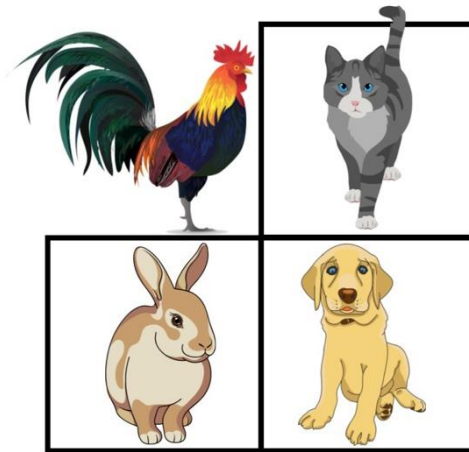


Loving the Roosters in Your Life



Roosters and Other Animals as
Metaphors That Define Your
Relationships

John Linton

Author's Note

Numerous studies suggest there are four different styles or aspects of human behavior. Different authors and researchers have probed psychological motivations, learning preferences and relational forces.

I have studied Anthony Gregorc's Learning Styles, Taylor Hartman's Color Code, William Glasser's psychological needs, and Gayle Gregory's personality styles.

All these different modalities have profoundly influenced my thinking and understanding of human behavior. As I have compared all models, they are very similar, and the concepts are each presented basically in one of four categories.

I have taken the liberty to present the four categories as animal metaphors, each representative of a personality and behavioral pattern. The rooster seeks power, the rabbit community, the puppy playfulness, and the cat aloofness.

I give full credit to the researchers and presenters above, and any assumption that I don't fully appreciate and honor their work is unfounded.

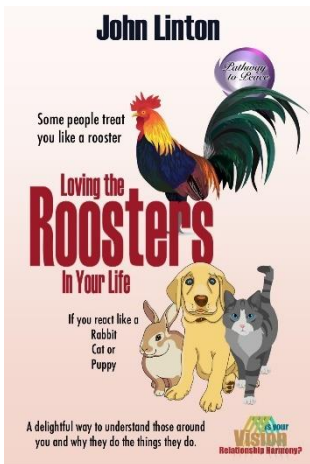
To examine my definition of a rooster is to liken it to the red personality in the color code, the concrete sequential in the Gregorc, the motivation of power in Glasser's definition, or the clipboard in Gayle Gregory's teachings.

This book, *Loving the Roosters in Your Life* is part of a broader program I have been developing for several years, *A Pathway to Peace*.



This book is one of five books I have been developing for several years. Now complete, each book represents a very important aspect of my lifetime of experiences

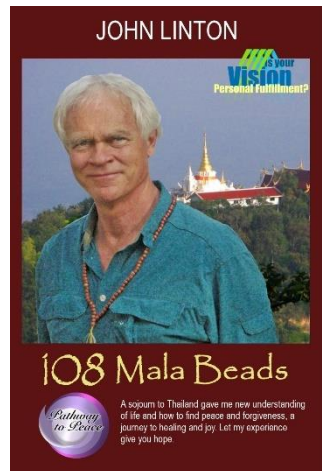
Vision is a very important concept to me, and I believe it should be at the core of every human being. What is it you want? Where do you want to be? What do you hope to accomplish? What is your vision of relationship harmony?



The book *Loving the Roosters In your Life* is an interesting and thoughtful explanation of why people do the things they do, often crazy and painful behaviors that make life difficult. This book asks the question, "What is your vision of relationship harmony?" It reflects on my work through many years of producing videos with some of the most highly renowned experts in psychiatry, psychology, education, family relationships and researchers in the field

of human behavior. Fascinating true stories of real people fill this book to give you understanding as to how you might better relate to other people in your life and how you can understand your own behavior as you interact with them. In the face of daily confrontations, confusion, difficulty, or opportunity, do you behave like a rooster, a rabbit, a cat or a puppy?

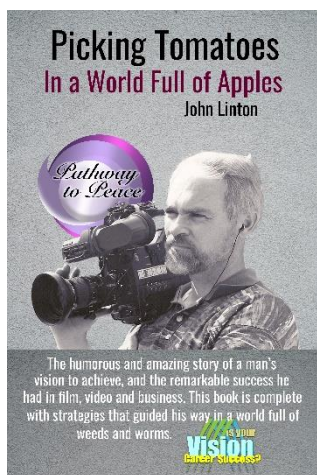
The book *108 Mala Beads* chronicles my personal spiritual journey. It asks the question, “What is your vision of personal fulfillment?” Within the book I reflect on the joyous experiences of relationships including family, marriage, children, grandchildren and many other associations. I delve into the importance of spirituality, religion, meditation and education with an underlying cognizance of my own unique humanity.



I come from a huge ancestry with many aunts and uncles and have a growing posterity which brings me great joy.

However, amidst this, I had many personal struggles and crises which culminated in my sojourn in Thailand 17 years ago. There I received a Japa Mala with 108 beads, each representing happy, joyous, and meaningful people and experiences throughout my life. I share many insights of personal growth with you.

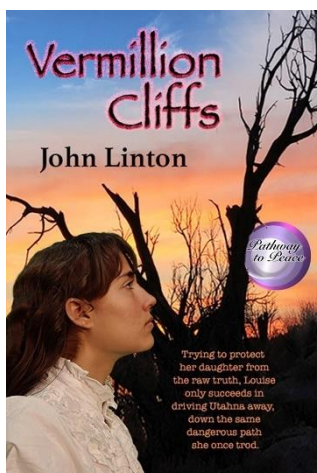
This book, *Picking Tomatoes In a World Full of Apples*, asks the question, “What is your vision of career success?” Within are various adolescent, educational and career moves—some deliberate, some foolish, some involuntary—but all culminating in a happy life for me. This is my journey on the pathway to peace. There are many stories, some offering useful advice to anyone charting life’s path from a career perspective. There are many amazing and comical situations reflecting the good, the bad and the ugly in my life of education and work



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many amazing and comical situations reflecting the good, the bad and the ugly in my life of education and work

The book *Vermillion Cliffs* is a novel I created as I crisscrossed the continent for many years while producing videos. With fictional characters, I tell the story that reflects much of the guilt and shame I have experienced and witnessed in others close to me. The novel is set in the beautiful red-rock country of Southern Utah.



From the back cover it reads:

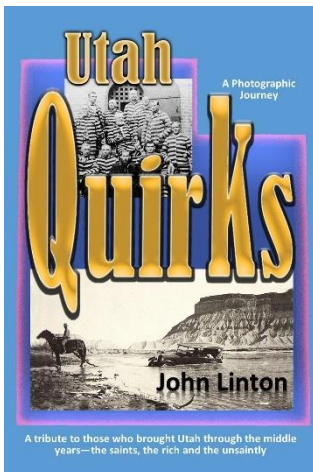
On Utah statehood day, January 4, 1896, Louise gave birth to her illegitimate daughter. In honor of the day, the baby was named Utahna—a name the girl detests.

Trying to protect her daughter from the raw truth, Louise only succeeds in driving Utahna away—to the very path she herself once walked but has always denied. Crime, tragedy, and harrowing

revelations reach life-threatening proportions as mother and daughter struggle to find mutual devotion in a sea of deception.

In one of the many accolades praising this novel, one woman in the Midwest said this book could not have been written by a man. A powerful story of a mother and daughter's struggle and reconciliation. A man she thought, could never write such an insightful story.

I was the only boy in a family with four sisters. Maybe that's why I could do it.



Utah Quirks is a companion book to the novel, *Vermillion Cliffs*, telling the factual circumstances in which the fictional characters lived.

This colorful compilation is a fascinating, humorous and informative photographic journey through Utah's middle years, paying tribute to the saints, the rich and the unsaintly. The photos and stories in this book bridge the cultural divide between pioneer days and the advancing

technology of the 20th century.

From a cultural perspective, polygamy laid the groundwork for much of the quirkiness of the era, set against the stunning and fractious geology of the Colorado Plateau, which fills much of the stunning panorama of present-day Utah.

The prehistoric geological epoch is itself one of the greatest quirks of all, shaping the landscape west of the Rockies. Vast as it is, this area is a small part of what Brigham Young laid claim to as the State of

Deseret, an area that encompassed most of the western United States.

Forward

People are like animals in their relationships.

Roosters are leaders. They take charge of things. They have many gifts and much that is great in this world comes from the work of roosters. But as roosters keep order, build and maintain control, they can become harmful in close relationships. They might become overbearing to someone such as a cat who needs to run and hide when the rooster crows.

Cats are conflict avoidant. They simply walk away from a threatening situation and observe unnoticed from a distance. Roosters are frustrated with cats because they often won't communicate and engage in conversation. They are sometimes sneaky and deceitful.

Rabbits are highly social and need to be in a crowd—a crowd of people with whom they feel comfortable. With their friends, rabbits find comfort and understanding. This can be very threatening to a rooster who wants to micro-manage his or her brood and what the rabbits might want to say or do.

Puppies are adorable and loveable. Everyone wants to be around a puppy because they are exuberant with life and so fun. But puppies always make a mess, such as never making their bed or cleaning up the dishes. Roosters don't understand why puppies are so muddled in their personal management and frustrated at their inability to be organized. Cats often stay away from puppies because they are sometimes too playful.

Puppies are frustrated with rabbits because they will not play rough and tumble games and take risks that puppies are prone to leap into. Cats are annoyed with rabbits that spend too much social time with

others when they want quiet intimate time in their close relationships.

So, there you have it, people needing to interrelate with each other but displaying the characteristics of roosters, cats, puppies and rabbits.

As you read this book you will begin to see where people fit into these categories. Most easily identified are the roosters, because they are the people who take control, sometimes to the aggravation of everyone else.

This book is not meant to denigrate roosters, nor to label people in a harmful way. But it is nevertheless a fun method to easily identify the characteristics in others that may delight or frustrate.

This book is really about understanding and loving those roosters, for progress in every area of society would stagnate without them.

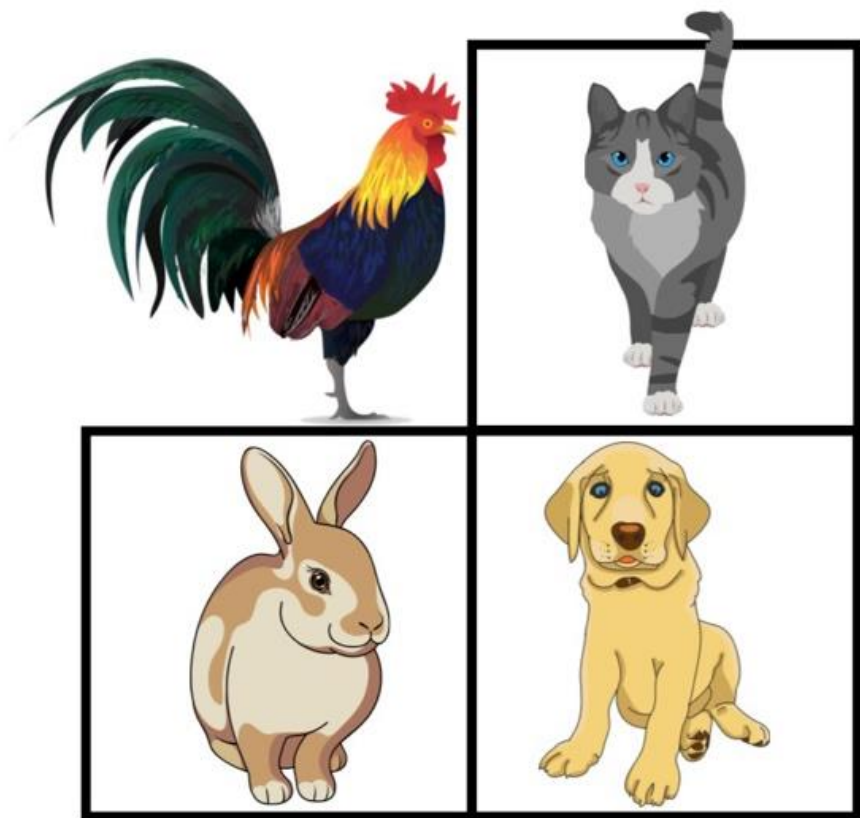
As you begin to understand others, you will learn the importance of establishing boundaries to protect yourself from those who are unwilling to understand you. Many strategies will be presented that help you better interact with those in close relationships and cope with unexpected painful encounters that occur from time to time.

You will develop the skill to strengthen your sense of self-worth and uniqueness.

There are many exemplifying stories in this book that are true, although I have changed their names due to the sensitivities that surround their world as they mix with roosters, cats, puppies and rabbits.

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Introduction



Roosters are driven by power. Control of their own lives is essential, dominance they would never give to another. And without realizing it—generally with well meaning—they exert authority as they try to control others.



Cats are fiercely independent and cherish their freedom. Usually conflict avoidant, cats will assert their will often in quietude or secretiveness. If necessary, they will deceive to maintain their self-determination and self-will.



Rabbits are social creatures, interdependent upon others for their opinions, validation and comfort. They cannot make a decision without a lot of input from others. They can easily be lonely and need to mix in a crowd.



Puppies are the life of the party, funny and fun. They set aside menial tasks and responsibility if they have an opportunity to do something new and exciting. They can work hard if they see a fun reward at the end of it. They are always loyal.

For many years I produced video programs that feature various researchers who delve into human behavior. William Glasser, Taylor Hartman, Anthony Gregorc and Gayle Gregory among others have delineated human behavior into four categories. Whether driven by motive, learning style or basic human needs, all modes find similarities in the animal metaphors presented in this book.

Animals are a lot more engaging than academic terms such as abstract-random or concrete-sequential. Reflective of these studies, I present these easy to grasp relevant ideas as you struggle with your relationships.

Blameworthy

As I analyze the reactions that these metaphorical animals have on each other, I have come to recognize that blame is often cast about for problems in a relationship. Some people feel always blamed, and I call this condition blameworthy, or worthy of being blamed or censured.

Blame givers are primarily roosters, but other animals can flair up in anger or frustration and become blame givers themselves. Sadly, in most relationships, someone becomes the habitually blameworthy person.

Have you ever done something important only to be criticized and belittled for what someone felt was of no worth?

Have you ever made an innocent mistake and been severely rebuked?

Do you find it is safer to lie about something rather than face blame or criticism?

Do you believe you are incapacitated from doing things you would like to do, fearing a put-down?

Have you ever done something for another only to be told you didn't do enough, well enough or fast enough?

Have you ever made a request of another only to be told that your need isn't justified?

Teasing, bullying and harsh judgment may have taken their toll. Do you feel like you have more than your share of this kind of painful rebuke? The answers are complex and deeply rooted in psychological scrutiny. But rather than be buried in a plethora of data and scholarly analysis, I offer you simplified answers based on my own observations and the experiences of others.

Only those who are blameworthy can understand the deep pain that comes from continuous criticism, ridicule, rejection and humiliation. Do you often feel that an attack or criticism is forthcoming? Are you always on guard to protect yourself from the onslaught?

Adding to the pain, some overbearing blame givers avoid accepting responsibility for virtually every problem. It is needful for them to find another to be culpable, absolving them of accountability. Even if all evidence points to them for some type of mistake, the blame giver will waste no time in finding another to take the rap.

Setting Boundaries

If you suffer the pain of being considered blameworthy, then you need to establish boundaries to protect yourself. As you learn the predictable characteristics of the animal metaphors you will gain the courage to set such boundaries. But beware, sometimes you may be a blame giver to others.

The process is simple and easily explained, but it will take fortitude on your part to make it happen. And you will find friends and loved ones ready to help. Other roosters, cats, rabbits and puppies will give you understanding and support.

These concepts have saved many individuals and have the potential to bless the lives of millions more. Those persons will be saved from the emotional suffering they feel and the same can happen to you. These ideas will liberate you, empower you and release unbridled potential within you.

You will find peace, joy and security, and feel validated as a healthy individual worthy of emulation.

You Can Take Back Your Life

Filled with strategies, this book contains numerous and proven helps that give you understanding as to the cause of your pain. You will also understand the blame givers and how to recognize them by gaining understanding as to why they function as they do.

You will find comfort as you understand that the blame givers, who so unfairly hurt you, are likely driven by their own insecurities, not your actions.

As you understand the animal tendencies you have, you will begin to reclaim their power over you by establishing boundaries. The dynamic of your interactions with others will change to your advantage.

With increased confidence and self-assurance, you will begin to do things you always wanted to do, but felt you were unworthy or incapable of doing. You will have the poise to say the things you never felt you could say; true expressions of your heart and opinions

of your mind that you never felt you were allowed to express. You will be able to do all of this without the fear of blame, put-downs, criticism or rejection.

