1975

Self-Defeating Characters

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SELF-DEFEATING CHARACTERS

by Milton R. Cudney Ph.D.
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SELF-DEFEATING CHARACTERS

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FOREWORD

For some time I have been aware of a need to have additional ways of helping people open up to see what they do to defeat themselves. The need is to help people see, and honestly face, what they do to bring about defeating results in their lives. When people can see what they do to defeat themselves, they are in a better position to make non-defeating choices. The various characters in this book have been created by me to serve as vehicles to fulfill this need. The characters themselves do not represent real individual people, but the information contained in the characters is accurate information concerning how people bring about such things as depressions, worry, alienation, impotency, failure, and the like.

Although this book is an entity in and of itself, the best utilization of it is as a supplement to my previous book entitled ELIMINATING SELF-DEFEATING BEHAVIORS.¹ That book is a basic text in the area of self-defeating behaviors, and this book can serve to give examples of how people implement defeating behaviors. I see this present book being used by individuals to help themselves, but I also believe helping professionals such as counselors, teachers, social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, and others can use this book to help open their clients' eyes to seeing more clearly what they do to defeat themselves.

Personally I have had a great deal of enjoyment in creating these various characters. I hope my enjoyment comes through so that the reader can not only learn some valuable things about defeating behaviors, but can enjoy involvement with the book as well.

Milton R. Cudney, Ph.D.
April 10, 1975

¹ The book ELIMINATING SELF-DEFEATING BEHAVIORS is available from the publisher of this present book.
INTRODUCTION

To derive the most benefit from the self-defeating characters in this book, the reader should have some elementary knowledge about self-defeating behavior patterns. Initially it needs to be understood that self-defeating behavior patterns are learned from interaction with the defeating parts of the culture. However, once defeating patterns are learned, people must take over the task of putting the behaviors into operation in new moments of living or the behaviors do not continue. To keep defeating behaviors for an extended period of time requires time, energy, and skill on the part of the people using them.

All self-defeating behavior patterns have certain fundamental characteristics to them. These fundamentals are always a part of the behaviors irregardless of which defeating behavior patterns are used. It can help you as a reader to understand the fundamental ingredients of self-defeating behaviors if the behaviors are thought of as assembly lines which are designed to bring about defeating results. For instance, sexual impotency as a self-defeating behavior is designed to interfere with successful sexual experiences. Procrastination is programmed in such a way that the person does not do his/her best in the endeavor in which the procrastination interferes. Inferiority is designed to bring about inferior results. Alienation is tooled up to interfere with warm, close, and loving human relationships. Perfectionism as a self-defeating behavior is designed in such a way that the person does less than what one is capable of accomplishing.

Let's take a look at these fundamental parts of self-defeating behaviors in order to understand them better.

Choices

To keep putting defeating behavior patterns into operation in new moments requires many choices. The defeating choices include going inside oneself and grabbing defeating materials
(ideas, attitudes, feelings, experiences) which have been learned from past interactions with the culture and following these out as one interacts with one's world. Choices need to be made to keep generating energy which is required to sustain all of the defeating effort. Choices must also be made to use techniques to implement the defeating patterns, and choices must be made to use the defeating results of the behaviors against oneself instead of letting the defeating results work for one.

Openness and Closure

To use SDB patterns requires that one open up to defeating materials one has learned from the past, and open up to defeating parts of the culture. In opening up to inner and outer defeating materials requires the closing off to inner and outer life parts. This opening up to defeating materials and the closing off to life parts is accomplished through the use of unrealistic fears. Unrealistic fears are the keys used to open the defeating door and close the life door. Some common fears which are used to hang onto self-defeating behaviors include the fears of: rejection, the unknown, being hurt, being lost, being alone, finding a terrible person underneath the defeating behaviors, and losing control. In the actual implementing of a behavior pattern what happens is that the person scares himself/herself about what would happen if the defeating behaviors were not used. Once the fears are cast out ahead of oneself, a great deal of energy is generated and is used to do all of the things required to keep the SDB pattern assembly line alive and functioning.

