse's closest soulmate, for years of lying to her husband, and for manipulating his relationship with her paramour (who has gone missing)

I found this histrionic almost psychopathic woman to be the truly morally reprehensible character in this yarn. Yet, evidently, no one else involved in the making of the film shared this view of her.

And, this insouciance, this indifference to perfidious immorality and profound betrayal is what makes this film a horror flick.

This is the new normal, the utter lack of inhibiting values, according to this movie: cheating on your significant other with his childhood friend, hiding it from him, manipulating his thoughts self-interestedly, then a matter of fact confession, a smile, hands held in sympathy, love unperturbed and off to bed we go. Extramarital sex as a form of forgettable, meaningless, emotional entertaining exercise. None of your spouse's business.

63.

[When caught cheating, two stock phrases many adulterers use](#) are: "s/he meant nothing to me, it was meaningless sex" and "I will never see him or her again." Both feeble - and infuriating - attempts at amelioration backfire.

Here is what you should say to the cheater just before you dump him - the only reasonable and justified course of action:

If the sex meant nothing to you - then your partner's feelings must have meant less than nothing. Why risk hurting the person that you purport to love and care about just to do something that means nothing to you with someone who means nothing to you?

As to "I will never see him or her again" - of course you won't! You got everything you wanted from your one night accomplice, mission accomplished, why see him or her again in any case? The other party is usually equally eager to avoid all further contract. So, there is no big sacrifice involved in making such a solemn pledge. It is simply a statement of fact.

The only rational thing to do is quit the relationship instantly. "Once a cheater, always a cheater" is supported by reams of studies and mountains of research as is the lesser known truth: "Once cheated on, always cheated on" and "if they cheat with you, they will cheat on you". Bail out. Break up. Preserve your sanity. No habitual cheater is worth your self-deception - and every cheater cheats again, given the opportunity.

64.

The [young are avoiding each other](#) in every possible way.

Spectatoring: worrying about how you look and sound while having sex.

It is the outcome of consumption of porn and growing shame and inhibition related to nudity and body dysmorphia.

Instead: sexting which can be staged and photoshopped is the rage as well as dating apps as entertainment and diversion from real face to face encounters.

65.

Few - if any - men are willing to commit nowadays. What for? Sex is just around the corner, with minimal or no investment of any kind.

So, [contemporary women in the reproductive age who want children](#) are so desperate that they settle on any man willing to serve as a long-term mate.

They go even for abusers, ostentatious cheaters, alcoholics, junkies, criminals, the obviously mentally ill, and good for nothing losers and delusional wannabes as long as they are willing to tie any knot, however tenuous and no matter how reluctantly.

66.

[Micro-relationships](#) are the emotional equivalents of sexual one night stands. They are short-lived (sometimes over in hours), but every bit as intense, passionate, and intimate as longer affairs.

These are not hot dates or sultry flings or desirous sexual encounters. They are full-fledged infatuations, replete with throbbing hearts, sweaty palms, and racing thoughts. They are as obsessive as the "real" thing.

Such confluences invariably culminate in one or a few rounds of torrid sex and then the parties dispose of each other one way (ghost) or another (move on to the next partner ostentatiously and hurtfully)

Out of sight, out of mind, dissociation colludes with object inconstancy to wipe out or dim the fond memories and make room for the next bout of romantic binging. Some youngsters go through 20 or 30 such liaisons a year.

67.

Women are irresistibly attracted to [mysterious, enigmatic men](#). But not all mysteries are created equal.

Actually, women are repelled, frightened, and get irritated by a man who withholds biographical and pecuniary information or sports a murky, occult, and confabulated life story. They regard such deliberate obfuscation as manipulative or sinister.

But women are inexorably drawn to a man whose essence is inaccessible and obscure, his identity uncertain, and what makes him tick unclear. Ostentatious self-sufficiency and dignified reticence render a man this rare combination: a challenge to be overcome and the promise of adventure as the woman explores and uncovers the terra incognita of his inner landscape.

Men who are too transparent and forthcoming regarding their psychology, men who bare their souls and carry their emotions on their sleeve - are boring and dull and assiduously avoided immature weirdoes.

“Who is he really” attracts hordes of obsessed women. “Why won’t he say what he does for a living” pushes them away equally forcefully.

68.

When men [refuse to grow up](#), they remain spoiled brats.

When women refuse to grow up, they become psychopathic men.

There is nothing that a spoiled brat hates and fears more than a psychopath.

There is nothing that a psychopath detests more than a spoiled brat.

Both genders are refusing to grow up at record rates.

Do the math. Draw your own conclusions.

69.

Men are prone to sexual overperception: they misinterpret many female gestures and behaviors as invitations to copulate then and there.

To be mere friends with a woman is perceived by many men as a narcissistic injury. When a woman rejects a man sexually or romantically and [friendzones](#) him, it implies that she has judged him to be of inferior quality, defective, inadequate, lacking, and has rejected him as a potential lover, partner, spouse, and father.

Such injury can morph into narcissistic mortification if the woman offering friendship (friendzoning) used to be, at one time, the man's date, spouse, or intimate partner and had dumped him in favor of another man with whom she has had sex (at times while cheating) or with whom she had later created a family.

70.

Multiple studies have shown that both men and women miss the overwhelming majority of [flirting](#) cues and behaviors. Men flirt to score (have sex), women flirt in order to feel connected, have fun, and reaffirm their desirability.

Styles of courting and flirting prefigure the type and quality of the ensuing sex: direct and transactional flirting indicates brutal and self-interested copulation.

Subtle though unambiguous flirting, especially one based on a fantasy or fairy narrative (fabulous) is creative, imaginative, indirect, and puts the woman at the centre as a damsel in distress, diva, goddess, or princess. Women use two bits of data to proceed to sex: 1. Is he nice and kind to me and 2. Does he find me irresistible. Contrary to myths online, everything else matters very little.

Such complex flirting guarantees orgasm: women react to clitoral stimulation, role play, fantasies, and dirty talk much more than to thrust, Sturm und Drang. Diplomacy wins in the sack with women, not a military campaign.

Schizoids and some types of narcissists (sadistic, for example) find flirting and courting excruciatingly boring, wasteful, and off-putting chores. They are auto-erotic and merely wish to use the woman's body to masturbate with.

71.

Alpha males are self-confident, empathic, team players, negotiators, and motivators. They induce harmony and integrate feminine and masculine traits and skills. The exact opposite of the nonsense sold to the gullible by con artist dating and business "coaches" or within the intellectually challenged misogynistic Neanderthals of the [Manosphere](#).

[Alpha males](#) are not born, and they don't achieve their position based purely on size and temperament. The primate alpha male is a much more complex and responsible being than a bully.

Merciless tyrants do sometimes rise to the top in a chimpanzee community, but the more typical alphas that I have known were quite the opposite. Males in this position are not necessarily the biggest, strongest, meanest ones around, since

they often reach the top with the assistance of others. In fact, the smallest male may become alpha if he has the right supporters. Most alpha males protect the underdog, keep the peace, and reassure those who are distressed. Analyzing all instances in which one individual hugs another who has lost a fight, we found that although females generally console others more often than do males, there is one striking exception: the alpha male. This male acts as the healer-in-chief, comforting others in agony more than anyone else in the community. As soon as a fight erupts among its members, everyone turns to him to see how he is going to handle it. He is the final arbiter, intent on restoring harmony. He will impressively stand between screaming parties, with his arms raised, until things calm down."

Mama's Last Hug by Frans de Waal, W.W. Norton & Company, 2019

72.

Some spouses elect to have [extramarital affairs](#), deceive their partners, and remain in a marriage devoid of love, intimacy, or, often, sex. Why would any person in his right mind make such a self-defeating and demoralizing choice? Why not abandon ship altogether? Why eat the stale and putrid cake and still have it?

In order of frequency and import:

1. Money: the most recurring and crucial reason. Financial security and prosperity trump all other considerations. Driven by fear, insecurities, and sheer avarice, people sacrifice their individuality, identity, morality, values, their children's mental or physical health as well as their own, and their happiness.
2. Pity, compassion, and care for the partner. This is especially common in couples where one of the partners is parentified. Divorce feels like abandoning a helpless, hurting child.
3. Shared memories and common history. The attachment and bonding are displaced into a counterfactual and fantastic sentimental form of nostalgia. It renders the couple "sticky".
4. The children's interests and welfare come last and are rarely a truly decisive part of the calculus of pros and cons. Parents deceive themselves into believing that their kids are the reasons they are not divorcing when the true, profound motives are the above.
5. Cultural and social mores. In some societies and cultures, divorce is still

frowned upon and stigmatized. It also carries inordinate costs (such as losing access to the children and the share in the community property).

6. Peer and family pressures and expectations, including the influence of pastors, therapists, judges, and friends who advocate against the dissolution of the dyad.

Pathological demand avoidance in the bargaining phase of the shared fantasy explains [why narcissists cheat](#) (commit adultery, infidelity, have extramarital affairs).

73.

[Why do people seek partners - sexual and romantic - from "out groups"](#) (other religions, races, ethnicities, and minority groups, not their own)?

More about victimhood state of mind:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIfTn7x6tzk&list=PLsh_y_ett4o3B44ProV_XB05Cd2MjvWxX

Sex drive is autoerotic. Object relations redirect it. When we are atomized, we regress to being autoerotic in a schizoid state.

Generational gap in psychology studies

Gender vertigo: women – especially VICTIMS of abuse – more psychopathic and narcissistic. Confuse assertiveness with aggression. Emulate psychopathic men.

Bodies in public domain (sexting, cams, digital forever, not perceived as sex so digital promiscuity)

21% of all couples in the USA are sexless (fuck fewer than 10 times a year). The real figure is probably much higher.

Among people under age 35, the situation is unmitigated disaster.

5 years without sex is very very common. Many go 10 years without sex

A sizable proportion of the population gave up on sex - and relationships! – altogether. People gave up on all types of connection, not only sex. Gender Reversal example: "men have started to withhold sex as an act of protesting , traditionally a feminine move" (P. S. Dupont)

Men just talk with women. They flee at the first sign of assertive sexual advances.

Men are terrified of sex because they perceive women as judgmental, aggressive, defiant, and psychopathic - or “insane” (dysregulated, labile) and bitter.

And men are right: women have become a lot more antisocial and man-haters. The change in gender roles (women stronger, more independent) turned men off completely.

The abyss between the genders is hopelessly unbridgeable, in my opinions.

Misogynists like Muslims and Italians are reaping the rewards, ironically.

Today, to find a willing sex partner is like winning the lottery. People lose it when they finally come across someone who actually likes to have sex: they cheat on their spouses, degrade themselves as subs, do anything, even in casual sex. Things have never been worse. Heterophily low, so the potential for conflict is high.

Members of out groups like to mate with white women as a form of payback and a way of humiliating “white whores”. Hangover from colonialism (post-colonialism).

Interracial porn and cuckoldry

As far as male members of the out-groups, white women are whorish but status symbol, have arrived, belonging and acceptance.

Exogamy rare (interracial couples) result extended or virtual singlehood.

74.

Here are [four types of breakups/divorces](#):

1. Honest

The initiating party clarifies her motivations and plans, packs her things, divides the community property, and is gone for good. No lingering, procrastination, or stalking.

2. Cheating

The initiating party cheats on her partner or betrays him ostentatiously, forcing him to be the one to take action and dissolve the couple.

3. Dissonant gold-digger

The initiating party is addicted to the money, material goods, and freedoms that the otherwise dead relationship affords. This creates in her a cognitive dissonance (“I am a good, authentic person, not an exploitative abuser!”)

To resolve the dissonance, she convinces herself that her partner needs her and would suffer grievously if she were to leave. If she cheats on him in order to satisfy her unmet needs, she lies and deceives him (“what he doesn’t know won’t hurt him”).

4. Overt or proud gold-digger

This partner breaks up only when the money runs dry. She is open about what drives her and about the transactional nature of her relationships.

75.

Studies repeatedly demonstrate a very disturbing truth: [men are predatory sexual opportunists](#), regardless of their age.

Given the chance, large majorities of men will not think twice about sleeping with underage girls, as young as 10 years old; with women who are intoxicated or stoned to the point of being unable to walk or talk and who slip in and out of consciousness; with evidently mentally ill women; and with women in the throes of a severe emotional crisis (sobbing).

These data support the belief that men are essentially autoerotic (masturbate with the partner’s body).

The mass media and show business - run by men - collude to encourage these forms of egregious misconduct by sexualizing the young, objectifying women, and glamorizing the “irresistible male”.

Laws on rape, sexual harassment, and statutory rape are dead letter as the victims are actively discouraged and bullied even by law enforcement and as prosecutors are extremely reluctant to take on cases.

Finally: women themselves contribute by minimizing and reframing inappropriate behaviors in order to restore a sense of control. They say: “I may

have been a minor, but I initiated the sex”, or “I felt grateful to him just for bring there to prop me up when I couldn’t walk” or “He will never see me again” (as if it were some sort of punishment).

A majority of women continue to interact and even bed their sexual abusers even when they had realized the abusive nature of the sex.

76.

Everyone advises that falling in love with [broken, damaged people](#) is self-destructive: they are bound to hurt you and traumatize you for life. Ruination awaits in such an affair of the heart.

But this blanket advice is often wrong and self-defeating.

The corresponding pathologies of the members of a couple can either cancel each other out, bringing a sense of safety, anxiety reduction, and even healing - or they amplify each other, exacerbating the underlying conditions of everyone involved.

The shattered are much more open and vulnerable: their “innards” are on full display. They are skinless and defenseless.

But exactly this susceptibility renders the interactions and emotions in such relationships both deeper and more intense.

Loving the mentally ill is an exasperating technicolor wild ride - not the black and white tones of healthy boundaries.

The hurt and the traumatized know each other’s lingering volcanic agony intimately, better than any outsider can. The same way alcoholics sponsor their kith and kind in AA 12 step programs, the broken see each other through the howling miasmas of their souls.

It is a gamble with one’s life and sanity. Yet, so many take it because loving such the wounded is the most selfless act there is and a hyperdrive of personal growth even through adversity.

Such tortured relationships go south when we want our partner either to wound us further (affirm our victim status) - or we expect them to “fix” us.

77.

The typical [emancipated Western woman](#) had gradually transmogrified into an imitative rendition of a somewhat psychopathic man.

Men are reacting to this gender vertigo by adhering to either of the equally dysfunctional camps of toxic, misogynistic, or opportunistic masculinity and complete withdrawal.

Studies have uncovered the “stalled revolution”: women are increasingly describing themselves in hitherto traditional masculine terms and are adopting behaviors and traits that were once of the preserve of stereotypical macho men.

Many women in the West are aggressively defiant with their docile intimate partners, but at the same time totally sexually self-trashing and submissive with abusive, disrespectful strangers (usually when they also abuse substances).

These women give to predatory strangers freely what they adamantly deny to their mates, sexually and emotionally.

This bizarre duality is part of the power play in the intimacy war zones that such women call “relationships” where the conflict between the genders is unfolding in full force.

78.

[Where have all the women gone?](#)

Why men are withdrawing and giving up on women?

79.

[Men and Women make each other](#)

To act like a man - to BE a man - one needs to have the right woman next to him. In the absence of such a woman, one is merely a MALE, not a MAN.

To act like a woman - to BE a woman - one needs to have the right man by her side. In the absence of such a man, one is merely a FEMALE, not a WOMAN.

80.

We are becoming [Unigender](#): men and women are rendered indistinguishable. Was this intentionally engineered?

81.

In a [long-distance relationship \(LDR\)](#), it is easy to get frustrated. Give your prospective partner a chance.

When people meet, unexpected things happen and firm decisions, boundaries, and expectations become much less firm - or are even reversed.

Impatience and headstrong power plays never pay.

Wisdom consists of biding your time, delayed gratification, persistence, and charming your opponent into submission.

Regrettably, men had become sex diggers and women - gold diggers. Traumatized by past liaisons, both genders avoid getting emotionally involved and shun intimacy.

LDRs allow the parties to modulate the pace, regulate their exposure, and bake in safeguards and circuit-breakers.

82.

When it comes to narcissists and borderlines, online "info" by "experts" is a [caricature](#) that has little to do with the current state of knowledge. Listen to this talk with Ruan de Witt to get your facts straight and your hype gone.

83.

The “[stalled revolution](#)” is the label given in scholarly literature to the upheaval in gender roles and sexual scripts in the past 50 years: women perceive themselves as increasingly more masculine while men are still denying their feminine sides (such as emotions, affect, empathy, attachment, and so on).

This asymmetrical sea change gave rise to two consequences:

1. Women are far better equipped to deal with the exigencies and challenges of the modern world and are gaining substantial advantages over men in education and in a growing number of professions;
2. Technologies like social media and the contraceptive pill on the one hand and IVF on the other hand have rendered women utterly self-sufficient and independent of men. Many of them eschew men and even sex altogether.

Men are reacting to these transformations with an admixture of exhilaration at the prospect of free sex - and resentment and fear as women are taking over. Many of them withdraw and shun women and even sex altogether.

84.

[Men are on their way out. Women are taking over.](#) But, we, men, are still here and we miss you, women. Please, come back to us!

85.

[Habitual cheaters](#) are masters of evasion and obfuscation. Two of their favorite self-justifying refrains:

1. “The relationship had been already dead when I cheated”.

Relationships can be either on or off, nothing else. As long as a dyad is on, it is very much alive. Behaving as if the relationship were off when it is actually on is deception and betrayal at their ugliest and most extreme. Doing it time and again is highly narcissistic and borders on psychopathy.

2. “The relationship was sexless, I wasn’t getting what I needed, so I cheated”.

In the majority of cases, this is a lie: the other partner is attempting to have sex, or the sex is merely unsatisfactory. In many cases, the cheaters are the ones who undermine the sex with passive-aggressive behaviors or by rejecting the partner.

Only in a vanishingly minuscule number of instances, known as “sex aversion”, is sex utterly absent.

Even then, the only right thing to do is to negotiate an open relationship and, failing that, walk away.

86.

[Men are pathetic.](#) Men are on their way out. Women are taking over. Men are resentful but resigned to their own fate: they withdraw, emotionally and even sexually.

CHARGE SHEET AGAINST MEN. Men are ...

Uneducated, underachievers, underemployed, resentful, sulking, atomized losers and failures, defeated by life, throw in the towel defeatism

Effeminate, threatened, and confused: gender vertigo, sexual scripts, stalled revolution, competition

Conspiracist Misogynistic (MGTOW, incels, redpillers, but also mainstream, someone like Jordan Peterson (soft misogyny)

Hyposexual or asexual (watch youth sexlessness video): dating down, video games up, porn addiction impacts sexual practices and objectification of females, reducing them to body parts and slaves to be degraded (Lisa Wade)

Immature, narcissistic, Peter Pan syndrome (Twenge studies)

Children of divorce and single parenting: want to avoid the same traumatizing mistakes but also give up without a fight, intimacy aversion and intimacy anorexia, open relationships

Abusive

Predatory (hookups in parties, clubs, dating apps)

Parasitic, exploitative: boomerang children study longer, live with parents well into their thirties

Irresponsible, unreliable, entitled

Non-committed

Carpe diem, reckless, defiant, impulsive, feel immune to the consequences of their actions (everything is simulation, reality TV)

Addictions

No relationship, social, or intimacy skills: a pandemic of autistic deficiencies

Virtue signaling within mass victimhood movements, not in one on one interactions.

87.

The ancient institution of [monogamous marriage](#) is ill-suited to the exigencies of modern Western civilization.

People of both genders live and work longer (which renders sexual exclusivity impracticable); travel far and away frequently; and are exposed to tempting romantic alternatives via social networking and in various workplace and social settings.

As leisure time increases and physical survival is all but effortlessly guaranteed, recreation takes precedence over procreation.

88.

[Women have never been less empowered sexually](#) than nowadays. As sexual scripts and gender roles crumbled (“gender vertigo”), they had been replaced exclusively by male stereotypes of women as sluts. Work by Lisa Wade and Kerry Cohen, among many others, supports this counterintuitive claim as does the explosive growth of female-objectifying pornography.

Rather than resist this typecasting, women have conformed: they post online self-porn to dozens of leering men; sleep around promiscuously, often inebriated; hook up; and subject themselves to multifarious degradations by individual men and sometimes by groups of predatory males. The male gaze came to define women more than ever (“stalled revolution”).

To resolve the inevitable cognitive dissonance that such abject submission creates, women had convinced themselves that they are agentic, endowed with choice and decision-making powers, and actually enjoy what they are made to do in order to conform to male expectations and to garner male attention: “I am a proud slut”.

89.

[Inter-gender relations](#) have rarely been worse. This is the sad outcome of several accelerated social trends:

1. Invulnerability signalling

Both genders signal to each other that they are autonomous, goal oriented, unemotional, uninvolved, and totally self-sufficient.

2. Gender vertigo

The abolition of gender roles and sexual scripts engendered ubiquitous confusion with regards to appropriate behaviors and codes of conduct. Each relationship and institution has to be negotiated from scratch in every instance

and this results in destructive and depleting friction and eventual atomization.

3. Stalled revolution

Both men and women now regard themselves in erstwhile masculine terms ("unigender"). Both have become breadwinners. Women have surpassed men in many realms.

Politically correct and woke groups and media revel in this uniformity. One inane example: mainstream media have recently resorted to the moronic phrase "pregnant people".

4. Fluidity

Both biological sex and socio-culturally determined genders are now up for grabs and subject to alteration.

5. Defiant agency

Agency and self-efficacy are gradually being infused with aggression and transmogrified into in your face assertiveness and reckless defiance. This attitudinal change has permeated the inter-gender dialog and displaced more benign discourses.

6. Enshrined double standard

Women conform to male stereotypes of sexually emancipated females ("sluts"). Their claims of empowerment are belied by their introjection of the male chauvinistic double standard and by rampant sexual self-trashing and self-harming behaviors. This duality - self-denial and self-deception - is driving the genders apart. Men and women are giving up on each other in droves and for good.

Grannon and Vaknin ask themselves: [whatever happened to women?](#)

90.

I always prided myself on shunning the [double standard](#) when it comes to men and women. I apply the same rigorous criteria to the sexual choices and acts of both genders.

But what I have conveniently overlooked are my emotional reactions.

Take sexual self-trashing, for example. I consider it a form of egregious self-harming in both males and females. I am revolted and horrified and saddened in both cases.

But I tend to exert harsh moral judgment only on women. Men are exempt, somehow.

I feel that women who self-trash are not only mentally disordered and unboundaried (like their male counterparts) - they are also immoral and condemnable sluts. The woman invites the man in, she is the failed guardian of virtue.

So much for my impartiality.

Still, while I am wrong to judge sexual self-trashing, I am justified in warning against its well documented long-term adverse mental health outcomes for **BOTH GENDERS**.

91.

Put together [Western men](#) in a female-free zone and they sound like the worst patriarchal, chauvinistic, even misogynistic tribe.

But, as distinct from their third world counterparts, they lie to women about how they truly feel.

Decades of politically correct indoctrination, social activism, victimhood movements, wokeism, and militant feminism conditioned Western males to feign equanimity in the face of rampant female promiscuity and exhibitionism.

In public and when among women, Western men seem unfazed by feminine acts that not long ago would have passed for dissolute egregious prostitution.

But when huddled defensively together, away from any prying woman, these very ostentatiously progressive-liberal men call a slut a slut and volubly hold these women in unmitigated and utter contempt.

This doublespeak is the new double standard.

"Modern" men are delighted to avail themselves of loose and wasted women and then dump them unceremoniously as so much trash.

But the same men would not dream of having a relationship with women of ill

repute: a gangbanger, a habitual drunk one night stander, or a live cam self-pornographer. And they disseminate the names of these women as easy lays wherever they go.

Plus ca change.

92.

[Women are defining themselves](#) in what used to be exclusive masculine terms and are rejecting all feminine aspects and descriptors.

This “stalled revolution”, as it is called in the scholarly literature, is exploding among the younger generations where gender roles have been effectively abolished, leading to an androgynous unigender state.

One more piece of evidence from a series of studies by researchers at the University of Minnesota: men are now seeking love and a long-term connection prior to having sex (even a one night stand) - women are the ones who reject them and walk away.

From Time magazine, February 14, 2019:

“... (S)tudies have shown that men usually say I love you in a relationship before women do, and prefer to hear it before they have sex. Women are more circumspect, preferring to hear it said after the couple first has sex”.

93.

Patriarchy: without consultation or voice, taxation without representation, subjugation, occasional horrific abuse, stunted growth, no self-actualization, sexual assault impunity (MeToo).

Women woke up and realized that most relationships with men are abusive.

[Women adopted the abuser’s POV, male stereotypes.](#)

Men are betraying women, coerce them into casual sex and then abandon them.

Everyone more narcissistic and psychopathic, men and women: tide that lifts all boats. But women regard their newfound narcissism as empowering ideology which legitimizes and contextualizes all misdeeds.

Men have to adapt to a Female Age, but so do women.

Equality is not identity: homogeneity (unigender, only fluid sex) leads to entropy and death (no relationships, we need children, no intimacy skills)

Counterfactual claims and myths in an age of truthism: no one is happy

Invulnerability signalling: autonomous, agentic, goal-oriented, unemotional, uninvolved, self-sufficient

Gender vertigo

Abolished gender roles, sexual scripts
Confusion as to appropriate behavior (codes of conduct)

Stalled revolution

Masculine unigender
Women as breadwinners, surpass men
PC media revel in uniformity (“pregnant people”)
Women are defining themselves in what used to be exclusive masculine terms and are rejecting all feminine aspects and descriptors.

Fluidity

Biological sex and socio-cultural gender

Defiance

Attitudinal shift from agency and self-efficacy to aggressive assertiveness replaced benign constructive discourse and inter-gender dialog

Refugees of abusive relationships and divorces: animosity, bitterness, hypervigilance, hatred, withdrawal, insecure avoidant attachment

Enshrined double standard

Women conform to male stereotypes of sexually emancipated “sluts”.

Claims of empowerment belied by introjection of male chauvinistic double standard, rampant discontent, and substance abuse.

94.

To be [a sexually boundaried and principled woman](#) nowadays is considered a shameful pathology. In the past, casual sex was optional, a choice - today it is the norm.

Women have always been the guardians of the status quo by internalizing male values, expectations and stereotypes.

Ironically, feminism fed into this traditional role, rendering women less empowered and more heartbroken and disillusioned than ever in their personal lives.

Women sought and attained equity and equality. Men had reacted by abandoning them en masse and by abrogating any commitment or investment. Both parties largely gave up on intimacy and relationships.

With men all but gone, women are attempting to become the new men (“stalled revolution”).

As newly converted zealous caricatured men, women are acting out male stereotypes, sexual scripts, and gender roles as the pillars of their newly defined femininity (“the self-objectifying slut in tank top, make up, and high heels”).

In a sad twist: to be an emancipated, empowered, modern woman is to give men what they had always dreamt of: no strings attached sex with an unboundaried partner.

Vociferous protestations aside, studies conclusively show that women had also assimilated the male double standard: they are conflicted about their conduct and secretly crave more in most instances of casual sex.

To resolve the cognitive dissonance that this lamentable state of affairs had created, women pretend to be agentic and carefree when in reality they are drunk and devastated in most of these encounters (Orenstein, Wade, Cohen, Armstrong, among many others).

Men take advantage on this self-inflicted injury: they are aggressive about demanding immediate sex and offer nothing in return.

Women end up with the worse of both worlds: they are being held responsible the way men are - but are suffering “slut shaming”, the double standard, and harassment as women always had.

Men manipulate women by falsely publicly supporting this transformation while privately still shaming them.

Western men especially lie and pretend to be tolerant of female unbridled sexuality in order to perpetuate these dysfunctional and self-defeating female behaviors.

The [double standard](#) is deplorable – but it is a fact. To ignore it is delusional, self-deceiving, and costly in terms of relationships prospects and reputation. The way to overcome it is not to outman men – but to teach men to be more considerate, compassionate, and respectful.

95.

That [latter day feminism](#) is an ideological cult is confirmed by the demented responses I have been receiving. So, here are my ripostes:

1. Hookups are not rendering women equal to men: in all formats of casual sex, women are 10 times more likely than men to be sexually assaulted, half as likely to orgasm, and give way more oral sex than they receive.

2. Both men and women are unable to transition from the hookup culture to dating and to intimate relationships.

They endure a string of failed liaisons and, having been burned repeatedly, about half of them end up being lifelong largely celibate singles. At least one quarter develop anxiety disorders, depression, and substance abuse disorders.

3. Ultimately, to avoid ineluctable hurt and heartbreak, the refugees of the hookup culture either opt for a life of drunken promiscuity (emotionless and meaningless sex) - or total phobic abstinence and sex aversion.

Fallaciously, feminism casts these two dysfunctional behavioral patterns in terms of “female empowerment”.

4. Studies and learning feature in less than half of college advertising and promotional materials. Fun is the keyword and it is clearly equated with sex. Hookups are a marketing tool intended to intoxicate the youth with the promise of unbridled “freedom” and loose women as a lure.

96.

[Women are postponing having a committed relationship](#) (such as marriage) until they are in their early 30s. They focus on their careers instead and cherish their freedom to make all manner of choices.

In the meantime, these young women avoid intimacy and emotions as they sleep around with strangers or with friends with benefits.

But then, by the time they decide to team up with an intimate partner, about half of these women discover to their horror that it is way too late.

They end up as embittered and misandrist lifelong singles. The other half cycle through a series of disastrous liaisons.

The rate of infidelity has more than doubled as women thrash about in growing panic in search of male alternatives while betraying their nominal mates.

Why this predicament? For three reasons:

1. Men prefer no strings attached sex with the crops of much younger women who flood the sexual marketplace every year;
2. The double standard is still alive and kicking. Western men lie to women when they pretend that it is a thing of the past. No one wants to team up for life with a slut, her reputation irreparably tarnished by years of unbridled “whoring”; and
3. After decades of meaningless sex, reduced affect, and zero intimacy, very few women (and men) constitute relationship material. They lack the most basic relevant skills or practice.

Men are going their own way: they reject any commitment or investment as they prey on the hordes of sexually available females.

When they grow old, some men marry conservative and submissive women, including gold-diggers imported from overseas.

Some Feminists claim that hookup culture led to positive outcomes: most young people still want to get married, teenagers today are far less likely than their parents were to have sex or get pregnant.

But these “accomplishments” are illusory: most young people fail to get married or even form long-term relationships. And the young are so turned off by casual

sex that, according to Pew Center, a whopping 38% of them end up adopting solitude and celibacy as the default lifestyle.

97.

[Sex has always been transactional](#): from time immemorial, women have been trading it for protection and provision.

Now, according to studies and interviews, they are swapping sex for free drinks and a place to crash when they are too hammered to return home.

This extreme cheapening and commoditization of sex engenders a cognitive dissonance which modern women resolve by reframing the sordid proceedings as a "liberating choice".

Both women and men nowadays decouple sex from emotions and meaning for an average period of 15 years.

This recurrent practice hardwires the association into their neuroplastic brains indelibly.

When they ardently want to change - they no longer can. Even in committed intimate and loving relationships, the sex is mechanical and impersonal.

When asked to link specific activities to intimacy, people under the age of 30 most frequently list "talking". Not one of them mentions sex!

Consequently, as they grow out of their casual sex days, they devolve into celibacy, a sexless relationship, or serial cheating.

98.

There are two periods in a Western woman's life when she is confronted with an overwhelming [shortage of eligible men](#): during the college or university years - and when wants to transition from 15 years of casual sex or short-term liaisons to a long-term and committed intimate relationship, usually as she turns 30.

These imbalances in gender ratios disempower women and reduce them to abject and unboundaried sex slavery as the only way to secure a mate.

Naturally, men leverage this despair and refuse to commit or to invest even as they extort and coerce no strings attached one night stands from their reluctant

“dates”.

Ultimately, about two fifths of women remain lifelong singles, having missed the love train by focusing on their cherished careers instead.

Inundated by much younger entries, older women find it increasingly difficult to compete for male attention until they finally succumb and opt for celibacy, Netflix, and their pets.

99.

The alternative to old-fashioned relationships is not necessarily [self-sufficient loneliness](#). There are other options.

True: not everyone is built to do full scale intimacy and cohabitation.

But extremely few people are really happy all by themselves, never mind how much they protest otherwise in order to resolve their embittering cognitive dissonance.

In her book “American Hookup”, Lisa Wade quotes the historian Stephanie Coontz as she argues that “never in the history of humanity have so many different ways of loving been allowed”. Example: LDR (long distance relationships).

In her essay “The World Historical Transformation of Marriage,” Coontz writes:

“Almost any separate way of organizing caregiving, childrearing, residential arrangements, sexual interactions, or interpersonal redistribution of resources has been tried by some society at some point in time.

But the coexistence in one society of so many alternative ways of doing all of these different things—and the comparative legitimacy accorded to many of them—has never been seen before.”

100.

Any [social movement that acts as a cult](#) and yields disastrous outcomes in terms of mental health, interpersonal functioning, and self-harming behaviors should be outlawed. I would start with feminism.

101.

[Toxic masculinity](#) is now the norm among women, as well as men. Coupled with unrestricted sociosexuality (fancy name for promiscuity), it is very common among dark triad personalities.

Surprisingly, though, this unsavory mix does not always automatically translate into infidelity. If the intimate partner is boundaried and committed to the relationship, the risk is no higher than average.

The problem is that few people bearing this psychological profile are either.

They tend to bail out and cheat with the first sign of serious difficulties and, accustomed to meaningless and unemotional sex, they hold a more permissive and dismissive view of extramarital casual encounters.

Consequently, most of them are serial cheaters.

I can't emphasize enough how important it is to [get fully informed regarding the relationship and sexual histories of a potential intimate partner](#). Past misbehavior is an infallible predictor of future misbehavior, period.

102.

In aggregate, [women](#) are now earning more than men, are way more educated, had monopolized certain critical professions, and prefer their careers to any man for much longer than before.

About two fifths of women across the lifespan remain single for life and either go celibate or do casual sex (Pew Center). They are catching up with men when it comes to infidelity, narcissism, promiscuity, substance abuse, and antisocial behaviors.

Women are empowered in all fields of life bar one: sex and interpersonal relationships.

To attract men and keep them, women still self-objectify, groom and titivate themselves, go under the knife (plastic and cosmetic surgery), and succumb, inebriated, to the most degrading sexual demands of men, even total strangers in hookups or in group sex.

Sex and intimacy are men's Alamo: the last stand in an ever shrinking enclave of virility and erstwhile dominance, a vengeful throwback.

Men now exaggerate and caricature waning chauvinistic machoism as a way to punish uppity women for their inexorable ascendance and “put them in their place, reduce them to size”.

Being sexually and emotionally abusive to women is men’s way of restoring their challenged grandiose superiority. They are wielding the good old reliable double standard: slut shaming and pathologizing women as “not relationship material”.

Women increasingly go their own way. Every year since 2016, a majority of women in the USA had avoided men altogether. Lesbianism has tripled in the past 20 years. Other parts of the world are following suit with alacrity.

103.

Derek Walcott: [Love After Love](#) (poem)

Micro-relationships: casual and stranger sex, including modern "dates" (glorified hookups)

Real relationships: vulnerability and hurt acceptance; dreams, goals, and planning - not fantasy; realistic perception of the partner, not idealization or devaluation;

Pseudo-relationships: shared fantasies

104.

[Personal growth, self development, and healing](#) crucially depend on vulnerability and the willingness to accept hurt and loss.

This is especially true in family settings and intimate relationships.

This is the age of pervasive [distrust](#): of experts, of science, of the authorities, of the future, and of each other. Everyone is wary of being played. Everyone has a pet conspiracy theory.

Nowhere is the mistrust more profound than between men and women in all age groups, from all backgrounds, everywhere in the world.

Around 70% of men and women say that they deeply or somewhat distrust the opposite sex. The remainder totally or “somewhat” trust their counterparties.

Women complain that men are “feminine”: not committed or invested, weak, ineffectual, and craven. The vagaries of online dating served to augment this inauspicious view of men.

Men describe women as sexually unboundaried, prone to cheating and drunkenness, and cunning.

A whopping 16% of people under age 25 cheat in their relationships every year (compared to 2% per annum in the 1980s). Cheating had become a default casual sex behavior and is now intimately coupled with excessive drinking.

This supernova of infidelity is driven by empowered and financially independent women who no longer tolerate male abuse and bad or no sex in their primary dyads.

This abysmal mutual resentment and hypervigilance has dire outcomes: about one third of the surveyed in Pew Center studies are lifelong singles, another 15% are in between rapidfire pseudorelationships.

The marriage rate is at an all time low, having declined by 50% since 1990. Birth rates in industrial countries have plummeted and the populations in many nations are aging and declining at dizzying speeds.