Everyone admires the regal stature of a rooster and loves a cat, a bunny and a puppy. And most everyone will love you.

You will come out of the darkness of night and become the shining star and delight in the company of others, and the one who is sought for wisdom rather than targeted for blame. And whatever may be at your core, whether that of a rooster, a cat, a puppy or a rabbit, you will become more confident, compassionate and happy.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth came to understand and accept herself as a puppy. She is a young working single mother with three children. Life is too busy for Elizabeth to keep her house neat.

Elizabeth resented the occasional visits of her neighbor who had no children living at home and did not have to support her family.

Often the neighbor would comment, "If you would just put things away when you use them, you wouldn't have such a mess." Comments like this hurt and infuriated Elizabeth.

Finally, one day after the understanding she gained from this book, she said, "She's a rooster, and she just likes to crow."

Elizabeth also set boundaries to protect herself from her neighbor, informing her that the criticisms were unjustified and unappreciated.

The neighbor rarely visits any more, and never criticizes. And Elizabeth no longer feels guilty if she doesn't always get the dishes done.

She lives in peace, knowing that she has control of her own life, even though she has the tendencies of a rabbit who cherishes community relationships.

The Struggling Sisters

Upon the eventual death of their parents, four sisters in the middle years of their lives were confronted with the need to clean up the old house in which they grew up.

I witnessed them in an upstairs bedroom closet sorting through old clothes and other items collected through the years. Some had more dominant rooster-like tendencies of control, and others were more like rabbits in their sentimental state of mind.

One sister pulled out an old dress and said, "We can throw this out."

Another protested, "No, that was my junior prom dress." So, it went back into the closet.

A hat was pulled out, all crushed and dirty. "This can go."

"No protested another, that has a lot of meaning to me." So back in the closet it went.

After several hours, each item had been pulled out, examined, argued over, then put back in the closet.

Finally, they gave up. Cleaning the closet was impossible, too many roosters and rabbits, each struggling from their perspective and unique personality motive.

The only way to clean the closet would have been for a third party to discard everything. If that had happened, the sisters probably would not have ever missed anything.



Roosters, Keepers of Control

Chapter 1



Roosters are driven by power. Control of their own lives is essential, dominance they would never give to another. And without realizing it—generally with well meaning—they exert authority as they try to control others.

Power is what motivates roosters.

For a few days, I lived with a native family in south rural China amid the vertical limestone karsts that surround the town of Yang Shuo. Their meager income is augmented with home grown fruit, vegetables, pigs and chickens.

I observed with fascination a rooster, whose major concern was a hen over which he had complete dominance. The rooster would take her food, squawk at her, and relentlessly peck her back.

So severe was the pecking that the hen had no feathers between her tail and head, only bruised bare skin. Yet amazingly, she followed him wherever he went. She was completely loyal to her rooster and took whatever domination and punishment he meted out.

Should she occasionally wander off on her own, the rooster followed, keeping her in check. She was never out of easy reach.

The island of Kauai in Hawaii is overrun with chickens. It is a perfect breeding ground for the birds, and with no natural predators they have spread everywhere. Walking down a lane, I observed a rooster

venture across the street encroaching on the territory of another rooster. He was chased back.

The second rooster wasn't happy, and found the situation reversed as he ventured too far in the other direction into the first rooster's territory. Human roosters are no different, always vying and jostling for position and control.

People as Roosters

Roosters are powerful leaders. Often, they are the movers and shakers in our society.

Business leaders, politicians, doctors and attorneys are often roosters. What drives them is the belief that they are correct in their vision of how things should be. In their mind, they are always right.

We honor these people for the contributions they make to society, even though they might be overbearing.

Why do roosters feel so confident that they are always right, and you are always wrong? Roosters may not necessarily be mean spirited; they just believe they're right and assume it is their duty to correct others.

They believe that others around them who don't conform to their beliefs are either inadequate or wrong. It is inherent in their nature. They see the world in a certain way, and expect that everyone else sees it the same way—and if not, they are in error.

Roosters Easily Cast Blame

To disagree with them is tantamount to insubordination.

Irrespective of the great gifts roosters bring to humanity of vision and leadership, they do tend to easily cast blame on those that don't

perform to their expectation. Consequently, those who work with them feel blameworthy. As a result, the rooster overlords them as the self-appointed blame giver.

The hen in China was blameworthy, expecting to be punished by the rooster.

The seriousness of feeling blameworthy places a person in a position where they're always feeling responsible for error. They are ever ready to accept blame for something that has gone wrong, even if they knew they were not at fault.

Blameworthy people are forced to either suffer in silence like a cat, or sometimes explode with rage when backed into a corner, claws and fangs flaring.

Roosters will often have unrealistically high expectations of the people they assume to rule. After all, the success of subordinates makes them look good, just as much as the failures of subordinates will make them look bad.

Sometimes roosters can be narcissistic, excessive self-admirers and believers that all things should inure to their personal benefit.

Roosters feel a keen need to compete with other roosters in close relationships. This can be problematic if a husband and a wife are both roosters, or if one rooster must work in his or her career beside another rooster.

Nathan

Nathan had three brothers who were all successful students, eagle scouts, and seemed destined to a life of success. Nathan was different. He resented scouting, school, and the dictums of church.

Unconditional love was not part of his experience. In a moment of exasperation his rooster father said to me, “That boy doesn’t listen to me. He won’t do a thing I say.”

That was the problem. Nathan’s father needed to LISTEN TO HIS SON—often!

Had he done so, Nathan might not have felt blameworthy, choosing to do harmful things.

Life for Nathan became a matter of competing with his father for control of his own life. Dropping out of college, promiscuity, and mingling with friends of dubious merit became his young adult lifestyle.

Seeking fun, Nathan became a puppy in the gutters of his hometown.

Many years later Nathan became a father, and a devoted supporter of his wife and children. But he will always be plagued with the condition of having felt blameworthy, never believing that his rooster father accepted or loved him unconditionally.

Unhealthy Roosters as Parents

Much of what contributes to blameworthiness is the undue expectations of a rooster parent on their children. Excessive religious rules, a certain career path, high achievement in sports or attendance at a particular college can be overbearing on youngsters.

The pressure they feel to perform can often negate the forward progress they could otherwise make.

Did your rooster parent have high expectations of you to follow a path that was not to your liking? Were they openly demanding, or giving you silent reproach? Did they dictate what clothes you were to wear? Did they disapprove of your friends? Did they dislike your

music? Did they demand you get high grades in school, with punishment if you failed? Did they expect you to follow a certain career path, or attend a particular college, or expect you to join the military?

The critical question any parent must ask is, “Do I want this for my child or do I want it for me?” The answer they derive must be honest, for often the motivations are for their own aggrandizement.

High achievement of a child may make the rooster parent look good. But in the process such expectations can be destructive to children.

A Righteous Father

Young people are exposed to a wide variety of distractions through music, entertainment and particularly social media. It is a challenge and concern for any parent to help their children navigate all that is out there without becoming corrupted in their minds or drawn into nefarious activities.

Before the current age of social media dominance, I met a man who very proudly boasted of not only his personal righteousness in the eyes of God, but a demand that his home be worthy of temple status.

He had three teenage boys who were closely guarded, not being allowed to watch anything but G rated movies. Other restrictions were imposed regarding dating standards, language spoken, and activities pursued.

So strict was this father that when each boy reached the age of 18, he left the home. They couldn’t handle the rigidity of their father.

After the last boy left, the father remained convinced that he had done the right thing, even though he lost the devotion of his boys.

A Father with Military Discipline

This father had been a Marine. Any military training is tough, but particularly for those recruits in the United States Marine Corps.

Years later, this Marine had fathered quite a brood of boys and girls within his family. The children were well mannered and disciplined. They occupied a particular pew in church, all neatly seated quietly and reverently.

This family was the envy of others in the neighborhood.

Once I was in their home visiting with the dad. A middle son came down the stairs, and immediately the father shouted at him about some responsibility the boy had been given.

Answering a barrage of questions and demands, the boy with almost military precision responded each time with “Yes, sir!”

It’s always amazed me what might be behind the curtain of public show in a family, for on occasion I had that curtain drawn to see the rooster behaviors in the family.

Basketball

I had a neighbor who had aspirations for his boys to become star basketball players. In his backyard, he built a full basketball court, and drilled his sons daily in the skills of the game.

At the time, the youngest was just about to begin school, and the oldest not yet in high school.

As a neighbor, I was often invited to bring my sons and play with them. The competition was fierce. With his boys, my neighbor could

not loose. He coached them like a college coach in a tournament—shouting and criticizing every minute of the game. They always won.

Ironically, none of his sons played basketball in high school or college, even though he envisioned them becoming stars in the NBA. And they were exceptional ball players! T

his unbridled drive was for the benefit of my neighbor to nurture his ego, not for any benefit to his sons.

In the end, they rejected their father's unrestrained expectation for superiority in sport.

Because their rabbit mother gave unconditional love to her sons, they have many years later proven to be very successful in their careers, careers that have nothing to do with basketball, or any service remotely related to what their father did for a living.

The rooster finally failed in his determination to control the destiny of his sons.

Roosters Can Feel Blameworthy

Interestingly, roosters can also suffer from the condition of feeling blameworthy.

Often the drive of a rooster is borne out of their own insecurities. They may have had a rooster father and followed his pattern of behavior.

They may have felt they could never measure up, and so lived with insecurity that they learned to hide. And they may hide the insecurity and blameworthiness by being too much of a rooster to others.

Abby

Abby as a baby was adopted. Little did her parents know that they began to raise a very powerful rooster who later would become an attorney. Abbey's parents were extremely quiet, humble people.

They were cats who retreated from social situations and avoided conflict.

Interestingly, cats can be passive-aggressive, meaning that they control in very silent, sneaky ways. Abby's mother was a cat.

She disapproved of her daughter's aggressive and outgoing style. Somehow, her mother felt that she should be like herself, quiet, unassuming and inconspicuous.

Unable to communicate openly, Abby's mother left notes for her daughter to see. Always a dreadful surprise, Abby would find a note on her pillow when she went to bed, in her backpack when she got to school, or at some other place without warning.

The lengthy notes always contained expressions of pain her mother felt at her daughter's behavior.

To Abby, her own actions were those of a normal teenager and young adult seeking to make her mark in the world. The notes also contained advice on how she should have done this, or done that.

Never did Abby's mother ever have a follow-up conversation after leaving a note. She only showed silent expectation that Abby would repent and be grateful for her mother's silent guidance.

Abby grew up blameworthy, always ready for another painful, silent assault and criticism in the form of a hand-written note.

Not All Roosters Are Blame Givers

Many of the great achievers in our society are roosters, but assuming they have a good self-construct laced with humility and compassion—they are not necessarily blame givers.

Healthy roosters still need to control their environment. They likely have a to-do list or a daily planner and they follow it. However, healthy roosters recognize that others need be able to make choices to successfully control themselves.

We all need roosters in our lives to give strength and direction in various realms of pursuit.

Activity

Study this list of characteristics of roosters then look at the chart that follows. There are four lined quadrants surrounding the picture of the rooster. This provides space to analyze up to four others.

In a quadrant, write in the person's name (or code name if you don't want someone else to know who you are analyzing.) Consider using a quadrant to analyze yourself if you think you might be a rooster.

Reflect on the characteristics of a rooster, and how the individual you identified fits those characteristics.

These Are the Things Roosters Do

- They believe they have the correct understanding of circumstances.
- They are annoyed at those who don't share their understanding.
- When frustrated they can be critical.
- To control their environment, they use a daily planner.
- They are driven to perform.
- They have little patience for those who don't work as hard as they do.

The Contributions Roosters Make

- They are powerful leaders that solve problems.
- They function well in occupations that require personal management and organization.
- They are driven to succeed.
- They can be relied on to make good decisions in tough situations.

In a quadrant, enter a person's name or code you think might be a rooster at their core. Then write in the spaces various things you have observed that give you that belief. If you are a rooster, enter your name and observations about yourself in one of the quadrants.

NAME		NAME	
NAME		NAME	





Cats, Always Independent

Chapter 2



Cats are fiercely independent and cherish their freedom. Usually conflict avoidant, cats will assert their will often in quietude or secretiveness. If necessary, they will deceive to maintain their self-determination and self-will.

Cats live for freedom.

When I was a child we had cats. When living alone I had cats. My sister has cats. My friend has cats. They are delightful and beautiful creatures, and all have the tendency to keep their space, avoid intrusions to their space and watch the world go by from a distance. I have often seen cats climb to a high place, settle in and watch. I have also seen them hide and play in boxes, sacks and crumpled up newspapers. As kittens they are playful, but with age they sometimes become aloof, seemingly disinterested in what other cats, animals or people around them do.

Cats are clean and tidy, and live an orderly life. Personal grooming is important to felines, and may likely define the cat people you know. Have you watched a cat lick him or herself to keep the fur clean and neat?

Generally, cats are content, but if cornered can become aggressive. Have you ever seen a pet cat backed into a corner by a dog? Claws, teeth and raised hair on the back will drive the intruder away. Do you sometimes explode with rage when you have had enough? You could be a cat.

It is said that when hiking in the wild, large cats like mountain lions may be nearby. Most of my life I lived at the base of the Wasatch Mountains near Salt Lake City and loved to hike amidst the meadows, forests and craggy rocks. Often, I have thought, feline eyes have me in their view. I respect their presence and home, and would never want to intrude on their personal space, at which point the cat might feel threatened putting me in significant danger.

People as Cats

Do you know people who keep their space, and guard it from intrusions? They are cats. Do you know people who are conflict avoidant, feigning agreeability then wandering off to do their own thing? They are cats.

Do you run away from confrontations, slipping into an emotional hiding place where no one can find you? Then you might be a cat.

Cats are clever and sneaky, not wanting others to know where they are or what they are up to. Roosters often mistrust cats because they quietly slip away unnoticed, appearing deceptive.

When you are hurting, do you hide from others either physically or emotionally?

Many years ago, one of my sons was hurt and angry while with the family at a shopping mall. He disappeared. We searched for well over an hour, and could never find him. Like a cat, he knew where we were, and slinked in and out of places so that he could not be found. Cleverly, he went to the car when he was ready to be found and waited for us.

The individual who avoids confrontation and buries their resentment and pain is a cat.

Sometimes cat owners can't find their pet. Calling them by name rarely brings the feline forward. They love to hide, climb to high places, and quietly observe. This was my son in the large shopping mall, at that time a cat.

People who are cats are easily deceptive. They would rather paint a picture of neutrality or compliance, then walk away still of former belief. They may easily lie about situations that could bring rebuke and confrontation. Just as cats sneak around, people as cats may maneuver situations to their advantage, quietly and effectively.

The mother of Abby who wrote notes of condemnation and counsel is a cat, completely manipulative, causing her rooster daughter to be blameworthy.

If there is too much noise or activity, cats will steal away into a safer place. They don't like big crowds.

Are you uncomfortable in large family or business gatherings? Then you are probably a cat.

Cats are often unnoticed, but definitely present, and very much the conflict-avoidant observers. Cats live and let live. They will not try to alter the behavior of others.

As a Cat, I Once Became a Rooster

When two of my four sons were young teenagers, they were arguing over some insignificant matter. I had come home from work with a migraine headache, and was trying to rest in my room upstairs from where they were fighting. Several times I had asked them to stop shouting. Each time their quiet would only last for a few seconds. As a cat, I was cornered. I had had enough. I had to come out clawing, scratching and screaming.

Storming downstairs blaring for them to shut up, I kicked the door at the bottom of the stairs. Knocking the door off its hinges, I picked it up like a ram rod and charged into the bedroom where the fight was under way. I crashed the door into the wall tearing a gaping hole in the sheetrock. The boys were stunned and silenced. I went upstairs and completed my nap in quiet solitude. Shocked, the boys just stared at the door embedded in the wall. Their quarrel mattered no more.

As a cat, I retreated to my place. Although I am not proud of this incident as a father, it certainly revealed to me the retaliatory power of a cat. On that occasion, I was to my sons a rooster, one that they feared for a short time. Fortunately, they have no scars from the incident, for we have always had a loving relationship and laugh now about what happened.

Stephen and Susan

Stephen felt like he could never do things correctly for his wife Susan. For many years in his marriage, Stephen was conflict avoidant, a cat, and at her put-downs and corrections he silently obeyed, slinking away. Stephen felt he was blameworthy.

Eventually he began to assert his own beliefs and ideas. This created a lot of friction, for Susan was beside herself with frustration at his change.

Anytime the hen wanders off, the rooster is sure to follow, checking on his or her charge, maintaining control in the relationship.