Techniques

Each time a defeating choice is made as part of the way defeating behaviors are implemented, there must be a way to carry out the intent of the choice. Techniques serve this function. Techniques are the things done to implement defeating choices.

As an example, there are techniques to block off the life parts of oneself with fears. Some common techniques used to implement fears are: to project ahead and assume what will happen, read wrong intentions into another's motives, and to keep going over old fearful experiences in one's mind in order to keep them alive.

Aside from the techniques used to implement fears, there are techniques used to put defeating materials into operation. Common
techniques in this area include comparing oneself to others in order to do inferiority, distorting the truth as a way of keeping old ill-fitting ideas and feelings, and imposing rules on oneself to keep behaviors like perfectionism. The technique of magnifying things out of proportion is an excellent one to use for doing depressions and worry, and selective forgetting works well to do hostility, and lying to oneself works well to accomplish something like failure.

A very important set of techniques which are used to accomplish self-defeating behaviors are the techniques used to disown the responsibility for everything the person does to keep implementing the patterns. In other words, a person makes defeating choices, closes off the life giving behaviors and opens the way for using defeating behaviors, uses techniques to implement the defeating choices, uses the defeating results against him/herself instead of using them as motivation to stop the behaviors, and then disowns the responsibility for these defeating efforts. There are many disowning techniques that people use, but most of them boil down to blaming something or somebody else for what one does in the "now" moments to defeat him/herself. People even go so far as to incorporate into their speaking patterns many disowning statements and these are used to keep one from facing oneself.

The last set of techniques used are those which, in effect, take the results of defeating behaviors and try to make them seem less severe than they really are. I call these "minimizing the results" techniques. These minimizing techniques do not actually take away the defeating results, but they help to convince the person that the results of the behaviors are not severe enough to warrant getting rid of them.

Results

All defeating behavior patterns bring about defeating results. These results include physical problems such as impaired breathing, digestive difficulties, headaches, and bowel complications, but they also include psychological results such as being unhappy, feeling trapped, wanting to give up, and the like. In addition, there are defeating results which others experience. Lastly, there are many life giving things missed as defeating patterns are used.

The results of defeating patterns are built into human systems to help them detect the defeating choices being made and to give people a direction towards what to do to correct the mistakes. In
order to stop defeating behaviors, one needs to open up to the results and let them hurt badly enough so that the person is motivated to change. To keep doing the behaviors the person must find ways to make the results seem less severe than they really are. Through minimizing the defeating results the person can deceive him/herself in such a way that the defeating behavior doesn't seem so bad.

The diagram below can help the reader see the SDB assembly line and the various parts of defeating behaviors.

As you read about the self-defeating characters, watch for their use of fears, how they open themselves to trusting defeating materials, the defeating choices they make, the techniques used to implement the choices, and look for how they minimize the defeating results. By carefully studying the characters in this book, you should be able to have a good grasp of how all self-defeating behavior patterns are implemented.
DEPRESSED DARLENE

(It would be smarter to say "I did a depression" rather than to use the popular phrase "I had a depression")
Setting: The setting is a talk show, and the talk show master of ceremonies is interviewing Darlene who has been chosen "Depressor of the Year." What needs to be realized is that before people can be on this particular talk show they must agree to take a "truth pill" one hour before air time, which forces them to tell the truth.

Interviewer: I would like to commend you for being chosen "Depressor of the Year" which is an honor of some sort I would guess.

Darlene: Well, I would think so. It does take a lot of training and practice to be able to do depressions as well as I do them.

Interviewer: Just how good are you at it?

Darlene: Well, so good that I can do it at the drop of a hat. I can take any little thing and do a depression with it. I can even take something someone says and turn that into a depression.