Since 2016, aloneness is the new normal for the majority of men and women worldwide.

“Happy New Year” is beginning to sound like a morbid and very bad joke.

105.

[Intimate relationships and love](#) ("catching feelings") are now perceived by the majority of people under 35 as a double whammy: a massive disruption to one's career and a surefire path to being abused and "played" (exploited).

This unprecedented view of interpersonal liaisons led to a mounting “loneliness gap” pandemic and resulted in four coping strategies:

1. The sociosexually unrestricted (about 20%) remain lifelong singles and play the field in bouts of stranger casual sex and group sex;
2. About 20% avoid all meaningful human contact, sex included. They become schizoid and celibate;

3. Growing numbers turn to same sex dyads. A whopping 1 in 6 women are now lesbian. “Safe” friendships and even intimate relationships between straight and gay are all the rage;

4. Even when in serial relationships, most young people are distrustful and engage in power plays and mind games intended to secure the upper hand. It is all about avoiding being played and not ending up being a loser.

Infidelity is rife and weaponized and is now virtually universal: every year, one in six cheat on their partner (cumulatively, about 60% of both men and women do the deed throughout the life of the relationship).

Strife and myriad forms of abuse (including emotional absence and sex withdrawal) are the norm in these dystopian unions.

106.

Not everyone is built to be in a [relationship](#). There are different attachment styles and the insecure ones predict recurrent relationship failure.

Across multiple studies, at least 15% of adults state that they are much more comfortable and content being alone. 31% of adults are lifelong singles. The majority of the rest are immured in abusive, dead, or ephemeral pseudo-relationships.

Intimacy and love are lost arts and outliers, not the norm.

The problem is that some people feel threatened or constrained by love and intimacy in longer committed relationships.

They anticipate failure, hurt, misery, and discord - so, preemptively, as an anxietytic strategy, they bring about these very outcomes by repeatedly adopting dysfunctional behaviors (“let the other shoe drop”).

These relationship misfits subvert and undermine their relationships and gain “intimacy” and acceptance and faux warmth via sex with strangers, even groups of strangers. They feel “liked”, even “loved” in a “connection” when in casual, drunk encounters with anonymous partners.

Typically, they experience dissonance with their choices and they resolve it by dissociating, numbing their emotions, abusing substances, and reduced affect display. Some convert their ego dystony into a narrative ideology of empowerment.

People who dread intimacy feel a lot more unencumbered with strangers. They use fantasy to compensate for the low level of intimacy in these seedy and unsatisfactory exploitative and predatory encounters.

Many of them finally give up on the chase and settle into a career-centered life of celibacy and self-sufficiency.

107.

[Dynamic-maturational model of attachment and adaptation](#) teaches us that the majority of attachment strategies lead to relationship failures.

[Return](#)

IV. Observations on Sex and Sexuality

1.

Outside can be hell: snow and dirt and noise and worse. But when a [woman flowers on your windowsill](#) - all is well: she is happiness and love and life regained. Happy 8th of March to these magical wonder-filled fairies we call "women" and to the one special woman in every man's life.

2.

For some people, [love and pain are flip sides of the same tortured coin](#). Intimacy is an agony that leads to lustful ecstasy and to an orgy of self-annihilation. The woman in such couples loves with all her being, her quiddity and essence.

When rebuffed, she turns into an untouchable, stone-faced, and cruel Madonna-mistress and an unspeakable whore. The man prostitutes her, shares her with other men because his arousal crucially subsists on her humiliation and degradation. They punish each other via sadistic sex and desired betrayal in a futile attempt to restore justice and sanity to an escalating spiral of obsession and abandonment anxiety. Their love becomes a dungeon, their bodied tools of mutual execution. As for me: I have experienced several such relationships.

There is nothing that comes close to them in intensity and color. I felt exuberantly alive and profoundly entombed. Such affairs are exhilarating. But not for the fainthearted. Reviews of films with a psychological angle here: <http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/film.html>

3.

"[The Last Tango in Paris](#)" is a harrowing film about sex as a futile attempt to overcome loss and secure love. Like in reality, the man is more romantic: he is the one who falls in love and insists on emotional sharing and a relationship. The woman is the cruel huntress who executes him because he transgressed against the anonymity of their love-making.

I have had my share of anonymous sex and have had long sexual liaisons. One of these "relationships" lasted more than a year of constant, wild love-making exactly like in the movie. I felt not a trace or hint of emotion throughout. So I know that it is absolutely possible to share bodies without sharing minds. Intimacy is a choice - not an inevitable outcome of the exchange of bodily fluids.

But, hey, I am a narcissist, what do I know about emotions, attachment, and love? I am like a Martian writing his dissertation on Mankind. Not very likely to

get it right.

Only studies show that I AM right. In the current hookup culture, emotional entanglements are assiduously avoided especially by young women. They want only sex - good sex if possible, any kind of sex if not. They gave up on fantasies of home and hearth and marital bliss because they do not regard their male peers as marriage material. There is contempt and hostility between the genders where attraction and love used to blossom. It is a sterile world. No wonder many women elect to remain childless.

And as for loss: Paul's wife commits suicide and the new love he had found shoots him dead. "Don't push your luck" - Bertolucci warns the viewers - "If you can at least fuck in this alienated world of ours, count your blessings and call it a day. Ambitions for love and intimacy can and will be lethal - even in Paris, the city of Love and Lovers. Like Romeo and Juliet we are all star-crossed and doomed to eternally search but never find. We can only consummate, orgasm and ejaculate". Or cum. Don't forget the butter next time!

Additional reviews of films with psychological angles

here: <https://samvak.tripod.com/film.html>

4.

The Lifestyle involves sexual acts performed by more than two participants whether in the same space, or separately. It is also known as "swinging", "wife-, or spouse-swapping", "wife-, or spouse-sharing", "group sex" and, where multiple people interact with a single person, "gangbanging". Swinging can be soft (engaging in sexual activity with one's own intimate partner, but in the presence of others, including acts of candaulism), or hard (having sex not with one's spouse or mate.) Threesomes (commonly male-female-male or MFM) are the most common configuration.

The psychological background to such unusual pursuits is not clear and has never been studied in depth. Still, thousands of online chats between active and wannabe adherents and fans in various forums reveal 10 psychodynamic strands:

1. Latent and overt bisexuality and homosexuality: both men and women (but especially women) adopt swinging as a way to sample same-sex experiences in

a tolerant, at times anonymous, and permissive environment;

2. The Slut-Madonna Complex: to be sexually attracted to their spouses, some men need to “debase” and “humiliate” them by witnessing their “sluttish” conduct with others. These men find it difficult to have regular, intimate sex with women to whom they are emotionally attached and whose probity is beyond doubt. Sex is “dirty” and demeaning, so it should be mechanical, the preserve of whorish and promiscuous partners;

3. Voyeurism and exhibitionism are both rampant in and satisfied by swinging. Oftentimes, those who partake in the Lifestyle document their exploits on video and share photos and saucy verbal descriptions. Amateur porn and public sex (“dogging”) are fixtures of swinging;

SEVEN additional psychological reasons for swinging (go to the link and choose the "swinging" section in the text): <https://samvak.tripod.com/pedophilia.html>

5.

The real femme fatale is an ingénue, an innocent child poised on the verge of decadent corruption. She is surrounded by salivating wolves and yet is the only true predator among them, hunting with the joy and abandon of a toddler in a toy shop.

The true femme fatale is never cunning or malicious - that would be off-putting. She is not mature, an adult, or an intellectual - that is boring. She is not a busty blonde - she is never vulgar.

Never mind what she wears, with or without makeup, just woke up, night or day - the femme fatale makes your heart leap out of its cage, thump and throb. She is an infarct in the flesh, in installments, and in slow motion. She is as ineluctable as death and as foreordained as self-destruction. And equally delectable.

Regardless of how she looks, the femme fatale is always the most beautiful and irresistibly seductive woman you will have ever seen. She is both sex and femininity reified.

But the true power of the femme fatale rests with her absentminded indifference to the consequences of her actions: a puerile psychopathy that is never malignant and always devastating.

She is selfish in the purest sense: she pursues her needs and wishes because she cannot do otherwise: she experiences them as overwhelming, intolerable urges and anxiety-inducing drives. She hurts even her loved ones because she has no other choice.

The true femme fatale is **UTTERLY UNAWARE** of her "fataleness" and of her unbridled power over men!

This obliviousness to her impact is irresistible: it makes her a relentless, ruthless, and callous huntress and an impersonal force of nature.

More about female narcissists: <http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/faq34.html>

6.

Is the [right partner](#) like-minded, a clone, a carbon copy? Common interests, same beliefs and values, similar history?

I beg to differ. I disagree. The right woman for me is unlike me. She should bring to our couple her differences with me. She should challenge and criticize and disagree with me - even risking at times my retaliatory immature rage and abuse.

My woman should push me out of my comfort zone. She should never be a mere echo. She should deflate my grandiosity, not enhance it. She should be my firm reality test and my trusted advisor - not my accomplice in a delusional shared psychosis.

My ideal woman is curious but never fawning. She compliments but does not idealize. She criticizes but does not devalue.

And of course my bambi woman is beautiful beyond words and intelligent in a natural, wholesome kind of way, and irresistibly stubborn and intolerably cute

at times, even - actually, especially - when she is stubborn and petulant and infuriating (but never ornery and contrarian). Which she is very often!

My woman gives me life and is my world in the sense that she is a necessary but also a sufficient condition for my happiness. No reflection in the mirror or echo in a chamber can accomplish that. Only a true, vibrant, vivacious, ambitious, supportive, and transformative intimate partner who fosters my personal growth and evolution into ever higher forms of myself. Isn't this what love is all about?

7.

Some relationships are characterized by a degree of laissez-faire and "freedom" that border on emotional absenteeism, neglect, and abandonment.

Both members of these couples lead separate lives, minding their own business. They rarely enquire about the other's whereabouts. DADT (Don't Ask, Don't Tell). The reason they grant each other such latitude is because one of them is a codependent with extreme abandonment anxiety - and the other a histrionic, compensatory narcissist, or, more rarely, borderline who wants to be dumped by her intimate partner.

When such a partner is dumped she feels good and relieved, even elated for 2 reasons:

1. It validates her view of herself as a bad and worthless object (usually the main message of the introjects - inner voices - of a sadistic-narcissistic mother or role models such as teacher or peers); and
2. It prevents intimacy. Such partners hate intimacy and fear it. Intimacy suffocates them. Being dumped puts an end to this threat.

So, they push their partners to dump them by being avoidant, passive-aggressive, plain aggressive, and verbally abusive.

If - no matter what they do and what they try - their partners keeps loving them, they feel deeply frustrated. They begin to hate the patient, loyal, and loving partner viscerally and wholeheartedly.

8.

Most common wisdom on the [effects of divorce on children](#) is wrong.

Children's emotional reactions to divorce dissipate within a maximum of 2 years. Only 15% continue to be distressed afterwards and into adulthood.

When the parents separate but do not divorce, the child adjusts even better, perhaps because there is hope that the parents will reconcile and the marriage will be restored.

The most severe long-term damages and traumas are incurred by children who grow up in conflict families where the marriage is hopelessly and irreparably dysfunctional.

The effects on children are particularly severe and long lasting when the parents constantly fight volubly, abusively, aggressively, and violently.

Such children grow up to be maladapted adults and experience difficulties in their own relationships

So, staying married "for the children's sake" ("parenting marriage") is an extremely bad idea and detrimental to the child. If the marriage is beyond salvage and there is no effective communication - the parents should DIVORCE exactly FOR THE CHILDREN'S SAKE.

Scientific American <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/is-divorce-bad-for-children/>

9.

Your intimate partner can't stand it when your abode does not resemble a museum, when your things are strewn all over the place, when there are splatters of coffee on the kitchen counter, when the books and DVDs are not stacked at right angles, and when the towels in the spotless bathroom are crumpled. He is a [neat freak](#) and most probably suffers from Obsessive-compulsive Personality Disorder (OCPD). Obsessions and compulsions are about control of self & others. OCPDs are concerned (worried and anxious) about maintaining and being seen to be maintaining control. They are

preoccupied with the symbolic aspects and representations (symbols) of control. OCPDs are perfectionists and rigidly orderly or organized. They lack flexibility, openness and efficiency. They tend to see the world and others as at best whimsical and arbitrary and at worst menacing and hostile. They are constantly worried that something is or may go wrong. They share some traits with the paranoid and the schizotypal.

It is easy to spot them. They are constantly drawing up and dreaming up lists, rules, orders, rituals, and organizational schemes. They demand from themselves and from others perfection and an inordinate attention to minutia. Actually, they place greater value on compiling and following rigid schedules and checklists than on the activity itself or its goals.

OCPDs are workaholics, but not because they like to work. Ostensibly, they sacrifice family life, leisure, and friendships on the altar of productivity and output. Really, they are convinced that only they can get the job done in the right manner. Yet, they are not very efficacious or productive.

Socially, OCPDs are sometimes resented and rejected. This is because some OCPDs are self-righteous to the point of bigotry and tyranny.

Much more about this type of personality: <https://samvak.tripod.com/personalitydisorders29.html>

10.

There are four cardinal ways to regulate [sex within committed relationships](#), each with its own explicit or implicit contract.

1. Sexual exclusivity

Contract: the intimate partners engage in all forms of sex acts as well as flirting and dating only with each other. Any sexual, romantic, or emotional interaction with someone outside the relationship is considered cheating and a betrayal of the intimate partner.

2. Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT)

Contract: the intimate partner in a DADT relationship turns a blind eye to, ignores, or denies the facts about his/her partner's infidelity. He/she implicitly allows his/her partner to date others, flirt with them, and have all manner of sex acts outside the relationship. But they have to be discreet about their affairs, to eliminate all the evidence, and to continue to love their partners and share a life with them exclusively.

Falling in love outside the relationship or setting up a parallel life are considered not only cheating - but a betrayal of the intimate partner.

3. Open relationship

Exactly the same as DADT only the partners know about each other's sexual involvement with others and approve of such escapades.

Falling in love outside the relationship or setting up a parallel life are considered not only cheating - but a betrayal of the intimate partner.

4. Polyamory

The partners are allowed to date, flirt, fall in love, maintain full-fledged relationships, and, of course, have sex with others. There is no concept of cheating or betrayal although the partners are expected to not neglect or abandon each other in favor of their other lovers.

More about the multifarious forms of modern marriage
here: <https://samvak.tripod.com/marriage.html>

11.

Sexless relationships have acquired pandemic proportions. Legions of sex-starved women roam the streets, foraging for the ever-dwindling numbers of sexually active men. These few remnants of virility end up with ravenous harems whose morally conflicted inmates reluctantly seek extramarital intimacy and romance. Most men now prefer porn and its solitary aftermath to the dubious pleasure of modern female company. How have we come to that?

Modern Man is a narcissistic, porn-addicted misfit. Women have banished men from their lives: they raise their children alone; they educate their offspring on

their own (90% of teachers are female); they are way more accomplished academically and they are breaching all the remaining glass ceilings forcefully. Men are on the retreat, hiding in cyber caves, self-medicating perilously, assiduously avoiding the dual threats of intimacy and sex with women, their newfound nemesis. It is War and all sides are losing it.

Women in sexless, loveless marriages often behave like single women (go out alone, travel alone, drink alone in bars, associate with single women). I call this kind of women 'virtual singles'. They send out signals (broadcasts) which are identical to the signals of single women. Men pick up on these signals and respond to them powerfully by aggressively courting the virtual single, by sexualising her behavior, and by reducing her to a sex object ("doll"). Additionally, other women react to virtual singles with resentment and fear because they consider them to be predatory. Every woman in the company of a virtual single is afraid that the virtual single will seduce her husband and abscond or elope with him (steal him away from her). All the men around the virtual single assume that she is available for sex, a "whore".

Read (free) "The Death of Sex and the Demise of Monogamy" <http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/sexmonogamy.pdf>

12.

The [sadistic woman-lover](#) (philogynist) is drawn to women, desires them, covets their traits, admires them, and, generally, prefers to spend his time with them. But it is precisely this inexorable pull that terrifies him: he is awed by women's hold over him and mortified by his own resultant women-centred obsessions and compulsions. He is poorly equipped to deal with and is overwhelmed by the emotions that women provoke in him. In a desperate attempt to extricate himself, he adopts avoidant behaviors, shuns women and frustrates them, abuses them, tortures and humiliates them. This panoply of behaviors restores his sense of control, power, and superiority.

The sadistic woman-hater (misogynist) holds women in utter contempt, detests them, wishes them ill, and seeks to punish them. He displays the same range of behaviors as the sadistic woman-lover but for an entirely different reason. The sadistic woman-lover seeks to restore a semblance of balance of potency between himself and the women he finds so irresistible. The sadistic woman-hater aims to annihilate women, remove them from his life, penalize them harshly for daring to intrude on his being with their demands for love, sex, and intimacy, (which he perceives as women's self-interested manipulation).

Narcissists hate women <http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/faq79.html>

13.

When the sexually healthy man watches porn, he says: "I wish my wife were like this." When the sexually inhibited man watches porn, he mutters: "God forbid my wife should ever be like this." Sam Vaknin, "Malignant Self-love: Narcissism Revisited" <http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/thebook.html>

14.

I am a foot fetishist. Give me a pair of elegant, streamlined, sensuous, voluptuous feet to play with and I have little need for the rest of the woman.

Sexual fetishism is predicated on a pathological sexual attachment to a fetish. The fetishist climaxes only in the presence of the fetish and cannot reach orgasm otherwise. In the absence of their fetish, most fetishists are sexually dysfunctional (for instance, they suffer from erectile dysfunction or are sexually hypoactive). Some forms of fetishism involve sado-masochistic and domination/submission fantasies (with fetishes such as feet or boots and shoes). The circumstances surrounding the sexual encounter are immaterial to the fetishist, as is his environment. Thus, a fetishist who is fixated on bras or feet is unlikely to mind the physical characteristics of the proprietress of either.

There are three types of fetishes:

I. An inanimate object, usually with a sexual connotation (such as a bra); II. A body part that is clearly still connected to a complete body, dead or alive (e.g., hair, feet); III. A reified trait, usually a deformity or idiosyncrasy that implies inferiority, helplessness, or dependence (for instance, a lame, or grotesquely obese, or hunchbacked person). Consequently, there are three categories of fetishism and fetishists:

I. Objective fetishists, for whom the inanimate fetish stands for and symbolizes a desired whole that is out of reach;

II. Somatic fetishists, for whom the body part stands for and symbolizes a coveted human body (and, by extension, a relationship) that is unattainable;

III. Abstract fetishists, who latch on to a trait or a characteristic as a means to indirectly interact with their "defective" bearer and thus fulfill the fetishist's

grandiose fantasies of omnipotence and innate superiority (pathological narcissism). More here: <https://samvak.tripod.com/pedophilia.html>

15.

Is [homosexuality](#) abnormal, not natural, a human aberration?

Recent studies in animal sexuality serve to dispel two common myths: that sex is exclusively about reproduction and that homosexuality is an unnatural sexual preference. It now appears that sex is also about recreation as it frequently occurs out of the mating season. And same-sex copulation and bonding are common in hundreds of species, from bonobo apes to gulls.

Moreover, homosexual couples in the Animal Kingdom are prone to behaviors commonly - and erroneously - attributed only to heterosexuals.

Still, that a certain behavior occurs in nature (is "natural") does not render it moral. Infanticide, patricide, suicide, gender bias, and substance abuse - are all to be found in various animal species. It is futile to argue for homosexuality or against it based on zoological observations. Ethics is about surpassing nature - not about emulating it.

The more perplexing question remains: what are the evolutionary and biological advantages of recreational sex and homosexuality? Surely, both entail the waste of scarce resources.

Read my analysis here: <https://samvak.tripod.com/sexnature.html>

16.

[When you wake the morning,](#)

red headed children shimmer in your eyes.

The veinous map

of sun drenched eyelids

flutters

throbbing topography.

Your muscles ripple.

Scared animals burrow

under your dewey skin.

Frozen light sculptures

where wrinkles dwell.

Embroidered shades,

in thick-maned tapestry.

Your lips depart in scarlet,

flesh to withering flesh,

and breath in curved tranquility

escapes the flaring nostrils.

Your warmth invades my sweat,

your lips leave skin regards

on my humidity.

Eyelashes clash.

More of my poems <https://samvak.tripod.com/contents.html>

17.

Narcissists cheat on their spouses, commit adultery and have extramarital affairs and liaisons for a variety of reasons which reflect disparate psychodynamic processes:

1. In the quest for narcissistic supply, the somatic narcissist resorts to serial sexual conquests.
2. Narcissists are easily bored (they have a low boredom threshold) and they have a low tolerance for boredom. Sexual dalliances alleviate this nagging and frustrating ennui. The quest for novelty, diversions, and thrills – a vacation from his own life - is combined with a journey of self-exploration and discovery that involves “filling in the gaps” in the narcissist’s biography: a missed adolescence, an old flame, a new aspect of his personality.
3. Narcissists maintain an island and focus of stability in their life, but all the other dimensions of their existence are chaotic, unstable, and unpredictable. This "twister" formation serves many emotional needs which I expound upon elsewhere. Thus, a narcissist may be a model employee and pursue a career path over decades even as he cheats on his wife and fritters their savings away.
4. Narcissists feel superior and important and so entitled to be above the law and to engage in behaviors that are frowned upon and considered socially unacceptable in others. They reject and vehemently resent all limitations and conditions placed upon them by their partners. They act on their impulses and desires unencumbered by social conventions and strictures.
5. Marriage, monogamy, and child-bearing and rearing are common activities that characterize the average person. The narcissist feels robbed of his uniqueness by these pursuits and coerced into the relationship and into roles - such as a husband and a father - that reduce him to the lowest of common denominators. This narcissistic injury leads him to rebel and reassert his superiority and specialness by maintaining extramarital affairs.

Other reasons why narcissists cheat: <https://samvak.tripod.com/faq29.html>

18.

Inevitably, the sexual fantasy life of narcissists and psychopaths reflects their psychodynamic landscape: their fear of intimacy, misogyny, control freakiness, auto-eroticism, latent sadism and masochism, problems of gender identity, and various sexual paraphilias.

Fantasies which reflect a fear of intimacy involve the aggressive or violent objectification of a faceless, nameless, and sometimes sexless person, often in

impersonal, alien or foreign settings (example: narratives of rape.) These usually coalesce with misogynistic erotic storylines in which females are humiliated, coerced into hurtful submission, and subjected to violation and degradation by one or many. Where sadism-masochism, homosexuality, or sexual paraphilias such as pedophilia are present, they are injected into the fantasy and colour its composition and progression.

In his fantasies, the narcissist or psychopath is always in unmitigated control of the environment. The assemblages of bodies and limbs which populate his daydreams – his body included - are minutely choreographed to yield maximum titillation. He is like an exhibitionistic and voyeuristic porn director with an endless supply of well-endowed actors either cowed into compliance or craving it. Naturally, the narcissist's fantasies are devoid of any performance anxiety or of the need to reciprocate in the sex act by pleasing his anonymous and robotic partners. Such imaginarium invariably leads to acts of self-stimulation, the ultimate manifestations of auto-eroticism. Even when the narcissist incorporates his real-life partner in his fantasies, he is bound to treat her as a mere prop, a body to masturbate with, in, or on, or an object to be “defiled” in acts such as group sex, swinging (wife-swapping), or outright sexual deviance (examples: urophilia, or coprophilia.) This crude & overt denigration serves to render her a “slut”, or a “whore” in his mind, the kind of woman with whom he can have lustful, emotion-free sex.

More about the narcissist's fantasy sex
life: <https://samvak.tripod.com/faq29.html>

19.

The [mentally ill form dyads or couples](#). Pathologies attract each other and resonate in alliances of pain, fused relationships.

Such partnerships are suffused with torment: the mentally ill spouses or intimate partners engage in mutually hurtful conduct. It is also heartbreaking to watch your loved one's inexorable decline.

Gradually, the parties settle on coping strategies that are either "approach" or "avoidance" oriented.

The "approach" strategies include active denial of the problem often via a shared psychosis which renders the mental illness something to espouse, encourage, or be proud of.

Another strategy involves enabling. The enabler collaborates with the mentally sick partner so as to accommodate his or her disability.

Sometimes one of the partners assumes the role and mantle of guru, teacher, coach, guide, or father or mother. He or she suppresses dissent and re-molds the mentally ill partner to conform to some ideal. This could involve harsh or even sadistic criticism and humiliation on a daily basis as well as intermittent reinforcement.

But more often the mentally ill members of the dyad end up avoiding each other and the pain that they cause one another. This hurt aversion leads to extreme estrangement and cruel disengagement. Being ignored and neglected results in decompensation and acting out. The mentally ill partner tries to provoke attention and punish his or her avoidant counterpart by engaging in promiscuous and reckless behaviors.

In extreme cases the wayward partner internalizes and accepts the harsh judgment of her significant other. This can lead to major depressive episodes, psychotic disorders, and suicide.

20.

Intimate relationships entail the experiencing, triggering, and display of one's vulnerabilities. Many find this integral and critical component of intimacy frightening or distasteful.

Being vulnerable is childlike and, therefore, could be a wonderful feeling: excitement and relief in equal measures. To cast aside all masks is to liberating. To finally be 100% you is exhilarating. To be accepted as you truly are is to be loved.

The disclosure of one's "weaknesses", fault lines, and deficiencies gives rise to anxiety only when you don't trust the other party, when you are worried that he

might disparage the newly gained information, reject you, or, much worse, leverage your openness, wounds, and needs to his advantage.

21.

Divorce is a good exit strategy out of an abusive relationship.

But the problem is that people use it as a first - not last - resort. Whenever things get even trivially tough - they bail out rather than try harder.

Nowadays, people give up owing to DIFFICULTIES - not to ABUSE. They MISLABEL difficulties as “abuse” in order to justify their lack of perseverance.

Our civilization relies on disposable and replaceable products - and we treat each other the same way.

The modern concept of a romantic dyad based on infatuation causes people to renounce reality in favor of fantasy and so they idealize their partners. This inevitably leads to disillusionment and breakup.

The misguided concept of a love-based marriage (romantic love) changed the way we select mates.

It is a modern phenomenon. Previous generations were transactional and saw each other in a realistic light. The mass media - cinema and romantic literature, especially - taught us to idealize our intimate partners in any and all ways.

Many studies have shown that people in marriages that were arranged or subject to matchmaking grew to love and respect each other. Basing mate selection mostly on lustful sex and on attraction got humanity into the relationship mess we have now.

22.

We assume erroneously that some roles are instinctual because, in nature, other species do it, too: parenting and mating come to mind. The discipline of sociobiology encourages us to counterfactually learn from animals about our social functioning.

But humans and their societies are so much more complex that there is little we can evince from lobsters, chimpanzees, or gorillas.

In nature, there is "male" and "female", not "man" and "woman" which are learned and acquired gender roles. There is no "mother" and "father", even among apes - just progenitors.

To fulfill any of these demanding and multifarious human functions, we must be exposed to good enough and working role models in childhood and then practice tirelessly through adulthood, constantly reframing and evolving as demands and expectations change with social mores and the times. Evolution in the human species is no longer predominantly genetic - but social and cultural.

So, many people simply don't know how to act as men or as women, as mothers or as fathers. Here, faking it never makes it.

23.

Biographies of great men invariably start with a physical description of their external appearance: Napoleon's height, Kennedy's youth, or Hitler's piercing eyes.

When I post videos, most of the comments refer to the color of my hair, whether I am handsome or reptilian, and do I look fatigued or rejuvenated.

The primitive circuitry of our brains is focused on mate selection and the propagation of our selfish genes. Looks matter because they convey inordinate amounts of instantly accessible information about our heredity, health, and constitution.

Nor is this preference temporary or limited to sexual, romantic, or intimate affairs.

Studies have shown that people who are physically attractive are employed much more often and earn much more money than their pedestrian, better qualified, competitors.

24.

Women in sexless, loveless marriages often behave like single women (go out alone, travel alone, drink alone in bars, associate with single women). I call this kind of women 'virtual singles'. They send out signals (broadcasts) which are identical to the signals of single women. Men pick up on these signals and respond to them powerfully by aggressively courting the virtual single, by sexualising her behavior, and by reducing her to a sex object ("doll"). Additionally, other women react to virtual singles with resentment and fear because they consider them to be predatory. Every woman in the company of a virtual single is afraid that the virtual single will seduce her husband and abscond or elope with him (steal him away from her).

All the men around the virtual single assume that she is available for sex. They see that her mate or husband is not interested in her and is not even protecting her as "his property". They see that she is not interested in him as a man. Their conclusion is that she is hungry for love and sex and will accept any offer of either unconditionally. They allow themselves to misbehave because she is an abandoned, unprotected, sexually frustrated woman.

A woman who is in a bad relationship with her husband and whose husband doesn't even bother to protect her from the advances of other men - is fair game. All men ASSUME that she is sexually frustrated (and they are right) and that she is sexually available (where, sometimes, they are wrong). There is nothing the virtual single can do about it. It is all about rumors, gossip, reputation, and her mate's behavior towards her. The virtual single is like a woman without a man, single in effect, so all men try to get her to be with them.

25.

To him a woman was an intoxicating swirl of scents and tastes and textures; her face a topography of his desire; its smooth elevations and depressions, the delectable vicissitudes of hope and ineluctable despair; her eyes a drowning invitation, a shimmering freedom, a matching pair of wishing wells.

26.

The sadistic woman-lover (philogynist) is drawn to women, desires them, covets their traits, admires them, and, generally, prefers to spend his time with them. But it is precisely this inexorable pull that terrifies him: he is awed by women's hold over him and mortified by his own resultant women-centred obsessions and compulsions. He is poorly equipped to deal with and is overwhelmed by the emotions that women provoke in him. In a desperate attempt to extricate himself, he adopts avoidant behaviors, shuns women and frustrates them, abuses them, tortures and humiliates them. This panoply of behaviors restores his sense of control, power, and superiority.

The sadistic woman-hater (misogynist) holds women in utter contempt, detests them, wishes them ill, and seeks to punish them. He displays the same range of behaviors as the sadistic women-lover but for an entirely different reason. The sadistic women-lover seeks to restore a semblance of balance of potency between himself and the women he finds so irresistible. The sadistic women-hater aims to annihilate women, remove them from his life, penalize them harshly for daring to intrude on his being with their demands for love, sex, and intimacy, (which he perceives as women's self-interested manipulation). (Sam Vaknin, "Malignant Self-love: Narcissism Revisited" <http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/thebook.html>)

In anomic societies, material goods serve as signals: they connote one's place in the social order and a stratified hierarchy of haves and have-nots.

27.

You have been mourning your marriage for many years now. And all these years of grief you were travelling and laughing and getting tipsy and making love to other men - even as your heart was bleeding inexorably and your tears were filling the infinite inward well of your depression. But there is hope. There is always life after the demise of a relationship. There is always love and rainbows and sunsets and beauty at the end of the day, the long day of our life. If we only learn to accept the bounty, the grace, and ourselves. If we only learn to let go and to embrace. If we stop rebelling against our happiness.

28.

The tendency to remain in bad relationships - abusive, hopeless, sexless, loveless, doomed - is known as the Sunk Cost (Concorde) Fallacy (or bias). Co-owning a business or property, shared memories, and especially co-parenting tend to cement this bias and pile it on top of traumatic bonding and a fused relationship.

We throw good money after bad just because "we are already invested" in a project. We watch an atrocious movie to the end because we have already spent an hour doing so. We eat food we have ordered even if it sucks. We keep clothes we never wear because we have paid for them. It is a particularly pernicious brand of loss aversion (proclivity to avoid waste). This utterly irrational behavior is motivated by malignant optimism: overestimation of the probabilities of positive outcomes if we just keep going or do something differently.

We are also afraid to look foolish if we admit to having made the wrong decisions consistently ("narcissistic injury"). We sometimes feel responsible

and guilty for having made these decisions in the first place.

Of course the rational thing to do is to cut your losses and abandon the dysfunctional relationship. But - divorce statistics aside - surprisingly few do so in time. The results? Wrecked marriages, hateful exes, bruised children, and crumbling enterprises.

My articles in economics: <https://samvak.tripod.com/guide.html>

29.

The terms "slut/whore", "sex addict/nymphomaniac", and "promiscuous" are used interchangeably - and wrongly so.

Slut/whore is an epithet reserved - usually by men - to sexually assertive women with a healthy libido. To satisfy their needs, urges, desires, and hunger such women do not hesitate to outsource sex, intimacy, and love if their intimate partner fails to provide or withholds them. They are usually disinhibited but in full control of their choices of partners, locations, and settings. Their conduct is not pathological though it may defiantly contravene the norms and mores - or even laws - of their cultures and societies.

A promiscuous woman is disinhibited and indiscriminate as far as the quality and the attributes of her sexual partners. She simply has no standards and filters when it comes to copulation but this is an issue of vulgarity and bad taste - not of any mental health problem. They are in full control of their choices and actions - they simply love to fuck.

If the woman is compulsive about the quantity and frequency of her sexual liaisons, or if she engages in a sex act because she feels that she cannot do otherwise, or if she dissociates during sex (on "auto-pilot"), she may be addicted to sex.

But such behavior may indicate other psychological issues or even the wish to conform to social expectations ("if I date a man and he spends money on me, I have to return the favor"). Some women with certain personality disorders act out: they sexualize frustration and anger at the partner and punish him by having sex with other men.

30.

Why would the likes of Weinstein and Cosby - rich, famous, and powerful - sexually harass babes? Because they cannot get consensual sex. "Gimme a break!" - you collectively exclaim - "These folks must be besieged by willing partners!" You don't know how wrong y'all are.

I have been rich and a mini celebrity on and off all my life. It was easier to get laid in the periods in between, when I had been poor and a nobody. Goldiggers aside, women felt intimidated and even repelled by my public exposure and intellectual prowess. Many of them grew envious of me or embarked on all manner of power plays and mind games, aiming to demonstrate their superiority, invincibility, and irresistibility by winning these one-sided delusional competitions.

When I am in the limelight, I am reduced to a one-dimensional cartoon figure, a mere function, a symbol, or a caricature. "You are my guru, my teacher, my savior, a genius. I love your mind, your brain. I can listen to you for hours, I have dreamt of having the opportunity to talk to you, I have had a crush on you since the first time I heard you speak, you are a legend." But, really, I am objectified and dehumanized by these acolytes. If I dare to confess any emotion or mood (for example: that I am depressed), if I express a wish, chat someone up and flirt, if I appear human in any way, shape, or form - my erstwhile fans reject my humanity aggressively: they feel "betrayed". Henceforth they devalue me for having debased my ostensible sublimity with the filth of carnal desire & lucre and for having disgracefully revealed my vulnerabilities & weaknesses. They resent me and are furious that I robbed them of their superman and substituted for it a mere mortal. They cannot forgive me the disillusionment and disenchantment. The Wizard of Oz is, after all, more of a villain for his frailty than for his misdeeds.

Why we hate our celebrities and mistreat them <https://samvak.tripod.com/faq19.html>

31.

In "[The Best Offer](#)", Virgil Oldman is an auctioneer: he helps to determine the price of art in public, rule-based jousts. He is rich, middle-aged, well-respected, if somewhat eccentric & misanthropic. He is an avowed bachelor, the kind of man who has transformed his firewalled reclusiveness into a prideful ideology. He adores women – but only of the two-dimensional kind, in captive portraits which he suspends in a vault in the recesses of his gloomy mansion. He is also a con-artist: he knows the correct prices of all items, but profitably misleads others.

When Virgil meets the agoraphobic Claire, he is smitten with her despite - or because - her extreme approach-avoidance games. She professes her love & then colludes with his only two friends in the world to rob him blind.

Many would say, what Claire did to Virgil was unfair: she took away his prized

possessions, having manipulated his emotions cruelly. I disagree. Claire gave Virgil 2 years of happiness and in return took all his paintings. It strikes me as a balanced trade. Better a short period of bliss in an arid life than none at all. Virgil got the better deal methinks: money and property come & go and, when the ineluctable moment is upon us, we leave them behind like so many pieces of colored glass. Happiness is the treasure that keeps on giving for as long as our memory holds. Claire gave Virgil a lasting gift – and took from him crumbling canvasses and peeling paint. She gave Virgil access to a real woman in lieu of the dead ones whose portraits he morbidly collected and revered.

Was Virgil truly conned? He should have seen through Claire, he should have known better, uniquely equipped as he was with his experience. His gullibility appears contrived: as though he wanted Claire to devastate the penal colony that his life had become. Don't we often invite others into our lives in order to disrupt them because we feel trapped and incapable of growth? Claire was Virgil's agent of change. She transformed his life by ruining it. She sprang him from his vault by emptying its contents.