“How could he do things so wrong,” she would say to others. Susan generally attempted to correct her husband by beginning her directive with . . .

. . .Don't you think that you should . . .Don't you believe that . . .?

Even though Stephen highly resented her judgments of *how he SHOULD do or think*, he nonetheless, in catlike silence, went about doing or thinking what *HE* felt was right for him. Unfortunately, Susan was relentless, for she truly felt she was right and he was wrong in so many situations. She became a huge obstacle to his growth and progress.

When hiking, I often come upon a fallen tree blocking the trail, or a pile of rocks washed down from a sudden storm. It is foolish to think I could go through the tree or rocks. I have to climb over the obstacle, or blaze a short detour around it.

A cat would rather not confront a difficult situation in a relationship but would blaze a trail around it.

Eventually, Stephen had to find a different path around Susan, one that validated himself without being made to feel that he was wrong in his beliefs or actions.

The World Benefits from the Talents of Cats

Cats are blessed with aptitudes that may manifest in creations of art, literature and music.

Many years ago, I was introduced to some research on highly creative people. They are project driven. Once their minds are set, they plow forward unabashed, ignoring other responsibilities. They abuse their bodies with loss of sleep, junk food, caffeine or anything else to keep them going. When taking on an assignment they are slow getting started, and they never complete the project on time. But in the end, they always create a masterpiece.

Cats Are Protective of Their Feelings

If highly creative people are cats, they are also very protective of their feelings that drive them. When they take on a project to the neglect of other matters, they withhold information on their plans and motives. This self-protective nature is the world of the cat, which can be very annoying to roosters who dislike what they perceive as sneakiness. Rabbits may be annoyed because social interactions are avoided and commitments may be entirely forgotten.

Puppies may be frustrated with cats, because when playful, the cat sometimes disengages to pursue something more meaningful.

Estella

Estella raised five boys, a rambunctious bunch that loved each other, but often fought as siblings. She is a cat.

Sometimes the play/fighting of the boys became destructive, breaking lamps, figurines and anything else in their path. Estella never got angry, but buried her hurt. She would cope by singing during the fighting, hoping her tones would settle the conflict.

There is beauty all around, when there's love at home . . .

The fighting continued.

It wouldn't be until Estella's rooster husband came home that the destructive mischief suddenly came to a halt.

Everyone loves Estella, but some unfortunately take advantage of her. If someone needs money, she feels horrible guilt if she doesn't help.

In her advanced age, Estella is still a cat. She is a wonderful painter. Her works of art grace the walls of many homes. She would never accept money for her craft, and gives freely of her kindness and meager funds.

Activity

Study the list of characteristics of cats on the next page then look at the chart on the last page of this chapter. There are four lined quadrants surrounding the picture of the cat. This provides space to analyze up to four people.

In a quadrant, write in the person's name (or code name if you don't want someone else to know who you are analyzing.) Consider using a quadrant to analyze yourself if you think you might be a cat.

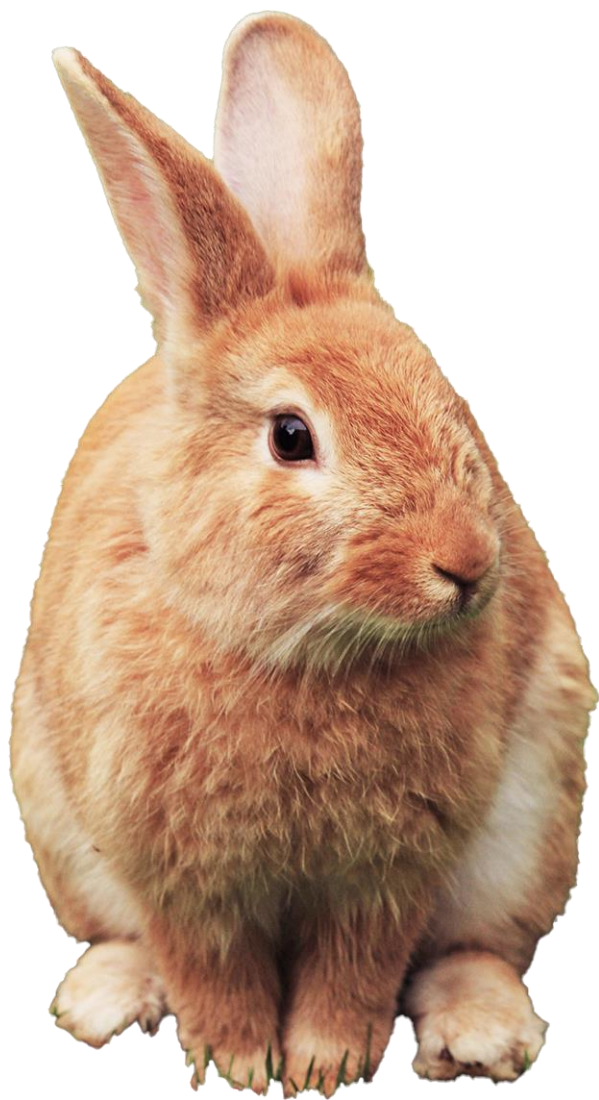
Reflect on the characteristics of the cat, and how the individual you identified fits those characteristics.

These Are the Things Cats Do

- They generally don't say much.
- They bury resentment and pain.
- They easily feel guilt.
- They don't like to work in teams.
- They are uncomfortable in crowded settings.
- They enjoy personal time.
- They become agreeable to avoid conflict.
- They can be deceptive and manipulative.
- They tolerate a lot, but when backed into a corner they come out fighting.

The Contributions Cats Make

- They are empathetic and compassionate.
- They have a great capacity to love.
- They are deep analytical thinkers.
- They are successful at jobs that require one person to complete.
- They have highly creative artistic skills.



Rabbits, Ever Interactive

Chapter 3



Rabbits are social creatures, interdependent upon others for their opinions, validation and comfort. They cannot make a decision without a lot of input from others. They can easily be lonely and need to mix in a crowd.

Rabbits are communal creatures.

For a few years I raised French lop ear rabbits. As I watched them, I observed how they love to crowd together with the other rabbits.

When I first got them, the rabbits roamed my fenced back yard freely, but never alone like a cat.

They were always next to other rabbits. During the winter when it was cold and snowy I couldn't find them. At that time, I had about twenty rabbits and I was puzzled as to why they had disappeared. I looked everywhere and they were nowhere to be seen.

I had a trampoline installed over a hole in the ground so that the jumping surface was at ground level. Finally, I looked under the trampoline and there they were, massed together in one enormous fur ball. Obviously, the cold kept them together, but even when it was warm they still clustered in a crowd.

In the summer, I had smaller fenced areas built, still giving the rabbits room to run and hop. Two different does had given birth to different litters at about the same time. The kits, or baby bunnies were gathered together and put into a smaller pen away from the adults.

Often, I would look at them and see that they were crowded together so tightly that it was hard to tell one bunny from another. The pen looked like one mass of fur.



So social are rabbits that they reproduce at an alarming rate. Rabbits are playful in a very communal way. They love to chase each other, run, hop and chew on everything in sight. They snuggle with other rabbits.

The adults are very willing to let the younger rabbits nuzzle close to them, even if they are not related. Their playfulness sometimes becomes destructive, as they knock things over and chew through bark and wood.

For a time, I kept the bucks in a separate pen to keep the reproduction rate under control. Even though the bucks would often fight and chase away other rivals, when the need for warmth and closeness was evident, they massed together.

Are you the kind of person that needs to be in a crowd? You might be a rabbit.

People as Rabbits

A few years ago, I was asked to help supervise a girl's retreat in a mountain cabin. Each night, as the girls would gather to watch a movie or share stories, they crowded together like rabbits.

Their legs and arms were intertwined, and they appeared to be almost sitting on top of each other. It was amusing that earlier in the day some of them were squabbling, but at this moment of need, they were massed together in one giant human fur ball.

When my daughter was a teenager, she had several of her friends over and they stayed up late chatting into the wee hours of the morning.

When I got up at daylight, I walked into the living room and there were a couple of girls sound asleep. I walked into the family room and three more girls were sleeping there on the couch and floor. I investigated her bedroom and there were four girls in the bed including my daughter. Like clusters of rabbits, they were huddled together in various places.

Remember that the rabbit is social, always needing to communicate and be with others. They are insecure when left alone, and prone to seek acceptance within a group.

The woman who is constantly on the phone talking to friends is a rabbit. The individual who never stops talking is a rabbit.

Do you always need to be with other people? Do you solve problems by talking to others? Are you criticized for talking or socializing too much? Perhaps you are a rabbit. When hurt, do you seek someone

to confide in? Unlike a cat, do you move toward others rather than away from them? You might be a rabbit.

Do you need to be in a crowd and interact with other people, even to the point of annoying the roosters, cats or puppies in your life?

Some years ago, I shared a confidence with a friend. It was a sensitive subject that I expected to remain private. At that moment, I was a rabbit needing to talk to someone. However, the person I confided in was even more of a rabbit, and with the interesting news started sharing it with others. I was angry and devastated. I severely criticized that person, and in that moment, I became a rooster.

Jeremy

Jeremy was a young man who grew up in Manhattan. He was an only child of two parents who both worked long hours.

At his core he was a rabbit, needing social interaction and acceptance. Unfortunately, he became the object of teasing and bullying from schoolmates. The persecution was incessant.

Each day he would walk home to his empty apartment following a different route so he wouldn't be ambushed and beaten up. Many nights he was alone, because his parents preferred the nightlife of New York City to parenting.

Unfortunately, Jeremy reached adulthood totally reliant on his story of tragedy. He discovered that his narrative evoked sympathy from everyone who would listen. Everywhere he told people of his youth, and they felt sorry for him.

Some people went out of their way to help him, only to find that Jeremy became dependent on them, demanding more and more

of their time and support. Jeremy was an emotional parasite with an insatiable appetite for pity.

Jeremy was never able to look at his story objectively and use it for personal growth. He married and fathered several children, only to abandon them. Strangely, like a mother rabbit, when the kids were weaned, he walked out of their heart and home.

He could never give of himself. Jeremy only took from others their sympathy and drained them of emotional energy.

I referred Jeremy to a psychologist friend of mine who diagnosed him as being completely unwilling to accept responsibility for anything in his life.

Every pain he felt was the fault of somebody else—his parents, his school, the kids on the street, the city where he grew up. He became obese, could never hold a successful job, and moved from place to place. He was incapable of supporting himself, or his family. He died at a very young age.

Rabbits can be frustrating to roosters because they always need to talk to somebody. To the rooster they appear undisciplined. Rabbits communicate exceptionally well with other rabbits. They might be entertained by puppies but prefer to stay clustered with other rabbits.

Rabbits and cats are likely to ignore each other.

Large Family Gatherings

Large family gatherings are a revealing way to analyze the conflicting characteristics of the metaphorical animals.

My children have a heritage of highly creative cats from my side of the family. Amongst my extended relatives are many artists, musicians and writers. Their joy is found in the things they create.

The maternal heritage my children have is from a family of very social people—rabbits. Their joy is getting together. At family gatherings, everyone is encouraged to come creating a huge mass of people in a home not designed for such a crowd. To enter the home at these gatherings is like looking under the trampoline at a massive human fur ball.

Some of the people at these gatherings are puppies, playful and the life of the party, always making everyone laugh. There are also many cats, typically in-law men who escape the crowd and visit in a different part of the house, away from the throng.

Some roosters in the family resent the gatherings and find excuses not to go.

My Father Was an Interesting Mix

Dad passed away over forty years ago, but I remember him so well. He was a unique mix of a puppy, cat and rabbit. He was funny and playful, very social, but at times secretive.

Once on a driving trip he annoyed my mother who is a cat, when he saw a sign that said *Woman's Road*. Said he, "That road must have soft shoulders and round curves."

Every few months in his "rabbitness" he organized a large family gathering bringing together all the cousins, aunts and uncles. I had one uncle who was an insecure cat. He brought his wife and children to the party, but remained in his car the entire time, refusing to socialize. This irritated my father.

My dad converted our dwelling to a nursing home, building a successful business caring for the elderly. He was blessed with the cat tendencies of high creativity. It was amazing how he found ways to remodel time and again that house, decorating it nicely and keeping up the grounds to be inviting to visitors.

He was also a very creative cook. He worked for a time as a chef at a major Salt Lake City hotel. He could go through the refrigerator and create a delicious meal from leftovers, thus saving a lot of money.

My father also loved to paint. I have one of his paintings of a mountain cabin nestled in snow covered mountains surrounded by aspens, rocky mountain maples and blue spruce trees. The colors of this winter scene are vivid, reflective of my dad's playful puppy nature.

Activity

Study the list of characteristics of rabbits on the next page then look at the chart on the last page of this chapter. There are four lined quadrants surrounding the picture of the rabbit. This provides space to analyze up to four people.

In a quadrant, write in the person's name (or code name if you don't want someone else to know who you are analyzing.) Consider using a quadrant to analyze yourself if you think you might be a rabbit.

Reflect on the characteristics of a rabbit, and how the individual you identified fits those characteristics.

These Are the Things Rabbits Do

- They love to be in a crowd.
- They talk incessantly with their friends.
- They are distracted when there are opportunities to socialize.
- They don't like to be alone.
- They find it difficult to keep confidences.
- Their feelings are easily hurt.

The Contributions Rabbits Make

- They are interactive and prefer to work in a team.
- They are always available to support and empathize.
- They are compassionate and willing to contribute time and money to a good cause.
- They are optimistic.
- They are good nurturing parents.

In a quadrant, enter a person's name or code you think might be a rabbit at their core. Then write in the spaces various things you have observed that give you that belief. If you are a rabbit, enter your name and observations about yourself in one of the quadrants.

NAME	NAME
NAME	NAME





Puppies, Seekers of Diversion

Chapter 4



Puppies are the life of the party, funny and fun. They set aside menial tasks and responsibility if they have an opportunity to do something new and exciting. They can work hard if they see a fun reward at the end of it. They are always loyal.

Puppies are all about having fun.

They love to play and make a lot of noise. They are loveable but often make a serious mess of things. Often puppies become annoying, but they are still a delight to have around.

Have you ever left the kitchen or your bedroom a mess, finding yourself severely criticized for being so disorderly? Perhaps you are a puppy. Have you seen a puppy attack a pillow or a magazine? Destructive, yes, but they are only playing.

Is your work or storage space a disaster? You might be a puppy.

Adult puppies as dogs are fiercely loyal to their master. No matter how much a dog may be neglected, they will remain loyal. That loyalty extends to protecting its master and territory.

As I walk through the neighborhood, dogs bark incessantly to safeguard the turf upon which they roam.

The hen in China was more of a puppy than a chicken the way she stayed loyal to her rooster. A puppy can be yelled at, slapped or kicked, but will always come back to its master.

Puppies are very curious and have fun with the simplest things.

People as Puppies

Everyone wants to be around a person who is a puppy because they are so fun.

Unfortunately, they often leave a mess after a party or a session of diversion, much to the consternation of roosters who must keep order.

Roosters don't understand why puppies are so muddled in their personal management and frustrated at their inability to be organized.

Perhaps your relationship with your spouse is usually amenable. But as a puppy, you may want to play. Your spouse could suddenly emerge as a rooster, chiding you for bad timing, or criticizing you for being unproductive.

Perhaps in their meanness you are really hurt and retreat whimpering with your tail between your legs. You become blameworthy.

Do these characteristics fit someone you know? Perhaps these characteristics fit you, thus classifying you as a puppy.

Children and teenagers are often puppies. As they grow and mature, and as life's experiences impact them as puppies, they may evolve into roosters, cats or rabbits, or remain as puppies.

The Day I Upset My Father

When I was a teenager, I was a puppy. In about 1960, my father had planned a party. He wanted to show family movies, and I was asked to get the projector and screen ready to show the movies outdoors after dark.

Curiosity overtook me and I began to take the projector apart. I just wanted to see how it worked. My father came home, saw what I was doing and saying nothing, went into the house.

At that moment he was a cat, avoiding confrontation with me, but to my mother he became a rooster and said to her, “Do something about that boy. He’s taken the projector apart and he’s got parts all over the lawn. People are coming.”

My mother reacted catlike, and rather than deal with me, went into her room to pray.

The Messy Bedroom

Several years ago, I was asked to videotape a sequence for a promotional tape in which a motivational speaker was sharing thoughts.

The speaker wanted to be in a nice home. Within our neighborhood lived a family whose home matched the look that was desired. It was a large classical Tudor style with a winding staircase going up to the next level where the bedrooms were found.

I wanted to set the scene in the foyer with the staircase in the background. The family that owned the home was a family of means, for the yard, dwelling and furnishings were immaculate and well appointed.