Interviewer: I can see that I better be careful. It would be just awful if you did one while we are on the air, although our audience might learn something seeing one in action. But, if you were doing a depression it would make it rather difficult to go on with the show.

Darlene: You can relax. When I have to be truthful I can't do depressions.

Interviewer: Are you telling me that to do a depression you need to lie to yourself?

Darlene: Don't look so shocked. Of course, I am saying that.

Interviewer: How do you manage to lie and get away with it?

Darlene: Oh, that is easy. Take, for instance, someone does something I don't like. I focus on that thing and magnify it out of proportion, but then I focus on what the other person did and not on my magnification. The lying comes easy once I am looking in the direction of what the other does, because then I don't really see what I am doing and I can convince myself with this method I am not doing anything. But, there is always a gnawing truth inside which tells me I am lying. But, I don't listen to it.

Interviewer: Well, one way to do depressions is to look in the wrong place for what is happening?

Darlene: It works for me.
Interviewer: What else do you do?

Darlene: Today is a nice day. How could I do it on a nice day when other people seem to be pretty happy? I would wait until something didn't go just the way I thought it should, then I would dwell on that one thing and forget the rest of the day. I can get quite upset over something like that. Or, if nothing bad happened I could imagine something did happen, or I could think back to something which actually happened in the past and I could dwell on it. Or, I might go over past hurts to keep them raw. Then, if at a moment's notice I wanted to do a depression, I would have these techniques available.

Interviewer: I knew a person once who used a comparing technique. Do you? And if so, how does it work?

Darlene: Yes, I use it and it works just fine. What I do is to compare myself to other people or to what I think I should be. I never measure up and then I have a way to be unhappy. This is probably my number one way of doing a depression. Now I don't only compare myself to someone else or to some "should." I compare things outside of me in order to get upset about them. I compare things like the weather, my boss, other people, my job, etc., and I do it in such a way that I can do a depression.

Interviewer: Isn't it hard to do a depression when other people around you are feeling especially good?

Darlene: No, not at all. What I do is to spoil their moods. I figure if I am feeling bad why shouldn't others. The other day a guy in our office told this story about two guys from a fraternity who streaked for one block at the downtown Kalamazoo Mall at midnight. One car let the guys out, while another waited on the other end. Just as the two guys got close to the car it took off. There they stood. They looked around and didn't see anyone which was lucky for them, but they didn't know what to do. They spotted a mailbox and ducked behind it, waiting for the car they knew would eventually return to rescue them. In a few minutes this older couple came by, and as they walked by the mailbox they noticed these two naked guys crouched behind this mailbox. One of the guys even covered his eyes—like a little kid—hoping the couple wouldn't see them. Anyway, it was funny, especially the way it was told.

I had been doing a depression while this story was going on but this story tickled my ribs. The way I continued the depression
was by quickly making a decision to pick out a couple of things about the story teller which I didn’t like and to focus on them.

_Interviewer_: You mentioned magnifying things out of proportion. What are some other things you magnify?

_Darlene_: Take a real tiredness and build that up bigger, or something like my mother being ill, or my period, or real money problems. These can all be used.

_Interviewer_: Don’t these things interfere with your life as well as the lives of others?

_Darlene_: Often I don’t like to admit that doing depressions brings a lot of difficulties. If I fully admitted what these behaviors cost me it would be hard to keep doing them. I miss out on a lot of fun. I make a negative impact on the lives of others. Gastronomical problems I have hurt me. I have lots of headaches and I have even, of late, been having difficulty with drugs and alcohol. See, I get down on myself and others and then I get into drugs and alcohol to try and cope with being down.

_Interviewer_: O.K. Now, while you are doing all these techniques, making these defeating choices, and paying these prices for doing depressions, what about your true self that you are leaving behind and abandoning?

_Darlene_: The truth makes it obvious that I often abandon my own truth. It is obvious too that I don’t follow my humor—that incident about the streaking story points that out. I often would like to try new things, but while doing depressions that is difficult to do. Those are some things I abandon.