Full review mid page here: <https://samvak.tripod.com/conman-en.html>

32.

Some people - men and women - [enjoy sex only when they cheat on their spouses](#). They were molded in their formative years to associate pleasure and intimacy with risk, deception, and adrenaline. They are aroused by their own immorality (or amorality) and whorish promiscuity, by the chase, the mind games, the power plays, and the conquests.

The less socially acceptable the act, the more illicit, the higher the degree of betrayal and self-debasement, decadence and deviance, perversion and shock value - the greater the resulting carnal titillation.

This type of compulsive behavior is a variety of role play. Such people need a narrative, a story, a confabulation, a script in order to get sexually aroused and enjoy the encounter. The role they assume is that of a promiscuous and treacherous prostitute. But the very fact that they take on this personality in a cinematic rendition makes them feel removed and distant from their own misconduct, absolved: "It was not me who did it, I was not myself, I felt dissociated, on auto-pilot, like an observer". When asked why they behaved the way they did, they typically shrug it off: "I don't know".

Ironically, these cheaters are inordinately attached and bonded to their emotionally thwarted, masochistic, codependent, financially generous, and enabling spouses. To fully enjoy sex, they need to remain married, they need

someone to cheat on and torment, someone to lie to, betray repeatedly, and blame for their misbehavior. They fiercely defend their spouses and their families to anyone who would listen and make clear to their lovers and fuck buddies how temporary the arrangements with them are.

33.

People remain in abusive relationships because they lack self-confidence, their self-esteem is shot, not least by their "loving, intimate" "partner", and because they are unable to regulate their sense of self-worth.

There are four common fallacies:

I AM LUCKY

I am worthless, damaged goods. I am lucky to have found even my abuser. If I leave the relationship, who else would want me and where will I find another partner?

THE BEST OF ALL WORLDS

Life is harsh and it doesn't get much better than this. The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence, but that is merely as an optical illusion. This is as good as it gets.

MY PARTNER IS NOT WORSE THAN OTHERS

Every other partner I may find will have flaws and quirks that I will have to get used to and accommodate all over again. Better stick with what I know. No one guarantees that my next partner will not be even worse than this.

HAPPINESS? BAH!

Life is a serious business. It is not about the selfish pursuit of elusive "happiness". It is about meeting your obligations and getting on with it. At best one can expect companionship and mutual support in old age. Anything more than that is self-defeating and destructive wishful thinking.

34.

In love - and to some extent in sex - we "undress": remove protective layers and expose vulnerabilities and weaknesses to our partner.

This information about the chinks in our armor can and will be used against us

even by the most loving of mates. We must take this fact into account when we decide what to share.

In a healthy relationship, secrets are an essential ingredient. Unmitigated, unalloyed truth telling is never a good idea. Couplehood and intimacy wither on the vine of total openness.

Of course, not all secrets are created equal. Some information if held back festers and poisons any liaison. Fundamental issues have to be aired, dissected and resolved. Emotions and conflicts require communication and closure. Expectations and hopes are best expressed. Behavior modification is predicated on good communication.

But not every mood should be reported. Not every lapse and transgression need be confessed. Not every fear articulated. Let Time, the Great Healer, do its job.

35.

"Love", "cruelty" and "impotence" are three sides of the same coin.

We love in order to overcome our (perceived) impotence.

We burden our love with impossible dreams: to become children again.

We want to be unconditionally loved and omnipotent.

No wonder love invariably ends in disappointment and disillusionment. It can never fulfil our inflated expectations.

This is when we become cruel. We avenge our paradise lost. We inflict upon our lover the hell that he or she fostered in us. We do so impotently because we still love, even as we fervently hate (Freudian ambivalence). Thus we always love cruelly, impotently and desperately, the desperation of the doomed to Sysiphean repetition.

Love as a psychopathology <http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/lovepathology.html>

36.

Attractiveness is gender-neutral. Of course, depending to the genders involved in the interaction, it may lead to sex, romance, bromance, or any other outcome on a spectrum of friendship and collaboration. But both men and women react with attraction or repulsion to other men and women.

Attractiveness is a composite of character traits and behaviors. But to be

deemed attractive, these have to conform to social and cultural mores, prejudices, and preferences. What would be considered attractive in one civilization would be judged off-putting in another.

Language plays a role. Stinginess can also be described as frugality. Eloquence as verbosity. Self-care as vanity. Self-confidence as narcissism.

The context is influential. Peer consensus is crucial: women find more attractive men who are always in the company of other women. The time of day, alcohol consumption, events immediately preceding the encounter all matter.

Surprisingly, body shape and good looks are less crucial and far more variable than they are made out to be by evolutionary biologists. In different parts of the world, opposite body shapes (lanky versus fat, for example) attract and criteria of beauty are disparate.

It seems that the mind plays the biggest role: the brain is indeed the largest sex organ. Intelligence, resourcefulness, optimism, charisma, self assurance, sense of humor, kindness, creativity, generosity are all far more critical than possessing the right kind of body.

37.

He is stingy, she - profligate. He is a recluse, she is gregarious. He is asexual, she is promiscuous. Glaring incompatibilities in grossly mismatched couples. Why do people trap themselves in long term relationships with their exact negations and polar opposites?

For three reasons:

1. The new inappropriate partner is chosen after a failed relationship precisely because he is the mirror image, the photographic negative of the previous, disastrous choice. Contrast overshadows all other considerations: a sense of relief and safety.
2. The mismatched partner provides an external locus of control and outsourced regulation of traits and behaviors that are perceived as undesirable, a check of unwanted aspects of the personality. In the examples above: the profligate partner delegates money management to her frugal counterpart; the recluse uses his partner's gregariousness to meet people; and the promiscuous husband restrains himself by remaining faithful to his frigid wife.
3. The mismatch and obvious incompatibility put paid to intimacy and usually, in the longer haul, to sex and love. These lacunas and lacks provide the partners

with a moral justification to misbehave: cheat on one another, deceive each other, even steal from each other. Socially unacceptable conduct is legitimized. We sympathize with a long suffering intimate partner or spouse and tend to be more lenient in our judgment. People who fear intimacy or loathe will make sure that their primary relationship never has any and strive to lead separate, parallel lives.

38.

To say that emotions are cognitions is to say nothing. We understand cognition even less than we understand emotions.

To say that emotions are caused by cognitions or cause cognitions (emotivism) or are part of a motivational process does not answer the question: "What are emotions?". Emotions do cause us to apprehend and perceive things in a certain way and even to act accordingly. But WHAT are emotions?

Granted, there are strong, perhaps necessary, connections between emotions and knowledge and, in this respect, emotions are ways of perceiving the world and interacting with it. Perhaps emotions are even rational strategies of adaptation and survival and not stochastic, isolated inter-psyche events. Perhaps Plato was wrong in saying that emotions conflict with reason and thus obscure the right way to apprehend reality. Perhaps he was right: fears do become phobias, emotions do depend on one's experience and character.

As we have it in psychoanalysis, emotions may be reactions to the unconscious rather than to the world.

Yet, again, Sartre may be right in saying that emotions are a "modus vivendi", the way we "live" the world, our perceptions coupled with our bodily reactions. He wrote: "(we live the world) as though the relations between things were governed not by deterministic processes but by magic". Even a rationally grounded emotion (fear which generates flight from a source of danger) is really a magical transformation (the ersatz elimination of that source). Emotions sometimes mislead. People may perceive the same, analyze the same, evaluate the situation the same, respond along the same vein – and yet have different emotional reactions. It does not seem necessary (even if it were sufficient) to postulate the existence of "preferred" cognitions – those that enjoy an "overcoat" of emotions. Either all cognitions generate emotions, or none does. But, again, WHAT are emotions?

Read how I derive emotions from the fact that we all have BODIES with senses and sensa (sensory input): <https://samvak.tripod.com/sense.html>

39.

"My husband is a misunderstood and much envied genius" (really he is an abject failure and loser). "The CIA is spying on us" (why would they waste resources on a couple of sedate third-rate accountants?) "My wife is good-hearted and kind" (a harridan in fact). A delusion is "a false belief based on incorrect inference about external reality that is firmly sustained despite what almost everyone else believes and despite what constitutes incontrovertible and obvious proof or evidence to the contrary" (DSM IV-TR). Sometimes, the member of a family, especially spouses or lovers, share a delusion and aid and abet each other in sustaining it in a cult-like setting: there is a primary inducer and a suggestible acceptor.

In "[shared psychotic disorder](#)" or folie a deux (no longer a diagnosis in the DSM 5), the delusions are persecutory (paranoid), grandiose (narcissistic), or manic ("we are going to make big money soon, so let's splurge now"). The line between steadfast support for your partner and believing in him and shared psychosis is not clear. In many ways, all long-term intimate relationships end up incorporating pronounced delusional elements which are fiercely defended by the couple.

Shared psychoses are also common in other settings involving emotional intensity and stress: business, political activism, ideological movements, even in academe.

40.

Marriages are never damaged by a [love affair](#). Love affairs are frequently damaged by marriages.

For a love affair to have occurred, the marriage must have already been in serious trouble. The affair, the act of cheating, only brings the rot to light.

So, a love affair rarely harms a marriage more than it is already hurting.

But marriages do put an end to love affairs. Surprisingly few cheaters actually divorce. When forced to choose between their lover and their spouse, the overwhelming majority choose the spouse, regardless of how dysfunctional, dead, and acrimonious the marriage is.

Moreover: even on the rare occasions that an affair leads to a divorce, it is even rarer for the illicit liaison to survive the divorce. The erstwhile paramours drift apart and find new partners, untainted by memories of deceit and heartbreak.

So: extramarital dalliances are nothing but symptoms of an already dying marriage. But even a dying marriage has the power to decimate the most exciting and happy dalliance.

41.

Now, in view of my previous Instagram post, I am dubbed a "[sexual pervert](#)". Only one problem: there is no such thing as "perverse" sexuality. Victorian middle-class values aside, if the sexual behavior harms no one (including oneself) and is consensual (between consenting adults), then it is considered by psychologists and psychiatrists alike to be utterly both healthy and normal.

Homosexuality, bisexuality, BDSM (Bondage, Discipline, Dominance, Submission, Sadomasochism), cross-dressing, water sports (golden showers), role playing and fantasy, and group sex or threesomes - all these are nowhere to be found in the two bibles of psychiatry: DSM 5 and ICD 11. I have done them all and they have enriched my sex life and rendered it a pleasurable pursuit and an adventure. Looking forward to more one day.

So, next time someone tells you that you or your sexuality are perverse - tell him to get rid of his hangups and inhibitions with the help of a good sex therapist, like my friend, Marty Klein.

Ironically, taken to extreme, such a judgmental, puritanical, and restrictive-normative attitude towards sex IS a sign of mental health problems, IS in the DSM, and is the hallmark of backward societies and arrested personality development or sick upbringing ("some sex is dirty"), or, commonly, both.

What about pedophilia? No consenting adults. Coprophagia? Medically dangerous. But even these are not "perversions". They are paraphilias.

More: <https://samvak.tripod.com/pedophilia.html>

42.

If you are [afraid of intimacy](#) you will choose a partner who is equally afraid of intimacy. We all seek love or at least companionship, but some people dread them even as they look for them (ambivalence). The intimacy-averse members of a dyad will both make sure to travel alone a lot, keep exhaustingly busy, be absent from home, withhold sex or abstain from it, cheat on their mates (have emotional and sexual affairs with others), and so on. But, most importantly, they abuse and sadistically torment each other.

Why the compelling need to hurt the partner?

The obvious answer is that abuse and intimacy are mutually exclusive. In an abusive relationship, there is little risk of intimacy and lots of avoidance. But there are two additional reasons:

1. People with fear of intimacy have intense and overpowering emotions of shame and guilt. They choose abusers as their partners because being abused is their comfort zone and affirms their self-perception as bad and worthless, whorish, dumb, and deserving of punishment. They force their mates to abuse them (projective and introjective identification).
2. Abuse legitimizes and justifies cheating, adultery, infidelity, and extramarital dalliances ("he is abusing me, so he deserves what I am doing to him"). Sex addicts, adrenaline junkies (like psychopaths), labile people with emotional dysregulation (borderline and histrionic personality disorder), and somatic narcissists are all in need of sexual novelty and constant conquests to regulate and stabilize their sense of self-worth, self-confidence, and self-esteem.

So, these kinds of partners need abuse as an excuse: "Of course I am promiscuous and am cheating on my partner all the time with many others! It is all his fault: he is abusing, rejecting, mistreating, and humiliating me! He deserves his punishment - and I need to feel desired, wanted, loved, and cared for again!"

43.

[Screens are metaphors](#) and reflections of the isolation and atomization in our increasingly more anomic societies.

The cinema screen fostered a communal, shared experience of thousands (the movie), replete with extracurricular social interactions. It was superseded by television, the PC, and the smartphone whose diminishing screens forced us apart and fractured, fragmented, and individualized our experience of the world.

Screens have been with us for centuries now: paintings are screens and so are windows. Yet, the very nature of screens has undergone a revolutionary transformation in the last decade or so. All the screens that preceded the PDA's (Personal Digital Assistant) and the smartphone's were inclusive of reality, they were AND screens: when you watched them you could not avoid ("screen out") data emanating from your physical environment. "Screen-AND-reality" was the prevalent modus operandi.

Consider the cinema, the television, and the personal computer (PC): even when

entangled in the flow of information provided by these machines, you were still fully exposed to and largely aware of your surroundings. The screens of the past were one step removed: there was always a considerable physical distance between user and device and the field of vision extended to encompass copious peripheral input.

Now consider the iPhone or the digital camera: their screens, though tiny, monopolize the field of vision and exclude the world by design. The physical distance between retina and screen has shrunk to the point of vanishing. Google glasses and 3-D television with its specialty eyeglasses and total immersion are merely the culmination of this trend: the utter removal of reality from the viewer's experience. Modern screens are, therefore, OR screens: you either watch the screen OR observe reality. You cannot do both.

44.

Can a man interact with a woman without invoking sex? If he is not attracted to the woman or if he had initiated intimacy and had been rejected, he can. But then he no longer regards the woman as a woman - but as The Other.

For a man to perceive The Other as a Woman, to react to her femininity, the promise of sex, the potential for sex, or actual sexual acts must exist. In their absence, the man recognizes merely the Otherness of the woman: it has a different body, distinct cognitive and emotional processing, eccentric decision-making procedures. It is exotic, enigmatic, and mysterious. But to the man, it is not a woman anymore.

Every person - man or woman - is The Other: an entire universe, accessible only via language and empathy. Sex is a third mode of communication and accessibility which, alone among all other modes of interaction, renders us men and women.

Of course, well-mannered men, especially in certain cultures and societies, go through the motions: they open doors, give flowers or gifts, court chivalrously, and listen rapturously. But these are all routines intended to disguise the yawning lack of interest that arises when the spectre of sex is gone. Gradually, the parties drift apart.

If to start with, the man does not find the woman attractive, there is the potential for friendship or companionship or collaboration. Sex does not get in the way. But even then, the relationship is among equals but different - not between a man and a woman.

This is why in sexless marriages, men and women end up being companions,

roommates, partners in business, merely parents, or good friends, if they are lucky. But they no longer see each other as man and woman (which only exacerbates the sexual aversion).

45.

Try as I may, I see Spiderman! I am perplexed! Am I a [latent homosexual](#)? Nope. Not a hint or trace of it. I am a die-hard heterosexual: women turn me and men turn me off big time.

So, how to explain this visual aberration of mine?

An oft-overlooked fact is that recreational sex and homosexuality have one thing in common: they do not lead to reproduction. Homosexuality may, therefore, be a form of pleasurable sexual play. It may also enhance same-sex bonding and train the young to form cohesive, purposeful groups (the army and the boarding school come to mind). Furthermore, homosexuality amounts to the culling of 10-15% of the gene pool in each generation. The genetic material of the homosexual is not propagated and is effectively excluded from the big roulette of life. Growers - of anything from cereals to cattle - similarly use random culling to improve their stock. As mathematical models show, such repeated mass removal of DNA from the common brew seems to optimize the species and increase its resilience and efficiency.

It is ironic to realize that homosexuality and other forms of non-reproductive, pleasure-seeking sex may be key evolutionary mechanisms and integral drivers of population dynamics. Reproduction is but one goal among many, equally important, end results. Heterosexuality is but one strategy among a few optimal solutions. Studying biology may yet lead to greater tolerance for the vast repertory of human sexual foibles, preferences, and predilections. Back to nature, in this case, may be forward to civilization.

Read more about homosexuality <https://samvak.tripod.com/sexnature.html>

46.

There are [two types of romantic love: consonant and dissonant](#).

In consonant love, reality aligns well with perceptions, beliefs, cognitions, and emotions related to the loved one

But what to do when the person you love is dimwitted, ignorant, stingy, bigoted, repellent, asexual, obnoxious, ugly, abusive, deceitful, cheater, narcissistic, exploitative, or otherwise as far from perfect as possible?

If you acknowledge these deficiencies and shortcomings, even only to yourself, you are bound to imperil the relationship. This is where cognitive dissonance kicks in and yields five solutions:

1. You can reframe the relationship and relabel it ("This is not love, it is a mere infatuation or physical attraction");
2. You can undermine the relationship passive-aggressively, thereby putting an end to the dissonance;
3. You can develop and take part in a shared psychosis, thereby deceiving yourself into believing anything about your lover, however implausible;
4. You can displace your ego-dystony (discomfort) or sublimate it: devalue critics of your loved one or engage in activities that take your mind off the conundrum;
5. You can project your good or desired qualities into your loved one and idealise him and then proceed to interact with the idealised figure, not with the real person.

47.

The sometimes severe crises experienced by persons of both sexes in middle age (a.k.a. the "[midlife crisis](#)" or the "change of life") is a much discussed though little understood phenomenon. It is not even certain that the beast exists.

Women go through menopause between the ages of 42-55 (the average age of onset in the USA is 51.3). The amount of the hormone oestrogen in their bodies decreases sharply, important parts of the reproductive system shrink and menstruation ceases. Many women suffer from "hot flashes" and a thinning and fracturing of the bones (osteoporosis). The "male menopause" is a more contentious issue. Men do experience a gradual decline in testosterone levels but nothing as sharp as the woman's deterioration of her oestrogen supply.

No link has been found between these physiological and hormonal developments and the mythical "midlife crisis". This fabled turning point has to do with the gap between earlier plans, dreams and aspirations and one's drab and hopeless reality. Come middle age, men are supposed to be less satisfied with life, career, or spouse. People get more disappointed and disillusioned with age. They understand that they are not likely to have a second chance, that they largely missed the train, that their dreams will remain just that. They have nothing to look forward to. They feel spent, bored, fatigued and trapped.

Some adults embark on a transition. They define new goals, look for new partners, form new families, engage in new hobbies, change vocation and avocation alike, or relocate. They regenerate and reinvent themselves and the structures of their lives. Others just grow bitter. Unable to face the shambles, they resort to alcoholism, workaholism, emotional absence, abandonment, escapism, degeneration, or a sedentary lifestyle.

Another pillar of discontent is the predictability of adult life. Following a brief flurry, in early adulthood, of excitement and vigour, of dreams and hopes, fantasies and aspirations, we succumb to and sink into the mire of mediocrity. The mundane engulfs us and digests us.

More: <https://samvak.tripod.com/faq62.html>

48.

So, you decided that [your marriage is over](#), or that a long-term relationship is not working for whatever reason. You remain married (financial dependence, common children), but you are back in the dating scene, scouting for a replacement, for a new intimate partner. You fall in love repeatedly & have prolonged affairs (you cheat) - only to discover that you have chosen badly time & again, as the costs to your reputation soar & you are branded a slut or a manwhore. The longer you make yourself available, the more you attract predators, goldiggers, & other unsavory characters. Why do you keep failing? What are you doing wrong?

Perhaps for emotional, economic, religious-cultural, or social reasons, or for the children's sake, you do NOT really want to dismantle your old marriage or relationship. So, you keep choosing paramours who are wrong for you: a mismatch (too poor, too uneducated, too kinky, too something or not enough of the other); lovers with whom you are incompatible: extremely avoidant (commitmentphobes), immature (childlike fantasists), mentally disturbed, geographically removed, stalkers, stingy, clinging or emotionally dead & absent partners; & so on.

Maybe all the good, reliable, rich, educated, gorgeous potential partners are already taken & those who are available are the rejects: the defective, the sleazy, the creepy, the depressed losers, the very old, or the sad & damaged refugees of repeated failed relationships. Indeed, the rates of divorce in second and third marriages are far higher than in first ones & the probability of producing offspring much lower.

Frequently, after a marriage disintegrates, the erstwhile partners devolve into living alone, as singles. Many of them end up being poorer, lonelier, &

involuntarily celibate. The costs in emotional & physical health are also very high. Studies demonstrate, counterintuitively, that the optimal strategy is to remain stuck in a bad relationship & hope for it to get better as you brave it out. All other alternatives yield far worse outcomes.

49.

Is this classic painting by Courbet [pornography or erotic art](#)? Where does one draw the line?

The answer is that there is no line.

Scholars say that porn creates arousal and results in action. But I have frequently masturbated to erotic literature and paintings and even sculptures. And most porn leaves me utterly cold.

Porn is supposed to be goal-oriented. But lots of porn is not (example: homemade videos). Not all porn is objectifying and degrading - yet, this patently erotic painting is the former and many would say the latter.

Porn is harmful, they protest: it involves coercion, exploitation, wrongful depiction of lovemaking (no foreplay), and causes addiction. But in the previous centuries erotic art - in word and image - had the same effects (read the Marquis de Sade). And how do we account for feminist pornography?

But porn is primitive and one-dimensional, you evince. Yet in the past 200 years, philosophers used porn in the service of a variety of social, political, and cultural causes. And frankly, Courbet's vaginal masterpiece (pompously titled "The Origin of the World") has depth (pardon the pun), but little else.

Erotic art is porn designated by self-appointed elites as legitimate and high-brow. Porn is what fails to obtain the sanction and blessing of the cultural establishment. No one is this clearer than in film where the boundaries are so blurred that censors the world over fail to concur: the same movie is categorized as porn in one locale and high art in another. Ask Polanski.

50.

[Romantic jealousy](#) is a form of abandonment or loss anxiety. Brain studies show that even a one night stand can lead to a full-fledged, emotion-laden love affair. So, spouses are right to be worried about infidelity. Adultery - even the most casual fornication - can lead to a loss of the mate and the disintegration of a couple.

But how about emotionless sex? Just the mechanics and the fluids, with no bonding or attachment? Definitely possible and even common. But it is playing with fire because it can result in a deeper involvement even in the wake of a single lustful consummation. Sex can lead to love exactly as love leads to sex: it is a two-way thoroughfare.

But more often intimacy leads to sex - not the other way around. Sex is a mode of communication, a bodily way of saying "You make me feel ... (good, safe, curious, warm, happy, self-confident, desired, empowered, and intimate)". So, I consider emotional affairs to be a far more serious threat to the integrity and longevity of a couple than the merely sexual ones.

In the age of smartphones and social media, the potential for infatuation and falling in love with a third party is far more pervasive and greater than the threat of actual, physical cheating. Relationships are based on the perceived scarcity of eligible partners ("Where will I find another one like him? He is so rare!"). But transport and communication technologies made possible abundant access to multiple compatible mates, dissolving the very glue that once held couples together.

51.

There are numerous [myths about promiscuity](#). Men find the female sex drive vaguely menacing, so they reserve this epithet to women. But, of course, there are many promiscuous men as well.

Promiscuity has little to do with the intensity and frequency of one's sexual urges, especially when it is associated with personality and mood disorders. Studies have repeatedly demonstrated that histrionic women, seductive and flirtatious, provocative and ostentatious as they are, regard actual sex as a bit of a chore. Borderlines are prone to promiscuity as a form of reckless behavior or when they act out. Poor impulse control is a part of the equation. Somatic narcissists are more calculated and their promiscuity is goal-oriented: they seek narcissistic supply. Bipolar patients are promiscuous in the manic phase.

Promiscuity is intimately connected to cockteasing in women and cuntteasing (pardon the neologism) in men: driving a potential partner insane with desire by tantalising him or her with verbal, visual, and tactile implied promises and hints of sex - and then withdrawing abruptly and frustrating the unfortunate target.

Promiscuity is a dysfunctional way to regulate a labile (fluctuating) sense of self-worth and restore one's self-esteem in the wake of a narcissistic injury (rejection, humiliation, being cheated on, and so on). Like rape, promiscuity is about power, not about sex. It is about reassuring oneself that one is still

considered irresistibly desirable and has the wherewithal to frustrate, enrage, and hurt others by withdrawing oneself. It is also about thrills and risk (in "adrenaline junkies"). 🤪

Promiscuity is, therefore, situational and reactive. It is not a personality trait, but a learned coping strategy in the repertory of one's behaviors. It is compulsive but has to be triggered by external events. Promiscuous people go through long periods of strict monogamy as long as they get their fix from their "source of narcissistic supply" (intimate partner or spouse).

52.

Romantic rejection is total: in a relationship you offer you all and, when dumped, you are dispensed with in your entirety. Your thoughts, emotions, memories, values, sexuality, intimacy, vulnerability, and hopes are dashed and trampled on, usually cruelly. It is not like other experiences of rejection - in a job interview, say, or an audition - where only your skills or talents are depreciated.

The decline of sex in modern society has to do with skyrocketing rates of and opportunities for rejection. But this is only one of the costs associated with pursuing intimacy and love via sex. Casual sex carries the risks - almost certainty - of contracting a sexually transmitted disease (STD) or infection (STI). And increasingly more so, meaningful, repeated sex with a significant other involves Herculean efforts.

Most potential mates today - both men and women in the cesspool that is the dating scene - are damaged goods. In the West, about 15% of the population are officially diagnosed with a mental illness. People are narcissistic, entitled, dysempathic, spoiled, immature, brattish, inconsiderate, unable to commit and attach, and selfish. It is a miracle that any relationship survives at all. Indeed, divorce rates are as high as they have ever been and fewer folks than ever are getting married or bear children. Ours is a world of porn-consuming, sempiternally dating, perpetual adolescents, consumed with hedonistic self-indulgence and celebrity-fuelled delusions of grandeur. In an anomic and atomized and solipsistic asocial landscape, we pull the drawbridges and repose in our digital castles, screens flickering, until we die.

53.

Good conventional sex leads to a climax via BEING. You feel every nerve and cell in your body come alive and die in ecstasy.

With an experienced partner, a veteran dom (=dominant), BDSM (bondage and

sadomasochistic) sex is about experiencing orgasm via NOT being.

The dom takes away your will, your inhibitions, your boundaries and your separate existence. You are utterly objectified. You surrender completely, irreparably defeated. This act of vanishing, merger, and fusion is the climax.

54.

First time transgressions - cheating on your spouse, doing drugs - involve emotional preparedness (being bored or frustrated, possessing a low arousal or low boredom threshold in psychopaths, for example)+disinhibition (overcoming guilt and shame owing to peer pressure or example, environment, alcohol or other factors)+loss of impulse control+a cognitive choice ("go for it or go get it").

The second time is different: it becomes a habit, with practiced moves. Habituation often leads to addiction, a form of compulsion. A confluence of physiological and psychological factors conspire to render the newly formed behavior a pattern: the thrill of the illicit or the dangerously risky and reckless, self-destructiveness or masochism, affirmation of oneself as a bad, unworthy object, and, of course, the bodily effects of such actions.

There are two types of habit: intensive and extensive. Intensive habits - like smoking or binging on food or libation - cater to and satisfy a limited array of needs and cravings, predilections and proclivities, pathologies and wishes. They are easier to dispense with.

But extensive habits - like cheating or antisocial conduct - are very difficult to get rid of because they gratify and reflect the totality of the personality, its quirks, and idiosyncrasies. The serial adulterer brings into play every aspect and dimension of who she is. Only a miracle will slow her down. Same goes for the drug addict or the pathological gambler or the alcoholic.

55.

ANSWER THIS ONE QUESTION Ladies, I need your help. I am contemplating a heuristic rudimentary personality test. Please leave your responses to the following question in the comments section. Thank you wholeheartedly.

For your birthday, which of these five gifts would you PREFER to get from your boyfriend/lover/spouse?

Pay attention: I am not asking you which gift you NEED - but which one

WOULD MAKE YOU HAPPIEST. You can choose ONLY ONE GIFT! NO MULTIPLE CHOICES.

1. The car you always wanted
 2. A diamond necklace
 3. A 14-day cruise on a liner
 4. A sumptuous bouquet of flowers
 5. A romantic poem or a short story composed especially for you
- 56.

Some women - single & married - use male attention to regulate their sense of self-worth (self confidence & self esteem). When low, these "[attention whores](#)" become flirtatious, seductive, cocktease, & trade sex for even the most inconsequential signs of attention: a chat, a compliment, small gifts, flowers, or a meal. Even if the attention they get is vulgar & demeaning - being groped & fondled in public or the targets of lewd, loud, explicit "compliments" - they still prefer it to being ignored. "Bad or the wrong kind of attention is better than no attention." Male attention serves a few functions:

1. It reassures the woman of her irresistibility & attractiveness. A Woman who is rejected, neglected, abandoned, & ignored by her intimate partner feels compelled to restore her badly eroded self-image. So, she conducts a "poll" among other men, offering her body in exchange for an erectile affirmation, a vote of fluids that she is still desirable.
2. Reasserting control & power over men via her sex, such a woman assuages her anxiety over their misogynistic hostility & aggression. She tames them with her body to feel safe.
3. Some women are adrenaline junkies. Illicit affairs, cheating, deception, risky & reckless behaviors or situations are all perceived as thrilling & breathless adventures which alleviate the tedium of daily life.
4. Many of these women sexualize frustration, act out. Their impulse control is impaired. They use addictive sex & compulsive, habitual cheating to avenge themselves.
5. Unsated hunger for intimacy & a semblance of emotion is overpowering. A woman who lacks both will sometimes provide access to her body in return for

even the feigned versions of what she craves.

6. Finally: some women break all boundaries in a feast of unbridled promiscuity. This is a form of masochistic self punishment, self-annihilation, & an affirmation of the woman's deeply ingrained introjects (inner critic, voices, superego) which inform her mercilessly that she is a whore, a bad object, & unworthy of anything better than being pumped and dumped by multiple men.

57.

There are two ways to regulate intimate relationships: via [intimacy or with romantic jealousy](#).

Mature partners achieve a workable balance between togetherness and personal autonomy. They engender intimacy via both communication and actions. Intimacy feels so good that no one in his right mind will exit such a bond. Thus, both abandonment or separation anxiety and romantic jealousy are absent in healthy relationships: object permanence (constancy) is accomplished.

When one of the partners is a codependent or a borderline and the other is a narcissist or a psychopath or a histrionic (common combinations), or when both partners suffer from mood disorders, they cannot achieve or maintain even minimal intimacy. Instead, they mesh, merge, or fuse.

This fusion fosters intolerable abandonment or separation anxiety. The only way to regulate this anxiety is to make sure that the partner doesn't jump ship. This is done by provoking his/her romantic jealousy (a reaction to anticipated loss). Indiscreet extramarital affairs, flagrant promiscuity, ostentatious flirtatious or seductive behaviors with strangers, provocative speech or dress, and hints of impending breakup - are all ways to provoke the partner into sitting up and paying attention and to raise her/his "value" in his/her eyes ("I am desirable and irresistible to other men/women"). The instigator wants her counterpart to set boundaries and put his foot down as proofs that he cares.

Alas, such behaviors precipitate what they had been meant to prevent and have the exact opposite effect to the one intended: anticipating loss and pain aversion combine to drive the injured party away and actually guarantee eventual separation and abandonment.

58.

Let's clear up some misconceptions: If the members of the couple are having sex ONLY with others - it is not an [open marriage or an open relationship](#), but legitimized cheating. One of the partners is usually codependent and gives in to

the other's blackmail. Such an "open" relationship is about clinging, control, and the inter-couple power matrix.

In swinging, if one of the parties is passive and just observes his partner having sex with others, s/he is a cuckquean or a cuckold, not a Lifestyle swinger. Swinging requires the full participation and interaction of everyone. Spouse swapping is a form of swinging that involves cuckoldry.

If the parties lie and deceive each other about their whereabouts and activities, they are being unfaithful. Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) means: no questions asked, no lies told.

59.

The intimate partner in a trauma bond constitutes a "safe (or secure) base". In child psychology a safe or secure base is typically the infant's mother. The child experiments with his new boundaries as a separate individual (separation-individuation) knowing that it can always return to the safe base.

In a trauma bonded dyad (couple), the parties feel free to experiment with the most reckless misbehaviors and indulge in the most outlandish fantasies, knowing that the safe (or secure) base partner will always be there for them.

The safe base partner shapes the other's sense of identity and many of her beliefs and cognitions (thoughts). The two members of the bond are merged and fused. It is not easy to let go of the partner's voice, representation, imago, or avatar in one's head (introject). Unconsciously, it is perceived as who one is.

In a trauma bond, the introject is negative and sadistic but it is a part of one's self-perception of who one is, one's demarcated identity (as a "bad, worthless, malicious, crazy object".) This is why any change to the status quo is treated as a threat and the relationship is remarkably stable despite the copious amounts of mind altering abuse.

60.

When a couple is in a state of shared psychosis (folie a deux), they uphold a common delusional or paranoid or narcissistic narrative about themselves and about the world and settle on a code of conduct. Shared psychoses require the partners to fuse and merge and, therefore, present psychodynamic aspects of both dependent (codependency) and borderline personality disorders.

When one of the partners opts out of the shared psychotic disorder, the other half feels annulled, incomplete (amputated) and cast out. S/he reacts with a depressive episode whose severity and duration can be extreme.

The depression resolves into two solutions or orientations. Some rejected partners react by utterly repressing the past (dissociating). They live solely in the present, like there is no yesterday - or tomorrow (carpe diem). They act out recklessly or antisocially or promiscuously.

Others get stuck in the past and are debilitated and rendered dysfunctional by nostalgia and abandonment anxiety. They live like there is no today or tomorrow.

Both types usually end up enmeshed in a new shared psychosis in an attempt to recapture the magic of being one with another person and the overwhelming sensations of safety and acceptance that it provides.

61.

Trust wisely! Be discerning, never gullible. Trust no one with everything - but trust a few with some things. To not trust anyone at all is as unwise as to trust indiscriminately.

Our natural tendency is to trust, because we trust our parents. It feels good to really trust. It is also an essential component of love and an important test thereof. Love without trust is dependence masquerading as love.

We must trust: it is an almost biological urge. Most of the time, we do trust. We trust the universe to behave according to the laws of physics; soldiers to not go mad and shoot at us; our nearest and dearest to not betray us. When trust is broken, we feel as though a part of us had died, as though we had been hollowed out.

To not trust is abnormal and is the outcome of bitter or even traumatic life experiences. Mistrust and distrust are induced not by our own thoughts, nor by some device or machination of ours, but by life's sad circumstances.

To continue to not trust is to reward the people who wronged us and made us distrustful in the first place. Those people have long abandoned us and yet they still have a great, malignant, influence on our lives. This is the irony of the lack of trust: it perpetuates the abuse long after the abuser is gone.

Some people prefer to not experience this sinking feeling of trust violated. They choose to not trust and, thereby, to never be disappointed. This is both a fallacy and a folly. Trusting releases enormous amounts of mental energy, which is better invested elsewhere.

But trust – like knives – can be dangerous to your health if used improperly. You have to discern whom to trust, you have to learn how to trust and you have to know how to confirm the existence of mutual, functional trust.

More: <https://samvak.tripod.com/faq20.html>

62.

In Hollywood, Leprechauns are exclusively asexual, bearded, wrinkle-faced grumpy males. In Irish lore, female leprechauns are also seductive fairies. Why the censorship?

Men feel threatened by [female sexuality](#). Remember the medieval vagina dentata (toothy pussy)? The stoning and stigmatizing of women with a healthy sex drive? Chastity belts? Stud versus slut double standard?

The female leprechauns are promiscuous, tiny, usually red-headed, very beautiful, have tintinnabulating voices, are unbearably cute, and consequently are constantly pregnant. Very naughty and mischievous, including sexually.

Hollywood, for this reason, shows only male leprechauns, never female ones. Same sex is safe sex in the sick universe of mass entertainment.

63.

There are numerous myths about [casual sex](#). Men and women react to it exactly the same in the buildup to it, during the act, and in its aftermath.

Casual sex is linked to negative mental health outcomes, but only in certain kinds of people:

People who were drunk or drugged during the encounter or acted under peer pressure (no autonomy); with conservative or traditional or religious upbringing and moral code or in societies with such mores; people who violate promises, boundaries, rules, and vows they have made to themselves (personal integrity) or to others; who get attached to sex partners or develop long-term expectations of a relationship; and those older than 40.