I asked the woman of the house if I could go upstairs to set a backlight shining down from the stairwell onto the talent. She most graciously agreed but said I would have to go into one of the upstairs bedrooms to find an electrical outlet.

Because of the flawless nature of the house I expected the bedrooms to reflect the same care as the rest of the domain.

I went into a bedroom to find an electrical outlet and was stunned to see an unmade bed with blankets twisted and half on the floor. Pillows were rumpled. Clothing, shoes and underwear were scattered everywhere.

I had to push clutter aside to find an outlet. By the nature of the dainty clothing, it was evident that the room belonged to a teenage girl. An adolescent puppy, the girl obviously came home from school every day to her kennel which she loved and enjoyed.

Amazingly, the girl's mother was not the least embarrassed at the condition of her daughter's room—a real tribute to the mother who allowed her daughter to be herself in her adolescent puppyhood.

Elizabeth As a Child

As a child Elizabeth was the only girl with four brothers. She was a victim of incessant teasing and sexual abuse.

Sadly, she was fondled by numerous relatives who exerted control over her.

One brother every night would come into her room and masturbate in front of her. So distressed was Elizabeth by this action that she asked her mother to come into her room at a time when she was certain her brother would be there exposing himself.

Her mother appeared at the appointed moment. Needless to say, the masturbation episodes in front of Elizabeth ceased from that point forward.

Elizabeth is a puppy and despite these episodes she remained loyal to her brother.

During those impressive years, Elizabeth's father had serious financial setbacks. He could not control his environment and in

frequent desperation resorted to alcohol. He was a distraught rooster.

While drunk, he would belittle Elizabeth, telling her she was no good and would never amount to anything.

As a puppy in her loyalty, Elizabeth found it easy to forgive her father and today loves him dearly and cares for him in his fragile elderly condition.

Puppies have the remarkable ability to exonerate and never let injustices impede their pursuit of happiness.

Irrespective, Elizabeth was vulnerable to always feel blameworthy. She married a rooster who became incessantly critical of her actions and motives, challenging her very ability to think rationally and perform tasks successfully.

To this day, when a potential threat comes from anyone, she tenses with anxiety and immediately wants to avoid the confrontation. At these moments she is a cat. However, her rational side prevails, for she understands her own blameworthiness susceptibility and the cool kindness and accepting of a puppy rises to the surface.

When she visualizes a forthcoming threat; Elizabeth role plays it out, then talks to a trusted friend like a rabbit. Consequently, she triumphs in the end. Today she is highly successful and loved by many.

But Elizabeth is still learning.

With every uncomfortable and threatening situation that confronts her, she looks for the lesson she can learn. She believes God places obstacles in her path to help her grow, and that as she conquers certain situations, she will no longer have that type of problem. With

this philosophy, her true “puppiness” shines forth, carrying her through every beating she suffers.

Brad

Brad was born to a wealthy and influential family in Hollywood.

His rooster father taught Brad the ways of Hollywood with its deal making and often deceptive practices. Morality was never taught to Brad, and in fact his father encouraged him to have mistresses.

Brad had a kind soul, a loving characteristic of a puppy. Irrespective, he was pained by the pressure placed upon him by his father. Naturally, Brad felt blameworthy, but nonetheless disliked his father’s lifestyle.

Brad sought for answers and found them in a religious denomination that represented everything his father detested such as morality, kindness and charity.

Furious, Brad’s father ordered him out of the house, disenfranchised him and wrote Brad out of his will.

Brad could have become angry and launched a war with his father. Undaunted, Brad continued to pursue his new path which brought him personal joy, and maintained a love and loyalty for his father who had disowned him.

He had removed himself from the blame giver and paid a big price by worldly standards. His father demonstrated the kind of cankering anger that can come when driven by personal repudiation and anger.

Eventually, the heart of Brad’s father was softened—probably because of Brad’s dismissing the temptation to be vindictive. Brad was gradually allowed back into the family circle.

If people nurture antagonism towards those who hurt them, it will become impossible for them to develop the kind of compassion necessary to understand and accept others.

Unlike Brad, they will make no progress.

Activity

Study the list of characteristics of puppies on the next page then look at the chart on the last page of this chapter. There are four lined quadrants surrounding the picture of the dog. This provides space to analyze up to four people.

In a quadrant, write in the person's name (or code name if you don't want someone else to know who you are analyzing.) Consider using a quadrant to analyze yourself if you think you might be a puppy.

Reflect on the characteristics of a puppy, and how the individual you identified fits those characteristics.

These Are the Things Puppies Do


- They love to make noise and be heard.
- They make people laugh.
- They are playful.
- They have difficulty planning ahead.
- They are easily bored.
- When bored, they lack concentration and long-term commitment.

The Contributions Puppies Make

- They are loyal to those with whom they have had positive dealings or made a commitment.
- They are the life of the party.
- They can bring cheer to a sorrowful situation.
- They work very hard if a fun reward is to follow.
- Puppies attract other people who want to laugh.
- They forgive and exonerate.

In a quadrant, enter a person's name or code you think might be a puppy at their core. Then write in the spaces various things you have observed that give you that belief. If you are a puppy, enter your name and observations about yourself in one of the quadrants.

<div>NAME</div>	<div>NAME</div>



<div>NAME</div>	<div>NAME</div>



Feeling Blameworthy in Your Relationships

Chapter 5

As I analyze the reactions that the metaphorical animals of roosters, rabbits, cats and dogs have on each other, I have come to recognize that blame is often cast about for problems in a relationship. Facing a difficult situation, blame givers look for a scapegoat, someone or something to blame that absolves them of responsibility. Consequently, and unfortunately, many people feel always blamed, particularly the cats or rabbits that take criticism very painfully. I call this condition blameworthy. The person is “worthy” (or conditioned) to be blamed for everything!

Are You Blameworthy?

Do you fear certain people and dread crossing their path?

Do you build up your defenses knowing that such an encounter is forthcoming?

In close relationships, such blame givers may deliberately follow their partner around, or at least always want to know where they are. They may question their motives. They may want to control the finances, or insist on buying everything, assuming they always know what is needed. They may question every decision their partner makes. In conversation, they may cut off and correct their thinking. Without realizing it, they often humiliate the other, leaving them demoralized.

Blame givers are primarily roosters that need to crow and flap their wings, but other animals can flair up in anger and become roosters themselves. Sadly, in most relationships someone becomes the habitually blameworthy person, a victim of control.

Sometimes roosters can be blameworthy such as Abby whose cat mother left very critical notes for her to read. Unfortunately, persons who suffer blameworthiness have learned not to share their feelings for fear of criticism or rejection, a very catlike tendency.

Have you ever wondered why you seem to get blamed for everything around you? Have you ever resented others that quickly criticize you, yet take no responsibility for their own actions or behavior? Do you sometimes feel that they target you for blame? Does this seem fair?

If feel you are blameworthy you are always ready to accept and absorb the blame for so many situations, no matter the personal suffering it causes you. You are the hen attacked repeatedly. You are spanked or kicked as if you were a dog. You may not feel justified for the blame, but you feel it nonetheless, because you always have accepted and expected the blame. And the blame givers will always be there to make sure you absorb the guilt as they overlord you.

It does not matter if the blame is justified, or the context of a particular situation is completely misunderstood by the person blameworthy. When blamed or anticipating blame, blood pressure rises, tension increases, headaches debilitate, anxiety peaks, defensive comments may explode or be repressed, and the entire episode is often followed with depression.

The sufferer may whimper like a puppy or retreat like a cat to a place where no one can find them. Perhaps they need to commiserate with a close friend, one who is likely a rabbit.

This is a horrible place to be in life. Much like being on a battlefield, the sharp arrows and spears of judgment and criticism continuously fly toward the person considered blameworthy. The arrows and spears may not be real, but to the individual suffering from blameworthiness, they are very real indeed.

Do Not Accept False Cures

Though sometimes pained and depressed, look for real cures, not false cures.

Sadly, chemical pain killers may become the cure, and unhealthy escape and addictions become the need. Billions of dollars are spent annually for pain killing and depression numbing medicine along with frequent doctor visits. Throughout much of my adult life I endured migraine headaches, so bad at times that I would have to give myself a shot and crawl into my silent dark cave for hours to recover. I was the cat that did not want to be found. Trying to find a cause and a cure, my neurologist finally gave up and told me I was just a headache person.

Much of pain and illness can be traced to emotional issues, largely centered on the concept of blameworthiness and its associated stress and suffering. Because of this, the pharmaceutical companies will continue churning out more medication, some of it easily abused and habit forming.

As I came to understand my own blameworthy condition and apply what is shared in this book, the severity of my headaches and other maladies disappeared in response to the emotional liberty I then felt as I am no longer blameworthy.

Is this the cure you want?

Mary and Bill

Mary had two children, a girl and a boy. From the time they were little she had to work two jobs to support her family. Her husband Bill was always on the verge of big success with a new business venture which never materialized. His financial contribution to the family was nil. Yet, he constantly criticized Mary for not keeping the house clean. She tried desperately to keep up with the demands of the children, and the responsibilities of her work. She also paid the bills, and was chastised for spending too much. Yet Bill took money she earned and often spent it on frivolous things.

On one occasion, Mary had just cleaned the kitchen floor. Bill had been outside working in the yard, and as he entered the house she asked him to remove his muddy shoes.

“You don’t tell me what to do!” he demanded. With that, he deliberately stomped all over the kitchen floor spreading mud everywhere, muttering under his breath what a poor housekeeper she was. Then he wanted to know why dinner wasn’t ready.

Bill was a mean rooster. Mary was blameworthy.

Stephen

A subtler example is of a man I knew named Stephen. He couldn’t ever please his wife. Always concerned that the house looked nice, Susan on occasion would get after him for not doing the dishes. Stephen was deeply hurt because oftentimes he did do the dishes without being asked, occasions which she never recognized.

Stephen came to feel that his good acts went unappreciated, and feared that if he didn’t do everything right, Susan would be quick to point out his shortcomings.

Susan was subtle in her rebuke, but a rooster nonetheless. Stephen was blameworthy.

Both Mary and Stephen worked through their blame giving and blameworthy realities, set boundaries, and eventually came to a point of safe communication. This was enabled through a separation. No longer willing to tolerate the sharpness of the blame problems, they took action, fortified themselves with an invigorated sense of self-worth, found friends to support them, and gained the strength to overcome the problem. They found safety within the boundaries they had defined for themselves.

Pat

Pat was a wonderful mother and friend. Her husband George was obsessed with controlling his wife. He made very good money, bought whatever she wanted, but expected her to be there for him in every situation. He only approved of outside activities that maintained and enhanced her beauty while protecting her from the influence of other men. Pat was in every sense a trophy wife to George, but was also a rabbit and needed social interaction, something George found threatening. In privacy, George's conversations with Pat were belittling and demanding. On occasion he was physically abusive, but stopped short of causing injury that would be apparent to others. In public, George constantly praised the beauty of Pat and what an accomplished mother and woman she was, but in private maintained absolute control over her.

Finally, she had reached the end of her endurance. She walked out, much to his fury and rage. She stayed in our home for an evening, revealing all the things that had been happening to her for many years. I told her, "You don't have to continue living in that situation."

I said little more other than to provide Pat comfort. Later she told me that moment changed her life, for she then realized she could take control by establishing boundaries. Much marriage counseling ensued, but to no avail. George talked the talk, but simply could not change his behavior. One of the psychologists who worked with them told me that people like him fundamentally don't change.

It is my belief that people of this ilk can change, but it takes a monumental crisis to do so. Divorce that had no hope of reconciliation was that crisis for George. Years later, after a second marriage, George treated his new wife better than he had treated Pat.

Alpha/Omega Phenomenon

It is helpful to understand the alpha/omega phenomenon. Alphas work to get to the top of a social structure. They could be any one of the animals, for in the animal kingdom, all species have alpha dominants within their group, and within the group are the omegas that remain at the bottom of the social structure. In this regard, sadly, humans are not much better than animals.

In any group, whether roosters, cats, rabbits or puppies, one individual will emerge as the alpha dominant, maintaining control of the others and the weakest will become the omegas.

The Anderson family had two fluffy cats, large furry animals that are excellent loving pets. They purchased a small tabby kitten which immediately became the alpha cat in the Anderson household. One mean hiss from the tabby kitten spooked the older larger cats and from that day forward they acquiesced to young tabby as the omegas.

In my back yard, I had a tunnel built under the grass connecting two separate rabbit enclosures. Watching one afternoon, I observed Francois carefully guarding his enclosure. When another buck came through the tunnel, Francois chased him back. After a few minutes Francois went through the tunnel to the other side only to encounter the young buck and was forced to return to his enclosure. Ultimately, both rabbits sat at each end of the tunnel, as if to dare the other to intrude. Finally, after many days, the younger buck assumed dominance and Francois became the omega rabbit.

In your close relationships it is possible that you have an alpha dominant, whether they are a rooster, cat, rabbit or puppy? Have you felt at times that the alpha dominant was daring you to step out of line, ready to exact punishment for the infraction? Have you felt that he or she was at the other end of the tunnel ready to strike?

You Have the Power to Change

No one can have complete control over you. Others may have that control for a time, but you can remove yourself from the clutches of others. I had a wise clergyman tell me once, “You can’t change others but you can change how you react to them.”

Unfortunately, many try for a lifetime to change others—their spouse, their parent, or their child—only to fail in frustration.

I had some friends climb a very difficult mountain in the Rockies. Lone Peak overlooks Salt Lake City from nearly two miles high. The round-trip climb and descent is long and arduous, and must begin before sunrise and likely will not be completed until after dark. One of the party decided that he could get back faster by taking a shortcut. Even though thousands before him had followed the well-marked trail, he thought he could find a better way. It appeared from

high on the mountain that by following a straight line he could return to his car sooner. He got lost and wasted several hours fighting underbrush and boulders.

As a person blameworthy, you might be fighting underbrush and boulders, not following the advice of thousands who have passed before you. Perhaps you are afraid to follow a well-marked course that may require a new belief system, affirming your rights, or removing yourself from a destructive situation.

If you are walking along a trail and come upon a boulder that blocks your path, you can't walk through it. You have to walk around it. Likewise, you may have to walk around those roosters, sometimes avoiding them altogether, or in other ways negate their power to stop you in your tracks.

The pages of this book will help you find that well marked trail that others have followed. Roosters, cats, rabbits and puppies leave very different footprints, but they can all lead to the same place of safety. The trail and footprints may not be obvious at first, but they are there, and the stories and strategies in this book will help you see the trail clearly, and give you the strength to follow it. You will be able to create a new model of your own life. You will find hope and belief that you in fact can change yourself, and discover the joy, peace and tranquility that you are entitled to enjoy.

With increased confidence and self-assurance, you will begin to do things you always wanted to do, but felt you were unworthy or incapable of doing. You will have the poise to say the things you never felt you could say; true expressions of your heart and opinions of your mind that you never felt you were worthy or capable of saying.

You Have the Right to Be Happy

No matter what mountain you may be climbing or descending, nor how weary you feel, you have the right to be happy. But it will take stamina and effort. It is your right as a human being to feel validated, empowered and free from the repression of others. No human being or institution can rob you of these rights. Such persons or entities may temporarily hold you in subjugation, but that grip on you can be permanently broken.

Victor E. Frankl

Victor E. Frankl, whose story of survival in the Theresienstadt Nazi concentration camp is a testament to courage and resilience. In the face of not only imprisonment, but an environment that exceeded blameworthiness to that of condemning the very worth of his Jewish soul, he said:

Everything can be taken from a man or a woman but one thing: the last of human freedoms to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.

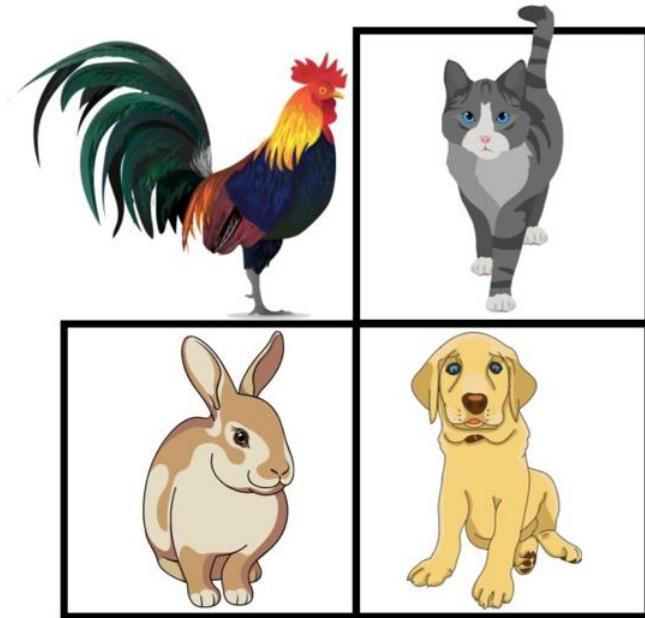


Positively Defining Yourself

Chapter 6

If you have been a victim of control and felt blameworthy, it is essential now to identify yourself in such a way that it will create positive affirmation in your heart and soul that you are good, unique, and worthy of high self-esteem.