_Interviewer_: I would think those prices and denying real parts of yourself would get you to want to change. Did you ever try to get help so you could stop what you are doing in terms of depressions?

_Darlene_: Yes, but I didn’t let it work. See, you can use your SDBs in such a way to interfere with help. I got depressed about getting help.

_Interviewer_: How’d you do it?

_Darlene_: I waited for things this psychiatrist said that I could either get upset about or twist to get upset about, and I chose to get upset. Then I used this upsetness with him to close myself off to change.

_Interviewer_: Why would you do that?

_Darlene_: Because I kept scaring myself about changing. I kept scaring myself that I’d be worse off without the depressions, and
used the fear that I'd not be much of a person behind the SDBs, etc.

Interviewer: Didn't you also have to disown by blaming him for upsetting you?

Darlene: You are a pretty clever interviewer. I did blame him. And I am glad you brought that up because if anyone in the listening audience wants to do depressions, they should know disowning is a requirement.

Interviewer: What are your disowning skills you can share with us?

Darlene: I complain a lot and in my complaining I am seeing the problem "out there" or in other words what I am complaining about. Then I don't look at what I do. I also blame the past, especially my mother... pause... but, you know... pause... it is her fault as to why I am depressed. She used that behavior and that is why I have it today.

Interviewer: Stop right there! All of a sudden you have stopped telling the truth, and we don't allow that on this show.

Darlene: Something is different. I think the pill is wearing off.

Interviewer: Being on a live show this is a problem. We can give you a shot which works real fast, but it has to be given in the buttocks for it to work the fastest. The other option is that you can just decide to tell the truth all on your own.

Darlene: I will try to tell the truth just on my own. I can do that. In fact, it has been sort of fun telling the truth.

Interviewer: O.K., back to disowning.

Darlene: I did mostly learn depressions from my mother, but I admit I have taken over and today do them on my own. But, I blame her and then don't look at what I do now to pull them off. I also blame a lot of other people. While I am being honest I will share with you the trickiest way I disown. First I do SDBs and then a few seconds later I verbally admit I am the one doing it. Then I do it again and admit it again. But, I own it too late, and that is by design.

Interviewer: Do you mean to say that you claim you own it just a little too late so that it looks like owning?

Darlene: Yes!

Interviewer: Boy, that is tricky.

Darlene: Yes, it is. It even tricks me. I learned this disowning from professional helpers. They know all about being responsible so that if they are afraid to let go of their SDBs, then they need to find a way to do the SDBs and look responsible. See, this one
person I know would be doing an SDB and say, “I know I’m doing it and I’m responsible for it,” and this allowed him to go right on doing it. I figured what’s good enough for them is good enough for me. Plus it works.

*Interviewer:* Let’s look more at the fears you use to keep SDBs.

*Darlene:* O.K. Most of the fears I use are connected to real things which happened in the past. What I do then is to come to a new moment and put these things ahead of me. I use (1) I will get hurt, (2) Rejected, (3) Ridiculed, etc., if I am just me. I am afraid. . . .

*Interviewer:* Let me interrupt. Don’t begin to slip and lie. Don’t you mean instead of “I am afraid” that “I use” the fear of. . . .

*Darlene:* O.K. I use the fears I will be worse off if I don’t use my SDBs, that life will be hard to handle, etc. I even make up fears of the unknown and the future.

*Interviewer:* A thought just crossed my mind. Is it not true that you think you are avoiding hurt, rejection, ridicule, life being bad, and so on, by using your SDBs, but really you bring all of these things about?

*Darlene:* I never realized that fact before. You know it is really wonderful to be truthful—mostly to myself. I am going to choose to do that more often. I can see that the things I think I am avoiding I am really creating now.

No offense to you, Mr. Interviewer, but next year when this award comes up I’ll not be here. I am going to quit being so rough on myself.