These profiles of participants in casual sex are likely to experience shame, embarrassment, guilt, depression, lower self-esteem, anxiety, regret, and memory gaps following the romp.

All others react with excitement, satisfaction, and even pride to their reaffirmed desirability and to the modicum of palliative affection, comfort, attention, acceptance, fleeting intimacy and closeness that is ineluctably involved in voluntary casual sex.

Casual sex allows singles to regulate their sex lives and satisfy their curiosity and need for variety. Still, it invariably involves objectifying the partner: most true casual sex is near anonymous.

64.

Sex is dead. No one is having sex anymore.

For the next edition of my book (2020), "The Death of Sex and the Demise of Monogamy", I conducted an informal survey of sexual practices. I interviewed 100 subjects in a variety of settings: 50 men, 50 women, ages 35-50, from 13 countries on 4 continents.

Many of the subjects can be easily described as good looking. All of them are intelligent and professionally accomplished. Only 2 have chronic medical conditions and 12 attend psychotherapy (5 for depression and anxiety, 4 for relationship issues or work-related problems, 3 for cluster B personality disorders). The shocking results:

73 haven't had any sex in more than 3 years (the cutoff in the survey). Only 17 had an intimate partner. They had sex on average once every 2.5 months, with 8 of them copulating on average once every 6 months. 3 of them were in a sexless union.

According to many studies, about 21% of the marriages in the US are sexless. But I think people are ashamed to tell the truth: the figure is probably 3 times higher.

Dating and sexual acts among teens plunged by more than 50% in the past 10 years. Teens in the UK and Japan are so uninterested in sex that they do not include it in lists of "things I would like to do". In Japan, the majority of people 15-35 are celibate.

I attribute the disappearance of sex to four developments: (1) Gender vertigo:

the shifting gender roles and the ensuing gender wars which engender sexual disorientation (2) The rise of addictive social media, online games, immersive augmentative Artificial Intelligence (AI) and similar technologies (3) The wide availability of porn and (4) The emergence of casual, emotionless sex as the preferred sexual practice (the decline of intimacy)

The explosion of dating sites proves how impossible it is to obtain sex in one's milieu. People have to go online and hook up with strangers, often in other countries, in a desperate bid to gratify this most basic and natural of needs.

65.

All animals practice sex without intimacy or emotions and the human animal is no exception.

So, why the righteous brouhaha about it?

1. Speciesism: Humans are superior to animals and should never give in to their animal nature but rather transcend it. It is a form of grandiosity, fostered originally by religious teachings.
2. Conflating and confusing lust and love, emotional intimacy with physical intimacy. Casual sex amounts to masturbating with the body of a nearly anonymous partner, an animated dildo, a sophisticated and unpredictable sex doll, replete with smells and tastes. It has nothing whatsoever to do with sex in a committed, loving relationship.
3. Being in love with infatuation itself, being addicted to falling in love. Some people "fall in love" with their sexual partners, even after a one night stand. This complicates matters and leads to heartbreak that is best avoided altogether.

The only thing that seriously bothers and worries me about casual sex (and I have had my share) is that it has become the norm, the standard practice ("hookup culture") among those born after 1995.

It may affect their ability to form meaningful intimate relationships (the jury is out on this one). It definitely predisposes the members of these generations to regard sex as nothing more significant than other bodily functions and renders them way more prone to cheating (up dramatically among both genders) and to reckless sexual behaviors also linked to substance abuse.

The preponderance of emotionless sex is the problem - not the act itself.

66.

BDSM (Bondage, Discipline, Dominance, Submission, Sadism, and Masochism) is both a sexual preference and a lifestyle. Many monogamous couples are into BDSM and it requires lots of trust in the partner and good communication skills to negotiate pitfalls and preferences.

One common mistake is that the submissive (or bottom) partner is a masochist. It is utter nonsense engendered by grossly inaccurate renditions of the scene by the likes of "Fifty Shades of Grey". In reality, many submissives are also dominant with other people or in different circumstances.

Masochism revolves around self-sabotage and self-destruction. The masochist has been taught from an early age to hate herself and consider herself unworthy of love and worthless as a person. Consequently, he or she is prone to self-destructive, punishing, and self-defeating behaviors. Though capable of pleasure and possessed of social skills, the masochist avoids or undermines pleasurable experiences. He does not admit to enjoying himself, seeks suffering, pain, and hurt in relationships and situations, rejects help and resents those who offer it. She actively renders futile attempts to assist or ameliorate or mitigate or solve her problems and predicaments.

These self-penalizing behaviors are self-purging: they intend to relieve the masochist of overwhelming, pent-up anxiety. The masochist's conduct is equally aimed at avoiding intimacy and its benefits: companionship and support.

Masochists tend to choose people and circumstances that inevitably and predictably lead to failure, disillusionment, disappointment, and mistreatment. Conversely, they tend to avoid relationships, interactions, and circumstances that are likely to result in success or gratification. They reject, disdain, or even suspect people who consistently treat them well. Masochists find caring, loving persons sexually unattractive.

The masochist typically adopts unrealistic goals and thus guarantees underachievement. Masochists routinely fail at mundane tasks, even when these are crucial to their own advancement and personal objectives and even when they adequately carry out similar assignments on behalf of others.

67.

Men are giving up on women and resorting to other men for intimacy and sex.

Homosexuality, homoeroticism, same sex attraction, and MSM (Men having Sex with Men) have been increasing year on year all over the world. This is not

only the outcome of gay practices becoming more acceptable. In my view, this is because there are no women left

Women dress like men, curse like men, drink like men, are as promiscuous and aggressive as men, are as narcissistic and dysempathic as men, cheat on their spouses and intimate partners at the same rate as men do, have become primary breadwinners, are taking over many traditional blue collar and white collar male vocations, are single mothers, and are better educated than men.

Unigender: there are only men with penises and men with vaginas. No women. So, some men go for the original - why opt for the imitation?

Freud predicted all this mayhem inadvertently when he described "penis envy". He said that women feel incomplete without the male appendage and unconsciously attempt to emulate men.

But what even he could not have predicted is the convergence of gender roles and the resulting "gender vertigo". In a world without women, homosexuality is an increasingly rational choice: the genitalia are familiar, the emotions and reactive patterns clearer and more predictable, tolerance is higher, and mutual expectations way more realistic and thus much easier to gratify

Consequently, men are ignoring and discarding women in droves and in a variety of ways. Most women now go without a man for years at a time and are reduced to picking up strangers in bars for one night stands.

68.

The morning after a torrid one night stand, replete with countless deep French kisses, the man offers his nocturnal partner a tame farewell kiss on the lips. She recoils in horror: "What are you doing? Get away from me!" How to account for this ostensibly irrational behavior?

Signaling.

French kisses during casual sex are a part of the total physical intimacy engendered during the encounter but have no emotional correlate. One night stands essentially amount to using the body of an animate partner - frequently, a stranger - to masturbate with. There are zero feelings, except maybe some generalized tenderness and a fuzzy affection which dissipate the minute the act is over.

In the light of day and out of the purely sexual context, [a kiss carries a message](#),

it constitutes a meaningful signal regarding the existence of underlying reciprocated emotional intimacy. It is misleading and coercive, an intrusion on sacred personal space and, therefore, a form of harassment.

Every single human action, gesture, and movement carry multiple, context-dependent semiotic connotations and denotations. Sex is not an exception.

69.

When [travelling alone in a foreign place](#), people resort to either of two default behaviors - or to both of them, alternating:

MCDONALD EFFECT

Finding themselves in unfamiliar territory, people default to old, well-established, true and tested patterns of behavior, choices, and brands. This is exactly the allure of the likes of McDonald: home away from home.

So: if you pub crawl, visit museums, or sample gourmet food at home - you may end up doing the same in Rome.

ROMAN HOLIDAY

But as often, being away from home also means freedom from prying eyes, prurient neighbors, peer pressure, and social control. It legitimizes a side of you that is inhibited or suppressed: drinking, promiscuity, having a fling, cheating, antisocial or petty criminal behavior, aggression, racism, misogyny, xenophobia, adventurousness, shopaholism, recklessness, gambling, or any number of frowned upon behaviors.

70.

Men have casual sex mostly for two reasons: 1. The woman makes clear that she is available or 2. They find the woman attractive. Period. They make no bones about it and feel no need to spin complex stories to embed the sex in some exculpatory context.

[Women have casual sex](#) for dozens of reasons including pity and gratitude. Few women admit to having casual sex for its own sake. They all come up with extraneous narratives to justify the copulation: anything from "I was drunk" to "he was nice to me"

Why this difference between the sexes?

Women dread being labelled a slut. The yarns they proffer render the merely carnal more intimate and, therefore, palatable and socially acceptable.

But there is another reason: body image issues. Even the most drop dead gorgeous woman is somewhat unhappy with her body. This pernicious variant of an inferiority complex and self-devaluation renders women less choosy and leads them to prefer "safe" beta males who are unlikely to reject them: attention from the wrong man is still vastly preferable to no attention whatsoever.

71.

Rules of attraction for one night stands

People are either broken and wounded (traumatized) - or healthy and functional. They either have brains, or brawn (beauty), or both, or neither.

The wounded and broken prefer as partners for casual sex "safe" counterparts who are unlikely to reject them: nonthreatening pick ups (no brains and no brawn or beauty). The healthy and functional select mates with brawn or beauty for a single roll in the hay.

People with brains only or brains and brawn or beauty are very unlikely to be chosen as casual sex partners.

Picking up someone highly intelligent is a deterrent: you have to be on your toes, shine, compete, and risk humiliating rejection if you do not measure up. Anxiety, narcissistic injuries, and depletion are often the only rewards.

If you have only brains and zero brawn or beauty, the potential mate has to be a sapiosexual and must be exposed to your cerebral charms over an extended period of time in order to overlook the unappetizing rest of you and consent to have sex.

Chances of that happening in a world of attention deficits, media imagery of bodily perfection, and instant gratification are slim to none. Most nerds and geeks end up being incels: involuntary celibates. They rarely get laid, if ever.

72.

I find modern men and women bizarre.

You have to BEG them to say "I love you" (and they very rarely do) - but they fuck each other at the drop of a hat.

People under the age of 40 are terrified of emotions and intimacy and consequently regard sex as a meaningless chance physical activity.

This is where the generational gap shows clearly:

My generation valued the constant expression of emotions like love as a way to strengthen and maintain relationships.

We dinosaurs were saying "I love you" all the time, morning, evening, and in between. It felt wonderful.

And we thought that sex has aspects and dimensions beyond the mere physical.

Maybe that is why we went extinct.

73.

Multiple studies have shown that women have [one nights stands](#) for two main reasons: (1) Emotional connection and support; and (2) The man's personality: the man had been "nice" to them, was "interesting", or had been perceived by them as an exciting "bad boy"

Men have one night stands for mainly ONE reason:

The woman made herself available

More in-depth studies demonstrated that the men merely masturbated with and in the woman's body ("masturbatory aid"). After the act, virtually none of the men recalled details about the woman (not even her full name). Only 20% of men studied said that they would NOT fuck a heavily drunk woman, though a majority of the men in these 20% admitted to having done it in the past. Perhaps because they interpret the woman's heavy drinking as preparation for sex.

Women admitted in studies that sometimes they get drunk to overcome inhibition and to pave the way for sex.

Women need to get drunk to have casual sex if they perceive themselves as "doing something wrong" (as acting slutty or cheating on their partner).

Women also drink in order to bed a stranger if they are overly shy, typically owing to a body image (somatoform) problem or deficient social skills.

45% of men said that they preferred casual sex to all other forms of sex. This may be the influence of porn.

Most men regarded the time they spent with the woman before the one night stand - however brief - as an "investment": something they had to do reluctantly because women demanded it as a socially acceptable pretext and excuse to copulate.

The men would have much preferred to simply get on with it, but knew that they had to talk to the woman, woo her, and feign interest and empathy.

74.

There are three types of sex: functional, intimate, and loving.

Functional sex is masturbatory, mechanical, cursory, clinical, impersonal, and goal-oriented

Intimate sex follows a period of intimacy (even with a stranger after a few hours) and reflects closeness, affection, tenderness, and a level of comfort and familiarity which engenders trust and a sense of security and safety.

Loving sex is a natural continuation of the wish to merge or fuse with one's lover also on the physical level and to communicate to him or her total intimacy and a host of overwhelmingly positive emotions. It also involves an elevated level of trust and a feeling of personal safety and naked vulnerability.

75.

Love and rage are twin emotions: the one ineluctably evokes the other. True and profound love, being irresistible and intractable, implies a modicum of helplessness and even hopelessness. This background frustration invariably results in aggression.

As a relationship progresses, rage gains the upper hand: betrayals, big and small, as well as narcissistic injuries, conspire against the powers of love to forgive and reframe.

The only antidote to rage is effective and honest communication. Alas, it is so rare, obstructed as it so frequently is by power plays and emotional blackmail.

Love cannot win this race. It succumbs to bitter, disappointed anger and its numerous transformations. Finally, it is alchemically transmuted into hatred.

76.

Intimacy and sex are inseparable, even in a casual, one night stand. The greater the emotional intimacy, the more expressive and meaningful the sexual

intimacy.

But there are people for whom sex and intimacy are mutually exclusive: when they are bonded and attached to a partner, they cannot make love to her and they fuck only relative strangers within shallow, fleeting relationships.

These dysfunctional and hurtful folks perceive intimacy as a threat and sex as a dirty act within a power play of dominance and submission. To fuck a loved one is to demean her and treat her a slut. To make love to an intimate partner is to hand over power and to be inevitably wounded and hurt when dumped or abandoned. So, they abstain and cheat.

Ultimately, these emotional cripples end up in dead marriages or as loners and are reduced to bar crawling to find equally inebriated sexual partners. As age takes its toll, they totally withdraw, incapable of even the most rudimentary tasks of psychosexual companionship.

77.

In some couples, where one member is a failure and a loser, the other member fails to thrive and engages in self-destructive and self-defeating behaviors in order to not humiliate the less accomplished intimate partner by being too successful.

Similarly, when one of the members of the dyad is challenged or threatened by intimacy or sexuality, the other member often opts to suppress her femininity (or his masculinity) in order to avoid conflicts and hurt.

78.

Beta male losers get laid more often than "alpha" male winners because women frequently select them for casual sex. "Nice guys" are "safe": they do not threaten the woman with any prospect of long-term attachment or relationship, they make few demands, and are pliable and compliant one night sexual and dating partners: someone to have drinks with, chat, and socialize with, fuck for a while, and then discard without giving this disposable man a second thought.

Women are far more likely to have sex on a first date with a beta male than with the socially superior and more accomplished variant.

As women adopt hitherto exclusively male sexual behaviors, mores, and traits, they become more promiscuous. Recent studies have revealed that women have almost as many one night stands as men, for example. Cheating among women

in committed relationships also surged dramatically.

Research shows that women younger than 40 prefer men with 120 IQ points or fewer to men with 140 IQ points or more. They also find "overconfidence" in men extremely offputting. Nuff said.

This is a major upheaval in gender roles and inter-gender power politics. Only 40 years ago, women still overwhelmingly opted for winners and "jerks", in line with a trend as old and established as humanity itself

Numerous recent studies demonstrate this tectonic shift. As women become way more narcissistic and empowered in multiple ways, they prefer weaker, feminized males both as sexual partners and in romantic dyads.

79.

Some people can have sex only when they are drunk.

There is a qualitative difference between [drunk sex and sober sex](#).

Drunk sex is wild, forbidden, everything is allowed, everything can and does happen, exciting, arousing, out of control. It is surrealistic (dreamlike), a fantasy come true, freedom reified.

Alcohol disinhibits (removes behavioral inhibitions), renders sexual partners much more attractive than they are, suppresses empathy and long-term memory formation, and distorts cognition and judgment.

But perhaps as importantly, alcohol legitimizes immoral and socially unacceptable misconduct which often ends up hurting significant others: "It is not my fault that I misbehaved, I did not mean to or want to, it was the drink that made me do it!" The sexual alcoholic may be addicted not only to the alcohol - but also to drunk sex and that is why he or she inextricably links sexual arousal to alcohol.

80.

[Sex](#) can be a feel good expression of libido, the energy of an exuberant, ebullient, self-confident, and optimistic life. But it can also be a desperate attempt to restore a self-esteem shattered by rejection and abuse

In the second case, the psychosexual etiology is completely different: sex occurs

even when the libido is absent, inhibited, or suppressed by alcohol or by depression and anxiety.

When sex is a manifestation of a treasured life, well-lived and cherished, it involves both self-gratification and a mutual celebration. It signals contentment.

When sex is restorative, aimed to fulfil and reconstitute direly missing psychological functions, it is self-centered and goal-oriented, not joyful or desired. It communicates desperation.

81.

Intimacy is such a primordial and basic need that, when deprived of it for prolonged periods of time, people are driven to despondence and seek substitutes, even in small doses.

Instant intimacy, fake intimacy, simulated intimacy, and transient intimacy are all widely preferred to no intimacy at all. Hence the skyrocketing incidence of casual sex and the pervasiveness of dating and cheating apps. Intimacy with anyone whatsoever is vastly better than no intimacy whatsoever.

When starved for intimacy, people con themselves into shared psychoses with others, abuse substances to dull their senses and remove inhibitions, somatize intimacy (use sex to feel intimate), or reframe intimacy (for example: by joining cults or reference groups). In extreme cases of recurrent failures to generate intimacy, people resort to self-intimacy: a solipsistic and schizoid attempt to become their own best friends and companions in lieu of the frustrating objects out there.

The self-intimate glorify aloneness within an ideology of personal autonomy, agency, and self-sufficiency. They interpret feeling lonely and the need for significant others as weaknesses of character and zealously castigate both as forms of social control, chauvinism, patriarchy, feminism, or pathological self-delusion. Narcissistic self-intimates conflate separateness with uniqueness and accomplishment.

82.

Both men and women are devastated when their intimate partner, significant other, or spouse cheats. Men react badly as they keep replaying the lurid visuals of the sex act. Women are heartbroken by the intimacy that is involved even in casual sex.

But both men and women mourn the trust lost as a result, the friendship

abandoned, the betrayal, the callous indifference to the partner's hurt, the inevitable deception and the egregious lies.

Somehow, somewhere along the line, the other man or woman, the long-term lover or even the one night stand became the locus and focus of affection, attention, and loyalty, a co-conspirator against the ostensibly loved one and the provider of both intimacy and sex: hitherto exclusive domains of the couple.

Sexual and emotional exclusivity constitute a statement regarding the uniqueness and importance of the relationship and one's mate. To share oneself with another is to inform your partner in no uncertain terms that she or he had lost their privileged position in one's life and are interchangeable and replaceable.

Add to this the sense of failure and inadequacy and the impotent fury at having so badly misjudged one's partner, having so thoroughly deceived oneself and been led astray, granting her or him unfettered access to the most vulnerable parts of one's life and the power to reduce one's heart to smithereens.

There is never a real and full recovery from such perfidy. Some codependent couples survive, hobbled by the terrible memories. But the majority of unions disintegrate under the relentless pressure of the revelations about the true nature of one's partner and his or her specious misconduct. When it comes to relationships, cheating is the equivalent of first degree murder: there is no statute of limitations and no way to undo the ubiquitous ruination.

83.

We do not get [attached to people](#) because of who they are. We fall in love and bond with others only when they cater to our emotional and physical needs and because they do. When they no longer fulfil this role efficaciously, we move on. Discarding the old and ushering in its substitute involves heartbreak, anger, and grief, true. But, still: we are all totally interchangeable and replaceable. "Mr. Right", the perfect match is a mere dating app matchmakers' myth

Being relegated to the trash heap of a relationship and witnessing how seamlessly your loved one has transitioned to the next provider is possibly the worst narcissistic injury imaginable: it profoundly challenges one's sense of uniqueness and, therefore, lovability. It is an existential threat mediated via the deepest loss. It provokes a host of infantile defenses such as splitting, immature behaviors such as clinging, raw and dysregulated emotions, such as jealousy and rage, and even paranoid and suicidal ideation. In extreme cases it can lead to clinical (major) depression, decompensation, reckless acting out, and reactive psychosis.

84.

Our [psychosexuality](#) is founded on personal narratives that in actual romantic interactions and especially in sex, translate into role plays.

As the name implies, role plays involve archetypal roles which conform to one's self-story: the princess in distress, the knight savior, the nurturing mother, the hapless victim in grave danger, the obedient violated daughter, the avuncular father figure, and so on.

We are turned on sexually only with a partner who fits the script in appearance and mentally and who collaborates by acting his role. The greater his thespian skills, verbal agility, imagination, and creativity - the more heightened and addictive the sexual gratification

In rare cases, some people harbor two equipotent and mutually exclusive narratives (for example: whore and mother, victim and in control). This generates extreme dissonance every time the individual falls in love or gets infatuated or sexually attracted.

The aim in therapy is to integrate the two narratives and fuse them seamlessly. This is done by creating, with the patient's active participation, an overarching meta narrative that comprises crucial but non-contradictory elements of both erstwhile opposing tales.

85.

People who [fear intimacy](#) are mirror images of those with healthy attachment styles: they react with rage and defiance to any attempt to love them, care for them, or get to know them by inching closer to them or by becoming an integral part of their lives.

They dread commitment, stability, predictability, sharing, planning, collaboration, support, and help.

They prefer casual sex to any longer-term arrangement. They avoid deep emotions and involvement. They undermine any budding intimacy by distancing or absenting themselves emotionally and/or physically; by lying and confabulating; and by engaging in passive-aggressive, outright aggressive, reckless, and self-destructive behaviors which are also devastatingly hurtful to would be significant others.

86.

Everyone needs to be loved. But some people convince themselves that they are not lovable, that they can never be truly loved and accepted once they are better known within a growing intimacy. They tell themselves that they are vile, or somehow deformed, or inferior.

To make up for this inherent deficiency, to render themselves desirable and tolerated, if not loved, such people flaunt their accomplishments, colorful history, possessions, wealth, power, sexuality, prospects, or connections. It is a form of displacement: if you cannot love me for who I am - at least adore and admire me for what I have, what I do, what I did, who I know ("namedropping"), and where I am.

87.

When rejected or abused, women overeat or abuse substances. But a minority of them self-medicate with men: they hookup with friends, former flames, or even strangers for some good time and sex. It helps them to restore their self-esteem, regulate or dull their negative emotions, buttress their femininity, and stabilize their labile sense of self-worth. Intimacy, however transient and limited, even if merely physical, does wonders to their assertiveness and resilience. In some cases, such conduct involves defiant, "in your face", rage infused cheating on the intimate partner.

But such misconduct has three other goals:

1. To hurt, cause excruciating pain, and grievously and often publicly offend and humiliate the rejecting or abusive counterparty;
2. To elicit a reaction - any reaction! - from the indifferent and dismissive spouse or mate (via triangulation);
3. To win points in a neverending power play of oneupmanship and brinkmanship between the misbehaving woman and her husband, date, or boyfriend.

The women who default to this kind of choice are able to engage in emotionless and casual sex and are often histrionic (the female variant of psychopathy, according to the latest thinking in the field). They lack impulse control and suffer from emotional dysregulation (common among Borderlines and trauma victims with PTSD or extreme CPTSD).

88.

To some people, intimacy is like Kryptonite, both sought after and feared. The result in an intricate and crazymaking dance dubbed "approach-avoidance repetition compulsion". Another aspect of this ambivalence in what I call the

"[menu-scrap dichotomy](#)". Those who truly seek intimacy want the entire menu of interpersonal togetherness: from intensive talking to romanticized sex. The intimacy-challenged make do and are fully satisfied with scraps: they feel threatened and overwhelmed by the totality of the intimacy menu. They get by on occasional snippets of talk, rare sex, and swathes of personal space and time apart.

The two types are utterly incompatible and make each other profoundly unhappy. Yet, oddly, they are inexorably attracted to each other. The menu types are parental fixers by nature and the scraps persons crave the unbridled and unconditional intimacy proffered by their antitheses - dread it as they do.

Mixed couple invariably end up in a mushroom cloud of agonizing mayhem and unmitigated catastrophe. They may drive each other to insanity and suicide and, at the very least, subject one another to excruciating pain as the menu tries to alter and modify the scraps and the scraps withdraws further and farther and resorts to desperate measures such as cheating or reckless behaviors in order to undo the bond and revert to pristine loneliness.

Remember: [giving 100% of yourself to your partner](#) is NOT an act of love: it guarantees your partner's failure to reciprocate.

89.

Everyone has an attachment style. But some people have "[flat attachment](#)": they are incapable of any kind of bonding or relatedness at all.

Flat attachers regard other people as utterly interchangeable, replaceable, and dispensable objects or functions.

When a relationship is over, people go through a period of "latency": mourning the defunct bond and processing the grief and withdrawal symptoms associated with a breakup. Flat attachers react to the disintegration of even the most meaningful or primary relationships by becoming defiant and mad rather than heartbroken and sad.

Not so the flat attacher: he or she transition instantaneously, smoothly, abruptly, and seamlessly from one (in)significant other to the next "target" and fully substitutes a newly found beau, lover, mate, or "intimate" partner for the discarded one whose usefulness has expired for whatever reason.

Many narcissists and almost all psychopaths are flat attachers. In 1995 I coined the phrase "idealize, devalue, and discard". I should have rather said: "idealize,

devalue, discard - and replace"

Flat attachment is often confused and conflated with commitmentphobia (fear of committing to a joint future). But while flat attachers are constitutionally incapable of bonding with others, commitmentphobes anticipate with anxiety the expectations that their attachments to others engender and the emotional and pragmatic outcomes of such liaisons. They are merely avoidant, not wholly emotionally vacuous.

90.

Major traumas can lead to either of two opposing outcomes: regression into infantile behaviors and defenses - or a spurt of personal growth and maturation. It all depends on how the trauma is processed.

Faced with devastatingly hurtful, overwhelming, and dysregulated emotions, personalities with a low level of organization react to trauma with decompensation, reckless acting out, and even psychotic microepisodes. Major depression and suicidal ideation are common.

In an attempt to restore a sense of safety, the individual regresses to an earlier - familiar and predictable - phase of life and evokes parental imagoes and introjects to protect, comfort, soothe, and take over responsibilities.

In a way, the trauma victim parents herself by splitting her mind into a benevolent, forgiving, unconditionally loving inner object (mother or father) and a wayward, defiant, independent, and rebellious child or teen who is largely oblivious to the consequences of her actions.

More balanced, emotionally regulated, and mature persons reframe the trauma by accommodating it in a rational, evidence-based (not fictitious or counterfactual) narrative. They modify their theories about the world and the way it operates. They set new boundaries and generate new values, beliefs, and rules of conduct (new schemas). They process their emotions fully and are thereby rendered more self-efficacious. In other words: they grow up, having leveraged their painful losses as an engine of positive development geared towards the attainment of favorable long-term results.

91.

Intimacy increases with time spent together. But the more time you while away with a narcissist, the less intimate you get!

This effect - reversed intimacy - is an outcome of the fact that one is interacting

with the narcissist's False Self: a piece of grandiose fiction, a placeholder where an entire person should have been.

Traumatized victims of narcissistic abuse have therefore learned to emulate the narcissist (himself in a post-traumatic state). Like him, they slap a label on their tormentor and then ignore him and relate only to the label ("total labelling"). Where no intimacy is possible, stereotypes take over.

There is a lot more to every narcissist than his disorder. Yet, following my pioneering work 25 years ago, people reduce the narcissist to a figment, to merely his pathology. They ignore the person behind the persona, the core in the narcissistic nuclear meltdown. This renders any type of meaningful communication with the narcissist all but impossible and inefficacious.

92.

A typical replica in 1973-1981 (my teenage years): You really think that the fact that we have had a chat or a drink gives you the right to have sex with me? Seriously?

Fast forward 20 years. The new normal is: You honestly think that the fact that we have had sex gives you the right to chat or to have drinks with me? Seriously?

Sex: once the breathtaking magical apex of intimacy and now a meaningless perfunctory body function. A sleazy perspirative afterthought.

What a sad, sick world we have created. And make no mistake about it: the emotional wasteland that we had wrought and inflicted on the young is irreversible.

93.

Sex is too meaningless to feature in our meaningful relationship. We prefer to do other things: talk, travel, watch movies, or create together

We reserve sex for one night stands and hookups, when we are in between significant others and intimate partners.

This is fast becoming the new normal: sex is what you do when you are out of a committed couple. Sex is emotionless, mechanical, masturbatory, often hurried and consummated when under the influence. The sex partners are nearly anonymous and discarded after one or a few encounters.

Sexlessness is surging uncontrollably even as the rates of casual sex soar. There is a disconnect, a yawning abyss between intimacy and recreative (though not procreative) sex, once thought to be inseparable, flip sides of the coin of togetherness.

94.

Submission and dominance are very misleading terms. Numerous studies, summarized in the book "A Billion Wicked Thoughts", have demonstrated that most heterosexual women are sexually submissive and most heterosexual men are sexually dominant. Among gays, there are tops and bottoms but they sometimes switch roles: type constancy is less entrenched among homosexuals.

Submissiveness is a fiction: the dom has only as much power over the sub as she allows. She can opt out at any moment ("safe word") and often dictates what can and cannot be done to her. In the scene, sub shares control with the dom.

The sub surrenders her will temporarily and conditionally because she wants to experience the freedom and lack of responsibility of powerlessness. Submission, therefore, empowers and dominance enslaves: the dom is the sub's servant, in many cases addicted to her helplessness.

95.

People react to rejection in intimate relationships with frustration and, as Dollard taught us, frustration provoked aggression.

But aggression has two major forms: internalized and externalized. When aggression is internalized, directed inward, at the the rejected individual, in an orgy of self-loathing and self-hate, the outcomes are: impotent and diffuse anger, depression, delusions, suicidal ideation, reckless and self-destructive behaviors, loss of impulse control, and, in extremis, psychosis.

When aggression is externalized, it targets the cause of the frustration - the rejecting party. Such aggression involves rage (fury), defiance, and acts intended to deeply and irrevocably hurt and traumatize the "offender". Though it is also brought about by impulsivity, externalized aggression is more premeditated and planned and accommodates delayed gratification.

96.

This is the "Era of the Stranger": we confide in and sleep with total unknowns, often preferring ersatz passing intimacy to the real, deeper thing

Modern, cheap means of transportation and communication coupled with technologies such as dating apps and social media conspired to erode meaningful, long-term relationships and favor liaisons, flings, and dalliances. Casual sex was made feasible with contraception and women's lib empowerment, especially in higher education and the workplace

Institutions predicated on profound and growing intimacy are doomed. The angst, ennui, and atomized loneliness of modern existence in cahoots with multiple triggers of anxiety and depression undermine any attempt to forge enduring bonds with significant others

Attachments are perceived as threatening: they invariably resolve into hurt. Pain aversion keeps people apart and renders interactions superficial and minimal. Society, community, and family are things of the past. Solidarity is dead. We are left to fend off for ourselves, each to and on his or her own.

97.

There is no difference between prostitutes, laborers, and, say, professors: all three are selling time-limited rights to access portions of their anatomies (vaginas, muscles, or brains)

The leasing of body parts ("labor") to third parties ("employers") accelerated after the agricultural and industrial revolutions, both of which engendered great needs for hired hands

Nowadays, the branding, packaging, sale, and distribution of such corporeal and intellectual rights are vastly different: technology has elevated personal autonomy and has empowered individual, self-employed service providers. But the principle is still the same: we all peddle bits and pieces of our lives and bodies in return for food, shelter, and entertainment.

98.

Some people - especially women - are far more likely to try to attempt to realize their sexual fantasies with a stranger in casual sex than with a long-term partner or a serious date.

You can afford to be sexually daring, adventurous, experimental, and sluttish with someone you are unlikely to ever meet again and whose opinion and judgment are of no importance or consequence to you.

Ironically, partners in a one night stand may end up having more memorable sex or even lovemaking than anything their conjugal bed can ever offer.

99.

Some women who are rejected and abused by their primary intimate partners trash themselves: get inebriated, high, and end up having dingy promiscuous sex often with lowlife scum - or otherwise recklessly self-destructing.

This egregious misbehavior is intended to secure three concurrent goals:

1. To punish and hurt the partner by debasing his "property"
2. To self-flagellate for the perceived infuriating, incapacitating, and self-defeating dependence on the indifferent or abusive partner (thus confirming his view of her as unattractive, worthless, bad, ineffectual, damaged goods, and broken slutish "whore"); and
3. To humiliate the partner and guilt trip him for having hurt the woman and for having failed to save her from herself or to triangulate with the aim of getting to the partner and eliciting an emotional reaction from him (jealousy, anger, anything).

100.

Fully 91% of both men and women equate sexual exclusivity in a committed relationship with dating exclusivity: no dating others, no sex acts with others.

As usual, narcissists and psychopaths enforce a one-sided deal: they provide no commitment or exclusivity and expect both in return. They lead double and triple lives and, within the couple, absent themselves and withhold affection and sex.

As Lidija Rangelovska (@reframingtheself) observed: the rise of narcissism among men led to a corresponding surge of similar traits and misbehaviors among women in their attempt to adapt to the new environment and cope with it.

Misconduct typical of Borderline (indistinguishable from CPTSD), Histrionic, and Narcissistic personality disorders has exploded among women. Witness, for example, the tripling of adultery rates and quadrupling of casual sex encounters among women of all age groups since the 1970s as well as the tidal wave of female defiant and antisocial (psychopathic) incidents.

Women are adopting hitherto exclusive narcissistic and psychopathic male mores and behaviors. They are emulating "bad guys" rather than "nice guys" because they feel imminently threatened and heartbroken. It is a narcissistic-psychopathic jungle out there, so better be predator than prey.

We - of both sexes and all genders - have completed the transition from a world of praying to a reality of preying.

101.

Women get drunk or high and place themselves in reckless, compromising and dangerous situations with men they hardly know - or with men they know only too well. Some women flirt aggressively or make out egregiously, seductively, and invitingly with no intention to follow through to full-fledged sex. Ineluctably, many of these women end up being sexually assaulted or even raped by unscrupulous, predatory men.

Nonconsensual sex is a crime and should always be punished harshly.

But [falsely promising sex](#) by word or by abundance of unequivocal actions should be equally criminalized as a form of fraudulent misconduct.

Men should be able to recover costs and damages from these "playful" counterparties, including for distress and hurt feelings.

Promises - made verbally or behaviorally - are binding and should be kept: look up promissory estoppel and breach of promise (mainly in marriage). Leading on and misrepresentation should be a crime not only in business and should have adverse actionable and tort or public reputation consequences and not only in politics.

102.

"I will never meet him again!" Every rape counsellor can confirm that this is the standard "punishment" meted out to the perpetrators by female victims of [rape, sexual assault, or other forms of coercive, non-consensual sex](#). "That's it! He will never see me again!" But how is this "threat" a punishment? It is laughable! It implies that the culprit WANTS to reunite with his prey. Nothing, of course, could be further from the truth.

As @reframingtheself observes, it is a grandiose attempt by the victim to restore her shattered self-esteem and sense of control. Victims react to all manner of

trauma with narcissistic and psychopathic behaviors and traits ("overlay").

The perpetrator got everything that he wanted - sex!!! The victim has nothing more to offer him that he wants. In the wake of the crime, his only fervent desire is to never again lay eyes on the woman! "We will never be together again" is, therefore, not a penalty - but a granted wish, a reward. The molester is counting on the victim's avoidance and silence to evade all accountability and the consequences of his misdeeds.

103.

Men and women born after 1995 maintain an "intimacy cloud": their marriage or committed relationship is only one liaison among a few and, sometimes, not even a privileged or unique one.

In these post-modern arrangements within the hookup culture, the intimate partners compete for the time, resources, and access to sex of their mates with work colleagues, same-sex friends, friends with benefits, opposite-sex friends, former old flames, schoolmates, have been and wannabe lovers, and other denizens of the [intimacy cloud](#) with whom close and recurrent meaningful contact is maintained throughout the life of the primary couple.

Increasingly, even sexual and dating exclusivity are challenged by the members of these young generations. A full 3% now openly profess to regarding their boyfriend, girlfriend, or spouse as just another intimate or sex partner among many. They date others frequently and see nothing wrong with it. Another 10-15% are in consensual open relationships and 21% are in sexless dyads.

Consequently, among young men and women in committed primary relationships, behaviors hitherto considered egregious misconduct have exploded, even quadrupled in incidence: adultery, casual sex (one night stands), getting drunk or high with a friend and then sleeping over ("he is like a brother to me, not a man!"), all-nighter solitary bar-hopping, travelling on holidays with someone other than the ostensibly main intimate partner, chatting or picking up total strangers in restaurants and pubs, sharing drinks or hotel room ("crashing") with unknowns, and similar non-monogamous manifestations.