It is also important to be viewed by others around you as happy, confident and a person admired and desirous of emulation.



To do this it is useful to be reminded of the characteristics of each metaphorical animal. Everyone may at certain times be a rooster, a rabbit, a cat or a puppy, but I believe we all have a dominance to be characteristic of one animal most of the time.

You must now work to become comfortable with who you are.

In the first four chapters you had an opportunity to examine yourself and others postulating which animal the person may be identified with.

As you are reminded of the characteristics of each of the animals, and consider the activities at the end of each of the first four chapters, which animal are you most like?



Roosters are driven by power. Control of their own lives is essential, dominance they would never give to another. And without realizing it—generally with well meaning—they exert authority as they try to control others.



Cats are fiercely independent and cherish their freedom. Usually conflict avoidant, cats will assert their will often in quietude or secretiveness. If necessary, they will deceive to maintain their self-determination and self-will.



Rabbits are social creatures, interdependent upon others for their opinions, validation and comfort. They cannot make a decision without a lot of input from others. They can easily be lonely and need to mix in a crowd.



Puppies are the life of the party, funny and fun. They set aside menial tasks and responsibility if they have an opportunity to do something new and exciting. They can work hard if they see a fun reward at the end of it. They are always loyal.

With a clear acceptance of which animal characteristics define you most of the time, read on with that identity in mind.

There are positive and negative aspects to each of these animals.

Refer to the lists of characteristics and the worksheets at the end of chapters 1, 2, 3, or 4 in which you identified and analyzed yourself. As you review the worksheet, and possibly make additional notations about yourself, commit to two very important understandings:

1. The positive characteristics are your gifts to humanity and are attributes you can be proud of.
2. The negative characteristics need to be accepted as opportunities for growth. Don't view them in a self-deprecating way.

Everyone has negative aspects to their personality. Don't dwell on the negatives of others any more than you would want them to dwell on your negatives.

Just as for you, their negatives are opportunities for growth.

One of the amazing aspects of taking a positive view of negative characteristics is that it will empower you with flexibility, enabling you to find forgiveness and develop acceptance for those who annoy you. In most relationships, this understanding will be sufficient to create more harmony.

People Shift from Their Core Animal

To meet the challenges of different demands and circumstances, people shift temporarily from their core characteristics.

As you study these possibilities, think of yourself and how you can shift depending on varying situations. Are there times in your life when you made such a shift?

I had a powerful shift from a cat to a rooster when I broke down the door and rammed it into my boy's rooms.



**A rooster may at times be
a dog when playing
with children.**



**A rabbit may need to be
a cat in order to keep
a confidence.**



A cat may need to become a rooster when it is necessary to bring order to the home or office.

Depending on conditions, people may act like the animal they need to be, even if it's not his or her natural inclination. People need to adapt to changing situations, but in the normal course of events, will most likely stay within the realm of their dominant animal metaphor.

Ramona and William

Ramona is a natural healer who has clients come to her home. She is a puppy and works as often as necessary to help provide money for groceries and other necessities.

Her house is a mess, filled with strange smells. Her entire surroundings bespeak of complete disarray. She is married to William who is a rather lazy rooster.

It would appear that this couple would have nothing but conflict. They had both been in previous marriages and knew the grief of discord.

Both wanting companionship, they worked to accept the negative characteristics of their partner's personalities and committed to find compromise and joy in the strengths they each brought to the relationship.

William controls the finances. That is his domain, and he feels comfort in being responsible for the bills and makes sure that their security is insured, even as the house suffers from unmitigated disorder.

He collects funds from prior investments, and currently spends most of his time reading or watching cable news. When Ramona is not busy, they go camping in their camper shell attached to the bed of William's pickup.

Comical Observations as a Teacher

When I taught 9th grade science students for five years, I observed repeatedly a comical situation when it was time to give grades.

I would invite the students to my desk, one at a time to show them in the roll book the grade they would get for that quarter.

Some students would come forward with fear and trepidation, anxiously hoping for the right outcome. It was an A, and the sigh of relief they felt was palpable.

Another student would come forward with the same fear and trepidation, anxious beyond measure. It was a D-. The same sigh of relief exuded their joy at not getting an F.

Clearly, the first child must have felt considerable pressure from home, with the expectation that they would perform at the highest level. Perhaps the parents had rooster tendencies.

Evidently, the second child came from a home in which there was hope for success, but not undue pressure. Perhaps the parents had rabbit-like tendencies.

I noticed another humorous situation.

Some students remained continuously alert, ready to absorb all I taught. Other students were sleepy and not always paying attention.

I learned after parent-teacher conferences that the alert students were often the oldest child in the family. There was a lot of expectation for their performance.

I also learned that some of the sleepy students happened to be in large families, with older siblings.

I could well imagine that youngsters in those homes stayed up late, alive with the activity of older siblings. They didn't always get the full night's sleep they needed.

Young parents are often controlling and protecting—rooster-like with the expectation that their offspring will perform well. This applies to academics, sports and other activities that will foster their growth.

However, by the time the fifth or sixth child comes along, the parents have run out of gas. Their expectations have lowered.

Insecurities

As you define yourself it is helpful to recognize your insecurities and accept the insecurities of others.

To be insecure is to be in a state of mind in which you feel unsafe and vulnerable. Without realizing it, you may have a deep-seated fear that others will take advantage of you, or recognize your weaknesses and worse yet, expose your weaknesses to others.

All roosters, cats, puppies and rabbits are insecure at times. When individuals are insecure or out of balance, they are likely to rob another person of their needs to fulfill their own needs.

For instance, if a rooster feels that others do not respect his or her sense of power—whether real or imagined—they will try to exercise increased dominion over other people in their belonging relationships.

An insecure cat may feel that others do not value their pain as justified. Consequently, they may effectively punish others with the silent treatment, or lie about their feelings. The cat may secretly want to get revenge.

When you understand the motives of others as you understand their animal characteristics, then the things they do may be less devastating.

Such individuals that unfairly hurt you are really driven by their own insecurities, not your actions. They are like roosters with sharp talons protecting their brood of uncertainties, fears, anxieties and self-doubts.

They mask their insecurity problems by an overinflated view of themselves which serves to cover their insecurity.

Sometimes they might be right in the corrections or criticisms they give but their method is often too quick and too harsh like the rooster in Yang Shuo which obliterated the feathers on the back of his hen.

Open Your Heart to Your History

Your personal history will help provide clues as to your own insecurities and behaviors. The deeper elements of your own story

may surprise you. Events of early childhood shape behavior, and often those events are buried deep within the psyche.

It takes serious introspection and sometimes therapy to unravel those episodes. It is very possible that circumstances in your childhood created the blameworthy condition you suffer.

Competition from siblings may have shaped you into a rooster. Criticism and teasing from family members may have conditioned you to disappear like a cat.

Perhaps you were overly controlled as a child, and constantly need the freedom and playfulness of a puppy. In your needs to solve problems you may have felt safety in finding the opinions of others, developing rabbit-like social tendencies.

Hurts from the past can cripple you for a lifetime, and channel you into predictable behaviors and reaction patterns.

Most painful may be the constant blame and belittlement you may have suffered, conditioning you to be always ready to be blamed and consequently blameworthy.

Working to understand and accept those hurts as part of your life's journey will help you begin to cope with the condition of blameworthiness.

My story and the stories of others in this book may help you by triggering recollections of similar events in your own life. This will help you build confidence in talking to others and sharing together common experiences.

Not only will this be cathartic and healing but will help you realize that you were never alone, for others have suffered too. While doing

this, you will find humor in equating various experiences with the roosters, cats, rabbits and puppies in your life.

From My Youth, I Have Been Blameworthy

For most of my adult life I lived in fear of blame, a condition born out of my childhood.

I became a very skillful liar, not wanting others to know of my deep feelings and actions. I needed to hide any shame I felt, and worked to maintain a persona that would draw no suspicion.

I was a cat that slipped into the shadows, sneaking my way around issues that caused me discomfort.

My father's way of maintaining control was to unfasten his belt threatening to use it as a whip. I don't remember feeling the belt thrash across my buttocks, but I do remember his look of disapproval and scorn as he began to unbuckle his belt.

As a preschooler, I once broke a figurine. I hid in an upstairs closet for hours, burying myself under clothes and shoes. I did not want to see my dad's belt.

The worry I caused my parents at being lost for hours assuaged their concern about the broken statuette.

My need to conceal mistakes and hide from the truth carried into my adult years. It took a long time for me to realize what had caused this cat-like condition.

I was the only boy with four sisters. My mother treasured me, and believed I was a gift from God. With perfectly logical and meritorious

motive she constantly protected me—and shielded those around me from mistakes that I might make.

Unfortunately, that protection often nullified things I wanted to do. Without realizing it, I was being invalidated.

I wanted to learn to play the trumpet. “No,” she said. “The noise will disturb the neighbors.” How about drums I asked. Again, for the same reason the answer was no. Instead I had to settle for the clarinet, which I came to detest because I was always ruining the reed. I became the subject of teasing from my teacher and fellow students because I always needed a new reed.

I wanted to play football. “No,” she said. “You might get hurt. Football is dangerous and boys get hurt.”

I instead was channeled into little league baseball, which I hated because I always struck out. In later years while playing basketball with friends, I was told that I should have played football because of my fearlessness in plowing through others—not an effective practice in basketball.

When I was older I wanted a motor scooter. No again, too dangerous. I wanted a car, but my mother insisted that if I got a car I would never graduate from high school because I would need a job to pay for and maintain the vehicle.

The worst situation was during my dating years. Every time I showed interest in a girl, I was lectured on the horror of making a girl pregnant.

I needed to keep myself worthy for what the Lord wanted me to do. I had no intention of fornicating, but to avoid the lecture I lied every

time I went on a date. She seemed happy that I was always “. . . going out with the boys.”

I know my mother meant well, and I have long since forgiven her of these disabling actions. But it did make of me a blameworthy cat, a haunting experience indeed.

In my adult years, I would never let anyone know if I had a lustful thought. I was fearful at sharing my passions and hopes. Consequently, I felt filtered, always speaking and interacting in ways that would not be contrary to the beliefs and hopes of others.

A psychologist once told me that I was a chameleon, a lizard that always changed colors to meet the circumstances of the present moment.

With this ability, I was able to blend in to any group, interacting in such a way that I looked like I belonged, when in fact, I may not have agreed with the beliefs and actions of the group.

In church, I was thought of as obedient and worthy, even though I had questions about some of the things I was taught.

In the boy scouts I did what was expected of me, although I disliked camping in a tent and was pathetic at catching fish.

I carried terrible guilt about lustful thoughts, for I always found that the female form was of great fascination and intrigue. This guilt came from the teachings I received in church, reinforced in scouting, and infused with dread from my mother.

How comforting it was to learn later in life that all normal males have lustful thoughts, feelings that only slow down with age but never really stop.

In retrospect, I never felt safe being myself. I was fundamentally invalidated, finding safety living in the shadows like a cat, unseen for who I really was.

In recent years, I read every book I could find that offered insight into how I felt. Unfortunately, religion did little to comfort me, for religion is laced with expectations, rules and judgment.

I did however find great comfort and inspiration in my supplications with the Divine. Prayer for me has been a powerful tool connecting me with a vital source from which I felt acceptance and understanding.

I saw therapists, I attended seminars, and I meditated for many days in a Buddhist monastery in Thailand.

I began to realize that I had never felt loved for who I was, but loved for what I was expected to be. Every close association I could recall from childhood to the present was imbued with expectations and conditions that had to be met if I was to feel accepted and loved.

Many of these feelings and experiences are expanded upon in the book *108 Mala Beads*.

Don't Fear Uncovering the Back Story

Understanding your story is the key to your growth in accepting yourself and feeling validation for who you are.

However, blameworthy individuals may without realizing it skip over important parts of their history because it stimulates painful reminders. Therefore, you need to acknowledge the story behind the story, which is the back story.

Your experiences are who you are. Do not be ashamed of anything that happened to you, for it is what has made you the wonderful person you are today.

You are like a flower growing in a garden. Every flower goes through times of unsightliness, demanding basic needs to survive. Weeds sometimes choke, and dryness may wilt, but eventually the blossom will become beautiful, as you now are, or soon will become.

Activity

On the Personality Blueprint at the end of this chapter indicate which animal metaphor you are. Then fill in each box under Back Story Characteristics.

This will help you define your own story which will help you understand those events in your life that have shaped your personality. Out of this you may discover your own insecurities and source of blameworthiness that you have felt.

Personality Blueprint

I am primarily a rooster, cat, rabbit or puppy

Back Story Characteristics

Year of birth

Place of birth

Total siblings

My place
amongst siblings

Parental marital status at time of birth

Parental marital status during my youth

Significant events during
my time of birth

Unique cultural aspects
of my birthplace

Role of religion during
my youth

Role of religion as an
adult

Tragedies that occurred
during my life

Triumphs that occurred
during my life

My attitude regarding
sex

My attitude regarding
the opposite sex

Physical disorders I have

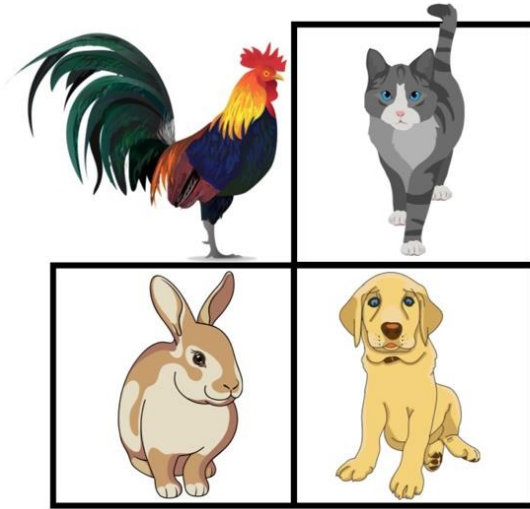
My career traits

Other unique things
about me



Setting Boundaries

Chapter 7



In the graphic of the four animals there are well defined boundaries around the cat, rabbit and dog—but not the rooster. Within the animal world, cats and dogs mark their territory with urine. Rabbits rub their chin on various objects, leaving a scent that marks their territory. Roosters go where they want.

To those who feel blameworthy, it is likely that they have not set boundaries marking their territory, and consequently always feel violated and in danger of rebuke. As victims of control, they move through life more sensitive to the boundaries and expectations of others than respect for their own boundaries, if indeed they even have any.

What are logical and justifiable boundaries that you are entitled to?

Read these out loud:

- I am entitled to private time and space as often as I need it.
- Others will need my permission to enter my private time and space.
- I have my own beliefs about every aspect of life and others are to respect my beliefs.
- The choice I make in my daily activities are sacred and not to be criticized.
- I will not allow unjustified criticism or rebuke of me on any topic.
- If others attempt to criticize me unfairly, I have the right to openly reject their criticism and ask them to leave my presence.
- I will not tolerate open criticism of me to other people like family or friends.
- My money and possessions are mine to own and control.
- Others may not expect to take my money or borrow my possessions without my permission.
- If others approach me in anger, I do not have to give them audience.
- If others are emotionally upset and demand my help and attention, I have the right to ask them to wait until I am ready to help them—if I will be ready at all.
- I will not allow others to touch me inappropriately.
- I will dismiss any rude or lewd comments made about me.

If you have been an omega, blameworthy and victim of control, you will find that the alpha blame givers will not take kindly to your newly acquired boundaries. Like the rooster in China, they may bite hard. I have known of many situations whereas the person blameworthy began to protect their turf and enforce their boundaries, the alpha in their relationship began pressing the buttons even harder. They

became frustrated, because the controls they had always enforced no longer worked.

For you, the situation with these alphas may temporarily get worse and the drama may increase. But as you are firm, confident and steadfast, the situation will begin to improve. Wrestling control of your own life from others will not be easy, but it will happen as you apply the concepts in this book.

Sometimes, the boundaries must be set so clearly, and enforced without relinquishment, that separation from the abusing person is the only solution.