*Interviewer:* Thanks for the interview, especially for telling the truth after the pill wore off.

*Darlene:* Well, who would like to take a shot in the butt in front of all these people? I had to tell the truth, but I really found it was my pleasure. So, I thank you.
(It takes talent to procrastinate effectively)
SDB CHARACTER
"PROCRASTINATION PETE"

Over a year ago Dr. Cudney asked me if I'd write a paper on how I implement procrastination in my everyday life. It was a left-handed compliment to be asked, but the fact of the matter is that I am good at it and that is why he asked me I guess. I have been meaning to question him on why he asked me, but haven't been able to get around to it yet.

When he approached me to do the paper I immediately wanted to get at it, not just to help him out, but because I knew it would help me to stop procrastinating if I saw it clearly. Perhaps what I did to put this paper off is a good place to start communicating to others what I do.

Better check the hamster first to see if she is OK.

A week later. After checking the hamster, got caught up in doing so many things never did have a chance to get back to this. Well, try it again.

First I would like to state that when I practice procrastination I put things off that are important to me. However, in order to put them off I make myself believe they aren't on my priority list. One of the ways I accomplished this in regards to this paper was to forget I wanted to do the paper for myself, and make it seem like I was only doing it for Dr. Cudney. Once I had myself convinced I was doing it only for him, then I had a reason to resist. You can't just resist for the sake of resisting most of the time, you need to first create the reason to resist. That way it is easier to lie to yourself and lying to yourself is usually a prerequisite for doing an SDB. At various times during the year when I would think of the assignment (I had to think of it as an assignment, but in reality he merely asked me if I would do it and I said yes) an anger would well up inside because I felt pressure to do this thing. Rather than to admit to myself that I brought the pressure on myself because I chose to put the paper off, I blamed Cudney, in my mind, for the pressure and subsequent guilt I felt. I never have liked people who make you feel guilty. I'm getting to dislike Cudney more and more for what he is doing to me.

A month later.

Better re-read what I wrote before continuing. Pause. Sounds OK so far!
Practicing procrastination can get complicated. One day I saw Cudney walking down the street and because I hadn’t done the paper, I avoided him. Because I have become extremely skillful at procrastinating (it is a skill you know) ... speaking of skills I better get to my archery practice I have been putting off ... 

Three weeks later. Better re-read what I said first. Sounds OK. I really needed to get to archery, too bad I saw those guys playing football on the way to archery. If they hadn’t been there and asked me to play I wouldn’t have done it.

Now, let’s see, where was I? Oh yah. Skillful at procrastinating. To be skillful I have had to put a lot of energy and practice at developing my avoidance skills. You see, there are many things I should do that I haven’t and putting things off can get you into hot water with people. Hot water! That reminds me. Wonder if I left the tea kettle on the stove. Hum. Better forget it, if I go out to check it I may never get back to this. OK, where was I? When you get in hot water people get upset with you. A repertoire of avoiding skills comes in mighty handy now and then. I remember the avoiding method I used that day when I saw Dr. Cudney. First I spotted him coming up the street. How did I spot him? Well, when I walk along the street I have to be looking all around to spot these people I need to avoid. So, I put energy and time into looking around a lot. Once I spotted Cudney I ducked into a building (I never could figure out why this girl I was with hung up on me when I called her later), but almost bumped into another professor I owed a project to also. There were some people in the hall of this building I was in and I quickly picked up a conversation with a couple of the people. I have developed ways to start immediate conversations; it helps to rehearse these kinds of things for the day you need them. Boy was I glad at that moment that I had done my homework on that skill. I went out to find this girl I was with after the prof got by and I had an all clear, but that was just like a woman, she didn’t even wait for me.