104.

There are [four categories of cheating on an intimate partner](#):

1. Deceitful: run of the mill surreptitious unfaithfulness intended to compensate for lacks in the adulterer's primary relationship or life and expressive of

deficient coping strategies, self-inefficacy, and deepset character flaws;

2. Ostentatious: intended to triangulate with a third party, elicit jealousy, and, ironically, provoke the complacent and indifferent partner into resuscitating the relationship;

3. Projective: intended to end the relationship by forcing the wronged intimate partner into the villain's role, rendering him or her paranoid, aggressive, and controlling. Dumping the partner then becomes both easier and justified. Such affairs or one night stands usually involve the shocking, out of the blue, and scorchingly humiliating public misconduct of the perpetrator;

4. Bridge: intended to sever the emotional bonds, burn all the bridges back to the dysfunctional relationship, breach all the verbal and unspoken understandings underlying the dyad, and propel the disloyal traitorous partner to move on to greener pastures.

105.

Is it possible to cheat on a [cuckold](#) (a man who gets off on watching his woman make out or copulate with other men)?

Of course it is.

When the cuckold is not informed of his partner's dalliance with another man, or when, having been informed, he withholds his consent - anything his partner does amounts to cheating.

Many cuckolds insist on being present during the sex, actively participating in it, "directing" the scene, placing strict boundaries on permissible behaviors, and controlling a lot of what goes on.

There is no cheating only if the partner's sex with others elicits positive emotions all around and overall (a little jealousy is inevitable), when the act is negotiated and agreed to well in advance, is voluntary on both sides, and not presented as a shocking and humiliating fait accompli.

Cheating involves the heartbreaking and disorientating loss of trust owing to

deception and betrayal. The cheated party also mourns the intimacy his partner seemed to have found with another. None of these happen in a well-regulated lifestyle of swinging and cuckoldry.

106.

When should you [forgive your cheating partner](#) and give the relationship, such as it is, a second chance? It depends on the answers to three questions. This is the male perspective, but it applies to the other side as well: just change the personal pronouns.

1. Why did she cheat? Was it NOT in order to satisfy unmet emotional needs but merely because of a penchant for novelty and risk taking? Did she feel compelled to have sex with the other party (out of fear, or gratitude, or pity, or pressure, or building expectations)? Did she lead him on, did all the flirting? Was she drunk or high? Did she initiate the sex? Did she place herself squarely in compromising circumstances bound to lead to sexual assault or voluntary lovemaking? Did she mean to hurt you, take revenge, or provoke your jealousy (triangulate)? Was there malice involved: rage, defiance, and disappointment? If the answer is "yes" to ANY of these questions, walk away, the relationship is hopelessly doomed: the betrayal will happen again.

2. Was sex the ineluctable outcome of her choices, decisions, and behaviors? Could she reasonably have expected the situation to deteriorate or become risky and end in copulation? Accepting the possibility of eventual sex is the same like choosing to have sex. Say goodbye to such a partner.

3. Most importantly: did she replace you with him even for one night? Were they emotionally intimate, hugged, kissed, touched, danced, socialized, spent quality time together, had fun, talked endlessly, laughed at each other's jokes ... In short: was he her new full-fledged intimate partner, no matter how transiently? If so, quit. It is one thing to merely have sex - it is another issue altogether to find a "rescuer", dump you emotionally, transfer her allegiance and commitment to him, badmouth you, betray your secrets, and find in the new Man the comfort, affection, friendship, warmth, and intimacy that she feels that she lacks with you.

107.

When a [woman cheats on an intimate partner](#), it is typically because she feels unfathomably lonely & miserable owing to egregiously unmet emotional & sexual needs. She is unseen, transparent to her mate. Frequently, she also abused routinely, at least verbally.

The cheating act - especially if it is a one night affair - provides distraction, but, more importantly, a restorative male gaze: the other man proffers the attention, empathy, support, a modicum of intimacy, & lust so sorely lacking in the primary connection. Less commonly it is an act of triangulation intended to hurt the primary partner or elicit a reaction from him (being noticed by him, jealousy)

Women who end up having sex outside the couple sometimes do so because they feel grateful to the new entrant: they may believe that giving their sex is part of the implicit deal struck when they have agreed to date him, that they had led the man on. They may also fear rape if they are perceived as mere teasers. There is also a sense of liberating adventure, novelty, & the allure of the forbidden. And having sex helps to revive the woman's flagging self-esteem & awaken her battered femininity.

Having sex with another man usually makes it easier to break up with an abuser or an incompatible partner: it severs the powerful bonds of consensual exclusive attachment.

Some women prepare themselves rather reluctantly for the ineluctable sexual denouement by drinking or getting high. Psychoactive substances reduce inhibitions ("I don't care anymore"), render an even unattractive man irresistible (beer goggles), provide an excuse for misbehavior between the sheets, & engender growing closeness between the drinking or smoking buddies as time passes.

Still, in the majority of cases of straying, women seek only companionship. That many of these events end in actual copulation has little to do with female choice: it demonstrates the ubiquity of sexual assault in the compromising circumstances & situations that many women create with their unwise - desperate, defiant, or impulsive - decisions.

108.

Polonius gives this advice to Laertes in "Hamlet": "To thine own self be true. Thou canst not then be false to any man."

[Erotomania](#) is the delusional belief that another person - who is usually unattainable or unavailable - is infatuated or in love with the erotomaniac. It involves referential ideation (ideas of reference): the conviction that actions and utterances by the target are coded messages intended for the erotomaniac. It

usually results in extreme stalking behaviors, like home invasion or even kidnapping.

Milder, functional versions of erotomania abound. One of the diagnostic criteria of Histrionic Personality Disorder is: "considers relationships to be more intimate than they actually are." Similarly, men suffer from sexual overperception bias: the erroneous belief that women who are being nice to them or laugh at their jokes are also sexually attracted.

When erotomaniacs are frustrated, having dramatically misjudged the extent, depth, or type of the commitment in the relationship - they frequently become enraged, vindictive, and defiant. They decompensate and act out recklessly and hurtfully.

More about the erotomaniac stalker

here: <https://samvak.tripod.com/abusefamily18.html>

109.

There are [two types of triangulation](#) (using a third party to manage the emotional, intimacy, and transactional aspects of a relationship): breakup and restorative.

Breakup triangulation involves overt and ostentatious cheating with a third party in conjunction with other egregious misbehavior. Its aim is to irrevocably break up with a current partner.

Why triangulate rather than simply terminate? A myriad reasons: revenge, rage, community property, inability to let go (codependency), restoring the cheater's self-esteem, feeling desirable and alive again, obtaining succor and ersatz intimacy, or uncertainty about one's true wishes.

But usually, it is simply the desire to cast one's mate as the villain who ended it all because of he is insanely jealous and not magnanimous or empathic enough to forgive and understand.

Restorative triangulation has the exact opposite goal: to revive the relationship by provoking an emotional response from the jilted partner. Such triangulation involves the mere favorable mention of another person, hints at possible misconduct or compromising circumstances, or, at a maximum, aggressive flirting and non-penetrative sex acts, such as kissing, petting (making out), or

hugging.

Triangulation is a last resort and risky strategy. It often escalates counterproductively into sexual assault by the recruited third party or results in an extreme reaction by the offended partner who chooses to discard an unfaithful, disrespectful, narcissistic, and dysempathic counterparty.

110.

MAN

[Why did you cheat on me with someone so vastly inferior to me?](#) He is ugly, penniless, paranoid, junkie, drunk, unemployed, indolent, and, generally, a beta loser

WOMAN

Because he gave me what you wouldn't, never mind how much I begged you to.

He flooded me with attention, affection, support, succor, and passionate desire. He wanted me in every way. He gave me hours of listening and handholding and the intimacy of inside jokes and of dancing and socializing and doing small inconsequential things together.

He was far superior to you in every way that mattered. He did not abuse me. I lit up his world and his face every time he saw me.

MAN

He wanted you only in one way and solely for one thing and you know it!

He was FAKING all the rest and not very well, if I may add.

WOMAN

True, he was - and, of course I knew it, I am not dumb or gullible.

But, you see, the very fact that he had bothered to fake it, that he had invested so much into making me believe his lies - this very exertion flattered me and proved to me that he cared about having me.

After the years of zero emotions with you, of taking me for granted - even these breadcrumbs of attention and effort and time and lust overwhelmed me with

gratitude and elicited in me the wish to reciprocate, to show him in every way how much I appreciate it - and him. So, I did. I gave him all of me, my body first and foremost.

As opposed to you, he toiled hard for it and at the end of every evening, he had earned it, this prize that was me.

And it didn't really matter how much IQ or money he had or how far he got in life or how many of his teeth were missing or whether he looked like a roadkill

The only thing that meant something to me was to glimpse myself through his adoring, desirous eyes, to gauge my reflection and to be able to find myself as lovable and as wanted as you have never made me feel. I did not want him, really, but I wanted him to want me, because it made me come alive, finally.

111.

How long will it take you to recover from a traumatic breakup or from infidelity by your cherished partner? And will you be able to remain friends afterwards or will you go no contact? Will you try again, give each other a second chance at relationship recovery?

Answer these six questions in the [Heartbreak and Recovery Scale](#) (HeRS):

1. Did what s/he do come as a shock to you - or was it predictable, the culmination of a visible process?
2. Did s/he humiliate you in the process, especially in public and in front of your peers?
3. Did you react with anger or even rage that just wouldn't go away?
4. Following the events, were you desperate and in the throes of catastrophising ("I will never find someone to replace her") or negative automatic thoughts ("I always fail in my relationships")?
5. In the aftermath, did you experience profound sadness (dysphoria) and nothing gave you pleasure (anhedonia)?
6. Finally, in the wake of the dissolution of the bond, did you feel excruciating

pain, overwhelming romantic jealousy, or pathological envy?

If you scored 2-3, it is improbable that you will ever be in touch again. A score of 4 prefaces a new phase of mere friendship or companionship between the two of you. A score of 5 or 6 leads to frenzied - though usually doomed - attempts to restore the relationship to its former romantic self.

112.

If she cheated on you once, she is likely to do it again (serial cheating). If he takes actions (not just talk) to triangulate with another person, he will probably end up double-timing with her or with someone else soon thereafter. If you fell victim to infidelity once, it will happen to you again and with multiple partners. Facts.

This is because adultery is the outcome of selecting for wrong mates repeatedly, mismanaging relationships similarly, and mishandling by the cheater of his or her inexorable dysregulated emotions and moods. Straying is a cry for help, a sign of debilitating distress, and the dead canary in the relationship's deepest mine shafts.

[Pain aversion leads to self-deception](#). The injured party often has access to all the relevant information, the bulk of which is provided by the guilt-ridden and shamefaced fornicator. But denial and reframing set in to twist the facts into a palatable, non-injurious tale of innocence, innocuousness, and happenstance. Narcissistic defenses - such as invulnerability and grandiosity - kick in to mask the betrayal.

113.

Casual sex with strangers (one night stands, or [stranger sex](#)) sometimes devolves into extreme humiliation and even outright infliction of pain. These outlier experiences could fulfill either of several psychological functions:

1. Experimenting with novelty without the risk of being judged and without caring about the sex partner's opinion. The absence of long-term consequences and future reminders (it is, after all, a one time encounter) encourage sexual daring and openness and result in trying out kink and other forms of "deviant or perverted" sex.

2. (Applies to women only) By picking an inferior or lowlife partner and then allowing him to use her body with no constraining rules or boundaries, women self-trash, self-punish, self depreciate, self destruct, and uphold their self-perception as a "bad, unworthy, dumb, defiled slut". Where there is a rejecting and abusive intimate partner in the picture, it is also a way to "devalue his property" by rendering herself a "whore"

3. Restoring one's self-esteem via the other's out of control, bestial desire: the more extreme the sex acts, the more carnally irresistible the violated or raped or humiliated party feels.

4. Sex with unknown and, therefore, potentially dangerous partners is - oddly! - palliative: the fight, freeze, fawn, or fight response required to survive the night distracts from and ameliorates overwhelming and dysregulated negative emotions, such as depression, disappointment, and anger.

114.

Does he [accuse you of cheating on him](#) all the time? There could be three reasons for his abuse: two of them malignant and one benign.

1. He may be projecting. Actually, he is the one who is cheating or considering to cheat. He assumes that you are in the throes of the same state of mind as he is.

2. He wants to legitimize his adultery or two-timing. If you are cheating - why can't he? And, if you started it, he still maintains the high moral ground, regardless of his peccadillos.

3. He wants to initiate a dialog on opening up the relationship and granting both of you the freedom to be with others, sexually. He just doesn't know how to do it, he feels awkward, he is afraid to hurt you - so he immaturely aggresses.

115.

Both having free choice and maintaining meaningful relationships provoke angst (anxiety or dread) in [broken, damaged, traumatized, or mentally ill people](#).

This existential crisis is further exacerbated to unbearable and intolerable levels by a rejecting and abusive partner. The resulting pain leads to decompensation and to reckless, self-destructive and self-trashing acting out. Such people, often on sudden impulse, then team up with rogue, dangerous, psychopathic, and predatory counterparties as instruments of personal doom and self-mutilation

for one night or longer.

Egregious misbehavior is irresistible in such circumstances because it fulfills multiple critical psychological roles and needs. Apart from self-debasement and self-punishment, it also provides ersatz empathic intimacy from the new partner and serves as a signalling function: a cry for help, a beacon of distress, intended to elicit a reaction - any reaction! - from the intransigent significant other.

Post-traumatized people have zero tolerance for uncertainty. The intimate partner's approach-avoidance and intermittent reinforcement (abuse-love bombing-grooming-hoovering) drive them up the insanity wall.

Misbehaving badly in any way (including ostentatious cheating) is a way of forcing the partner's hand: wake up, forgive me, and love me from now on - or dump me and let me go. It is brinkmanship at its most acute and actually a rational strategy.

116.

There are 4 variants of the [pandemic of emotional or physical cheating](#): 1. Ostentatious-malicious (intended to triangulate or hurt the cheater's intimate partner); 2. Deceptive (most common); 3. Functional (pressure valve to alleviate stress, palliate, or meet needs, usually in a "don't ask, don't tell" permissive agreement with the partner); and 4. Open-contractual (as in open relationship or marriage)

Recent studies show that half of all cheaters are happy in their marriages and love their partners. The most common reason for straying given by women was: inequality of burden-sharing (not falling out of love, unmet needs, or boredom – but drudgery!). Two-timing had become a psychopathic (antisocial) impulsive mode of protest and subversion of traditional gender roles. It levels the playing field, fostering unigender and gender vertigo.

Themselves children of divorce, young people are disinclined to separate. Why bother? The next intimate partner is bound to be as bad (or as good) as the current one. Cheating is a narcissistic plan B: have the marital cake and eat the forbidden fruit too. Deception, dysempathy, disintimacy, and blind egotism are now widely perceived as positive and self-efficacious adaptations with beneficial outcomes.

Over the past 300 years, we have revamped our behaviors and values, doubled our life expectancy (which rendered monogamy and a partnership for life impractical), and revolutionized our communications and transportation

technologies. Our millennia-old institutions, though, have barely changed to accommodate these tectonic shifts. Anomie, atomization, alienation, irrationality, rampant mental illness, multiple dysfunctionality, mob rule, and rabid narcissism are the costs of this failure to reform.

117.

Men choose a casual sexual partner based on one of three parameters (opportunity, availability, visual cues). Women go through a whopping 39 criteria before they agree to copulate.

This is why women may end up having one night stands even with ugly junkie bum losers: they "saw something in him" (read: he passed some of the 39 tests). Women's sexuality is plastic: a woman will have sex with a man she pities or out of gratitude or because he is intelligent, funny, kind, interesting, attentive, finds her irresistible, pleasant to be around ... the list is 39 items long.

Similarly, the [mating \(mate selection\) algorithm](#) is different between men and women. Men first feel carnally attracted and are then driven to act on their lust. Women's bodies react exactly as men's do: blood flows to all the right places. But they consciously experience arousal only AFTER they have decided to sleep with the man (in other words: after he had been vetted by passing some of the 39 exams)

Different evolutionary paths account for this disparateness: Nature encourages men to be promiscuous and women to think twice. Reproductive strategies reflect the anticipated investment of scarce resources: even in post-modern societies, women are the ones who get stuck with the bill: pregnancy and childrearing.

118.

"It was meaningless sex, she (or he) meant nothing to me!" is the stock response of cheating men (and, increasingly, women). I always found this odd reassurance odiously offensive. It only makes matters worse and hurts even more.

To start with it is never true: there is no such animal as "meaningless" sex. [Sex](#) - even the casual sort with a virtual stranger - always has some intimate and emotional psychosexual background. There is mutual affection exchanged, gratitude expressed, self-esteem buttressed, pity or protectiveness felt, attraction articulated, smells and tastes enjoyed, support given, exuberance, possessiveness, and, often, hopes and expectations aroused.

But, far more importantly: if he or she really meant nothing to you and the sex was that irrelevant - why risk devastating your significant other for no value? Surely, the happiness and wellbeing of your intimate life partner matter more than an orgasm with a nonentity? Or do they?

119.

Studies have consistently demonstrated that both men and women often - though by no means always! - [cheat on their primary partners with far inferior lovers or mistresses](#): uglier, or older, less intelligent, unattractive, or less accomplished. Why would anyone trade down? When the sexual or emotional affairs are exposed, the cheated spouses are aghast at their unintelligibly poor replacements: they feel humiliated and narcissistically injured.

But, actually, such choices of "safe" stand-ins signal an abiding and deep commitment to the relationship with the deceived significant other.

In a relationship that had become emotionless and sexless, the partners have an irresistible urge to satisfy their needs for affection, succor, and intimacy, sometimes including closeness of the physical sort, when they miss being wanted and desired both as companions and as sexual objects.

But, if the strayers still value the primary relationship for whatever reason or if they still hold hope for it, they would attempt to avoid an alternative liaison with a potentially serious substitute. They want to not form a new, competing, and equipotent attachment. It is easier to give up on an inferior stopgap romantic counterparty. They want to stray - but never lose sight of the safe and secure base of home.

Only when they have given up all expectations within the morbid primary bond, do they seek other partners with superior qualities. Such choice is the tintinnabulating death knell of the old, now irredeemably defunct love.

120.

There are [three types of promiscuity](#): frequency, conditional-contextual, and standards.

In Frequency Promiscuity, the quantity of partners and sexual encounters is statistically abnormal - but some criteria and standards are maintained throughout with regards to mate selection, what little time is spent together, minimal emotions (liking the partner, affection, feeling good in his company),

and behavioral choices.

In Standards Promiscuity, the numbers of sexual liaisons and disparate partners are not always high but there are no thresholds or benchmarks as to the type of partner chosen or which behaviors are deemed unacceptable: anyone and anything go.

In Conditional Promiscuity, women reward with sex anyone - even a "bad guy" - who is "nice" to them (attentive, protective, and possessive) and finds them irresistibly desirable. It is a meaningless transactional exchange: emotionless sex swapped for worn out pickup lines: better the wrong kind of attention than none.

The first type of promiscuity is not really casual sex: it involves getting to know the prospective sex partner however superficially and cursorily. The second type is compulsive (intended to ameliorate anxiety and depression) and ego dystonic or impulsive (reckless, emotionless, novelty-seeking behavior) and ego syntonic.

Examples:

A heterosexual man who is frequency promiscuous would trawl bars or swipe dating apps to pick up partners for casual sex. But he would be selective as to the physical type of the partner, her psychology, and background. He would also not do drugs or get drunk senseless or visit a brothel. He would spend some time with her, getting to know her better and making up his mind whether he wants to copulate with her or not.

A heterosexual woman who is standards promiscuous will rarely have a one night stand but, when she does, will do it with anyone anywhere at any time. She would also get drunk senseless, do drugs, go to strip clubs, let herself be groped in public or by multiple men, even make herself available to gangbangs, and so on: no standards or inhibitions.

121.

Neglect is when one's intimate partner does not care about one's needs, emotions, or wishes and does not mind or interfere with one's behaviors or choices, however self-destructive or harmful or hurtful they may be.

Two forms of neglect are benign indifference (one's partner is available only on explicit demand, "on call") and malignant freedom: "Feel at liberty to do whatever you want with whoever you wish, just don't bother me with the details"

Neglect is not the same as active and overt verbal, sexual, or emotional rejection: pushing you away and asking you to absent yourself in every way.

Neglect also does not involve withholding of sex or of attention when both are asked for openly and clearly.

But it may well be the most pernicious form of abuse because it implies and broadcasts a lack of emotional investment and interest in the partner that obviates her uniqueness and importance as an individual.

Other forms of abuse: <https://samvak.tripod.com/abuse.html>

122.

[Trust in a relationship](#) relies critically on clear enunciated values, agreed upon rules of conduct and stated boundaries with promulgated sanctions if the above are breached. These interpersonal compacts engender stability, predictability, realistic expectations, and self-regulation.

Testing the trust fostered between the parties is a seriously bad idea. One should avoid placing oneself in temptation's way and in potentially compromising circumstances. The parties should not give in to the grandiose and counterfactual assumption that "nothing will happen if I do not allow it to happen. I've got everything firmly under control. It is safe to misbehave up to a certain point"

Why provoke insecurity and uncertainty in your partner by acting in ways and placing yourself in situations which could go awry despite the best intentions and pre-existing commitments? Human behavior is complex and, therefore, rarely predictable and controllable. Stay on the straight and narrow and where there is doubt or even a 1% chance of mishap and mischief - keep away. Think of your partner's peace of mind and of her trust in you and let go of your "freedom" just a little. After all: grandiosity, dysempathy, risk-taking, novelty seeking, reactance, and defiant autonomy are the hallmarks of ... psychopathy!

123.

Conducting my own mini-poll.

If you are in a committed heterosexual relationship with agreed monogamy and sexual exclusivity (like a marriage), which of the following would you consider to be an [inappropriate behavior](#) on your part:

1. Meeting once a week EVERY WEEK for evening drinks or a dinner with a friend or colleague of the opposite sex who is single
2. Spending the night in a bar with a friend or colleague of the opposite sex and returning home in the early hours of the morning
3. Sharing drinks with a stranger of the opposite sex who you have just met in a bar or in a restaurant
4. Sleeping over on a couch at the apartment of a friend or a colleague of the opposite sex who is single and living by himself
5. Going on a non-business trip or a vacation with a friend or a colleague of the opposite sex who is single
6. Kissing on the mouth and making out (but no sex) with a friend or a colleague of the opposite sex
7. Giving or receiving oral sex (without penetration) to or from a friend or a colleague of the opposite sex
8. Which of these 7 behaviors would you consider as cheating

Kindly indicate your age in your responses.

Feel free to elaborate on your responses and explain the reasoning behind them as well as discuss the issues among yourselves in the comments.

You can also DM me with your answers and reasons.

Thank you for supporting my research.

124.

[Romantic Distancing](#) is when people who used to have a full-fledged relationship remain in the confines of a dyad and share living and business quarters as functional roommates or business partners, but are emotionally

and/or sexually avoidant and absent. They keep on keeping on owing to inertia or habit, community property, common children, peer pressure, social expectations, low self-esteem, economic, legal, or other dependence, pessimism regarding the dating pool out there, sometimes good sex, and any other reasons they can think of.

But many of these disgruntled spouses or partners seek sex, intimacy, and love elsewhere. And a small minority do so openly, ostentatiously, often with their official primary partner present and observing as the flirt with another person evolves into much more.

Why flaunt the extra-dyadic affair so cruelly and egregiously?

There are three successive phases in such radical misbehavior:

I. Triangulation: attempting to rekindle the relationship by provoking jealousy. A cry for help, really: a signaling of distress and dysphoria.

If this fails and the partner couldn't care less there is ...

II. Rage and a wish to hurt the partner's feeling by defiant in-your-face, overt, dysempathic, and disrespectful cheating that he is forced to witness.

III. Gradually, being unfaithful becomes a way to self-soothe and cater to emotional and sexual needs not met by the primary partner. There is little effort to conceal the succession of new lovers because the cheater no longer bothers about his or her partner's emotions and whether s/he is hurt or not. Emotional absence and utter indifference as well as unrelenting and driven selfishness had replaced love, friendship, or even common courtesy. The rationalization is: "He (or she) doesn't care or mind, so why bother to hide it?"

125.

Instances of [casual sex will explode](#) after the pandemic is over. But too much casual sex can impair your ability to associate sex with intimacy: if you do it with strangers often enough, your own partner is rendered just another stranger, a statistic. One night stands become the norm and how you think about sex. Habits mold our neuroplastic brain. Meaningful relationships become impossible in a world of meaningless, physical, often drunk sex: you bond to

your mate in every way, except sexually. People under age 35 - the generations of hookups and dating apps - are already experiencing this self-inflicted disability whenever they try to have a more significant liaison.

Here are some psychosexual rules to follow to mitigate this risk:

1. Never spend too much time with your casual sex partner before you hit the sack. Time shared engenders attachment and intimacy and transforms what should have been a harmless one-off experience into a more meaningful variant, replete with budding emotions (such as affection or even gratitude). Confronted with these mixed signals, our brains react by linking casual sex to intimacy. Henceforth, you will pursue intimacy only in bars and via occasional romps. Bad idea.

2. Exclude certain sex acts and reserve them only for your loved ones. Don't do absolutely everything with everyone, promiscuously or indiscriminately. Refuse to realize all the sexual fantasies of your casual sex partner. Maintain an island of uniqueness and exclusivity: your body should be used to tell your intimate partner how special he or she is to you. If there is nothing you haven't done before with total strangers or acquaintances - in which way can you make your mate feel chosen and unprecedented in your sex life?

3. Don't have too many [one night encounters](#) too often. Don't sever the neural pathways that connect sex to deep and abidingly profound intimacy. Do not overuse your sexuality off-handedly, transforming it into just another bodily function, a mere exchange of excretions, a form of masturbating with other people's genitalia. Do not debase sex to the point that you will think nothing of cheating on your partner or doing it when drunk, wasted, or stoned senseless. Respect yourself and be mindful of the trust issues (and real-life hurt and dangers) that a totally carefree, anarchic attitude to sex can create.

Casual sex can be fun once in a while and can restore one's sense of wellbeing and self-esteem. If it conforms to one's values and upbringing, it is ego-syntonic and not disruptive. There is nothing wrong with it inherently. But like everything else in life, overuse can be detrimental to your psychological health and to your ability to nurture a future connection with that other special person. You can overdose on casual sex. Recent statistics show that young men have 6 and young women a little over 4 such encounters a year. Women are catching up to men. This is way too much. It is toxic.

Life can never be meaningful without meaningful interpersonal relationships, especially with intimate partners or significant others, including friends. Narcissists, psychopaths, histrionics, and borderlines are incapable of having such profound connections, each disorder for its own psychodynamic reasons.

Consequently, even in the best of times and when they are goal-focused, the lives of these people are aimless, diffuse, derealized, depersonalized, confabulated, and dissociative. They meander and wander and stumble through their lives as if they were on a stage set, sempiternal, disinterested, and mildly curious observers of the comings and goings.

Often they end up hurting and traumatizing others more by their absence than by their presence. Lacking object constancy, their "nearest and dearest" are out of mind when they are out of sight. Splitting helps them to justify egregiously immoral, antisocial, harmful, and hurtful misconduct: if your partner or friend is suddenly all bad, intentionally frustrating, persecutory, and evil - surely whatever you do to him or her is in self-defense.

In his unsurpassed masterpiece, "The Mask of Sanity", Cleckley suggests that meaningful relationships "influence to consistent, purposive behavior". Studies - like Lisa Wade's - are demonstrating that the young have elevated meaninglessness to an item of faith: it is bad taste to attach to your sex partner and dating is down 50%, replaced by hookups. Problem is: meaninglessness is malignant and metastasizes to all other areas of life, including marriage (or partnership) and parenthood. It is a psychopathic fixture and goes hand in hand with "pseudologica fantastica" (pathological lying), as Dan Ariely had convincingly demonstrated.

127.

I regard sex by women and men as fundamentally different experiences. "Penetration" is an aggressive male chauvinistic word that refers to the woman as a territory to be probed, invaded, and conquered. Men are as much engulfed and "digested" by women as they pierce them.

With the single exception of rape, the woman has to invite her sex partner in, welcome him warmly, bathe him in her unique libation, and guard his liquid manhood in herself. She is a host, he is a guest in her shrine.

Even in casual sex, the woman gives access to her essence, from the inside. Even a one night stand implies a modicum of intimacy, closeness, naked vulnerability, and total trust between the woman and her sex partner. At least as much friendly confidence as between a hostess and her guest who she invites to the most shielded private recesses of her home.

This is why cheating by his female intimate partner is such a disproportionately devastating blow to the cheated heterosexual man from which he never fully recovers. Women are far less impacted by the sexual-physical aspects of their partner's infidelity precisely because the anatomy is different: when a woman gives consent it is more pronounced, explicit, proactive, significant, and, well ... deeper.

128.

There is a marked decrease in dating (-50%) and [relational sex](#) and a pronounced increase in the frequency of casual stranger sex. Recently, I posted two lengthy videos about promiscuity and casual sex. I left three issues to be explored in a future feature:

1. The proliferation of sublimatory channels.

Sexual energy (a manifestation of the libido, the life force) can be converted and directed into other, socially conformist, venues, like artistic creativity or politics.

Modern technologies have empowered us and granted us access to so many new or hitherto inaccessible activities that sex had been pushed to the bottom of the list. Simply, we are too busy to copulate and sex has to compete with other equipotent distractions and diversions.

2. The male brain perceives pornography as the real thing. The female brain similarly reacts to erotic and chic lit. This renders sex with a flesh and blood partner a poor, logistically fraught substitute best avoided except as a last resort.

3. As both men and women became way more narcissistic or even psychopathic and as the numbers of broken and damaged victims and survivors of abuse proliferated, the pool of eligible acceptable partners shrank dramatically. People are more demanding, self-centred, dysempathic, grandiose, defiant, impulsive, incapable of attachment and bonding, leery of intimacy, and less prone to compromise.

The effort and performance required today in establishing and maintaining a

viable longish-term dyad far outweigh and outstrip anything expected in the past. Breakups, divorces, and infidelity are stratospherically high - so, why bother? The prize is no longer worth the price and it is all for one night, anyhow.

129.

Both Picasso and Einstein would have been considered abusers nowadays. With such a reputation, women would have shunned them, regardless of their genius or celebrity status. See Harvey Weinstein.

It wasn't always like that. In my youth, [geniuses were allowed to mistreat other people](#), including and especially their intimate partners and nearest and dearest. The genius's infidelity, outbursts, moodiness, and absences were the price one paid for the once in a lifetime privilege of sharing a life with a luminary. It was both expected and accepted.

Today, physical appearance and a kind personality (real or feigned) are the two parameters that determine attraction. A towering intellect, an overabundance of talents, skills, and expertise are major turn offs and their bearers are derided, hated, suspected, and shunned. In these uncertain times, there is safety in mediocrity, similarity, and predictability. The irrational is comforting, the stupid congregate, the losers afford each other succor. Alpha winners are hunted, penalized, or avoided altogether, by both genders.

130.

[Pick-up artists](#) (PUA) are communities of men, guided by self-imputed "experts" who purport to have found the exact sequences of buttons to push to get a woman to succumb and offer access to her body.

They fail to see the irony: like homebroken and trained puppies they jump through hoops held high by females and adhere religiously to a script written entirely by the fairer sex: "You want to sleep with me? You have to go through these motions and act clownishly for hours"

I have even less respect for self-disparaging and self-loathing incels who whine constantly and pathetically about being shunned by women and how they have a god-given right to sex, by force if need be (black pillers). Some of these misfits even undergo extensive cosmetic surgeries to fix their "facial deformities", a form of body dysmorphic insanity known as lookmaxing.

Red pillers are more benign: they claim only to have seen the light and the true

nature of women as rapacious and psychopathic entities who leverage the institutions of society to their unbridled and dysempathic benefit.

The logical extension of this alleged power asymmetry is to avoid all committed relationships (casual sex is fine): enter MGTOW (Men Going Their Own Way)

There is no question that traditional gender roles are dead and that sex has become merely a physical function, no longer associated with intimacy. Both men and women feel disoriented and overlooked in this maelstrom of gender vertigo.

It is also true that women are empowered and, having been only recently emancipated, are imitating the traits and behaviors of antisocial men. It is a veritably post-apocalyptic age for relationships and dating.

But the solution is not avoidance or manipulation. We need a new social contract between the bearers of disparate genitalia. And we need with our heads rather than with our nether organs.

131.

[How to tell apart a one night stand with a stranger from a first date that ends with sex?](#)

1. Casual sex is focused on the act and takes place after a brief chance encounter in a bar, pub, restaurant, club, dating app or site, a party.

Dating is more involved and time consuming: it requires coordination, spending time together, getting to know each other, and engaging in other activities, such as attending an event, dancing, or socializing.

2. Partners to a one night stand are selected mostly based on their looks or physical attractiveness, often fuelled by alcohol ("beer goggles"). Personality matters only in date sex. In casual sex people end up in bed because they turn each other on. In dating, they end up having sex because they fascinate or like each other or for some other emotional or transactional reason ("owing" the other, for example).

3. One night stands may result in one more encounter, but rarely lead to a relationship. Dating sex morphs into more much more often.

4. Casual sex evokes instant diffuse, weak, consistent, body-focused, and stable emotionality: gratification relaxation, comfort, a general "feel good" fuzzy factor. There is no psychological intimacy, just the physical kind.

Emotions and intimacy in dating start low. They are hesitant and diffuse in the first few minutes. They coalesce, focus, become clearer, and intensify with hours spent together to the point of communicating positive feelings - anything from gratitude to affinity to infatuation - via sex.

5. One night stands with strangers are unambiguous: the acquaintance with the partner is so brief, cursory, superficial, and forgettable that it borders on anonymity.

Date sex comes after getting to know the partner substantively over hours of talking and interacting with him or her in various settings and sometimes with other people. The acquaintance is much deeper and consequently the sex is less perfunctory or emotionless.

6. Finally, in casual sex, the transition from hanging out together to full-fledged sex is abrupt and transactional: the parties waste little time on banter and are focused on the gratification.

In dating, courting and signalling precede the sexual act, which is a culmination of fondness and intimacy, however minimal.

132.

When intimate partners cheat on each other, they ease their conscience and allay their guilt and shame via a "deceitful confession": coming clean about certain facts and circumstances while altering, minimizing, or denying outright the more egregious misconduct, the core of the transgression.

The aim is utterly selfish: to unburden the offender but without hurting his significant other with exclamation like "what s/he doesn't know won't hurt her/him" or "what happened there, stayed there, it was totally meaningless and I will never see this person again"

Examples of deceitful confessions:

I just (danced with him, kissed her), but it stopped there, I got hold of myself,

nothing else happened

We got drunk, so we slept overnight in a hotel room, that's all.

I spent the night at his apartment, but he is an old friend, like a brother to me.

I stumbled and fell all over her, so we started talking and we have common friends. I am meeting her to have a quick bite.

[Deceitful confessions](#) make matters worse. They only amplify the emotional damage made to the intimate partner and the wreckage in the relationship.

Why engage in acts that are evidently massively injurious to someone you claim to care about and love - if these misdeeds are so meaningless to you and so casual that they can be glossed over so effortlessly? If the sex with another person was so forgettable, why not forget about it to start with?

But of course in an age of ubiquitous narcissism and psychopathy, self-gratification trumps impulse control and one's needs, however trivial, invariably take precedence over another's wellbeing, however profound.

133.

[Conditional love](#) is offered only when the love object takes certain actions or attains certain performance criteria. In contradistinction, pernicious or toxic love sends a mixed signal: "Only I love you because you are not lovable and you are better off dead"

Conditioned love connects love to certain acts and minimum accomplishments. Toxic love links love to pain, hurt, and self-eradication.

People exposed to intermittent love in early childhood bribe other people to secure their caring and succor. They become people-pleasers, codependents, histrionics, or narcissists. People who grew up with dual signaling (I love you - you are unlovable - kill yourself) end up being internalizing borderlines, schizoids, schizotypals, or externalizing psychopaths.

All these intimacy-challenged, intimacy-anorectic types have rejection sensitivity coupled with zero latency: no matter how emotionally invested they are in another person, the minute they anticipate or perceive rejection, they catastrophize and instantly switch off any emotions they may have had. They do not mourn or grieve and they immediately transition to a new love interest or friend, in some cases within minutes from the breakup.

134.

Many of you have been so wounded in the past that you do not trust yourself to make the right decisions anymore.

You let these bad advisors: [anxiety, wariness, and even fear](#) dictate your choices and decisions and constrict your life.

In modern society, we are narcissistically obsessed with avoiding hurt, pain, and death altogether or at least postponing them indefinitely.