Mary and George

Mary, whose husband George was the mean critical rooster that stomped mud all over her kitchen floor, became so enraged with her enforced boundaries that he threatened her life. A restraining order was followed by a divorce.

Stephen and Isabelle

Stephen who never could please his wife finally exerted his own beliefs, causing so much consternation within Isabelle that she began to complain openly about him with family and friends. This violated one of Stephen's boundaries which forced a separation.

Isabelle and Stephen had to gain an understanding of why blame givers did what they did. They recognized the alpha/omega phenomenon. They had to establish and reinforce boundaries of fairness and communication that could not be crossed. And they learned to accept joyously their core personality, Isabelle being a puppy and Stephen a cat.

Richard

My closest childhood friend shared with me a remarkable philosophy that was molded by experiences from his youth.

Richard had grown up in a home where ultra conservative religion drove every expectation. Highly creative and random in his thinking—a puppy—Richard found it difficult to buckle down to the daily expectations of prayer, supplication, scripture study and model behavior. He was highly intelligent with a sharp wit. When we were in school as teenagers he shared with me the answers he provided on a test in seminary. He was to write down the beatitudes. These were some of his answers:

Be at Sunday school . . .

Be at Sacrament . . .

Be at prayers . . .

Be at scripture study . . .

Many years later Richard told me that he felt like he had been raised in a bottle. A dog cannot be kept in a cage without destroying the canine spirit. Inside the glass he was molded to be righteous, and through the glass everybody could check on his worthiness. Richard was not unrighteous nor was he unworthy. He just needed to be validated and free, like a pooch.

His wife had similar experiences in her youth. They agreed that their children were not going to be raised in a bottle. “We wanted them to follow their own compass,” he said. Today, his three children are highly successful in the top of their respective fields.

Your Boundaries Define Who You Are

Do you feel like you are unworthy, unlovable and doomed to failure and sadness?

You don't have to feel that way, for as you define and enforce your boundaries you will develop an exhilaration and sense of fulfillment you may have never felt before. Your boundaries will define for others who you are, and they will respect you for it.

Do you accept blameworthiness as fate, a pathetic existence that may be credited to God's will, or to the astrology of the stars and planets?

It's not true.

Do you feel that you have to live your life in misery because of bad choices? Did you marry because you had to, or were denied who you wanted to marry, or were otherwise pressured into an alliance that was unhealthy for you?

By now defining your boundaries, you can change your circumstances and you don't have to live in misery.

Sadly, many feel trapped in a painful relationship that causes continual hurt with no hope of cure or escape. Is that you? These relationships can fall into many forms, some as simple as co-workers in a temporary assignment, or parents to whom you feel forever obliged. Establishing your boundaries will set you on a course to correct these problems.

No One Can Forever Control You

No matter what the relationship, no human being has the ultimate power to rob you of the right to grow, progress, succeed and find happiness. No one. And no one has the right to dictate how you should feel, or perform in a given situation. The only exception to this might be if you choose instruction to perform a particular task in school, on-the-job training, or any other worthwhile activity.

Many people flounder in frustration because they are not anchored in a fulfilling belief system regarding life and its purpose. Such a belief system has boundaries in the form of hopes, goals and objectives.

From the beginning of time mankind has searched to find the meaning of life, with an inherent belief in a supreme being worthy of worship and emulation. Furthermore, people are born into this world with an inherent belief that there is something better in existence after death. Most religions prescribe that in order to enjoy that post mortal bliss, such as heaven or nirvana, compliance to religious code—or boundaries—is essential.

Many resist these religious boundaries because they have not been internalized or found to resonate with their own personal beliefs. Therefore, it is essential to formulate a belief system about life. When persons do this, they are surprised to often find that religious ideals come to them even though in the past such notions were rejected.

One of the problems religion often creates is the idea that God is one to fear, for his punishments have been depicted as gruesome and horrific. The preached retribution may follow a spectrum from everlasting conflagration to imprisonment and separation from loved ones, or entrapment in some form of prison or eternal pit.

I believe from my personal spiritual experiences that the threatened punishments are misguided and do not represent reality in this life or the next. I do not know exactly what the next life will be like, but I do not believe that we have to live in fear of not eventually obtaining eternal joy. If people can progress here, they surely can progress there.

I do believe that peace and a sense of fulfillment in this life come from following a moral compass and a line of integrity, or boundaries that may possibly be prescribed by religion as core values worth living.

I believe that helping others, being kind and generous, and working to make life better for oneself and others is at the heart of provident living. I see this in all religions. But the moment that such behavior is driven by fear of God's punishment, then individuals lose their own sense of personal value and become victims of negative religious dogma.

Some blame givers use religious belief as authority to exercise dominion. Nowhere do the commandments imply that it is proper to hold one in subjugation. Unfortunately, such effort at distorted and misguided "righteous dominion" may carry with it an assumed license to be abusive, critical or hurtful to those with whom someone has a "heaven-blessed" relationship. I believe such persons are alpha driven without a true understanding of spiritual kindness. They are roosters of the highest order, all the more dangerous because they think they have the backing of God's will and authority.

Horrible acts of physical and emotional brutality are committed—even today in the 21st century—in the name of assumed religious authority.

God does not expect you to live in misery, pain or fear in a state of emotional insecurity. He loves roosters, cats, rabbits and puppies equally, irrespective of their unique characteristics and often counterproductive way of solving problems. As you work to overcome the power of the blame givers, God will bless you with the strength to find your true worth and assert that worth with those in your life who cause you pain.

It is possible that if you are fundamentally a rooster you can use your strength of determination to lead in organizations and relationships in a spirit of kindness, understanding and forgiving. As a cat you can take your gift of observation and quietude to meditate, create masterpieces and fulfill your regal role in your relationships. As a rabbit, you ignite the sparkle of love and cohesion within the groups you circulate. As a puppy your playfulness is a gift that brings joy and humor into the lives of others.

I encourage you to root yourself into the divine nature, and build a belief system that resonates with your soul and spirit. Your belief system may well be defined within religious circles, but it must become your own belief system, not one dictated by others.

Activity

On the boundaries worksheet are boxes that represent different boundaries you may want to set for yourself. Notice that the boxes are outlined in dotted lines, symbolic of weak boundaries. Your job is to make your boundaries solid and easily seen and felt by others. Some boundary definitions are suggested, others are left blank.

Boundaries

The Things I Will Not Allow

Verbal Abuse

Sexual Abuse

Uninvited Criticism

Intrusion of My Time

Violation of My Space

Violation of My Privacy

Denigration of My Beliefs

Attack of Anger

Control of My Finances

Free Access to My Property



Nurturing Unconditional Love

Chapter 8

Unconditional love is the type of love that a mother has for her newborn. It is the kind of love that says without words, “I accept you for who you are, without condition.” It is affection without limitations.

Unconditional love comes from someone with whom you feel safe—safe from criticism, safe from judgment, safe to hold in confidence your hopes, your feelings and your secrets. Persons who love you unconditionally do not judge you and do not talk about you with others unless it is in glowing terms.

Those who love you unconditionally do not measure you against some standard, such as grades in school, dress, or rules of religion or other institutions. They may hope for your best in these areas but would never use them to withhold love from you.

Unconditional love does not give you license to break rules, get poor grades, or live the life of a reprobate without natural consequences. The one who loves you unconditionally would allow natural consequences to flow.

Those who love unconditionally would stand by you as you suffer the consequences of bad choices, but they will never withdraw their love for those choices you made—or make you feel as if that love might be threatened. And they would never seek to find punishment for your transgressions. Unconditional love is the love of a true friend.

My lop ear rabbits demonstrated unconditional love for each other. Any number of bunnies could crowd into the feeding area, or the

shelter for protection, and never be rejected. No matter the relationship, the color, the size, or the health of the rabbit, all were welcome. Unlike most animals, rabbits do not growl and chase others away from the food. The only exception to this kind heartedness is when a mother is protecting her newborn litter, or a buck is challenging another for dominance when there is the scent of estrus.

Would it be that such kindness and acceptance could be universal amongst humans? Homo sapiens are the worst of animals for rejecting those whom they consider inferior. If this is tragic in the general population of people, it is monumentally destructive within families.

Have you ever known anyone who loves unconditionally? Has anyone shown you unconditional love? Is there anyone you love unconditionally?

The Impact of Expectations

As unconditional love is present in the birthing room with a new baby, it is likely to fade as the child grows. Expectations creep in, making children sometimes feel inadequate, threatened or unloved. Parenting is tricky at this point, but with true unconditional love a youngster generally feels motivated to do what is right, driven by their own sense of value rather than an external force. Parents must guide, but it must be out of the needs of the child, not the needs of the parent. Intrinsic motivation to be good is born out of the security of unconditional love from a parent.

Unconditional Love and Responsibility

As parents, teachers or other leaders in close relationships, we must give unconditional love, but also recognize that growth comes

through accepting responsibility. I have known some parents who give freely to their children anything they want, spoiling them by rewarding their every whim.

When raising our children, my wife and I acknowledged the wants any of our children had, like the desire for a new bicycle or a new pair of expensive designer jeans.

Our philosophy was to help them find little jobs around the house and yard to earn money so they could eventually get what they wanted. We might give them extra cash for a job well done.

The youngsters then respected and treasured their new purchase because they had “skin in the game.”

Opposite to this, I remember one parent who forbid his son from getting a new pair of jeans because the father felt it was important to keep the young man humble.

This is the opposite of unconditional love. This is control and a form of punishment.

Heroism Is an Example of Unconditional Love

One of the most dramatic demonstrations of unconditional love is the heroism that takes place on the battlefield. Soldiers and marines who may be entrenched in combat find that their dependence on their comrades is stripped of any prejudice or expectation. Numerous are the stories of individuals who put their own lives on the line to save their buddies such as diving on a grenade, or charging up an embankment under fire to rescue another.

The Congressional Medal of Honor is given for such acts of heroism, and truly represents unconditional love for others under the duress of war.

Similar stories are often headlined in the news of people doing remarkable things to help or save a complete stranger.

My Discovery of Unconditional Love

For most of my adult life I had never experienced unconditional love, for I was unaware of its veracity. I didn't know what I didn't know. The bliss from feeling unconditional love is something I had never experienced, for in most situations as I grew up, there were expectations and fears of failure that surrounded me.

Discovering the existence and nature of unconditional love is a cardinal moment that I shall never forget.

My pattern of life was to always try fitting into my surroundings. At a social gathering I was the life of the party. I would laugh at an off-color joke if I knew those around me would approve of that, and I would deplore such a joke if I knew those around me would condemn it. I was a different person around extended family than I was with my army buddies. Fundamentally, I was a fraud, not true to myself, because I didn't understand or acknowledge my true self.

During those years I spent a fortune on therapists, books and seminars. One such massage/counseling therapist who became a wonderful friend asked me a question after I poured out my frustrations. She said, "Have you ever been loved unconditionally?" I was puzzled. I asked her to explain what she meant. I had never heard of the term unconditional love.

She then described unconditional love as I have explained it here. I sat in silence for a few moments then had to admit, “No, I have never experienced unconditional love.”

During those moments, I thought back on so many experiences where everything was conditional: The receiving of rewards, gifts, vacations, salvation—these were all conditional based upon my performance. Everything had a price on it if I was too feel approved.

I had to conform if I was to be accepted or given the opportunity to succeed. That approval of me was not there if I did not comply, and the punishment would be failure, isolation, or damnation.

I felt empty. I felt sad. I felt cheated.

Throughout my life I had worked so hard to comply, to seek the approval of family, of clergy, and of friends. As a true cat, my innermost secrets were kept within.

There is only one friend, one confidant that I remember I could share my innermost feelings with, and that was my cousin whose life experience paralleled mine. He was always examined, always scrutinized, and was always made to feel he came up short. He was a middle child, and was always compared to his older brother who was a scholar, and his younger sister who was a high achiever.

In his heart my cousin was an artist. It was expected that he should major in business, but a business degree was not for him. In college he majored in fine arts and became a master painter. Although disappointed, his mother nonetheless doted over his art work and showed his canvases to anyone who came to the house.

He disliked the attention and began hiding his paintings in the attic so his mother could not see them. Sadly, his catlike tendencies

exacerbated by his feeling of only receiving conditional love blocked his ability to communicate with his parents and share with them his wonderful talent. Because of these feelings, he became very private in his communications—except with me—not wanting to be subjected to questioning as to his motives and purpose in life.

Since my therapist helped me understand the power of unconditional love, I have learned to give freely of myself in unconditional love to everyone else. No longer was I going to judge. No longer was I going to place expectations on anyone, including my own children and grandchildren. I have learned to love them for who they are.

With time, I began to feel unconditional love from new friends and associates, and with time occasionally from members of my family. Ironically, unconditional love comes easily from children, and rarely from adults who have been steeped in expectation and indoctrinated with judgment. My heart is full as I think of my relationship now with children, grandchildren, my former wife, neighbors, friends and professional associates with whom I can be real and genuine.

As a young parent, I came close to giving unconditional love although it was laced with a lot of expectation regarding religious values. Fortunately, the genuine qualities of my loving heart were felt by each of my five children who are now highly successful in business and family. I give full credit to the mother of my children who with me became the perfect partner for those children.

Two Extraordinary Mothers

Maven has a son who suffers from mental illness, and well into his 30s has suffered numerous terrible crises. Unable to function in normal society, he has been in many hospitals subject to medications

which often made his condition worse. On occasion he committed crimes which were driven by his heightened state of mental instability. Sadly, in those situations he was jailed.

His mother is not embarrassed as he does not present a favorable image in the community. Rather, motivated with unconditional love, Maven is untiring in her efforts to find help for her son, working to unite resources for the betterment of those mentally ill.

She expresses continual love and support to her son, even when he is in crisis.

Sadly, some people prefer to shun the problem and pretend it doesn't exist.

A good friend of Mavin is Patricia who has a son who is severely autistic. Extremely obese and non-communicative, he mumbles and moves about making others uncomfortable. His joy in life is to go into secondhand stores and by old toys or CD's which he keeps in his room.

Every day Patricia takes him to different stores, and despite the disparaging and rather frightened looks of other patrons, she helps him with his routine. Fortunately, many of the store owners and customers show love and acceptance for Patricia and her challenge with her son.

Sadly, she made the observation to her friend Maven not to expect much help from other people for such difficult parenting problems.

Give of Your Own Love

To find true healing in the journey to overcome blameworthiness, you must discover where you have fallen short in feeling

unconditional love, and work toward giving unconditional love to others. Be the rabbit, not the rooster. Share of your heart, and don't condemn another's heart or motive.

Let go of the judgments, the criticisms, and the advice. Just love people for who they are, and they will come to love you for who you are. Be genuine, be real, and be authentic in your daily expressions and actions. Have a readiness to believe in goodness.

As you do so, you will rise to the highest order of humanness. You will bring with you the best unconditional loving characteristics of kittens, bunnies and puppies and even of roosters. And you will leave behind the stifling, demeaning and injurious characteristics of earthy man.

If you do so, your own sense of blameworthiness will fade with time as the frost in the morning sun. Your sense of worth to the human family will grow as the stately redwoods, to be honored forever as a shrine of humble greatness and love amongst your family and friends.

Paul the apostle admonished the ministers of God in *Second Corinthians 6:6* to interact. . .

. . .By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned.

Said Mother Theresa:

Intense love does not measure, it just gives.

And from Oscar Wilde:

To give and not expect return, that is what lies at the heart of love.

Dealing with Those Who Often Hurt You

Chapter 9

There are certain people you must interact with every day. Do some of them always blame you, or cast judgment upon what you think or do?

Those individuals might be your spouse, parent, child, fellow worker or a neighbor. How do you deal with them and stop them from hurting you?

As you have come to understand the animal characteristics which reflect personality traits, you have gained insights that may help you understand triggers that cause them to blame or find fault with you.

Furthermore, as you understand the alpha phenomenon in which certain individuals maintain superiority in a group, you may do something very innocently based upon your own needs that annoy or threaten them, causing the trigger to release judgment or criticism upon you.

In chapter eight you learned the importance of unconditional love.

Do those people that hurt you have unconditional love for you? Probably not.

Perhaps there may be acceptance or professed love for you that is based on some type of performance or efficiency they expect of you, or belief of theirs they think you should share.

Lying and Deceiving

I had an acquaintance who lives a very productive life in her home and business responsibilities. She told me once, “Sometimes you just have to lie, and it’s okay.”

We have all been bombarded with half-truths and exaggerations. Efforts to sell or gain advantage in the world of politics sometimes puts people in compromising situations when they deal with the public.

But deliberate lying to family or friends with the full intent to deceive is harmful. I caught this friend in a bold-faced lie that was meant to fully trick me to gain an advantage for her.