But pain and death are the only two things, apart from love, that give life any meaning. They are the greatest teachers, the engines of personal growth and development.

Even depression is not such a bad thing. It is like trash collection: it is how we process inner debris.

We should not seek these negative emotions and experiences out - but we should welcome them with an open mind and, much more crucially, an open heart.

135.

[Sexual inflation](#) is when women offer unconditional sex with no strings attached. Such behavioral choice leads to a precipitous decline in committed relationships and a commensurate rise in casual sex.

Throughout the history of our species women traded access to their bodies as vessels of both sexual gratification and childbearing (pregnancy). Men provided, in return, proteins: as nutritional supplements (game meat they had hunted for), as sperm, and packaged in muscles. They guarded their women and children (really enslaved chattel) from incursions by other men.

Typically, men euphemistically relabelled this possessiveness "protection" and the whole unsavory arrangement "marriage". But nowadays as sex is freely and instantly available, men have little incentive to commit. Women are no longer dependent on men for any of the traditional functions.

The foundation of the inter-gender compact have crumbled, gender roles became fluid and fused (unigender), and this frustration led to aggression (radical feminism and the manosphere). Gender vertigo ensued: men and

women are exceedingly wary of each other and repeated hurt and abuse perpetrated by both parties is driving most people to opt for an atomized, solitary, self-sufficient existence as a lifestyle choice.

136.

People are [emotionally or sexually unfaithful](#) to their partner for dozens of unrelated reasons. Often an affair is merely an attempt at self-exploration. But in some cases, cheating - whether a love liaison or a one night stand - is the only way to transition out of an addictive relationship founded on trauma bonding or even mere pity. Even if the partner is not aware of the transgression, the offending party is and it is often enough to bring about the separation.

Intimacy with a third party is empowering: it restores the cheater's self-esteem and confidence, makes him or her feel desirable, less tolerant of the absence, rejection, and maltreatment meted out by the spouse or mate. Having alternatives does wonders to one's sense of personal autonomy and self-efficacious agency.

Being loved by an outsider - even if only briefly and physically - proves to the straying party that s/he deserves better. It is also, of course, a way to sever the emotional bonding conferred by exclusivity, to disinvest in and divest from the failed dyad (decathect)

Sometimes, desperate to eject, cheaters self-trash recklessly with highly inappropriate partners and in insalubrious circumstances in order to render themselves "damaged goods" and make it easier for their partners to give up on them.

With narcissistic, borderline, and psychopathic cheaters, the act buttresses injured grandiosity: the hidden and forbidden makes them feel special and superior as well as righteously vengeful and omnipotent.

137.

Women weigh the looks of a potential partner for casual sex & then, to a lesser extent, his personality & mind.

On a date (or a relationship) - even a single outing - personality is king: is he attentive, nice, kind, empathic, supportive, and attracted? Looks come second and the mind matters but only up to a point: average intelligence is less intimidating than genius and a sense of humor has to be accessible in order to register at all.

The personalities of narcissists - both cerebral and somatic - are exceedingly obnoxious and repulsive. Laughable pomposity combines with outlandish grandiosity and sadistic misogyny with objectifying chauvinism.

All types of narcissists are, therefore, forced to labor inordinately hard to get any woman to just glance their way, let alone date them or sleep with them.

Only damaged, broken, promiscuous, & mentally ill women deign to consider the narcissist as a mate or a date. And even these bottom of the barrel specimen invariably recoil and jump ship after a short while.

The cerebral - of less than average good looks to start with - spends months upon months targeting potential sexual partners in pyrotechnic displays of superior intellectual fireworks which usually backfire: most women find such ostentatious efforts to impress them into submission manipulative and creepy.

The somatic dedicates the same amount of time, albeit behind the scenes, honing his body into an irresistible proposition. Women go to bed with the somatic only to then discard him as so much wet Kleenex, disposable & forgettable.

So, while the somatic scores much more often than the cerebral, his return on investment is also derisory.

Still, at least the [somatic has some sex life. The cerebral is doomed to long celibate stretches](#) - years or decades! - without regular female company & sex. Even his "intimate" partners cheat on him serially & overtly with other men. He ends up being a pitiable meal ticket in a sexless liaison, a sugar daddy, or the infrequent client of cheap sex workers as he gets older.

138.

People tend to mate or copulate with partners who are more or less equal to them in every way - or physically superior. Members of the manosphere misuse the term "hypergamy" to refer to the latter preference.

Less known is the fact that, with the exception of a precious few self-styled "sapiosexuals", the vast majority of people assiduously avoid potential mates with an IQ considerably higher than theirs. They are positively turned off and intimidated by such a discrepancy.

These preferences have to do with psychological defenses aimed at preventing narcissistic injuries (humiliation arising from conspicuous inferiority) and preserving the integrity and functioning of the ego or the self. Envy and competition are also involved in such avoidance.

Finally: people feel elevated and elated when they have a relationship, however cursory, with physically superior partners. They attribute the mate selection to their own attractive personality or style.

But [everyone feel exploited, hypervigilant, anxious, paranoid, and vaguely menaced when they team up with their intellectual superiors](#). People wonder why they were chosen: what is in it for the more intelligent counterpart. They become suspicious of ulterior motives and a hidden agenda. They anticipate abandonment and loss sooner or later, when their inferior faculties are exposed.

139.

Imagine the following two scenarios:

1. Your wife returns home at 5 AM and tells you that she ran across her colleague in an afterwork bar. They spent the entire night talking and reminiscing, but nothing inappropriate and sexual happened. It was such heartwarming fun that they decided to meet again from time to time: she even intends to bring him home and introduce him to you.

2. The octogenarian widowed neighbor from upstairs dropped by while you were away. He was so lonely, depressed, and heartbroken that your wife let him fondle her breasts and touch her genitalia in order to lift his spirits (if nothing else besides)

Strangely, the first scenario is likely to render you far more jealous than the second one. It is because romantic jealousy is not about sex at all. It is about intimacy and it is a form of extreme anxiety about anticipated loss, rejection, and abandonment. The risk of losing your wife to the animated corpse from the floor above is zilch - but her colleague can definitely make a move on her and the way she had already reacted to his company indicates that he stands a chance of breaking up your marriage.

People also often confuse humiliation (narcissistic mortification) with [romantic jealousy](#). Being cheated on undermines one's sense of safety and creates disorientation, confusion, and minacious insecurity. Infantile regression triggers

infantile defenses, extreme neediness, entitlement, petulance, and a passive-aggressive wish to destroy the frustrating and hurtful object. But all these have nothing to do with romantic jealousy. In other words: it is possible to be devastated by your wife's cheating and still not feel romantically jealous or possessive at all.

140.

There is an almighty confusion, even among mental health practitioners and in diagnostic bibles, such as ICD-10, between the dom in BDSM (with hyperdominant sexuality) and the [sexual sadist](#).

The dom (top) seeks to please his submissive (bottom) partner by subjecting her to pain, humiliation, and degradation. His arousal crucially depends on the power he exercises over her and on her overt excitement at the wielding of his dominance. The sadist is turned on only by the evident suffering and repulsion of his counterparty during the intercourse.

BDSM is consensual and, often, compassionate and considerate. Sadism in bed is exercised either without consent or with coerced consent which is extorted reluctantly and, usually, under explicit or implicit threat of abandonment.

The sadist dehumanizes his partner and reduces her to body parts. To him, she is not a human being, let alone a woman or even a sexual entity. He is out to spoil, dismantle, and corrupt her, as children do with toys. His main desire is to witness her unbelieving horror at what is being done to her, at her psychological or physical mutilation, and at the cheer and gratification on her tormentor's face as he proceeds with his gruesome business. Her nauseating disgust, extreme discomfort, and palpable hurt, debasement, and agony are his aphrodisiacs. Conventional vanilla sex actually turns him off.

141.

[Sex can be a way to avoid intimacy](#) rather than experience or enhance it. By reducing the partners to fetishized body parts or objectifying them into animated dildos and dolls, the act becomes impersonal and auto-erotic rather than intimate. The partner remains largely anonymous and is then discarded perfunctorily and is easily forgotten.

Such casual one night stands usually occur a short time into a random meeting with a stranger in a bar or a party. Few meaningful words are exchanged: bodies speak and seductive flirtation usurps real conversation and getting to know each other. Even just hanging out, having fun is perceived as a wasteful prologue

best truncated. People think with their crotches and reduce the other to his or her genitalia and erogenous zones.

This urgency and one track mindedness are what distinguish true casual sex from a first and even only consummated date.

142.

If your intimate partner or spouse is uttering ANY of these sentences, s/he is [about to cheat on you](#) and s/he knows that it is almost certainly going to happen:

No need for abandonment anxiety

These are just your insecurities

You are being insanely jealous/paranoid

I am just going for a drink with him/her

You should trust me/don't you trust me?

He is like a brother (she is family) to me

We are going to just discuss work

Actually, I don't find him/her attractive/interesting

I didn't know he/she is going to be there

I will be back before you know it

I just need some personal space and time

S/he wants to discuss something highly personal with me, so it is better if we are alone

I will never cheat on you

Feel free to add your own "pearls" of protestations of innocence and faux or guilt-driven displays of goodwill.

143.

[Cheating](#) with no intent to exit the shared fantasy - even with the same man repeatedly - does not provoke romantic jealousy in the narcissist.

Actually, cheating with the same man preserves the idealized version of the woman, while casual, sluttish sex challenges or destroys it.

So, the narcissist prefers the former: if she has a stable, long-term, intimate lover or if she has sex with someone she has known for a long time – but only someone who does not threaten the shared fantasy with him.

The shared fantasy demands presence and availability. If the narcissist is busy (not available) or absent, the woman is free to do as she wishes (object inconstancy). But if he is available and present, she should be all his, exclusively. If she then spends time with other men, he perceives it as a rejection of the shared fantasy and it provokes abandonment anxiety and romantic jealousy.

Cheating which challenges or destroys her idealized version (drunk one night stand) and is intended to facilitate an exit from the shared fantasy (prefers to spend time with other men) provokes extreme romantic jealousy focused on both the sex and the intimacy with the other man (=the substitute shared fantasy). Cheating that is intended to mortify leads to a breakup without romantic jealousy.

The narcissist doesn't have sex (except sadistic despoiling) or real intimacy with his woman, so he does not mind if she has both with other men. He has a shared fantasy with an idealized version of his woman, so he feels excruciating hurt and intense romantic jealousy ONLY when the woman replaces the shared fantasy she has with him with a shared fantasy (=intimacy) with another man and, in the process, as she exits the shared fantasy she had with him, destroys the idealized version that I am interacting with.

144.

Here is a syllogism for you: (1) [All sex is physically intimate](#); (2) Some sex is emotionless and meaningless; hence (3) All emotionless and meaningless sex is

intimate, at least corporeally. In other words: intimacy is not connected necessarily to emotions and meaning. The context is crucial.

Intimacy is the removal of psychological defenses and physical barriers in order to grant access to one's body or mind. If so, an appointment with your gynecologist or psychotherapist is intimate; but rarely involves reciprocated emotions or is a part of a meaningful relationship. Still: exposing your genitalia to be probed and sharing your innermost secrets and thoughts are, no doubt, intimate acts.

145.

Just finished watching the culturally sensitive and fascinating series "Unorthodox". In the last episode, a young (19), married, penniless, homeless - and pregnant - Jewish orthodox woman has a one night stand after a tour of a local bar in a foreign city (Berlin). She sleeps with a relative stranger who had been sporadically nice and helpful to her in the preceding two days. Neither of them considers her behavior a problem. No one sees anything wrong in a man taking advantage of a broken, disoriented woman. Yes, taking advantage because she is not in the right frame of mind to make even minor decisions. An interracial, multicultural, politically correct gay couple even find the whole thing hilarious and promise to keep her secret.

As long as such [social, interpersonal, and sexual mores](#) are endorsed by the mass media, our species is doomed: the monogamous, sexually exclusive couple still is the indispensable basic organizational and functional unit without which everything will grind - is grinding! - to a halt.

This is not to say that couples cannot agree and negotiate other - non-monogamous, non-exclusive, consensual - types of arrangements (such as open relationships or polyamory). But what she did was cheating, pure and simple. And, yes, I prefer "cheating" to the more sanitized and neutral versions such as "adultery", "extramarital affair" or "extradyadic sex". Where the parties do not agree to introduce other people into the couple, emotionally or sexually, and one of them does so secretly and surreptitiously, it is deceit, pure and simple. And no amount of touchy-feely "look how wonderfully tolerant we are" of rainbow-colored makeup can disguise the hideousness of the act. There is nothing aesthetic or commendable about it: it is ugly and bestial.

146.

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147.

Our [sex partners](#) are either people who we care nothing about, emotionally insignificant and disposable - or those who mean the world to us.

But sex is mostly a physiological function: hormones rage, body systems realign. So, as far as the brain is concerned, banging a stranger is no different to copulating with your loved one. Making love to your sweetheart is not necessarily deeper, or better, or special. This is why we react to pornography so potently.

This fact creates two problems:

1. Casual sex is much more profound than we think. We force ourselves to deny and numb our reactions to it and this creates dissonances even in the most experienced cads and swingers. Conversely, we reframe sex with loved ones

and confabulate to render it much more than it is.

In short: the hookup culture of rampant one night stands has pathologized behaviors, cognitions, and emotions and this adversely affects our ability to integrate physical intimacy into dyadic romantic relationships.

2. We all prefer passionate "bad guys" and "bad gals" for casual sex. But everyone is "bad", given the right partner and circumstances. As technology explodes the number of potential accessible partners, it is becoming increasingly more onerous to maintain "role constancy". Hence the supernova in adultery and cheating behaviors. We oscillate between our scripts as "good" (transactional) and "bad" (promiscuous) which fosters additional dissonance and anxiety.

148.

Studies have repeatedly revealed that swingers (adherents to the Lifestyle) are happier and in better mental health than monogamous couples.

The psychological roots of [cuckoldry](#) are many and I have written about them extensively (watch my recent video on the topic).

Two much neglected aspects are:

1. The cuck(oid) reclaims his partner after she has had sex with another man (sometimes by copulating with her then and there). After the deed is done, she chooses to return to him. This clear preference for him as her man boosts the cuck's self-esteem and helps him to reframe the situation: he now pities the other guy who just got a taste of what he would be missing henceforth: the cuck's hotwife.

2. The entire choreographed scene is also a test of loyalty taken to an extreme: having bedded another man, will his mate still be faithful and loyal to him - or will she elope? Every time she elects to return to him from her exploits, she is renewing her vow to her dyad with the cuck.

149.

Women fantasize about bad guys: muscular, tattooed, drop dead gorgeous. They swipe them on Tinder and read about their steamy exploits in chick lit.

But studies - including the largest ever made - have demonstrated conclusively than [in real life a woman chooses a man based mainly on three factors](#):

1. Is he nice to her (he can be a jerk with others, but never with her);
2. Does he find her irresistibly attractive (is he into her and finds her fascinating); and
3. Is he serious about the relationship and willing to commit: provide consistent succor and fun for a brief while - or much more for a lifetime: a home, children, future, hope, common plans, companionship, and steadfast support.

These criteria apply to any type of interaction: from casual sex or a one night stand to marriage.

Courtship, therefore, can be reconceived as an extended form of virtue signalling. But women are attuned to subtle nuances: is he truly into ME - or actually into what he can get out of me? Are his commitment, attentiveness, and kindness genuine and tested - or fleeting, shallow, and forced? Women probe men continuously.

So, to dispel three myths (MGTOWs and red-pillers, pay attention):

1. The man's looks, earning power, accomplishments, status, and toys don't matter much in mate selection, even for a quickie in a hotel room or an apartment. Actually, nothing else matters except the three aforementioned factors; and
2. A woman always knows when you are faking it, but she gauges the effort that you are putting into your act. Even a sham performance involves investment and commitment and signals unequivocally your overwhelming interest in her. Put on a good enough production and she will go for you.
3. Women fear rejection way more than men. They break apart when they are ignored or rebuffed. Men are far more resilient and take it in stride. This is why women administer all these tests and apply these criteria rigorously: they cannot afford to be abandoned, discarded, and dumped too often.

For more, read the jaw-dropping book "A Billion Wicked Thoughts".

150.

[Four Rules to Avoid Bad Relationships:](#)

1. If it feels wrong - it is wrong.

2. S/he is trying too hard? It involves too much conspicuous and ostentatious effort? It is fake.

3. Too good to be true? It is not true.

4. Verify everything: 90% of the time, people lie and 90% of the time we believe every word they say (90:90 rule or base rate fallacy).

You feel ill at ease because you are flooded with info that generates cognitive dissonance (he says one thing and behaves another) and emotional dissonance (I am so into him, I will ignore). This leads to confirmation bias.

But all the info is there (misogynist vs. narcissist vs. sadist), available to your intuition.

Philosophers have a lot to tell you about your gut feeling and whether, when, and how you should trust it.

151.

If all [your relationships end up the same catastrophic way](#), you most likely need to work on three issues:

1. Anticipated hurt (your certainty that everyone is going to hurt you sooner or later);

2. Interpreting every behavior as hurtful (hypersensitivity, hypervigilance, paranoid or persecutory ideation, “no skin”); and

3. Preemptive aggression (I am going to hurt or dump them before they hurt or dump me).

152.

How the Cringe Stole Christmas

To describe [sex with a woman](#) as "penetration" is counterfactual: no barrier is breached (except when the hymen is broken in virgins). Up until recently, most women were virgins when they got married, hence the widely used misnomer.

To properly describe the act, one should use words like "insertion" and "engulfment" or "reception".

Penetration is of course the male's aggressive POV and aggressive: the amorous equivalent of laying siege to the woman.

But nowadays women are as assertive and dominant as men (if not more so). They often initiate the sex, aggressively when needs must. This is also reflected in the non-traditional positions that many women assume during sex and in the expanding use of toys and aides.

Sex is totally reciprocal in most cases and the woman's needs and predilections are fully catered to. As a minimum, the parties equally use each others's bodies to climax.

Still, there are objective differences:

Men are invited in: women maintain the exclusive function of gatekeeping. Men are guest, women hosts, anatomically speaking. It is the apex of corporeal intimacy to allow someone into your body.

Men deposit sperm (gametes) in the woman while women only contribute lubrication.

Male latency with same woman is way longer - but not with a different woman! So, psychosexually, man do regard women as "single use" partners and their physiology reflects it. On porn websites, this frame of mind is abundant and women are irredeemably objectified.

Women also secrete bonding and attachment hormones (such as oxytocin) way more than men do and men release copious amounts of conquering aggression hormones, such as testosterone.

There is no such thing as meaningless sex, however cursory and casual. But we have learned to deceive ourselves that such insignificant liaisons do exist. We are paying the ultimate price now, as a species: the complete breakdown in communication between men and women; gender vertigo and wars, fueled by

misogyny and misandry; and a unigender world where women increasingly and vociferously emulate psychopathic men and men are lost like never before oscillating between toxic masculinity and effeminate self-negation.

153.

When your best friend takes your new car for a spin with your permission - you do not feel slighted, hurt, offended, or that your car had been devalued or depreciated in any way.

But if s/he were to [sleep with your spouse](#), even with your consent, you would instantly come to regard your intimate partner henceforth as "damaged goods".

Why the starkly disparate emotional reactions?

The car does not reciprocate, share, or feel anything. As opposed to most spouses, it is not conscious or sentient.

But what if the sex was utterly mechanical and therefore meaningless?

There is no such thing as "meaningless" sex. All sexual acts are intimate to a degree. By undressing and sleeping with your friend, your spouse had instantly created and shared with your friend a set of exclusive moments to which you are not privy and which you would never share. You are denied access to a time in your spouse's life which is unique to her and to her lover. It is an act of exclusion. It involves emotions, however basic.

But surely your spouse has had such moments with others before you had met?

True. But once you had teamed up, you had agreed, explicitly or implicitly, that all intimate moments will be exclusively shared by both of you and only by both of you. Granting access to your bodies reifies precisely such moments of exclusive mutuality, a declaration of the special place you have in each others' lives. Sleeping with someone else is a breach of this compact even when the whole event is orchestrated, impersonal, unsatisfying, and consensual.

Other forms of intimacy with another also constitute a violation of the bond even if they do not end in bed. Some people regard an evening spent talking as more intimate than even sex: a candlelit dinner, the sharing of confidences, a

nightlong bar crawl, a holiday, or a good time, fun evening spent together.

Why does exclusivity matter in a romantic intimate relationship?

Because it safeguards against instability, external shocks, threats, hurt, and abandonment. It guarantees the longevity of the union, thus encouraging and fostering commitment and investment in the bonded dyad.

154.

Some couples are romantic, others are transactional (for example: in a parenting marriage, or a power couple, involved in business together).

The [dynamics of a dyad](#) can be analyzed using six axes:

1. Cultural and social backgrounds of the members: from compatibility to conflict;
2. Communication: style, effective protocols, trigger points, and context-independent content;
3. Expectations: from congruity to mismatch, level of fulfillment;
4. Goal-setting, decision-making, and execution: from equality to asymmetry, efficacy;
5. Cooperation: from synergy to cancelling out or conflict; and
6. Reflexivity: from visibility to transparency.

155.

It is rational to prefer to be with someone who feigns empathy and caring, fakes attentiveness and interest in you, and pretends to have no ulterior motives, goals, or an agenda.

Even when you know for a fact that the other party is attempting to manipulate you in order to secure sex for the night, gain access to your money, pick your brain, or leverage your skills or power, it is irrational to turn them down just because they are acting the part. Loneliness is a pernicious toxin with a high price tag, far greater than any alternative's.

[Faking it is a form of virtue signaling](#): it requires sustained efforts, commitment, and investment in the relationship, however faux it may be.

Moreover: it is a predictable behavior and conforms to social norms of conduct and mores (it is communal and prosocial). If you are aware of what's happening, you can even enjoy the ardent courtship, the attention, succor, and time together with the faker: you get to decide on when and where to grant the thespian desperado his most fervent wishes.

The flip side is true as well: people who refuse to fake, pretend, play along, and white lie are either sadists or rabid misanthropes: bad news in either case. They hold you in such contempt that they see nothing in you and of yours that is of the slightest interest to them.

Refusing to partake in the social game of hide and seek is a form of grandiose haughtiness and a resounding slap in the collective face - and in yours as well. He who declines to even fake it when with you is sending you this message: "Your sex, your company, your mind, your love, companionship, or friendship, even your money are not worthy of even feigning the slightest interest in you or sunk capital on my part."

Someone who refuses to fake is rejecting you lock, stock, and barrel and, probably, enjoying your humiliation to boot.

156.

Women - and to a lesser degree, men - who are [cruelly rejected by their loved ones](#) and intimate partners, sometimes go through two phases: 1. Acting out, followed by 2. Sublimation.

The first phase involves reckless and self-destructive self-trashing: punishing oneself for one's failure to hold on to one's relationship or marriage. For example: women rejected by men they love often consort with lowlife scum. The temporary boost to self-esteem and the gratification of both sexual and emotional needs typically come replete with a high price tag: from rape to STDs.

Promiscuity and dissolution are followed by almost schizoid withdrawal and an obsessive-compulsive focus on religion, children, career, or activism. Sex aversion is common.

In this second phase, celibacy is coupled with growing addictive and self-

soothing behaviors. Many remain stuck in this limbo for life, unable and unwilling to risk a repeat of the harrowing cycle in a new liaison.

157.

Intimate relationships entail the experiencing, triggering, and display of one's [vulnerabilities](#). Many find this integral and critical component of intimacy frightening or distasteful.

Being vulnerable is childlike and, therefore, could be a wonderful feeling: excitement and relief in equal measures. To cast aside all masks is to liberating. To finally be 100% you is exhilarating. To be accepted as you truly are is to be loved.

The disclosure of one's "weaknesses", fault lines, and deficiencies gives rise to anxiety only when you don't trust the other party, when you are worried that he might disparage the newly gained information, reject you, or, much worse, leverage your openness, wounds, and needs to his advantage.

158.

[Divorce](#) is a good exit strategy out of an abusive relationship.

But the problem is that people use it as a first - not last - resort. Whenever things get even trivially tough - they bail out rather than try harder.

Nowadays, people give up owing to DIFFICULTIES - not to ABUSE. They MISLABEL difficulties as "abuse" in order to justify their lack of perseverance.

Our civilization relies on disposable and replaceable products - and we treat each other the same way.

The modern concept of a romantic dyad based on infatuation causes people to renounce reality in favor of fantasy and so they idealize their partners. This inevitably leads to disillusionment and breakup.

The misguided concept of a love-based marriage (romantic love) changed the way we select mates.

It is a modern phenomenon. Previous generations were transactional and saw each other in a realistic light. The mass media - cinema and romantic literature, especially - taught us to idealize our intimate partners in any and all ways.

Many studies have shown that people in marriages that were arranged or subject to matchmaking grew to love and respect each other. Basing mate selection mostly on lustful sex and on attraction got humanity into the relationship mess we have now.

159.

The [separation of emotions from sex](#) has challenged our very ability to experience, engender, or enjoy intimacy within stable dyads.

Men have been incapacitated by such practices for millennia now. Currently, women are defiantly and ostentatiously going the same broken road of promiscuity and near-anonymous, masturbatory casual sex.

Emotionless sex is pathological: it is psychopathic and schizoid. It involves the objectification and dehumanization of the partner in an ambience of fake instant intimacy. Hence the splitting defense known as the Madonna-whore complex, for example.

Rampantly available casual sex removes the incentives to commit or to invest in a relationship and leads to atomization, alienation, and malignant, froward self-sufficiency.

Hundreds of studies have concluded that people born after 1995 have severe intimacy, relationships, and sexual deficits (they are largely asexual in between rare hookups) even as the rates of schizoid withdrawal (think social media), depression, and anxiety among them have skyrocketed. Watch my video on youth sexlessness.

160.

There are [two kinds of intimacy](#): one that leads to sex and another that inhibits it.

The first kind is almost instant and is based on physical attraction. Coupled with kindness and attentiveness, the parties feel safe precisely because they are strangers: no strings attached, never likely to meet again. They can afford to let go, share, be themselves, allow all masks to slip, and cater unabashedly, even recklessly, to their deepest urges.

Providing that the encounter did not end with abuse or assault, a whiff of the intimacy lingers on as a fond, lifelong memory. Sometimes, the one night stand

evolves into a friendship, with or without benefits.

The second variant of intimacy is the mirror image of the first: it hails from a total absence of sexual tension. The parties feel secure exactly because sex is not in the air. As familiarity creeps in glacially, intimacy builds up. It is like the comfort of an old slipper and the coziness of a fireplace in dead winter.

Problems start when expectations mismatch: the homely friend aspires to become the torrid lover and the casual sex partner falls in love. Once rebuffed and spurned, they both feel exploited and abused.

161.

In [casual sex](#), intimacy is incidental to the sex which is center stage. It is an occasional byproduct.

In a love relationship, sex is incidental to the intimacy that is the heart and fuel of the couple.

The quality of the sex is informed by this intimacy and it bears little resemblance to the casual variant.

In fact, a whopping 80% among women and 60% of men rated casual sex as terrible and a majority of both men and women did not reach orgasm.

The culprit may have been a lack of familiarity with the partner's (objectified) body but also a lack of intimacy in a typical one night stand which is essentially a form of mutual masturbation between an animated dildo and a breathing sex doll.

162.

[Setting boundaries](#) is a two-edged sword. On the one hand, boundaries inhibit unacceptable conduct. On the other hand, if they are established and promulgated in the wrong way, they can actually provoke aggression, defiance, and retaliation and incentivize lying and deception by others.

For boundaries to be effective, they must meet four conditions:

1. They should be firm and rigid, never fuzzy or negotiable;
2. They must be clear and unequivocal and communicated unambiguously;

3. They must come replete with carrots and sticks applied to everyone automatically and equally - including to oneself: rewards for behaviors that conform to the boundaries and punishments for any violation. The deterrent inherent in them must be credible and just - not knee-jerk and arbitrary.

4. Zero tolerance: first strike and you are out, first breach and you are gone, first offense or incident of maltreatment and the offending perpetrator is history.

163.

Your wife dolls up, grabs a bottle of liquor, excited, and rushes through the door at 21:30 PM. She says that she was invited for a late dinner by a friendly couple. Do you believe her?

[Belief is not the same as trust.](#) It is purely cognitive, not emotional.

First, you have to care enough to scrutinize and contemplate the issue. If the outcome is of no importance to you, the resource-efficient path of least resistance is to believe.

Next: the facts must align with the belief, they cannot be blatantly counterfactual. If the facts match a possible benign interpretation, you are likely to adopt it so as to reduce dissonance and hurt, owing to her deceit (confirmation bias). If you wish or are forced to maintain the status quo, turning an inner blind eye (self-deception) is the only viable option.

Finally, awareness and even vigilance are inversely proportional to the extent of idealization, splitting, projection, reframing, and other defense mechanisms. You are far more likely to believe your wife if you are still idealizing her, for example. Eyes wide shut are conducive to belief.

164.

[Spouses and intimate partners cheat](#) for several possible reasons and each cause dictates a different style of betrayal and adultery.

Some cheat in order to seek novelty, experience variety, and because they are aroused by the forbidden and socially proscribed fruit of two-timing.

Others are out to cater to their unmet needs, but they lie and deceive so as to not hurt the partner, or to preserve the marriage/couple for whatever reason, pecuniary or amorous.

165.

There is an almighty confusion regarding [people with low or no sex drive](#). Here is a helpful disambiguation guide.

Asexual: someone who is devoid of an other-directed sex drive. Some asexuals do not crave intimacy, companionship, or romance either.

Hyposexual: a person whose sex drive is either infrequent or intermittent and is distressed by this self-perceived deficiency.

Schizoid personality: he finds sex unappealing, repetitive, and tedious and so avoids seeking it. Most schizoids also abstain from having any relationships.

Schizoid style: unlike the schizoid personality, the style enjoys sex but will not go out of his way to find it. He can go years or decades without sex, but when the opportunity throws herself at his feet, he thoroughly enjoys the proceedings.

Cerebral narcissist: he derives narcissistic supply from his intellectual pyrotechnics and converts his celibacy into a proud ideology, feeling superior to common folks who lust and bang bestially.

Histrionic: oddly, flirtatious and seductive as they are, most histrionics are sex-averse (“frigid”). They regulate their moods and self-esteem via the chase and the conquest, not the act itself.

166.

In the DSM-5, male [hypoactive sexual desire disorder](#) is characterized by "persistently or recurrently deficient (or absent) sexual/erotic thoughts or fantasies and desire for sexual activity", as judged by a clinician with consideration for the patient's age and cultural context.

Female sexual interest/arousal disorder is defined as a "lack of, or significantly reduced, sexual interest/arousal", manifesting as at least three of the following symptoms: no or little interest in sexual activity, no or few sexual thoughts, no or few attempts to initiate sexual activity or respond to partner's initiation, no or little sexual pleasure/excitement in 75–100% of sexual experiences, no or little sexual interest in internal or external erotic stimuli, and no or few genital/nongenital sensations in 75–100% of sexual experiences.

For both diagnoses, symptoms must persist for at least six months, cause clinically significant distress, and not be better explained by another condition.

Simply having lower desire than one's partner is not sufficient for a diagnosis. Self-identification of a lifelong lack of sexual desire as asexuality precludes diagnosis.

(Wikipedia)

167.

Everyone has an [attachment style](#). But some people have "flat attachment": they are incapable of any kind of bonding or relatedness at all. Not even an avoidant, fearful, or dismissive one. Nothing, nada, zilch.

Flat attachers regard other people as utterly interchangeable, replaceable, and dispensable objects or functions. They lack emotional empathy and are robotic and emotionless. They instrumentalize and weaponize sex, but find the adult, mature, reciprocated variety excruciatingly dull.

When a relationship is over, people go through a period of "latency": mourning the defunct bond and processing the grief and withdrawal symptoms associated with a breakup.

Not so the flat attacher: he or she transition instantaneously, smoothly, abruptly, and seamlessly from one (in)significant other to the next "target" and fully substitutes a newly found beau, lover, mate, or "intimate" partner for the discarded one whose usefulness has expired for whatever reason.

All schizoids, many narcissists and almost all psychopaths and paranoids are flat attachers.

168.

[Fantasies](#) are either compensatory (you can't get the real thing, so you fantasize) - or inhibitory (you are afraid to pursue the real thing, so you fantasize). All fantasies are, therefore, healthy ("normal") regardless of their contents.

There is no such thing as "perverse" sexuality. Victorian middle-class values aside, if the sexual behavior harms no one (including oneself) and is consensual (between consenting adults), then it is considered by psychologists and psychiatrists alike to be utterly both healthy and normal.

Homosexuality, bisexuality, BDSM (Bondage, Discipline, Dominance, Submission, Sadomasochism), cross-dressing, water sports (golden showers), role playing and fantasy, and group sex or threesomes - all these are nowhere to

be found in the two bibles of psychiatry: DSM 5 and ICD 11. I have done them all and they have enriched my sex life and rendered it a pleasurable pursuit and an adventure.

So, next time someone tells you that you or your sexuality are perverse - tell him to get rid of his hangups and inhibitions with the help of a good sex therapist.

Ironically, taken to extreme, such a judgmental, puritanical, and restrictive-normative attitude towards sex IS a sign of mental health problems, IS in the DSM, and is the hallmark of backward societies and arrested personality development or sick upbringing ("some sex is dirty"), or, commonly, both.

What about pedophilia? No consenting adults. Coprophagia? Medically dangerous. But even these are not "perversions". They are paraphilias.

More: <http://samvak.tripod.com/pedophilia.html>

169.

Presentation to the 2nd International Webinar on Psychology and Psychiatry, March 2021

Casual sex is a continuum: from pornography, to cybersex and sexting, one night stands, to casual sex, like FWB (Friends with Benefits). The spectrum runs from the impersonal to the personal and from the merely visual to a total experience.

One night stand and casual sex satisfaction very low and participants insist that it is emotionless, meaningless/meant nothing, and the partner is a nobody. They compare it to masturbating with another's body (autoerotic empathy through the other's gaze, L. Rangelovska): animated sex doll or dildo.

But it is easy to prove that this is false: casual sex is anything but casual, it is narrative intended to resolve multiple dissonances triggered by the lack of subsequent bonding. It is a rupture of the typical sexual script even when both parties are fully aware and consensual.

(1) Intimate partners (who had experienced casual sex first hand) react with jealousy and breakup when their mates have one night stands: they consider it to be a significant deal breaker;

(2) Some of these encounters evolve into relationships. Had casual sex been totally emotionless and meaningless, this would have never happened;

(3) Participants report negative or positive emotions after the sex: shame, guilt, and anger (mostly among women or following substance abuse), satisfaction, pride, and elevated self-esteem (among men and also among women with personality disorders). This signifies that the sex was a meaningful experience that triggered an emotional cascade;

(4) Sex: initial info exchanged, hormonal cascade, long-term memories (hippocampus);

(5) Use of alcohol and drugs to alter the perceptions of the potential partner's attractiveness, to enhance intimacy (via ritual), and disinhibit (overcome socialization) proves that casual sex is a momentous event that requires a massive effort and investment and an alteration of the personality and its scripts;

(6) Casual sex involves trust (physical and emotional), a sense of safety (hence beta preference), suspending defenses, and exposing vulnerabilities. These are some of the most profound and transformational emotional experiences (also common in love and in therapy);

Sex is a drive/urge, so opportunity driven: even unattractive partners with incompatible smells and offputting behavior (such as stinginess/being cheap, pushy, vulgar, aggressive) are game.

Casual sex is a part of mate selection: a test drive. Many attempt to convert it to some type of relationship (friends with benefits, or even a romantic one).

Intimacy in casual sex involves: attentiveness, kindness/succor, passion (irresistibility), directness/honesty, matching expectations, leadership, good time/fun, affection, compassion, comfort, non-judgmental/non-critical, equality.

170.

Women choose "beta" males on [Tinder](#) when they date or have casual sex, not "chads". They want to remain empowered singles. "Alpha" males on Tinder are Dark Triad personalities (narcissists and psychopaths), interested in hookups. People use dating apps almost exclusively for entertainment, to boost to self-esteem, and to find an intimate romantic partner. When it comes to real-life face-to-face dating or to finding sex, the apps are a total failure.

171.

Surveys conducted by Zoom, Webex and other popular videoconferencing apps discovered that users are very worried about sexually explicit material exchanged in [sexting](#) making it into the public domain.

In this day and age of rampant digital promiscuity and infidelity, attitudes about nudity and sexuality are far more permissive and relaxed. So, why the extreme discomfort and anxiety?

Because indiscriminate sexting with virtual strangers (but not with friends or intimate partners) is highly correlated with mental health issues such as a dysregulated sense of self-worth, low self-esteem, alcoholism, mood lability, emotional dysregulation, erotomanic delusions, cluster B personality disorders, reactance (defiance), recklessness, issues with power and control, depression, decompensation, acting out, object impermanence, lack of impulse control, eating disorders, sleep deprivation, body dysmorphia, among others. Such behavior is indicative of self-trashing which is a self-defeating or even self-destructive behavior.

In other words: someone who constantly and compulsively sexts with multiple random acquaintances is very likely to be bad news - first and foremost to herself. No one wants to be stigmatized with such disclosures, not even the mentally disordered or ill.

172.

[Once promiscuous – always promiscuous](#)? The short answer is: yes, but intermittently.

Promiscuity is having sex with multiple partners, mostly total strangers, indiscriminately and impulsively. It is a compulsive reaction intended to ameliorate to stress, anxiety, and perceived rejection. It is a form of reckless self-trashing that sometimes involves practices such as group sex, and adverse outcomes such as rape and recurrent sexual assault.

Promiscuity often starts in early to mid-adolescence and then it involves incest, molestation, gang rape, or pedophilia and hebephilia sex. With age, promiscuity is replaced with other addictions and with substance abuse (most often, alcoholism).

Many promiscuous individuals apparently settle into a more or less sublimatory (socially acceptable) functional lifestyle, replete with jobs and families. But the trait never goes away: it is there, lurking. Given the right adverse circumstances, acting out leads to flareups and relapses: bouts of uncontrolled sex, flagrant

infidelity, and self-endangerment.

Promiscuity is highly correlated with many mental health disorders, among them Borderline Personality Disorder and psychopathy. The promiscuous psychopath is an especially menacing type as she tends either to objectify her partners (in one night stands) or to stalk or blackmail them. Both types use promiscuous sex to shore up their self-esteem and regulate their moods. For the psychopath, sex is an aggressive winner takes all zero sum power play.

Short-term promiscuity is also a common behavior among mentally healthy people who had undergone a traumatic breakup or divorce.

173.

The [partner's cheating and promiscuity](#) legitimizes the sexlessness of the schizoid cerebral narcissist in 2 ways:

1. The partner is dirty, corrupted, sick, revolting and, therefore, it is her fault that she is sexually undesirable; and
2. She does not regard the narcissist as special to her or unique. He is merely a statistic, just one of many. It negates his grandiosity and provokes legitimized aggression expressed via sex withdrawal.

Such a partner challenges the narcissist's grandiosity: he is the one who will get her hopelessly addicted to him and get her to give up on her sexuality, sacrifice it just so as to not lose him. It is a perverted form of the typical male savior/fixer/rescuer role.

174.

Many people ask me: "What's your beef with casual sex?" I have none. Casual sex with friends (with benefits) or in situationships is a wonderful way to communicate emotions, compassion, comfort, and enhance wellbeing.

My problem is with [one night stands](#). Never mind what hookup adherents tell you, the biological and psychological data are overwhelming: one nighters involve emotions, attachment, and intimacy to varying degrees. To deny and repress these repeatedly sounds a lot like self-trashing to me.

Moreover: participants in one night stands report liking and trusting the partner. But they refuse to explore further: they deny themselves the incalculable riches and pleasures that real intimacy - getting to know the intricacies of another

person - provides. One night stands are about self-gratification, power, and objectification of the other: the hallmarks of narcissism and psychopathy.

Indeed, recent studies in 21 countries have all come to the same conclusions: the vast majority of people who engage in one night sex (and compulsive sexting) possess marked dark triad traits (narcissism, psychopathy, Machiavellianism).

175.

If you keep [choosing intimate partners who are catastrophically wrong for you](#) (repetition compulsion), my advice is: avoid relationships (and, if you can, sex) altogether. Stay single and find other founts of gratification and happiness. In short: sublimate.

Alcohol is pleasurable and disinhibiting, but alcoholics deny themselves alcohol because they cannot manage its consumption and owing to its long-term costs.

Similarly, sex and intimacy are wonderful, but, owing to recurrent self-destructive mate selection, their long-term consequences can be ruinous. The wrong partner can cost you your sanity - or even your life. A succession of them is bound to doom you to an early grave.

176.

Some people maintain [multiple, secretive, separate relationships](#), cheating on everyone simultaneously, and juggling numerous conflicting expectations and schedules.

Such deceptiveness is often the outcome of a pernicious combo of insecurity and catastrophizing.

They anticipate the eventual and inevitable disintegration of their relationships. Having a labile sense of self-worth and low self-esteem, they equally distrust their ability to find a replacement.

So, they say “yes” to every passing opportunity, hoarding options, taking out romantic or sexual insurance policies. Just in case, you see.

177.

The number of sexual partners until age 31 for both men and women had tripled (!) over the past 13 years. Promiscuity (indiscriminate sex with relative strangers) is now normative. But there is a huge difference between [promiscuity](#)

[and sexual self-trashing.](#)

Self-trashing is always compulsive, promiscuity is not (though it is sometimes impulsive and situational).

Promiscuity is an active role and is often experienced as an empowering lifestyle choice or a conquest. It boosts the participants' self-esteem and their inner locus of control.

In contrast, self-trashing is masochistic, self-punitive, passive, and is chiefly intended as an anxiolytic (anxiety ameliorating) and antidepressant activity. It is self-medication via temporary, self-loathing sexual self-annihilation.

In self-trashing, the preliminaries (flirting, courting, dating) are perfunctory, minimal, or nonexistent: sex is the first move, not the culmination. The self-trasher actually ends up bedding unattractive mates as a way to further despoil and degrade herself. She typically engages in kinky, reckless, or extreme sexual acts in the first few minutes with unknown strangers.

Alcohol and drugs frequently precede both types of sex. But the promiscuous use substances to disinhibit themselves while the self-trashing leverage the same to numb themselves often to the brink of a blackout or unconsciousness.

Finally, promiscuity is usually ego-syntonic. Self-trashing is sometimes ego-dystonic (though always defiant, assertive, and self-efficacious). Self-trashers often describe the sex as cursory, disappointing, objectifying, "disgusting", "unpleasant", or "uncomfortable".

Some self-trashers report shame, regret, anger, disappointment, and guilt, emotional blunting, and an increase in anxiety and depression after the act. This is very rare among the truly promiscuous.

178.

The world is what YOU make of it. It is the truest cliché ever.

If I may give [two pieces of relationship advice](#) as an old man on his way out?

1. Do not try to eat the cake and have it. Do not play the two ends down the

middle. Do not two-time and cheat or deceive, never mind the pretext and the context.

If you act this way, you end up losing everything - and alone.

Never mind how good your reasons to keep silent are - always be honest and straightforward with your partner.

2. Never do everything and anything with total or relative strangers. Keep something special for your intimate relationships. Make your partner feel unique by reserving some experiences exclusively for your loved ones.

179.

When You Are Their [Sex Prop](#): Exhibitionism, Autoeroticism, Masochism.

[Autoeroticism](#) (regarding oneself as one's sex object) often goes hand in hand with exhibitionism (becoming sexually aroused by another's objectifying gaze). The more numerous the observers, the more intense the sexual excitatory state. Exhibitionism is also a "conquest", a power play and can easily become a paraphilia (exposing oneself to unwilling bystanders).

That is why the autoerotic - mainly narcissists and psychopaths - gravitate to group sex with total strangers even in early adolescence.

The autoerotic objectify not only themselves but also the partner, whose body they use as a sex toy, to masturbate with.

Thus, the partner's identity is utterly incidental: he or she could be anonymous strangers encountered only minutes or a few hours before the act.

Casual sex is the autoerotic's staple: in his committed relationships, s/he is typically sexless.

Sex with the autoerotic is an eerie sensation: disembodied, mechanical, non-reciprocated, infantile, and lonely as the autoerotic partners focus exclusively on their bodies and on their self-gratification.

The intimate partners of the autoerotic invariably develop sex aversion to them. The autoerotic's solipsistic self-focus, defiance, and oblivion to the partner is also a narcissistic injury and triggers aggression in narcissists and psychopaths.

Paradoxically, precisely because the partner is a mere generic, undifferentiated prop, as long as they are sexually catered to within the relationship, the autoerotic rarely cheat on their mates. At any rate, they are actually making love to themselves.

If s/he is masochistic, the autoerotic's on the fly sex involves extreme self-trashing: sex with unwanted, little-known, or inappropriate partners in degrading circumstances or environments. Less commonly, cheating serve or even celibacy the same purpose of self-despoiling ("I am a bad, unworthy object").

The self-trashing autoerotic abuses substances with the aim of disinhibiting herself and numbing herself to her socially unacceptable conduct and possible unconscious ego dystony.

180.

People tout the wisdom of having sex on a first date and cohabitation before tying the knot. Research is unequivocal: both are seriously bad ideas.

[Sex on a first date](#) often becomes a one night stand. Social stigmas aside, because the parties know close to nothing about each other, the copulation sucks and leads to disappointment rather than to enhanced intimacy.

More than two thirds of practitioners of casual sex report not having climaxed (the figure is much higher for women).

Moreover: you can learn nothing about your sexual compatibility with someone from a single encounter with effectively a stranger.

Similarly: sharing living quarters results in a much higher rate of breakups and divorces. Counterintuitive - but true, all the same. Takes away the mystery, I guess.

And in the absence of the mysterious - what is left between a man and a woman? Not much.

181.

[Extreme promiscuity](#) (self-trashing) is a form of self-mutilation, akin to cutting or burning in Borderline Personality Disorder. It caters to the same two mutually exclusive needs: to feel alive again and to numb overwhelming and dysregulated emotions.

Extreme promiscuity is distinct from the healthy variety in that the sexual partners and circumstances of the sex are both wrong, unappealing, or degrading.

The reasons for extreme promiscuity are skewed (reframed) or slight (sex for little or no cause and with very brief or few antecedents).

Like in other forms of sexual compulsivity (“sex addiction”), the self-trasher convinces herself that she is in full control and that what she is doing is actually not “real or meaningful or full-fledged sex” because it lacks the emotional component, it is only mechanical or physical.

Extreme promiscuity is closely correlated with mental health issues, many of which are exacerbated by the unboundaried self-trashing: depression, anxiety, and substance abuse (especially alcoholism).

Psychologically, self-trashers present an intriguing duality.

They have the cognitive-linguistic-analytical capacity of adults coupled with the unboundaried emotional immaturity, impulsivity, reactance, and pseudo-naivety of a child aged 8-11.

182.

Even professionals conflate and confuse the [patient's psychosexuality and his/her sexualization](#).

Psychosexuality is the sum total of an individual's:

1. Sexual orientation (heterosexual, bisexual, gay, etc.);
2. Sexual preferences (conventional sex, kink, BDSM, group sex, exhibitionism, etc.); and
3. Sexual practices and choices.

With few exceptions (pedophilia, etc.) psychosexuality is always healthy and functional.

Sexualization is never either. It involves the use of sex acts to express and amplify underlying mental health issues and pathologies - or the misattribution of sexual content and motivation to the wrong people in the wrong settings and

circumstances. Rape is an extreme example of sexualization.

Sexualization often co-occurs with egregious and self-destructive substance abuse.

There are many ways to sexualize. Two examples:

1. Numbing emotions and disinhibiting oneself by consuming alcohol. This leads to multiple cognitive and axiological dissonances, anxiety, and the activation of mostly infantile (regressive, primitive) defenses.
2. Sexual self-objectification ("self-trashing" as distinct from healthier promiscuity) whose outcomes are lifelong anxiety and depression and the abuse of alcohol and drugs to quell the ego dystony.

183.

Lisa Wade describes in her studies how young people feign and signal [casualness in sex](#) also by getting intoxicated. This had become the hegemonic sexual script and by far the most dominant and widespread sexual practice among the young.

Most of these youths - boys and girls alike - crave intimacy and want to have relationships, but these are considered bad taste, faux pas, and signifiers of revolting and ominous clinginess and neediness. So, no one dares to communicate openly.

The alcohol, casual sex, and inevitable self-trashing serve to numb their emotions and drown their disappointment, frustration, and pain as well as resolve ego dystonic cognitive dissonances and disinhibit.

Getting emotionally involved portends heartbreak, so only 6% expect a second night stand. But many fantasize, imposing on the dreary, impersonal proceedings a narrative that caters to their denied emotional needs.

The intrusion of fantasy into casual sex renders it autoerotic and solipsistic. Only a small minority of participants of both genders actually orgasm.

It is a dystopian barren landscape, replete with extreme deficits in relationship skills and all pervasive intimacy anorexia.

184.

With [no strings attached sex](#) freely available from multiple women, men no longer feel the need to invest in relationships or commit in any way. One night stands (including on first and only dates) and hookups have become the dominant form of sexual practice in the West and beyond.

Agentic (usually drunk) women now pick up men for casual sex the way men used to pick up “easy women” well into the 1960s. Such emancipation and equality among the genders is liberating and laudable.

But women then proceeded to adopt a masculine self-identity, erasing differences in gender roles and upending sexual scripts. They descended into dysregulated and defiant promiscuity. Faced with such anarchy, men completely withdrew from the scene forcing women to become more manlike, narcissistic, and even psychopathic.

Militant radical feminists espoused precisely such an outcome: a world where men are sex toys, women are empowered and self-sufficient, and “patriarchal” institutions such as marriage and the family are gone.

Oddly, their agenda accomplished, anxiety, depression, suicide rates, and substance abuse among women have skyrocketed. Women are not too happy in a world without “real” men, it seems.

185.

In couples therapy, a standard piece of advice in trying to survive an affair is to immediately prohibit all further contact with the third party, the [jilted lover](#).

This is sound counsel if the affair had lasted more than a single night, involved emotions and romance, and did not occur in an inebriated state.

But if the offending party was drunk, regrets the transgression, and has had only casual sex - the other party is the safest person, the last one on earth s/he would have sex with again.

Of course, this does not apply to habitual alcoholics and junkies who are liable to relapse with the same accomplices regardless of how bad they had felt the morning after.

186.

Studies had revealed that we reserve [certain sex acts only for intimate relationships](#), refraining from including them in the repertory of casual sex.

Actions in this case do speak louder than words and when certain sexual behaviors are reserved for that special someone, this exclusivity communicates love efficaciously.

But what about those who do absolutely anything and everything with near total strangers? Such people are incapable of experiencing intimacy or emotions. Many of them are psychopathic personalities. They are also bound to abuse substances and sex compulsively with one and all.

The unfortunate mate of such a dysregulated, maximally inhibited individual is often told: "It may be the same sex act, but with you, I experience it differently, it is filled with emotions, attachment, and affection!"

Regrettably, such self-reporting is highly suspect and most often counterfactual. Psychopaths confuse possessiveness and competition with love. They use sex to manipulate and subjugate.

Most promiscuous people - let alone whose sex is out of control and would do anything with anyone - are incapable of positive emoting or coupling. They feel vaguely "bad" or "good" and mislabel dim stirrings as "bonding". At times, they resort to faking affect and orgasms.

187.

Some people fear heartbreak, abandonment and being cheated on to such an extent that they [undermine intimacy](#) and bring on the very outcomes that they are so terrified of.

They restrict their emotional expression and appear to be cold and stand-offish. They avoid commitment or investment in the relationship, hedge their bets (maintain alternative partners on the side), reject their mate's sexual advances, or abuse substances and act promiscuously and recklessly.

As the relationship inevitably deteriorates, they feel justified to stray.

Sadomasochists tend to choose precisely such partners. Their mate selection is skewed in favour of the dysregulated and the dissolute. The inevitable betrayal by the partner and resulting excruciating pain are sources of addictive vindication and gratification.

188.

We are conducting a concatenated (cohort or structured) survey on the sexual experiences of women. Please answer these two questions (first read the definitions under the questions).

1. What percentages of all of your [sexual experiences](#) were (a) agentic (b) negotiated (c) coerced
2. In what percentages of all of your sexual relationships were you (a) a playmate (recreational fun only) (b) a partner (reciprocated, intimate, and emotional) (c) a sex object (“sluttish” and dysregulated, including with unwanted sex partners).

So, 6 numbers representing the percentages.

DEFINITIONS

Agentic: you initiated the sex and controlled its circumstances

Negotiated: both you and your partner reached a consensus on what sex acts to engage in and in which circumstances

Coerced: you engaged in sex because you had felt that you had no other choice or stood to lose a lot if you refrained. Includes non-consensual sex.

If you feel more comfortable to DM me rather than comment, please do.

189.

[Promiscuity](#) comes in many flavors and varieties which reflect starkly disparate etiologies. Here is a disambiguation guide:

1. Common promiscuity is agentic and involves firm personal boundaries. Sexual partner selection is indiscriminate and instrumentalized (the counterparty is a sex toy or a masturbatory aide).
2. Common self-trashing (self-objectification) is agentic but unboundaried. The partners are disrespectful and sexually aggressive or sadistic. It is the outcome of deep-set ego dystony (self-loathing or even self-hatred).
3. Masochistic self-trashing is submissive and unboundaried. The selected partners are contemptuous, dismissive, and objectifying. They despoil and degrade, thereby gratifying the masochistic impulse. Masochists are ego syntonic (not self-rejecting). They often report having rape fantasies.

4. Reckless self-trashing is common in Borderline Personality Disorder and in psychopathy. It involves risk taking, defiance, novelty seeking, and acting out. It is a form of emotional reregulation and mood stabilization: self-medicating with trashy sex.

190.

[Sexual attraction](#) is only partly determined by biology or inebriation. We are attracted to people who are unlikely to reject our sexual advances.

We need to avoid humiliating rejection, narcissistic injury, and the cognitive dissonance provoked by such dismissal.

So, we are consciously attracted mostly to “safe bets” and then idealize them as “attractive” or “irresistible”, with or without the help of mind-altering substances.

191.

Long-term healthy relationships are three legged stools: they are founded on [love, trust, and respect](#).

All three are mutually reinforcing and all three are essential: when one of them is missing, dysfunction, betrayal, breakup, and heartbreak set in.

192.

Casual sex had become the [dominant sexual practice](#) among the declining number of sexually active people, both men and women: hookups, one night stands, and sex on first dates are now the almost exclusive sexual diets of the vast majority of adolescents and adults in the West.

Sizable majorities of both men and women find this state of affair deplorable but had lost all hope for any change. Casual sex sucks: tiny minorities experience an orgasm, for instance. But if one is possessed of a sex drive - what are other option is there?

This is the dismal outcome of three converging trends:

1. Women are confusing assertiveness with defiance. They are adopting the traits and behaviors of psychopathic men: promiscuity, recklessness, impulsivity, contumaciousness, antisocial misconduct, and dysregulation.

With few exceptions, men are deterred and had withdrawn from the dating scene altogether.

2. Both men and women avoid long-term relationships owing to the poor and devastating outcomes of such attempts. Deficient intimacy skills guarantee ineluctable failure, so why bother?

3. Predatory men had come to literally monopolize the arena. They infest dating apps and pickup venues such as bars and clubs.

They prey on the tsunami of hordes of women who are vulnerable, broken, mentally ill, substance abusing, and refugees of abusive relationships.

193.

There are three ways to gauge [how meaningful your sex with your new partner is to both of you](#).

The text uses gender pronouns that are interchangeable (substitute “man” for “woman” and “he” for “she”).

CASE 1: MEANINGFUL

When a woman had slept ONLY with men who are meaningful to her (loved ones, friends) and then she sleeps with you - it means that you are also meaningful to her (because she sleeps ONLY with meaningful men).

CASE 2: MEANINGLESS

When a woman has had mostly meaningless sex mostly with men who are meaningless to her (strangers) and then she sleeps with you - it means either (1) that she considers sex to be meaningless (because she has had mostly meaningless sex mostly with meaningless men) - or, more ominously (2) that you are meaningless to her (and she is lying to you that you are meaningful to her).

CASE 3: MEANINGLESS

Sometimes, through the use of fantasy, projection, and other defense mechanisms as well as the abuse of substances, it is possible to have meaningful sex with total strangers, replete with sex acts usually reserved for intimate partners.

When a woman has had mostly meaningful sex mostly with men who are meaningless to her (strangers) and then she sleeps with you - it means either (1) that her meaningful sex renders you meaningless to her (because she has had meaningful sex with meaningless men) - or, again (2) that you are meaningless to her (and she is lying to you that you are meaningful to her).

194.

[People pleasing](#) is sometimes a life strategy intended to ameliorate extreme generalized anxiety. The world is perceived as hostile or frustrating and the only defense is to be “liked”, “loved”, or “accepted” by others, whether individuals or collectives.

Anxiety-driven people pleasers have no personal boundaries. They would do anything and agree to everything in order to belong: be treated as an objectified sex slave in one-on-one or in group settings; be verbally, emotionally and physically abused; and let themselves be taken advantage of and exploited.

In fact, these people pleasers interpret sexual and other forms of abuse as “initiation rites”: proof positive of having been inducted into a relationship or a fraternity/sorority.

Anxious people pleasers place emphasis on material objects or money: objective measures of affection, sharing, and goodwill.

Gifts are understood as signs of affiliation. They are devastated when they are taken financial advantage of or stolen from by the very people whose favor they seek to curry.

The complex of behaviors known as [people pleasing](#) emanates from multiple etiologies. In an earlier post, I have mentioned anxiety. Another source is social phobia.

Socially phobic people often become avoidant: they shun all social interactions.

But a small minority of them disinhibit themselves with alcohol and drugs and then proceed to act out and engage in dysregulated, reckless, and unboundaried behaviors, including and especially sexually.

These self-defeating and self-trashing behaviors are intended to accomplish the goals of pleasing others, fitting in, belonging, being accepted, appreciated, “loved”, and liked.

But the phobia never disappears. This constant presence drives an escalation in people pleasing behaviors and the compromising of self-respect, self-esteem, and boundaries which renders the phobia even worse.

It is a vicious cycle which often results in lifelong anxiety disorder, depression, and passive-aggression.

Many [people pleasers are love addicts](#): they crave affection, acceptance, and companionship desperately. They instantly idealize eligible candidates or even groups and are bitterly disappointed and heartbroken when disillusioning reality intrudes and vitiates their sunk costs and “investments” in the “relationship”.

They give away and give up their bodies, time, self-respect, boundaries, attention, money, contacts, anything and everything to maintain the delusional fantasy of emotional proximity, the antidote to loneliness.

Inevitably such abject and prostrate submission breeds resentment and defiance.

The people pleaser resorts to passive aggression to release this cumulating negativity.

She becomes hostile, sarcastic, disparaging, castrating, mocking, disrespectful, envious, and undermining. Her dysregulation and lability increase in tandem with the abuse of substances.

Ironically, this pernicious and subterranean sabotage of intimacy and trust leads to the very outcome most dreaded by the love addicted people pleaser: abrupt discard and abandonment, loneliness, and the compulsive need to start all over again with a new “partner”.

195.

[Serial idealizers](#) go through brief sexual episodes or micro-relationships at a dizzying speed. They instantly and counterfactually idealize a date or a random stranger - or even a group of them! - as potential mates or friends.

Sometimes within minutes from a chance encounter, they construct a one-sided fantastic narrative and act as though it were true.

The fantasy has three functions:

1. To legitimize ego dystonic or socially unacceptable sex acts or sexual

choices;

2. To make the serial idealizer feel good: loved, accepted, wanted, and liked;
3. To facilitate bonding and attachment should the fiction be reciprocated and become a shared fantasy.

The serial idealizer may attempt to compulsively [recreate the experiences](#), hoping for better outcomes with the same partners or with different ones.

Like the narcissist, the serial idealizer is interacting with an internal object, not with the real sex partner or date. This way, she avoids the emotional costs of rejection (“I couldn’t care less what a stranger I will never see again thinks about me”).

Inevitably and almost invariably, reality painfully diverges from the fantastic yarn. This justifies moving on with minimal heartbreak to the next target - or cheating, if in a committed relationship.

196.

[Sexual and relationship scripts](#) are the socially prescribed and proscribed ways to effectuate gender roles. They have all been upended in the late 1960s, but were supplanted only with ambiguity and equivocation.

Men and women are in turmoil: bewildered and befuddled as to how they should behave with each other.

For example:

In a stark reversal to the habits of the preceding two centuries, sex on first dates, hookups, and one night stands are now the dominant sexual practices.

They are widely perceived as “tests” or vetting procedures for potential mates or intimate partners: why bother to venture on if the sex proves to be calamitous?

These emerging scripts led to two perverse outcomes:

1. The vast majority of sexual experiences are now coercive, objectifying, or outright disappointing. People are starting to avoid real-life sex altogether and resort to the virtual kinds;
2. When, rarely and miraculously, the casual sex is good, it sometimes leads to a

relationship. Alas, these are founded merely on sexual attraction and are, therefore, brittle and short lived.

197.

Once promiscuous, always promiscuous? Once a cheater, always a cheater? In a relationship with a promiscuous partner, they will always cheat on you? They can't help it: it's an addiction to sexual attention? Are all these statements true? Yes, they are, according to all the studies we have.

As the author and therapist Kerry Cohen observes, promiscuity ("loose girl syndrome") is a lifelong condition which is often associated with mental illness and substance abuse.

But where the literature fails is in making the distinction between [formative and situational promiscuity](#).

Formative promiscuity is the learned use of sexual attention to regulate negative moods and affects. It is a form of self-soothing and an attempt to reassert control over a life perceived as adrift and meaningless. In some respects, it is the same psychodynamic that drives the narcissist's solicitation of narcissistic supply.

Formative promiscuity is a process addiction (to an activity, not to a substance) which starts in early adolescence, persists throughout the lifespan, and characterizes all interactions with potential sex partners, regardless of the promiscuous person's life circumstances at the moment.

Situational promiscuity is a reaction to trauma, most commonly to rejection, neglect, and abandonment by a loved one. It is limited in time and responsive to overcoming grief and depression.

Situational promiscuity also disappears once the circumstances change - for example when a new love interest emerges.

198.

WHAT you do in sex is not important. WHY you do it - is. Sex for all the wrong reasons can be bad for your mental health and lead to or enhance preexisting depression, anxiety, and substance abuse.

What are the wrong, detrimental kinds of sex?

Sex intended to regulate affects (emotions), moods, self-esteem, or self-worth;

Sex in situations where meaningful informed consent is impossible (for example: extreme intoxication);

Sex as a form of self-harm, self-punishment, or self-trashing, especially when coupled with addictions and the use of disinhibiting substances;

Extreme self-objectification (for example: group sex with strangers without an intimate partner or friend present);

Reckless, risky sexual practices and encounters;

Sex as part of a power play, or a bid for control.

Non-autonomous sex intended to make the sex partners like you, accept you, “love” you, to feel chosen or special;

Sex with people you dislike or are not attracted to out of a sense of duty, gratitude, or because they provide you with benefits (e.g., free drinks, or a place to crash for the night).

Participants in such sex often claim to have wanted the sex and to have acted in an agentic and empowered manner. These protestations are counterfactual and intended to resolve the cognitive dissonances, shame, guilt, and traumas that inevitably arise out of wrong sex.

The denials, reframings, and reduced affect display are all variants of defensive emotional numbing and inappropriate affect.

They mask debilitating dissonances, inner conflicts, and traumas. Left to fester, they generate depression and anxiety and lead to substance abuse as a form of self-soothing (though, of course, the abuse of alcohol and drugs has many other functions and cater to multiple psychological needs).

The [psychosexuality](#) of such people fluctuates between psychopathic, objectifying individual or group sex (cold, mechanical, exhibitionistic,

emotionless, even anonymous) and people pleasing instrumental sex (intended to render potential partners addicted to the sex and to make them “like” or “love” the provider of the sexual services).

Women have never been less empowered sexually than nowadays. Some of them brag of being “supersluts”, others of being agentic.

But, in reality, all women had adopted the [stereotypes](#) propagated and perpetuated by chauvinistic men. They dress and act the part, to the great delight of male predators who never had it better.

199.

When you [misidentify sex as intimacy](#) and mislabel love as pain - you end up having sexless intimacy and painful loves.

200.

[Foot fetish](#) is linked to abandonment or separation anxiety: the intimate partner or object of desire uses his or her feet to walk out on and away from the fetishist. Holding onto feet and making love to them is a way of attaining symbolic object constancy or permanence.

The propensity to regard and treat other people (caregivers, parents) as objects (to "objectify" them) is an inevitable phase of personal development and growth during the formative years (6 months to 3 years).

As psychoanalysis and the Object Relations school of psychology teach us, we outgrow this immature way of relating to our human environment and instead develop a sense of empathy.

Yet, some of us remain "fixated" and do not progress into full-fledged adulthood. Arguably the most ostentatious manifestation of such retardation is the sexual paraphilia known as fetishism.

There are three types of fetishes:

I. An inanimate object, usually with a sexual connotation (such as a bra);

II. A body part that is clearly still connected to a complete body, dead or alive (e.g., hair, feet);

III. A reified trait, usually a deformity or idiosyncrasy that implies inferiority, helplessness, or dependence (for instance, a lame, or grotesquely obese, or hunchbacked person).

Consequently, there are three categories of fetishism and fetishists:

I. Objective fetishists, for whom the inanimate fetish stands for and symbolizes a desired whole that is out of reach;

II. Somatic fetishists, for whom the body part stands for and symbolizes a coveted human body (and, by extension, a relationship) that is unattainable;

III. Abstract fetishists, who latch on to a trait or a characteristic as a means to indirectly interact with their "defective" bearer and thus fulfill the fetishist's grandiose fantasies of omnipotence and innate superiority (pathological narcissism).

201.

We are going through by far the greatest upheaval in human affairs: millennia-old organizing principles and fundamentals are being challenged and torn asunder.

Every transformation has its costs. The current one involves losses too many to enumerate. One of the major ones is the [disappearance of intimacy and relationship skills](#).

Sex is now a mere mechanical release, leveraging the bodies of strangers on "dates" and hookups.

Food and dining are now relegated to gorging on junk food and microwave dinners.

Majorities of men and women are single and lead largely sexless lives. The frequency of dating had declined by 60% since 2008. People had resigned themselves to a lonely existence for the rest of their natural lives.

Communal institutions and social safety nets have been rendered obsolete by recent trends.

Friendships, marriages, childbearing, intimate relationships, and face to face interactions have gone the way of the dodo long before the pandemic.

We no longer press the flesh - we press buttons and icons instead. Our only “friends” are random passersby on the misnomered “social” media.

Can our species survive without intimacy? Possibly. Would such a dystopian future be worth living in and for? I am not sure.

The young are born into this new normal. They see nothing wrong with it. What about us, old codgers, who still harbor the memories of a smile and a handshake and making love and sitting around a campfire? Where do we go from here?

202.

Women and men in their 20s mock me for warning against the dangers of casual sex as an exclusive practice. “OK, Boomer” is the typical reaction of this delightfully sagacious generation.

Fast forward ten years. The same people come to my practice, defeated and humbled, and pay me a fortune for [relationship advice](#).

Here’s the thing:

If you practice only one night stands - you fail to develop relationship and intimacy skills. It is a “use it or lose it” situation. Your “relationships” resemble glorified, extended casual sex - and you end up being discarded.

The behaviors that get you laid in casual sex militate AGAINST you when you are trying to find a partner for a relationship.

203.

The ability to thrive in [intimacy](#) is inextricably linked to the capacity to maintain and enforce personal boundaries. In personality disordered patients, both are sorely compromised.

Intimacy, however fleeting and of whatever nature (even merely physical) is a tightrope act.

On the one hand, it involves the disclosure of vulnerabilities and the relaxation of firewalls intended to fend off unwarranted or coerced attention.

On the other hand, real intimacy entails the maintaining of personal autonomy, agency, and self-efficacy. In other words: of separateness.

To attain intimacy, one needs to feel sufficiently secure of one's core identity, self-worth, self-esteem, internal regulation, and boundaries to invite another person in.

The mentally ill tend to enmesh, engulf, merge, or fuse with others - even as they push them away and flee (approach-avoidance repetition compulsion).

This dysfunctional attachment style is the outcome of twin contradictory anxieties: of abandonment and of engulfment.

204.

[Hypermasochistic psychosexuality](#) includes exhibitionism and arousal by degradation.

Substance abuse is often involved as both a form of self-trashing and as disinhibiting agency.

205.

One of the most moronic bits of politically correct advice online is: "Your partner's sexual, social, and psychological histories, his or her past, are not relevant and you have no right to inquire about them. Only present choices, decisions, and behaviors matter. Don't be retroactively jealous!"

Yet, by far the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior. Recidivism - defaulting to past misconduct - is rife.

More than 80% of alcoholics restart drinking within a year from rehab. Almost 70% of criminals repopulate their erstwhile cells. Having cheated once, you are three times as likely to cheat again. Promiscuous women sleep around extradyadically much more often than the regulated, bounded sort.

By all means: [interrogate a new potential intimate partner](#) to the greatest possible extent. It is your only protection against future nasty surprises.

206.

[Intimacy relies heavily on privacy and uniqueness](#) (being special to your partner). This is why sexual EXCLUSIVITY is still the dominant practice.

If you place your body and sex in the public domain via rampant casual sex and public self-porn, you create a legacy that renders intimacy between you and

future partners all but impossible.

If you share your sex with everyone casually - you ruin your ability to integrate it with intimacy. You destroy the linkage between the two, the very capacity to associate them.

Instead, you are likely to compensate with FANTASIES of sex and of intimacy.

Hence the tsunami of porn and self-porn, the precipitous decline in dating (-60%), intimate relationship formation (-40%), and sex (-20%) since 1998 (Twenge; Wade; Zimbardo; Campbell).

Your history of casual sex leads inexorably to a deficiency in intimacy and relationship skills.

Your future partners are affected, too.

If your partners know that you had shared your body and sex with so many random persons, they cannot regard your choice to have sex with them as SPECIAL. After all: you did it with everyone, even people you didn't know at all.

Intimacy is not possible when the partners feel that they are just numbers, statistics, the next conquest, in the queue, next in line.

A partner with a history of casual sex as a dominant practice also creates insecurity: it is difficult to be safe when your partner takes sex so casually and flippantly.

This commodification of your body and sex makes your partners feel that when you offer and grant them access to both, it is meaningless because you had offered exactly the same to dozens of total strangers.

Your partners do not feel special or that they stand out from others. They might as well be among the countless strangers to whom you had granted exactly the same privileges.

Your partners do not feel chosen - because you had selected so many before, so indiscriminately, including anonymous strangers.

Sex with you cannot be intimate (special) - only clinically arousing. It is pornography, not lovemaking. And without lovemaking, there is no intimacy.

207.

People with [kinky or paraphiliac psychosexuality](#) often repress or curb it unless and until a “loving” partner - real or imaginary - legitimizes it with his presence or active cooperation and thus helps to resolve the dissonances and ego dystony involved in their sexual practices.

Consequently, they go through huge stretches of involuntary celibacy or unsatisfactory sex simply because their partners either don't love them to start with or are totally turned off by them and by their attitude to sex, love, and relationships.

This self-denial is especially complicated by love addiction. Craving for love renders such people tenacious and stalkish. They give up and sort of move on (cheat rather than break up outright) only when they receive incontrovertible proof that they are not loved and not desired sexually (more or less coterminous, as far as they are concerned).

Such dysfunctional strategies and behaviors are common to everyone who has outlier psychosexuality COUPLED with a burning desire to be in a traditional intimate LOVE relationship. These, alas, rarely go together.

Of course, there are only two other solutions to this predicament:

1. Find a loving partner with a psychosexuality similar or complementary to one's own and who is aroused by such sexual preferences to the point that s/he is eager to incorporate them into the couple's common sex life on a permanent basis; or
2. Pursue one's psychosexuality and PRETEND that one is with a loving intimate partner (fantasy defense).

In the long run, the second solution is the more feasible and the most common one.

Etiologically, in all these cases, there is an unresolved conflict between sexual preferences, emotional preferences (craving a loving partner), and socialization (the need for legitimacy and acceptance).

Narcissists confuse and conflate their universe of internal persecutory objects with reality. So, they perceive [any change in their environment as a destruction of the self](#). This creates anxiety and they use kinky or paraphiliac sexuality to

mitigate it. In an increasingly more narcissistic and psychopathic civilization, these individual pathologies became normative.

208.

Both laymen and scholars confuse sexual submission (“sub”, “bottom”) with masochism and domination (“dom”, or top) with sexual sadism. All four are consensual practices, but there are important differences.

[Submission and domination](#) are intradyadic practices, rarely conducted in public (not exhibitionistic). They involve the ritualistic and rigidly bounded exchange of pain and power between the parties.

Sexual arousal in BDSM is the outcome of the suspension of the bottom’s autonomy and the outsourcing of potentially self-harming decision-making to a loving, compassionate, or caring dom. It is an extended fantasy or role play.