I could never trust her again.

Perhaps this has happened to you. It is painful and disheartening. Are you going to be a rooster and confront them with the truth?

Or are you going to be a cat and slink away? Perhaps as a rabbit you want to maintain the friendship and simply accept the lies as part of the relationship.

These are challenging problems, and you must find your own comfort zone, which might be rooster-like and confront them with the truth.

Sexual Abuse

I have no sympathy for those individuals who take advantage of others for personal sexual gratification. Consensual sex is one thing, but deliberately forcing oneself upon another is abhorrent, disgusting and criminal.

The harm it causes to innocent victims leaves them with a lifetime of emotional scars.

I am aware of a situation in which a stepfather took advantage of a teenage stepdaughter.

Aside from the emotional and physical harm it caused this girl, it drove her from religious affiliation and any affinity toward God. The man was a lay leader in their church, and the hypocrisy displayed was monumental in harming her emotional construct.

As bad as abusing a stepchild might be. It's hard to imagine a father sexually abusing his own child.

I know of a man who did just that. He had three daughters, and each one of them left the home as soon as they were able to survive on their own.

This man combined his abuse with unbelievable coercion and deception. Whenever he would fondle a daughter late at night, he would say, "Doesn't that feel good? Now don't tell your mother, it would really make her sad."

Being a victim and being made to feel guilty if not lying is at the height of repugnance.

Add to that hypocrisy, for he also prided himself on being very active in his church affiliation. In public he was proud of his family, and was oblivious to the harm he was causing his children.

These are extreme instances of harm. But in everyday interactions with family and friends that does not include abuse or deceit, pain can still result from your regular associations.

Who Causes You the Most Pain?

To give you strength to encounter these people who cause you pain and reverse their attack on you, begin with the consideration of one person. It may be easier to begin with someone troublesome but not so intricately tied to you like a spouse.

On the other hand, if you are brave enough, begin with your spouse, child, parent or someone of familial connection. Think for a moment and focus only on that one person.

As you do this work, distance yourself emotionally from that individual until the exercise is completed.

Dig deep to articulate two or three incidents that caused you pain. Pinpoint sufficient details as to time, place and motivating factors of the incident. What were the triggers?

Be careful not to allow this reflection to throw you into depression. Remember, this is an exercise to help you grow and become powerful enough to disallow the pain they cause you.

Complete a Blueprint

At the end of this chapter is a blueprint similar to the one you completed on yourself at the end of chapter six.

However, this blueprint is to help you understand other people and is designed to help you develop a profile of the individual that causes you pain.

You are going to outline why he or she does the things they do.

Reflecting on the rooster, cat, rabbit or puppy, consider their needs, and motivations. How do they solve problems that run in conflict with the way you solve problems?

If you are not sure of these facts, make your best effort guess as to what that might be. Define something concrete.

If you find you later misjudged them, it is okay. This is just an exercise to give you working skills.

They Too Have Pain

You may not realize it, but your most brutal abuser also suffers from pain. They likely have been attacked by roosters or alphas in their own life, or given silent punishment by a cat. This may have happened in their childhood.

Such experiences are part of their back story or history, the story that is not evident in their daily activities. It is possible that their pain is far more severe than you could ever imagine, but with time they have learned to mask it.

They likely have become so skillful at hiding their pain from their past experiences that they no longer acknowledge they ever had pain. Their back story has been suppressed to the point that they would have a hard time remembering, or even acknowledging the impact it has on their present behavior.

Now you must speculate as to why they have suffered, what their back story might have been. Even if they deny they had pain, deep in their subconscious the emotional memory of the pain is very real, and present triggers can exacerbate their behavior.

Accept for the time being that they did endure hurt during those earlier years.

At this point it is particularly important to be emotionally distanced from the person you are evaluating.

Consider their childhood, their family situation, and any intellectual, spiritual or physical handicaps they may have. Try to recall traumatic experiences they suffered in their life.

Examples of Back Stories

The following two stories are powerful examples of how childhood has impacted adult behavior. In both instances, the individuals could have benefitted if they had been able to understand and internalize their own back stories, making it less likely to cast blame on others.

Margaret

As a girl Margaret was expected by her parents to support the needs of her older sister and brother.

She felt like Cinderella in that her needs were not valued. She never got a new dress, whereas her older sister always got new dresses. It was assumed within the family that hand-me-downs from Margaret's older sister were sufficient.

After all, the family was very poor and could not afford to buy new dresses for Margaret when she could fit into her sister's outgrown dresses.

College tuition for her brother became a family responsibility.

Margaret had to work to help support her brother, knowing that because of family tradition she could never go to college, a desire she finally fulfilled much later in life.

In her childhood home it was important for young men to prepare for careers and young women to prepare for homemaking.

Margaret could never express her feelings, for she feared the rebuke of her parents for being ungrateful for what they had. She was not to bring down the wrath of the Lord for her ingratitude.

It is little wonder that Margaret became blameworthy. In her adult years she was a cat, always slinking away from threatening situations.

She became a cat because she never had freedom as a child, always expected to meet the needs of others.

Regrettably as a cat she sometimes reacted in anger, screeching and clawing like a rooster when she was backed into a corner with expectations from others she felt were unjustified.

Clarence

Clarence was a man who generally was very generous. So generous was he that he often failed to account for his money. At times he was very poor, but when he had money, he spent it freely on himself or others.

Unfortunately, Clarence had a dark side. Sometimes he would brood, and lash out at others in anger. When livid he would become physically abusive. Striking his wife was an outlet for deep seated hurt he suffered as a child.

Clarence had grown up the oldest of several children.

As a youngster he was expected to work and contribute his earnings to the family budget. He never was able to graduate from high school because the demand for cash paying jobs was too great.

For Christmas one year he asked for a popular toy, a large truck.

Snooping around a few days before Christmas he found the truck hidden under his parents' bed. He was delighted, only to be devastated not to have the truck on Christmas morning.

He was crushed to learn that his parents were hiding the truck for their neighbor's son.

This story spoke volumes about Clarence and why this scar impacted him for a lifetime.

As a boy his need for belonging was lost in the maze of his large family. To compensate, he became overly gregarious as an adult.

In his need to belong he often spent money needlessly trying to impress others, making himself look successful and worthy of friendship.

This brought wrath from his wife which caused him to sometimes lash out in anger.

Develop Compassion

With the knowledge that comes from the back stories of Margaret and Clarence, it is possible to develop compassion for them and their abusive behavior as adults.

As you similarly come to understand the back story of those who cause you pain and develop empathy for their suffering, you will understand why they have unknowingly converted their suffering into abuse of you.

Considering now the person you have selected, identify a series of events that you know happened. If necessary, create fictional events to complete the story of that person. Accuracy here is not essential.

What is important is to develop compassion and sympathy for the other person that comes through understanding their back story, even if it is partly fictional.

You may come to a startling realization: They did not intentionally try to hurt you.

It may be hard to believe, but as blame givers reflect upon their own lives, they rarely recognize that they harm those around them. It is vital that you believe—at least temporarily—that they do not intentionally try to hurt you. With your new-found compassion, you are ready to take the next step in your personal growth.

Role Play with a Trusted Friend

You must find someone you trust, someone that has unconditional love for you, someone that will keep confidential your work with them. If no one fits this category for you, then find a counselor or therapist who is a good listener.

You need to replay various scenarios with that trusted friend in which you had painful interactions with the one who caused you hurt.

You will find that with the new compassion you have for the pain of the blame giver, your replaying of the incidents will be less painful than what actually happened.

Next, invent new scenarios in which you are able to not feel blameworthy when that person becomes a rooster to you.

See yourself not feeling the pain that you have felt in the past. Feel secure in the safety of your boundaries. If the abuses you have suffered are physical, see yourself taking steps in the scenario to avoid the attack. Practice these scenarios with your friend.

Up to this point the friend is a third person observer that you are sharing scenarios with.

Now pretend that your friend is the second person, the identified individual who causes you the pain. With your new-found strength and understanding, confront your friend as if he or she were that person.

In a calm voice explain to your friend the newly defined boundaries you have set to protect yourself.

If you need to, review chapter seven in which you set your own boundaries.

Next, pretend that in a moment of calmness, you are going to express ideas and hopes you have been afraid to share in the past.

Take a Risk with the Blame Giver

When you have practiced with your best friend enough to have an increased sense of your own worth, you will need to prepare an encounter with the person who causes you pain.

Pick a moment of tranquility. Share with him or her some of your hopes and ideas.

As you do it calmly, with compassion permeating your soul, you will find in that blame giver a listening heart. Assuming it goes well, do it again on another occasion.

Should a mean incident flare up, express in calm but certain resolve your newly established boundaries.

You may need to say something like, "I do not have to listen to you speak to me in that kind of voice." Then walk away. Stick to your boundaries, and distance yourself when necessary.

Be patient. It is very difficult for people to change. But as you have made transformations in your life, having filled your heart with compassion, you will have success, a little bit at a time.

If after sufficient attempts the meanness continues, then it may be time to consider alternatives that will remove you from that person and the confrontations that continue. If it is a fellow worker, you may need to change jobs. If it is a neighbor, you may need to move. If it is an adult child, you may need to ask them to move. If it is a spouse, you may need a divorce.

Regrettably, some people have a conditioned meanness that has calcified to the point where they no longer have a heart that can soften. Or perhaps they are so entrenched in their belief system that nothing contrary to their view of things will be acceptable.

You do not have to be their victim any longer. No institution, counselor, clergyman or friend would condemn you to a lifetime of abuse.

Before you arrive at that point, you need to experience unconditional love. This is not finding a lover, but one who accepts and loves you unconditionally. By so doing, the contrast will be so great as to give you the strength you need to extricate yourself from the destructive association.

You can then live in peace knowing that you have done everything possible to create harmony in the relationship.

Blue Print Activity

On the Personality Blueprint on the last page of this chapter indicate which animal you think the person might be. Then fill in each box under Back Story Characteristics.

You may need to guess on many items. This will help you define their story which will assist you to understand those events in their life that have shaped their personality. Out of this you may discover their insecurities and source of pain.

Do not feel that you are judging. You are crafting tools to better cope, love and forgive.

Personality Blueprint of Others

NAME: Use a code name if you prefer

He or she is primarily a rooster, cat, rabbit or puppy

Back Story Characteristics

Year of birth Place of birth Total siblings

Place amongst siblings Parental marital status at time of birth

Parental marital status during their youth

Significant events during time of birth

Unique cultural aspects of birthplace

Role of religion during youth

Role of religion as an adult

Tragedies that occurred during his or her life

Triumphs that occurred during his or her life

Attitude regarding sex

Attitude regarding the opposite sex

Physical disorders

Career traits

Other unique things about them



Dealing with Unexpected Encounters

Chapter 10

There are certain people you may need to encounter occasionally, but with whom you do not have a close relationship. With most people, you likely have no problem and interact with them in a normal, cordial and productive manner.

But there are people that as soon as you see them, your blood pressure rises, you tense up and brace yourself for that which is sure to come. This anxiety is compounded if you feel blameworthy.

Some people do not suffer the condition of blameworthiness. If they are criticized or offended in one of these meetings they react by refusing to accept the criticism. They have well established boundaries and brush the incident off as no big deal. However, perhaps you can't so easily brush it off. Are you hurt when people suddenly criticize you for no justified reason? Do you feel anxious when interacting in public, fearing that something difficult like this might happen?

Armed now with a greater understanding of what drives other people, and a clear understanding of your own boundaries, you are now empowered to navigate your way through such situations and like others, simply brush off the offending person.

The Jana Technique

Jana is a person who works in the movie entertainment business. She encounters many volatile characters. Through her career, while interfacing with demanding and critical people, she has developed a

technique that facilitates effective communication. If insults or criticisms are forthcoming—which surely happen during the stress of production—her technique side tracks the offender in such a remarkable way that not only is she unharmed, but the offender feels better as a worthwhile individual.

Address Them from Their Reality

With the Jana Technique it is vital that you place your mindset in their situation. This can be done in an instant. You don't need to know endless details about their background.

With the work you have done in previous chapters, you have developed the skills to recognize human needs and can easily recognize the characteristics of roosters, cats, rabbits and puppies. Having completed the Personality Blueprint at the end of the last chapter will help you be more keenly aware of the impact of a person's back story, even if you don't know the details of their history.

With this knowledge, you will be able to peg the individual as they walk through the door and will know how to react to them and apply the Jana Technique.

They may have an inflated need for power. They must control the situation. With a rooster personality, they charge in ready to take command, crowing and flapping their wings. Perhaps they are like a puppy, annoyed that their play time is being robbed by some crisis. Perhaps their need for belonging like a rabbit has suffered a blow and they are falling apart.

You don't need to know what happened. You just need to know that the person confronting you is out of balance. Empathize with them.

You may not have walked a mile in their shoes, but you can for the moment pretend you have.

As you become instantly focused on their needs, the situation will be greatly diffused.

You may think at this point you are caving in, being weak. Who is strong in a confrontation? Who gets hurt? By understanding the blame giver from their reality, you really begin to take control of the situation and create a win-win situation.

Restore Their Pride

With the Jana Technique, you help the potential offender maintain their pride, and if necessary, help them restore their pride.

Unhealthy roosters have deep insecurities. You will never have a productive conversation with them *if they feel threatened*. You may initially feel threatened, but when you realize that they are insecure, and may well feel threatened themselves, then you are taking steps to balance the forthcoming exchange.

Find value in who they are and what they have contributed to you and to others. Overlook their weaknesses and search for the good they have done.

Compliment them. If nothing else, tell them their shirt is nice, or their shoes or hair are becoming to their appearance. These kind words will disarm, or at least minimize any criticism or judgment.

And you will feel so much better about yourself, because you took control of the situation. From that moment on, in any future encounters, build on the good that you started. You will find that they will come to highly value your opinions and friendship.

Raul and Smitty

In army basic training, Raul had to bunk next to a profane, unhappy and critical individual who wanted to be called Smitty. He got angry if anybody used his real name.

There was nothing about Smitty that was in any way desirable. Not only did he despise the military, but he complained about the food, everyone in his unit, the officers, the NCO's and everyone else that came to his mind.

Smitty used the vilest language to describe anyone he saw or remembered in his life, including his parents. At first Raul didn't know how he could survive living in such close proximity to this miscreant.

Using the Jana Technique, Raul looked for something positive about Smitty.

All trainees had to wear a belt with a brass buckle. Daily uniform inspections by the drill sergeant forced everyone to be dressed properly in their fatigues.

Smitty took pride in his belt buckle, and Raul took notice. Commenting on how Smitty's buckle looked better than that of anyone else in the platoon, Raul asked him how he kept his brass so shiny. Flattered that evening, Smitty demonstrated.

Raul carefully followed the steps that Smitty had shown on his brass buckle. Every day Raul made sure that Smitty could see that he worked hard to keep his buckle shiny like Smitty's.

From that day forward, Smitty treated Raul with respect and kindness, attributes not accorded anyone else in the military unit.

Practice the Jana Technique

With your trusted friend, role play some potential interchanges with those who might hurt you. Pretend that friend is the person aggressive toward you. Address them from their reality and restore their pride.

Elizabeth and Her Physician

Elizabeth is a medical practitioner. Her supervising physician is a very demanding man that expects perfection. He had been out of town, and learned of a mistake made by a member of Elizabeth's staff. The doctor was prepared to come down hard on Elizabeth, expecting her to chastise the office worker.

The entire matter was not as severe as the doctor pretended it to be, but it was an opportunity for him to show who was boss. He assumed such action would increase respect for himself.

Dreading the encounter, Elizabeth reviewed the Jana Technique. She did her best to be calm and prepared with the facts of the situation.

But her more important preparations were to visualize the doctor's space, mindset and reality from his perspective.

As the doctor came storming in, Elizabeth greeted him kindly, noticing immediately a new tie. Flattered, the doctor's anger went down a few notches.

Before talking about the incident, Elizabeth thanked the doctor for his knowledge and experience which had benefited her as a practitioner. "I have learned so much from you, and I really appreciate it," she said.

Elizabeth then went on to explain what had been done to correct the problem, again thanking the doctor for his concern. Completely disarmed, the doctor forgot about the matter.

In retrospect, Elizabeth learned that the doctor was always worried about a law suit. With help from Elizabeth he was reassured that everyone within the office was doing everything possible to maintain professionalism and proper record keeping.

The Jana Technique worked for Raul, and it worked for Elizabeth. It can work for you too.

Activity

On the T Form found on the next page, you will notice two columns.

In the left column box, fill in an unexpected encounter that was hurtful from the past.

In the box on the right, jot down what you could have done to restore the pride of the person who hurt you.

If you find it difficult to write down actual situations, fill in with fictional encounters.

What is important is to develop the skill to utilize ahead of time the use of the Jana Technique in a threatening episode. Preparation will arm you with the ability to deflect the potential sting.

T Form

Unexpected Encounter	How to Restore Pride



Strengthening Your Sense of Self-Worth

Chapter 11

Everyone loves a puppy, a kitten, a bunny and a baby chick. And most everyone admires the regal stature of a rooster.

The notion that you might demonstrate the characteristics of one of these animal metaphors more than another is reflective of your primary personality persona. But it is likely that you will take on the characteristics of other metaphors at different times depending on the circumstances.

If you are true to yourself, nurturing unconditional love for all people, and completely accepting of who you are, and who they are, then all people will love and cherish you.

With this genuineness, everyone will not only love you, but honor their association with you.

You will come out of the darkness of night and become the shining star and delight in the company of others, and the one who is sought for wisdom rather than targeted for blame. And whatever may be at your core, whether that of a rooster, a cat, a rabbit or a puppy, you will become more confident, compassionate and happy.

As a human being, you are endowed with emotion, intelligence and the ability to achieve remarkable things.

Most important is the sanctity of you as an individual entitled to respect and reverence. You have the God-given capacity to find

supernal joy, and do not have to live forever under the unjustified dominance of those whose drive is still at the baser level of the animal kingdom.

Have you been told that you cannot rise above a certain level of success or happiness?

That notion is entirely wrong.

There is no stopping what you can accomplish once you understand the truth about your potential and your own giftedness as a child of God.

If you struggle with negative beliefs about yourself, know that those beliefs are wrong and destructive, and were thrust upon you by those people or institutions that want to control you. These horrible feelings are as the feathers on the hen's back in China, continually ripped off leaving gaping sores.

You were born into this world with gifts and rights befitting the offspring of divine nature.

You are special. You are as special as a newborn kitten, puppy or bunny. You are as innocent as a newly hatched chick, barely revealing your soft downed feathers.

You are unique. No one else is exactly like you, even if you are a twin. How can anyone so exceptional feel less than worthy and capable of joy and accomplishment?

Dismiss the Negatives

If the uniqueness of you has been desecrated, consider again the metaphors.

As a cat, you may have been yelled at for running and hiding—dodging some responsibility.

As a puppy, you may have been spanked for ripping apart the day's newspaper—in your playfulness neglecting something important.

As a rabbit, you may have been violated because you are so cute and beautiful—perhaps sexually abused.

Even as a rooster, you may have been criticized for being too assertive, too independent and too determined to have your own way.

Cherish Your Divine Nature

You were born perfect, directly from the presence of God. Meditate on that reality and your heart will be filled with His divine essence. God is the great giver of love and understanding. I believe in His ability and commitment to empathize with and desire to help you develop your own gifts.

He does not expect everyone to be the same. We all have gifts that bless humanity. Just as there is a multitude of beautiful flowers of every color, individuals have special qualities that bless the lives of those around them.

We have been created to be different, and life's evolution makes us even more inimitable, matchless and special.

But you have to take the steps to gain control of your own life. Pull the weeds of discord and pain. Nurture the exquisite and variant colors of your own life.

No one else in the world is like you. And you are as important to God and humanity as any other individual.

If you feel blameworthy, you may not believe how wonderful you are, but it is true, nonetheless. If God loves His creations of the many animals that roam the planet, including dogs, cats and rabbits—and yes roosters—then surely, He loves you.

The divine is not an executioner, but a kind, understanding and loving parent. We attribute to God the position of being our final judge, but I believe that His judgment will be filled with compassion and help, not retribution and eternal suffering.

As we progress and grow in this life, we will continue to progress and grow forever, and not live in eternal torture as preachments so eloquently threaten.

Individuals who as blame givers ascribe to themselves the power of judgment, may find themselves to be the most harshly judged in the end. Consider the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:1-3.

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

Some doctrinal interpretations implore that Jesus didn't recommend that we should never judge, but that we should judge in righteousness. This suggests a moral qualification—perhaps erroneously self-imposed by the blame giver.

I believe if one is morally grounded with Christ-like love, they will probably never judge, and certainly not in a way that will create the kind of pain felt by those blameworthy.

You Have Special Gifts

Everyone has something valuable to contribute to the world. Do you feel like you have no talent, or anything special to make the lives of others better? It is simply not true. Blame givers may make you feel that way, and if they do, they are attempting to rob you of a God-given gift. You along with every other human being have the potential to learn, love, change and grow.

Do you feel like you were born into a lower class without privilege and potential? It is not so. One of the foundational tenets of western civilization is that we all have equal rights under the law. But more than that, we all have equal love and devotion from our creator.

God does not pick winners and losers. He has endowed you with all the necessary capabilities to be happy and successful. In addition, he has blessed you with special gifts, unique to you. Consider the teachings of Paul the Apostle in 1 Corinthians 12:8-11:

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kind of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

The list could go on in terms of your ability to speak, or to listen, or think, or to be fun-loving and beautiful as the animals that we adore.

You may have special talents in preparing meals, fixing things, or making people laugh. No one has the right to rebuke you for using your gifts. And as you use your gifts, your confidence will increase in those areas where you may feel vulnerable to attack from the alpha blame givers in your world.

You Can Change Your Life!

God has endowed you with the power to change your life, to no longer suffer from the ill effects of being blameworthy.

You no longer have to be the omega sufferer, at the bottom of the pecking order, always being blamed, and always feeling responsible for every unsavory situation.

Cats need distance, and as you seek distance, do not fall into the trap of unhealthy escape. Many people run from their problems, burying their pain in alcohol or drugs. Others have affairs and illicit relationships escaping from those who cause them pain. Others just simply run away, abandoning their families, jobs, or other responsibilities. Many become skillful liars, engaging in escape mechanisms unable to confront their blameworthy condition.

Follow the guidelines in this book for healthy change, learning how to identify the causes that make blame givers the people who they are.

With that knowledge you will be able to better manage your relationships. You will learn to no longer cope in unhealthy ways. In addition, you will find strategies and ideas that will help you. And you will blossom in your fun loving “puppyness,” and your amorous and affectionate “rabbitness.”

I have learned these things from personal experience. I have learned these things from many friends, family and associates who have suffered blameworthiness and largely overcome the condition. These individuals have a greater sense of purpose, self-esteem and confidence in confronting difficult situations.

You can have the same wonderful growth experience for yourself!

Come Out of the Foggy Night

My paternal grandparents were born and raised in England. I remember hearing stories from my Grandpa Linton of dark foggy nights in London. In the northern latitudes, the sun sets early in the winter, and the fog rolls in off the North Sea and the River Thames.

In those days well over a century ago, most residents burned coal to keep warm, and the smoke mixed with fog to produce “pea soup” or smog. One could hold their hand in front of their face and not see it.

But what they could see was the light from a streetlamp ahead. Walking toward the lamp, one could eventually see the next lamp. And so, a Londoner could find their way home, one lamp at a time.

You may feel surrounded by the choking smog of emotional pain, unable to see anything around you. But a lamp will appear.

It might be one of those beautiful animals you resonate with. As you move toward it, you will see another lamp, another aspect of that animal. And eventually you will find your way, coming to understand the truth of your exceptional self.

In London the next day, the bright sun would burn off the smog, and residents would douse their fires. Breezes would clear the air, and all of London could be seen.

Likewise, you will see with clarity who you are, and what alterations need to be made in your belief system and behaviors to overcome blameworthiness and rise above the lowly omega soul that you always felt you were. I urge you to be courageous, take the risk, learn about yourself, and follow the light one lamp at a time.

Create a Personal Inventory of Who You Are

By completing the inventory questions below, you will realize how truly special you are. You will discover things about yourself that you approve of. You will isolate aspects about you that others may be critical of but have no justification in those views.

You will learn to give yourself permission to be you, the unique you.

When you have completed this inventory, you are encouraged to share it with close friends and relatives that you trust. You might want to carry it with you and refer to it in those low moments that you might have from time to time.

Inventory Questions

1. What is the noblest characteristic others see in me?

2. What important thing did I accomplish that was difficult?

3. What have I often done to make other people happy?

4. What aspect of my personal appearance is most appealing?

5. What am I most passionate about?

6. What ideas of mine do I feel most comfortable in sharing?

7. What positive thing about me can other people always depend on?

8. What event in my life has made me the most happy?

9. For whom could I be a cheerleader?

10. What sacrifice did I make that made someone else happy?

11. In what area am I a real leader?

12. What animal metaphor most warms my heart?

13. In what skill am I most adaptable?

14. What was a situation in which I forgave somebody?

15. What positive belief do I have about God?

16. What makes me laugh?

17. In what area of my life do I have the most self control?

18. What sport or game am I good at?

19. What energizes me?

20. What is my favorite book or movie and why?

21. What is my favorite color and why?

22. What is my favorite food and why?

23. What in my life is very orderly?

24. What task am I really good at?

25. What person has had the most positive influence on me?

Stories of Those Who Now Thrive

Chapter 12

Connie and Keith

Connie as a young woman married Keith. The relationship was challenged from the beginning, as Keith was driven by a hard-working rooster personality. His needs for power manifest itself in long hours at the office and control of the home. Unaware that his control was destructive, he with time created fear in Connie's heart.

Often feeling unloved in her relationship, Connie took many opportunities to leave the home with friends. She was a rabbit, needing to circulate among other people. After having a baby, it became more difficult for her to fulfill her need for a wide circle of social interactions.

Responding to the attentions of another man Tom, Connie had an affair. When the nefarious relationship came to light, Keith was naturally furious. Unlimited condemnation fell upon Connie, whose blameworthy condition became painfully numbing.

Keith put Connie on a schedule so that he would know where she was every minute. Bearing down on her like the worst of roosters, Keith figuratively pecked the feathers off Connie's back. This pressure only turned Connie into a liar. Becoming like a cat, she found ways to hide and run from Keith, and continued the affair with Tom unabated.

Keith could not completely control Connie. No one can ever completely control another person. But in every way possible, Keith made the life of Connie a living hell.

Worse still, the extended families of Connie and Tom met frequently to try and find ways to break their relationship.

It wasn't until Connie realized that Tom was not a good worker that she began to question the value of their cagey liaison. His puppy personality was too inclined to seek mostly fun.

Connie's sense of family belonging accentuated with the responsibility of raising a child brought her to the point where she ceased her relationship with Tom.

Even though the affair had ended, Keith continued in his quest of controlling Connie. For several years she lived under his management. Life was miserable for both of them.

Then ironically some years later, Keith had an affair. Suddenly he was more kind to Connie, admitting he then understood why she had an affair many years before.

This is where Connie's sense of blameworthiness made it difficult. Even though Keith wasn't so overbearing, she still feared him every day. From the beginning, their personalities and values never matched very well. The horror of those years under the rooster's dominance robbed her of the ability to feel safe. Finally, she divorced him.

At this time Connie is very happy not having a relationship. Although she has many friends, she does not want to lose her freedom in marriage. She had experienced two men, one power hungry and the other irresponsible.

Where Connie now really fulfills her need for belonging is in her relationship with God. She is very devoted in her personal sense of worship, but decries organized religion because of what she sees as attempts at control. She does not want to be blamed for not living all of the church rules, and so disavows them entirely—but she does worship frequently in her own way.

Connie has very skillfully removed herself from any threat of blame.

Harry and Sandy

The story of Harry and Sandy is not yet finished. But the struggle they have provides a template that others might follow in their journey to each overcome their own unique quality of blameworthiness.

Harry is a rooster, but he means well. It's just his nature to control his environment, including those people within it. His wife Sandy has found it difficult at times to endure Harry's moods, which often result in excessive crowing and feather flapping.

Sandy's pattern is to react like a cat. When he crows, she runs and hides metaphorically, disappearing from emotional view. Unfortunately, when Harry settles down and wants to be affectionate, Sandy is not there for him.

As she has worked to understand her husband's back story, Sandy has developed an empathy that she never had. Harry's insecurities have been exacerbated over time by his business struggles. The ups and downs of income and the back stabbing and embezzlement from business associates and partners have taken their toll.

It is still difficult, but with this understanding, Sandy works to reciprocate affection while not putting at risk her self-esteem. She has well established boundaries that will not tolerate emotional

abuse. When Harry crows, Sandy calls him on it, boldly stating when he has overstepped her boundaries. In these moments she is a rooster. Amazingly, to Sandy's surprise, Harry likes to be checked, for he is a good man and does not want to destroy his relationship. Roosters are sometimes checkmated by other roosters.

When frustrated, Harry likes to lose himself in a project. At these times he becomes a cat and wants to be alone. If Sandy gets in the way or wants to talk, he reacts. However, now Harry understands that Sandy is at her core a rabbit and needs social interaction. Harry knows he needs to pause and communicate with his wife.

The relationship between Sandy and Harry is vastly improved, but they need to remind themselves frequently of the important concepts presented in this book.

Karen

Karen's story is extraordinary in that she had a near death experience. During a few moments when she was clinically dead in a hospital room, she had a remarkable occurrence that brought her knowledge, peace, and the complete elimination of pain and feeling blameworthy. And she also lost the need to blame others, for she understood in those moments that people cause pain out of their own insecurities and hurt they have suffered from others.

When Karen was a child her older brother was cruel and emotionally abusive. They lived in a rural area and her brother would make her believe that monsters in the forest would come and eat her. She was terrified when alone.

At the time of her hospitalization Karen was raising children of her own and was suffering a complicated pregnancy. She was in the

hospital for many weeks. Her four-year-old son was placed in the care of a close friend.

When she flat-lined Karen found herself elevated over her hospital bed looking down on her body. In spirit form, Karen was able to move from place to place instantaneously. She realized that speaking was unnecessary. Information and understanding passed instantly between individuals in the spirit form.

Knowing her son missed her, she was immediately at his side comforting her distraught and weeping child. (Many days later when Karen talked with the sitter, she was told how in an uncontrollable moment the child was suddenly calmed. Karen knew it was the instant she comforted her son.)

While in the spirit, Karen found herself seeing into the heart of her brother. But what she saw was entirely different from her recollections of him in mortal life. As she looked at him, she understood his entire back story. Suddenly she was aware of details of his childhood that she knew nothing about, knowledge of his pain and suffering as a child. Ironically, her brother suffered terrible insecurities when she was born, feeling abandoned by his mother. Karen's empathy filled her heart with complete love and forgiving.

The experience was so joyous and blissful that she found it difficult to return to her body. Her choice was motivated by the needs of her children and her devotion as a mother.

The tragedy of pain for Karen as exacerbated by her brother in life, was swept away by knowledge of him gained in the spirit realm. The great gain for Karen was the gift of peace and healing that blessed Karen for the rest of her mortal life.

You Have a Story

Your story is who you are. Your story is a good story, perhaps filled with tragedy like that of Connie or Karen, but a story of a person who is good and worthy, no longer needing to feel blameworthy.

Share your story with me. It is very comforting to know that others have suffered and triumphed, and your story might be just the perfect story to help someone in need.

Send me your story, and with your permission I may share it in future publications or on my website. One of the greatest joys you may ever experience is to help someone else.

Epilogue

All people—including the alphas and omegas—and the roosters, the cats, the rabbits, and the puppies have insecurities. Everyone finds a way to deal with their insecurities, sometimes in harmful ways, harmful to themselves and to others. Blame givers cascade blame onto others, masking their own pain. Persons blameworthy simply take the rebuke.

If you are a blameworthy person, you can now take control and no longer suffer in fear as you have in the past. You no longer have to be pained by unjustified criticism or judgment.

You have the tools to understand why blame givers do the things they do. You know why roosters have to crow and peck at others. You know why cats disappear emotionally. You know why rabbits are incessant talkers and you know why puppies are sometimes too playful.

You can now understand the motivations of all these people, and with a sense as to their back story or history, you can now develop compassion for those that harm or frustrate you.

With that compassion, you can create a blueprint of the person who harms you, giving you the knowledge and courage to mitigate their potential attacks. You know how to cope, forgive, and potentially help the other person, growing yourself in the process.

With strategies like the Jana Technique you can actually create positive interactions that will not only bless your life but the blame givers as well.

To give you further strength, you have created a personal inventory of yourself that will help you realize how truly strong and blessed you are, providing a backbone of emotional strength.

As you journey forward, may you ever have the peace that comes from knowledge, and an awareness of other people's needs that impact you. May those impacts be positive and growing for you and everyone with whom you associate.

Best of luck, and God bless you!

And be sure to share your story with me by going to my website, LintonMinute.com.



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