Masochism revolves around self-objectification, sexual degradation, the infliction and reception of real pain, and public exhibitionism. It is sometimes embedded in a fantasy of intimacy with a partner, real or imaginary. Physical pain and public despoiling are the founts of arousal - not humiliation or transient choreographed helplessness.

Sexual sadism is about being turned on by torturing a partner and observing her writhing and agony, however orgasmic it may be to the masochistic partner, and however momentary, and fleeting. It need not involve humiliating the partner or public exposure but, if the partner is averse to both, it often does.

209.

[BDSM is not sexual sadism or sexual masochism.](#)

210.

[Love addicts](#) crave the high of falling in love, but not the intimacy and relationships that follow. They are dysregulated, unboundaried (especially sexually), prone to fantasy, compulsive, impulsive, and suffer from mood and anxiety disorders.

211.

[Intimate partners with a rich fantasy life](#) are far more prone to cheating and other forms of betrayal.

Fantasy is a defense mechanism that severely impairs reality testing and often degenerates into full-fledged dysempathic narcissism.

People with prominent fantasies frequently compromise their self-proclaimed values, standards, and boundaries owing to identity disturbance, dysregulation, and lability. Some of their actions and choices are always self-degrading, antisocial, and shocking.

Fantasies are compensatory and offer an escape from overwhelming mood and anxiety disorders. They allow for the reframing of experiences to render them ego syntonic and to allay shame, guilt, and remorse (to resolve dissonances).

The problem is that resorting to fantasy is addictive. The potency of extant fantasies fades and new ones are constantly sought.

So, novelty-seeking, reckless, or immoral behaviors like cheating become more and more prevalent as current relationships lose their fantastic veneer and allure.

212.

Copious studies show that we have all - young and older alike - adopted a [sex worker's attitude to sex](#) and to our sex partners.

Sex used to be described (though never practiced) as the sublime apex of intimacy with another person.

A prostitute's clinical, mechanical, statistical, dehumanizing, casual, impersonal approach to sex was widely frowned upon and considered both disgusting and horrifying.

Sex was supposed to involve emotions, however rudimentary and these imbued the acts with meaning.

Sex to modern men and women is exactly that: mechanical, statistical, dehumanizing, casual, impersonal. Clinical.

Even the language used to discuss sex is a sex worker's lingo.

Sex had become merely an aerobics exercise, or a physiological release.

Sex partners are at best amusing anecdotes and more often just forgettable warm bodies.

Sometimes, we hang a fantasy onto our sex partners. But they are otherwise invisible, just an excuse to fantasize.

We had become auto-erotic and porn addicted. We masturbate with a kaleidoscopic parade of interchangeable animated corpses.

Being a sex worker is not “wrong”. It is morally defensible or neutral. It is NOT immoral to be a prostitute.

True: sex workers typically have mental health issues. Who doesn't?

My beef with sex work is different.

I am old-fashioned about sex.

To me, sex is a wonder of intimacy, each encounter and partner etched in my memory in vivid detail.

To me, sex is a miracle of vulnerability and connectedness, an aesthetic, a work of art, a sacred text.

And my sex partner is a goddess, even if only for a night. She transforms me. Our bodies fuse. Emotions resonate. The experience is always meaningful, sometimes transformative.

I never fuck. I make love. Unforgettable. Profound. Enchanted.

213.

There are [two forms of love addiction](#) ("pathological love"): overt and inverse.

In the overt version, there is a tendency to seek momentary limerence ("crush") or more protracted infatuation in reaction to a potential partner who either expresses interest or is found to be even rudimentarily attractive.

In an overt situation, sex is used to connect or merge in fantasy with a casual, largely interchangeable partner.

In inverse love addiction, the crush is intended to resolve a cognitive dissonance and it is the addict who initiates the contact.

The dissonance has to do with the addicted person's sexual orientation and

preferences.

The "love" is a fantasy resolution because it legitimizes the sex, however socially unacceptable it is deemed to be.

214.

Who is a [sexual self-trasher](#)?

Someone who is minimally selective in choosing sex partners;

Is unboundaried (does anything imaginable with anyone she had "selected", strangers included); and

Against her will, lets her sex partners objectify, humiliate, or even hurt her during the sex act;

Has sex with partners she doesn't want to sleep or sext/cam with for reasons completely unrelated to sex (trading it for free drinks or a place to crash, for example or as a way to say "thank you");

Has sex as a form of people pleasing and in order to be liked or "loved";

Renders herself unable to express proper consent by getting drunk or drugged;

Uses sex - typically with random strangers - to regulate her emotions and stabilize her moods, to "feel good", self-soothe and self-medicate with near anonymous sexual partners (sexual acting out).

215.

The [Avoidant attachment style in children](#) is organized. Yet, when it evolves into the Dismissive and Fearful Avoidant attachment styles in adulthood it becomes disorganized, at least in the latter case. How come?

Many mental health issues have childhood precursors with a high level of organization but become disorganized in adulthood. Borderline Personality Disorder, Conduct Disorder, and some forms of paranoia-schizophrenia are such examples.

This is possibly because personality complexity increases with age and with it the opportunities for disorganization.

216.

[Loneliness](#) is innate, not externally determined. One is never lonelier than in a crowd or in a dead relationship.

Loneliness is about not being seen.

Not being understood.

Not being loved.

Not being forgiven.

Loneliness is to be forgotten.

Neglected.

Ignored.

Used, manipulated and abused and then discarded.

Loneliness is about realizing that we are all alone when it comes to the important things in life - and death.

That we can never really access someone else's mind.

That empathy is a self-soothing sham.

That evil is real and enduring while good is ephemeral.

That all our narratives are delusional and end in sorrowful disillusionment and disenchantment.

That the only magic is in our hearts and the only hope is in our minds and both are toxic.

Loneliness is another name for our inexorable being. It is the antonym of love and its ineluctable complement.

217.

To be able to experience [mature adult love](#) you need to have been loved as a child and consequently to have developed healthy self-love.

218.

[Fear of intimacy](#) results in either of two diametrically opposed sexual behaviors or in a pattern of vacillation between them: unboundaried promiscuity or anxious abstinence.

219.

The [Madonna-Whore complex](#) is old news: some men divide women into respectable but sexless and disreputable but hot. The first kind are marriage material - the others are good for casual sex at most, pump and dump trash.

One mediating mechanism involved in this schism is abandonment or separation anxiety.

Such men, when they have sex, immediately place their sexual partners in the “whore” category: loose, unboundaried, no self-respect or dignity. Sex is dirty, degrading, and despoils the woman.

But “whorish”, promiscuous sluts cheat and abandon with abandon. To mitigate the anxiety engendered by such ineluctable outcomes, these men recast their long-term sexual partners as Madonnas, incorporeal saints, devoid of sexuality and lust. Now said men feel safe.

But, of course, to have sex with a saintly mother figure is both sacrilegious and incestuous, so all sex in the couple ceases. The woman becomes an asexual artifact.

This state of protracted sexlessness drives these hapless women to cheat and to abandon - the very traumatizing outcomes sought to be skirted in the first place!

220.

Women who consent to no strings attached instant drunk sex with men they had just met make it very difficult for their boundaried, self-regulated, self-respecting sisters who are possessed of at least a smidgen of self-esteem and wish to pace the dating process organically.

Having grown accustomed to sex on demand, [men are becoming more and more predatory](#) and unwilling to commit or to invest beyond a single night's romp.

When denied sex, even on a first date, most men become aggressive,

demanding, coercive, verbally abusive, and worse. A whopping one quarter of first dates now end in rape.

Similarly, studies show that women are giving up on men in droves. They expect no intimacy or relationship. When horny, they resort to dating apps or the nearest dive, pick up a stranger, and go through the motions. Hookup sex is so bad that only 10% of women and one third of men actually orgasm.

221.

It is impossible to suffer from a mental health illness - even only anxiety or depression - and have a [healthy sexuality](#).

Our psychosexuality is both a determinant and a derivative of our personality. If the personality is pathologized in any way, if moods and affects or cognitions are skewed - sexual choices, preferences, and acts are bound to be adversely affected and become reckless and self-destructive.

222.

A [friends with benefits](#) (FwB) arrangement is vastly preferable to casual sex as far as mental health outcomes are concerned.

But it is a pernicious phenomenon all the same because it provides the illusion of an intimate relationship where there is none.

Studies show that people who engage in FwB are less likely to find a true intimate partner or maintain a full fledged love relationship. They are more likely to engage in promiscuous and reckless sex.

FwB liaisons often last for months or years and inhibit dating or courting. Ultimately, they may have a retarding effect on acquiring and deploying intimacy and relationship skills. They also foster and encourage superficiality and emotional unavailability and render sex a mere release or self-soothing function.

On the rare occasion that one of the parties wishes to convert the FwB situation into a romantic affair, s/he is often rebuffed and rejected.

This might take a devastating emotional toll, especially if the spurned party suffers from a mental health problem, such as Borderline Personality Disorder.

223.

[Two myths](#) pervade the last 60 years: that we all have a right and a need for recreational sex and that women are gatekeepers who refuse to procreate with unsuitable men (another Jordan Peterson malarkey).

Well into the end of the 19th century and in most of Nature, sex was and is about making offspring. It is limited to a mating season or estrus (the Talmud actually uses the word “season” to describe the female sex drive).

Recreational sex is a new invention. The right to have sex is an incel concoction: the majority of animals and humans get laid rarely or not at all.

Moreover, a plethora of studies reveal the toll in mental and physical health that casual sex has on its participants. It also adversely impacts the capacity for intimacy and the ability to form long-term relationships. Hookups are seriously damaging (see my video on the topic where I review the literature).

Finally, women actually have a tendency to select inappropriate mates for breeding: criminals, the uneducated, and the poor account for the majority of children born worldwide. The elites are often childless or have one child per household.

224.

Even people with run of the mill mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety fall [victim to sexual assaults and sexual abuse by predators](#) much more often than healthier folk.

The incidence of such mishaps skyrockets when it comes to patients with personality, mood, and psychotic disorders.

They tend to abuse substances and be collared into extreme and reckless sexual situations with opportunistic individuals and groups of abusers.

Mentally ill victims typically react to the shame induced by such helplessness in one of two ways:

1. They reframe the events as agentic and autonomous: “I wanted the sex, I initiated it, I could have stopped it at any minute, despite my intoxicated state, I was in full control of the proceedings”; or
2. They adopt the victim stance: “I was drunk, young, drugged, scared, trapped. There was nothing I could do about it, so I just gave in and put out. The people

who did this to me were lowlife scum. I did nothing to either deserve this or bring it about.”

225.

In this day and age of [malignant tolerance and moral relativism](#) so many questions have been classed taboo that public academic discourse has ground to a screeching halt.

Consider for example the research-based FACTS that the overwhelming vast majority of sex workers, promiscuous sexual self-trashers, and serial cheaters suffer from a constellation of mental health issues (such as mood and anxiety disorders) and possess highly specific antisocial personality types (“dark triad” and “dark tetrad”).

The sexuality of all three is usually nonautonomous (people pleasing, "never say no") which leads to frequent revictimization.

All three kinds are dysregulated and unboundaried and abuse substances (mainly alcohol).

They tend to act out in reaction to perceived or real abandonment or rejection - or defiantly, in your face, and recklessly.

They all perceive sex as transactional in some way, a give and take involving shallow affectivity (emotions). Even when the sex is meaningful - the partner is interchangeable and meaningless, a mildly interesting or convenient prop, usually embedded in a transient fantasy.

All three types are unable to maintain long-term dyads and are prone to egregious dissolute cheating, replete with blaming the partner for their misconduct.

They lack intimacy and relationship skills, have insecure attachment styles, and are approach-avoidant (repetition compulsion).

226.

[Making love](#) is not a power play or a competition. It is never aggressive, demanding, critical, comparative, or demeaning. NEVER!

Giving to the partner is often more gratifying than getting!

Teaching and demonstrating and exploring together everything the two bodies have to offer is 99% of the joy!

Making love is exactly like talking - but with our bodies: communicating emotions, moods, and needs.

If there is a discrepancy in experience, the more experienced partner simply suggests a new, enhanced vocabulary for the consideration of the less experienced partner.

There are no expectations in making love: only openness to the partner.

Gentleness, kindness, understanding, and a very gradual approach are indispensable keys to the experience of lovemaking.

227.

[Informal survey of 276 of my students](#), ages 18-31 in 6 countries: Russia, Nigeria, USA, UK, Australia, and Israel.

Q: How long on average before you have sex with a person you have just met?

Less than 2 hours (112)

5-10 hours (94)

More than 10 hours (21)

Depends (31)

I don't know or decline to answer (18)

Q: Do you consider sex in a one night stand sex an intimate act?

Very intimate (156)

Intimate (76)

Can be intimate or not (34)

Not intimate (8)

Don't know (2)

Q. Do you consider sex in a long-term relationship more intimate than in casual sex?

No (132)

Yes (97)

Sometimes (37)

Not sure (10)

Q. Quantitatively, did you have more sexual encounters in committed relationships or in casual sex?

In casual sex (192)

In relationships (21)

I abstain from sex (11)

Don't remember (52)

Q. Where do you pick up partners for casual sex?

Clubs and bars (46)

Parties (93)

Dating apps (36)

Workplace (44)

In transport (buses, trains, planes) (17)

Everywhere I meet people (40)

Q. Is casual sex less good than sex in long-term relationships?

Less good (193)

Better (67)

Can't decide (16)

Q. Did you ever participate in group sex?

Yes (48)

No (212)

Decline to respond (16)

Q. Do you sext or cam with strangers on a regular basis?

Yes (12)

No (79)

Only when I am in a phase (82)

Decline to answer (103)

Q. Do you consume porn daily?

Yes (154)

No (36)

Decline to respond (86)

Q. How often do you get very drunk before you have casual sex?

100% of the time (177)

50% of the time (87)

Fewer than half the times (12)

Q. How many times did you end up having sex in an alcoholic blackout and have had no memory of it?

1-2 times (11)

3-6 times (45)

7-10 times (127)

Never (76)

Refused to answer (17)

228.

My blood boils when I peruse some of the pseudointellectual trash meted out by the practitioners of the increasingly more dubious field of [gender “studies”](#).

Consider, for example, the current dogma, spawned by Hanna Rosin and supported by the studies of Elizabeth Armstrong and others: “Hookups are a great thing for women because they let them focus on their careers rather than on men”.

Several problems with this inane statement:

1. Hookups ARE about men. The way most women describe them, hookups are a form of sexual slavery on men’s terms and conditions;
2. Women are not giving up on men in hookups! Women are giving up on intimacy, investment, commitment, succor, and relationships;
3. The sex in hookups sucks for the overwhelming majority of women - twice less so for men.

229.

The frequency of casual sex among [Millennials and the Z-gen](#) is LOWER than among the Baby Boomers (my generation) and generation X.

But there are some fundamental differences:

1. Casual sex is now the normative practice, not one of many options: “having fun” is the imperative;

2. Nowadays, hookup sex leads to an intimate relationship (albeit rarely), not the other way;

3. My generation put love, intimacy, and couplehood above career. Not so today’s youth who remain single a decade longer - or for life;

4. Currently, stranger sex is used to establish a social ranking or status within a reference peer group (relative positioning).

Like information (Wikipedia), Facebook likes, a sense of self-worth (narcissistic supply), or quality control (Yelp), the potential partner’s attractiveness is now crowdsourced: peer opinions outweigh one’s own (see Lisa Wade’s seminal work);

5. With the borders between public and private all but gone (aka social media), sex is increasingly becoming a public act (technically, dogging): in parties, group sex, clubs, even bars and restaurants.

230.

The orthodoxy is that [sexual orientation](#) is inherent and immutable.

But when many homosexuals get seriously drunk and, therefore, disinhibited, they become heterosexuals. And vice versa: inebriated, heterosexuals engage in same sex acts.

Inhibitions are internalized social strictures. They are an integral part and outcome of the socialization process. Alcohol removes them.

This raises an intriguing possibility: can all sexual orientations be merely socially-determined scripts and roles? And, if they are, what are the implications?

231.

Here is another moronic pearl of “wisdom” from the [cult of feminism](#): hookups are good because they render the participants more resilient even when they end up being raped and more sexually experienced, even if most of these experiences are bad.

But why acquire resilience and experience this way? Why not simply warn the

youth that hookups both suck and are risky?

It is like saying: “Jumping from multiple tall cliffs without a glider or a parachute taught me a lot about my body and about the nature of cliffs out there”.

Moreover: “dating” among the young is merely glorified hooking up. It has nothing to do with the way it had been done since the 1920s. “Dates” nowadays are way shorter, the two parties are plastered, they invariably end in penetrative sex (or sexual assault), and they rarely lead to a second encounter.

So, once a youth gets hooked on hookups, there is no way back.

232.

From my draft syllabus of “[Youth Sexuality: Trends and Issues](#)” (Outreach program of SIAS-CIAPS: Centre for International Advanced Professional Studies).

GENDER RELATIONS STRIP

WOMEN: Let’s hang out and have fun!

MEN: OK, but only if you act as total drunk sluts and have no strings attached sex with us on demand.

70% of WOMEN: You got yourselves a deal! We will do anything to secure free drinks, have a social life, get male attention and some sex, however bad.

15 years of hookups and “dates” (glorified hookups) later

WOMEN: We now want to have a long-term intimate relationship with one man. Maybe even a child.

MEN: But you are sluts! You said so! You trashed yourself with us! We feel deceived by your about-face! We feel led on, teased, and played! We don’t want any commitment or emotions! We are having great fun!

And anyhow your are nothing but used goods: older and uglier. We will go find younger, prettier women, “fresh meat”, who just want to have fun with us. Don’t ever contact us again: go find a cat!

RAPE VICTIMHOOD SCHEMATICS

All rape and sexual assault perpetrators should be punished harshly.

But most victims are victimized multiple times. By refusing to accept responsibility for their own actions and choices, they are setting themselves up for future abuse.

Examples of self-exculpating fare:

“The rape just happened (I had contributed nothing to it happening)”

“The rape does not define who I am (even though I had made a series of decisions that put me in harm’s way or in a highly ambiguous situation - and I keep repeating these behaviors time and again)”

“I went to a frat house or a club whose members are notorious for their sexual aggression, I got myself blackout drunk there, I wore the skimpiest of clothing, I gave blow jobs in public to several guys. I then agreed to go with several of them to their rooms and public showers.

But, despite all the above, I bear no responsibility for my rape: I may have said “yes” (I can’t remember), but even if I did, I had been taken advantage of”.

233.

[Affirmative consent](#) (“yes means yes”) is the newest piece of nonsense, trying to square the circle of decaying gender relations.

Here are the facts:

1. When it comes to sex, men still dominate, dictate, coerce, and have the upper hand. Women comply and try to please them;
2. In a haze of alcohol and drugs, there is no credible way to establish consent. Most contemporary sex takes place among participants nearly incapacitated by substances;
3. Alcohol affects women much faster and more profoundly than it affects men;
4. In the absence of sexual scripts, both men and women are bewildered as to their own motivations, decisions, and choices and are heavily influenced by women objectifying and despoiling porn;

5. Young men hold women in utter contempt and treat them as so much inebriated trash.

One third of men say that they would force a woman to have sex, one in seven would rape her, one fourth of women in college had been sexually assaulted, a majority of men find the sexual degradation of intoxicated women to be “hilarious” or “funny”;

6. Faced with such attitudes and a staunch refusal to commit, invest, emote, and reciprocate in relationships - women react with anger bordering on misandry (man-hating).

7. Many men lie and future fake and so obtain consent under false premises, a breach of contract in all but name. Though technically consent had been given, it was conditioned upon the fulfillment of certain promises and should be considered to have been retroactively revoked.

Not very conducive to mature, negotiated, consensual sex.

234.

Nothing new under the sun. [History of modern love and sex](#): locus of power and control, type of sex. Every generation ADDS to repertory, so today enormous diversity of models and options.

2010-

Casual sex bad and dangerous, sometimes a form of self-harming (self-trashing): sex recession, celibacy

technology empowered atomization: self-sufficiency, relative positioning, fetishization of devices, addictive behaviors

Infantilization: puberty starts and ends years later, continuing education, living with parents, no jobs, not driving, not drinking, no unsupervised socializing, no adulthood markers, no committed relationships, marriage postponed

Between ages 30-40 difficult to find partners: men won't commit, women despair and withdraw, no intimacy or relationship skills (“dating assignments”)

31% lifelong singles, another 30% single most of the time

Depression, anxiety, suicide on the rise among the young

Until the industrial revolution:

arranged,

economic,

family is work unit,

women's wealth goes to man,

man's wealth inherited, mobility only for younger siblings

rare divorce,

sex procreative,

men outsource sex,

brawn over brain

Industrial revolution to 1920

Singles in crowded cities

Functions of family outsourced (education in factory schools, healthcare, work),
except succor and sex

Gentleman caller (chaperoned)

Women as gatekeepers

Emergence of romantic love, desire

1920-1950

Shortage of men owing to wars (makeup only for women: sexy, not sexual, self-objectification, spectating)

Automobile, phone, classified ads, cinema

Dating: fun, first and second base sex common, multiple partners (essentially casual sex)

Dating in college as status marker

Men pay, so have the power

1950-1960

Going steady: sex only in intimate relationships

Stay at home women more conservative than previous generations, men as providers

1960-1990

Golden age of sex:

free love,

college parties,

feminism,

women empowered by the pill, employment, breaking the glass ceiling

sex with multiple casual partners as an option but always leads to abundant sex in relationships, few singles

harbinger: first dating app in 1965

1990-2010

Hookup culture in colleges where women outnumber men 2:1

Casual sex normative and encouraged until age 30

Porn as sex ed

Dating apps

Relationships perceived as threat (obstacles to career and self-actualization)

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234.

[Transactional sex](#) is any exchange of sexual services for goods, services, and benefits, however minimal - or for the promise of such in the future, within a relationship, a perceived liaison (fantasy), or extradyadically.

A multitude of studies had demonstrated the strong connection between unrestricted sociosexuality, dark triad traits (subclinical psychopathy, Machiavellianism), self-focused sexual motivation, and the Ludic (game-playing, manipulative) love style.

A transactional attitude to sex was also correlated with a borderline personality organization: impulsivity, dysregulation, compulsivity, anxiety, a history of trauma or victimization, unstable interpersonal relationships, and low self-esteem.

Unexpectedly, multiple studies have shown that subclinical narcissism is not correlated with a propensity for transactional sex.

People who are into transactional sex often mistake their involvement (emotional investment in the goal or the project) as “love” or “intimacy”.

235.

[Sex is an act of love. Love is not merely a sex act.](#)

When sex is confused for or conflated with love, there is no love and no (good) sex.

Psychopaths often mistake the two (unrestricted sociosexuality is associated with dark triad personalities).

236.

The New York Times published yesterday an opinion piece against marriage, calling on people to remain single. It is titled: “What Does Marriage Ask Us to Give Up?” And the answer: “Our hard won independence as singles”.

What this odious op-ed wants you to think is that all marriages are bad and that the ONLY alternative to marriage is to be single. Both assumptions are of course totally FALSE.

To resolve the onerous cognitive dissonance of loneliness, singlehood had become an ideology.

Everyone - men and women - are expected to be [career-oriented, cherish money](#) above all else, and act unrestricted sociosexually (be casual about sex). This is the new unigender role and its attendant social and sexual scripts.

According to Pew Center, maintaining one’s career is 2.2 times more important than being in a committed relationship. Only about HALF trust their partner FOR ANYTHING (with the exception of faithfulness).

Embarking on a relationship and “catching feelings” are, therefore, threats to one’s narcissistic self-actualization best fended off by keeping sex emotionless, meaningless, and never with the same person.

The 20% of the population who are promiscuous by nature thrive in this culture of hookups (and bad, drunk sex). They remain single for life.

Unrestricted sociosexuality is correlated with subclinical psychopathy, substance abuse, and extraversion.

The remaining 80%, having endured the vagaries and dangers of modern “dating”, recoil. About 60% end up in a succession of committed liaisons (marriage, cohabitation). The remaining 20% go celibate and become lifelong singles.

All told, only about half the adult population share their lives with someone intimate. The rest are equally divided between celibate singles and sexually active singles who are exclusively into intoxicated one night stands and anonymous group sex.

237.

[Loving someone requires courage.](#) Being vulnerable open you up to malice, hostility, and aggression. It also transforms you, getting rid of your old self. But you need to take this leap of faith to grow and heal and complete yourself.

238.

[Is your relationship abusive but not dead or beyond hope?](#) How to tell relationships apart and what can you do to revive your partnership?

239.

Why do women participate in swinging (The Lifestyle), gangbangs, dogging, camming, and other forms of multiparty [kinky sex](#)?

The few who venture out with strangers and without the presence of an intimate partner are dark triad personalities and, typically reckless primary (factor 1) psychopaths, acting out borderlines (factor 2 psychopaths), or histrionic narcissists - all more or less one and the same diagnosis, according to emerging current research.

The risks involved, breaching the taboo, being the center of male attention and desire, and the novelty arouse them.

It is a dual trip of power and ego and also a way of showing the middle finger - and much more besides - to social mores and conventions, including the male double standard.

But even these hardened Amazons ultimately seek acceptance, to be “liked or loved”, and to belong (to a gang, to a man they fancy). Their deep motivation is nonautonomous.

The codependents among these women strive to enhance the intimacy with their existing partners by sharing these unusual experiences. These are usually communal psychopaths.

All of them share an instrumental view of sex: as a trade off for goods and services, a prop to self-esteem, or a method to fend off abandonment.

They tend to dissociate the mostly degrading sex. They numb their emotions and have reduced affect display.

Some of them embed their activities in the context of a victimhood narrative

(feminism) or an ideology (empowerment) while allowing multiple men to objectify and disempower them in the hookup culture, for example.

Decoupling sex from true and deep emotions protects the participants from trauma and renders swinging couples happier (more ego syntonic) than vanilla coupled, studies show.

240.

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About the Author

Sam Vaknin (<http://samvak.tripod.com>) is the author of Malignant Self-Love: Narcissism Revisited and After the Rain - How the West Lost the East, as well as many other books and ebooks about topics in psychology, relationships, philosophy, economics, and international affairs.

He was the Editor-in-Chief of Global Politician and served as a columnist for Central Europe Review, PopMatters, eBookWeb , and Bellaonline, and as a United Press International (UPI) Senior Business Correspondent. He was the editor of mental health and Central East Europe categories in The Open Directory and Suite101.

Visit Sam's Web site at <http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com>

Work on Narcissism

Sam Vaknin is the author of [Malignant Self Love: Narcissism Revisited](#), the pioneering work about narcissistic abuse, now in its 10th , DSM-V compatible revision

Sam Vaknin's work is quoted in well over [1000 scholarly publications](#) and in over [3000 books](#) (full list [here](#)). His [Narcissists, Psychopaths, and Abuse YouTube channel](#) and other channels garnered more than 35 million views and 155,000 subscribers.

His Web site "[Malignant Self Love - Narcissism Revisited](#)" was, for many years, an Open Directory Cool Site and is a Psych-UK recommended Site.

Sam Vaknin is a professor of psychology, but he is *not a mental health practitioner*, though he is [certified in psychological counseling techniques](#) by [Brainbench](#).

Sam Vaknin served as the editor of Mental Health Disorders categories in the [Open Directory Project](#) and on [Mentalhelp.net](#). He maintains his own Websites about [Narcissistic Personality Disorder \(NPD\)](#) and about [relationships](#) with [abusive narcissists](#) and [psychopaths here](#) and in [HealthyPlace](#).

You can find his work on many other Web sites: [Mental Health Matters](#), [Mental Health Sanctuary](#), [Mental Health Today](#), [Kathi's Mental Health Review](#) and others.

Sam Vaknin wrote a column for Bellaonline on [Narcissism and Abusive Relationships](#) and was a frequent contributor to Websites such as [Self-growth.com](#) and [Bizymoms](#) (as an [expert](#) on personality disorders).

Sam Vaknin served as the author of the Personality Disorders topic, Narcissistic Personality Disorder topic, the Verbal and Emotional Abuse topic, and the Spousal Abuse and Domestic Violence topic, all four on Suite101. He is the moderator of the Narcissistic Abuse Study List, the Toxic Relationships Study List, and other mailing lists with a total of c. 20,000 members. He also publishes a bi-weekly [Abusive Relationships Newsletter](#).

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Born in 1961 in Qiryat-Yam, Israel

Served in the Israeli Defence Force (1979-1982) in training and education units

Full proficiency in Hebrew and in English

Education

1970 to 1978

Completed nine semesters in the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa

1982 to 1983

[Ph.D. in Physics and Philosophy](#) (dissertation: "[Time Asymmetry Revisited](#)") – [California Miramar University](#) (formerly: [Pacific Western University](#)), California, USA

1982 to 1985

Graduate of numerous courses in Finance Theory and International Trading in the UK and USA.

Certified [E-Commerce Concepts Analyst](#) by [Brainbench](#)

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Business Experience

1979 to 1983

Commentator in Yedioth Aharonot, Ma'ariv, and Bamakhane. Published sci-fi short fiction in Fantasy 2000.

Founder and co-owner of a chain of computerized information kiosks in Tel-Aviv, Israel.

1982 to 1985

Senior positions with the Nessim D. Gaon Group of Companies in Geneva, Paris and New-York (NOGA and APROFIM SA):

- Chief Analyst of Edible Commodities in the Group's Headquarters
- Manager of the Research and Analysis Division
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- Project Manager of the Nigerian Computerized Census
- Vice President in charge of RND and Advanced Technologies

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1985 to 1986

Represented Canadian Venture Capital Funds in Israel

1986 to 1987

General Manager of IPE Ltd. in London. The firm financed international multi-lateral countertrade and leasing transactions.

1988 to 1990

Co-founder and Director of "Mikbats-Tesuah", a portfolio management firm based in Tel-Aviv.

Activities included large-scale portfolio management, underwriting, forex trading and general financial advisory services.

1990 to Present

Freelance consultant to many of Israel's Blue-Chip firms, mainly on issues related to the capital markets in Israel, Canada, the UK and the USA.

Consultant to foreign RND ventures and to Governments on macro-economic matters.

Freelance journalist in various media in the United States.

1990 to 1995

President of the Israel chapter of the Professors World Peace Academy (PWPA) and (briefly) Israel representative of the "Washington Times".

1993 to 1994

Co-owner and Director of many business enterprises:

– The Omega and Energy Air-conditioning Concern

– AVP Financial Consultants

– Handiman Legal Services – Total annual turnover of the group: 10 million USD.

Co-owner, Director and Finance Manager of COSTI Ltd. – Israel's largest computerized information vendor and developer. Raised funds through a series of private placements locally in the USA, Canada and London.

1993 to 1996

Publisher and Editor of a Capital Markets Newsletter distributed by subscription only to dozens of subscribers countrywide.

Tried and incarcerated for 11 months for his role in an attempted takeover of Israel's Agriculture Bank involving securities fraud.

Managed the Internet and International News Department of an Israeli mass media group, "Ha-Tikshoret and Namer".

Assistant in the Law Faculty in Tel-Aviv University (to Prof. S.G. Shoham)

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Financial consultant to leading businesses in Macedonia, Russia and the Czech Republic.

Economic commentator in "[Nova Makedonija](#)", "Dnevnik", "Makedonija Denes", "Izvestia", "Argumenti i Fakti", "The Middle East Times", "The New Presence", "Central Europe Review", and other periodicals, and in the economic programs on various channels of Macedonian Television.

Chief Lecturer in courses in Macedonia organized by the Agency of Privatization, by the Stock Exchange, and by the Ministry of Trade.

1999 to 2002

Economic Advisor to the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and to the Ministry of Finance.

2001 to 2003

Senior Business Correspondent for United Press International (UPI)

2005 to Present

Associate Editor and columnist, [Global Politician](#)

Founding Analyst, The Analyst Network

Contributing Writer, The American Chronicle Media Group

Expert, [Self-growth](#) and Bizymoms and contributor to [Mental Health Matters](#)

2007 to 2008

Columnist and analyst in "Nova Makedonija", "Fokus", and "Kapital" (Macedonian papers and newsweeklies)

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Member of the Steering Committee for the Advancement of Healthcare in the Republic of Macedonia

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Seminars and lectures on economic issues in various forums in Macedonia

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[Editor in Chief](#) of [Global Politician](#) and [Investment Politics](#)

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Owner of the [Narcissistic Abuse Study](#) List, the [Toxic Relationships](#) List, and the [Abusive Relationships Newsletter](#) (more than 8000 members)

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Editor of mental health disorders and Central and Eastern Europe categories in various Web directories (Open Directory, Search Europe, [Mentalhelp.net](#))

Editor of the Personality Disorders, Narcissistic Personality Disorder, the Verbal and Emotional Abuse, and the Spousal (Domestic) Abuse and Violence topics on Suite 101 and contributing author on [Bellaonline](#).

Columnist and commentator in "The New Presence", [United Press International \(UPI\)](#), InternetContent, eBookWeb, [PopMatters](#), [Global Politician](#), The Analyst Network, Conservative Voice, The American Chronicle Media Group, [eBookNet.org](#), and "[Central Europe Review](#)".

Publications and Awards

"Managing Investment Portfolios in States of Uncertainty", Limon Publishers, Tel-Aviv, 1988

"The Gambling Industry", Limon Publishers, Tel-Aviv, 1990

"[Requesting My Loved One: Short Stories](#)", Miskal-Yedioth Aharonot, Tel-Aviv, 1997

"[The Suffering of Being Kafka](#)" (electronic book of Hebrew and English Short Fiction), Prague, 1998-2004

"The Macedonian Economy at a Crossroads – On the Way to a Healthier Economy" (dialogues with [Nikola Gruevski](#)), Skopje, 1998

"[The Exporter's Pocketbook](#)" Ministry of Trade, Republic of Macedonia, Skopje, 1999

"[Malignant Self-love: Narcissism Revisited](#)", Narcissus Publications, Prague and Skopje, 1999-2015

[The Narcissism, Psychopathy, and Abuse in Relationships Series](#) (electronic books regarding relationships with abusive narcissists and psychopaths), Prague, 1999-2015

"[After the Rain – How the West Lost the East](#)", Narcissus Publications in association with Central Europe Review/CEENMI, Prague and Skopje, 2000

[Personality Disorders Revisited](#) (electronic book about personality disorders), Prague, 2007

More than [30 e-books](#) about psychology, international affairs, business and economics, philosophy, short fiction, and reference

Winner of numerous awards, among them [Israel's Council of Culture and Art Prize for Maiden Prose](#) (1997), The Rotary Club Award for Social Studies (1976), and the Bilateral Relations Studies Award of the American Embassy in Israel (1978).

Hundreds of professional articles in all fields of finance and economics, and numerous articles dealing with geopolitical and political economic issues, published in both print and Web periodicals in many countries.

[Many appearances in the electronic and print media](#) on subjects in psychology, philosophy, and the sciences, and concerning economic matters.

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You may also join **Malignant Self-love: Narcissism Revisited on Facebook:**

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You can read hundreds of Readers' Reviews at the Barnes and Noble, and Amazon Web pages dedicated to "Malignant Self-love" - **HERE:**

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/1983208175> (Amazon US)

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/1983208175> (Amazon UK)

Participate in discussions about Abusive Relationships:

<http://www.runboard.com/bnarcissisticabuserecovery>

<http://thepsychopath.freeforums.org/>

Abusive Relationships Newsletters

<http://groups.google.com/group/narcissisticabuse/>

<https://groups.google.com/g/narcissistic-personality-disorder>

*Abused? Stalked? Harassed? Bullied? Victimized?
Afraid? Confused? Need HELP? DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!
You OWE IT to yourself and to YOUR LOVED ONES!*

Brought up by a Narcissistic Parent?
Married to a Narcissist – or Divorcing One?
Afraid your Children will turn out to be the same?
Want to cope with this pernicious, baffling condition?

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These books and video lectures will teach you how to...
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We offer you four types of products:

- I. **"Malignant Self-love: Narcissism Revisited"** (the print edition);
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Copies **signed** and **dedicated** by the Author (use only this link!):

http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/8023833847/ref=cm_sw_r_tw_myi?m=A2IY3GUWWKHV9B

From the PUBLISHER

"Malignant Self-love: Narcissism Revisited" is now available also from the publisher (more expensive, but includes a bonus pack):

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/thebook.html>

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From KINDLE (AMAZON)

Kindle Books about Narcissists, Psychopaths, and Abusive Relationships – use these links:

http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=ntt_athr_dp_sr_1?encoding=UTF8&field-author=Sam%20Vaknin&search-alias=digital-text&sort=relevancerank (Amazon USA)

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III. Cold Therapy Seminar on DVDs

<http://www.narcissistic-abuse.com/ctcounsel.html>

IV. Counselling with Sam Vaknin or Lidija Rangelovska (or both)

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