Most of my friends who practice procrastination as a way of life get quite a bit of procrastination mileage out of pressure. I do myself. The way I do it is this. I will make choices (although at the time I make the choices I don’t see I’m making them) to put stuff off until the deadline gets close. Then instead of deciding just for myself to do the stuff, I let the pressure push me. By doing this I build up a fear that without the pressure I won’t get anything done. I have even gotten so good at procrastination that I see the
pressure as a friend of mine. I suppose you will want to see how I have made it a friend. Well, I'll tell you.

One month later.

Got to get back to this dumb thing Cudney wants. Forgot what I wrote before so better re-read it. Pause. Did I write that? Ye gads, must have been crazy to admit that much to myself, cause if I'm too honest I'll let go of the behavior and then where will I be? OK, so I scare myself about being without the behaviors. No one is perfect you know.

This paper will be a little choppy—not enough cohesion to it maybe—but don't blame me for it. With a month layoff on it, what can you expect?

Aw, screw it. I'm not in the mood.

Three months later.

I'm getting tired of this thing hanging over my head. Wish he would get off my back. Hell, I could just tell him to screw it; that I'm not gonna do it! Pause. But, there's this little voice inside which says I'd like to get rid of procrastination and seeing it clearly would help. So maybe I'll work at it. Maybe.

I think I am beginning to see that my procrastination brings on added work. For instance, each time I have taken this project up again, I have had to re-read it. That's time and energy wasted. Then, too, by putting things off I have always got stuff hanging over my head. It's a real price to pay. I have learned to live with that unclean feeling, I think mainly by thinking that's the way it has to be. I say, "That's just human nature." It is a little disowning method I use, but it works.

As long as I'm on the subject of results (I'm really flowing right along now and it feels good) of procrastination I'll mention that when I procrastinate I don't end up doing things as well as I'm capable of doing. It works like this. If I do a paper for a class and I receive an "A" in spite of the procrastinating, I convince myself that I have done my best and use the "A" as proof. When I am not lying to myself I can clearly see that getting an "A" is not necessarily proof that I've done my best. In my lifetime I have cut down on a lot of creativity by the above method. But, to do procrastinating you can't let the results of SDB's hurt, so you need to find ways to distract your mind from the hurt. See, hurt is like putting Iodine on an open sore, it hurts and gets you moving, but . . . what's that? A noise in the hall, better go see what it is . . .

A week later. Got to re-read what I wrote. Not bad. I can
see a lot of truth in what I've said. Now what can I add? Maybe I'll get through this yet.

Picking out a characteristic you don't like about a person who asks you to do something and then dwelling on it, works wonders in accomplishing procrastination. Keep in mind it takes more than choosing to procrastinate; methods must be used to carry choices out. Cudney calls them techniques. Dwelling is a technique I use. So is picking out a characteristic you don't like about a person a technique if you use it right. When Cudney asked me to do this paper I wondered if he might not be insinuating something negative about me. To procrastinate I kept focusing on his possible insinuation, got angry with him, and was sure as hell not going to do something for someone I was mad at.

In doing any SDB one must deny following that which he is and would naturally follow if in a given moment he didn't use the behaviors. As I've been watching myself use procrastination I see that I often don't listen to my own interests, my talents, and my priorities. I'm afraid maybe that my own personal stuff will get me into trouble, or it won't be quite good enough. The purpose of my procrastinating behavior is to avoid the fears I first cast out ahead of myself.

People who practice procrastination do pretty funny things sometimes. But, you need to keep from seeing the humor in it. I'll tell you why later. Honest! Before I can relate an incident which can be seen as humorous, I need to state that as I've practiced procrastination on big things, there is a carryover to little things too. One day I kept putting off urinating. I walked over a mile downtown with three quarters of a full bladder and, of course, I eventually found myself in trouble. I began to panic. What do you do downtown with a full bladder? The thought raced through my mind that "those damn stores always seem to hide their toilets or maybe they just hire people who can hold it all day." I was on the east side of the main street in my hometown and upon looking around spotted a gas station. There was a release of mind tension, if not bladder tension, as I calmly and sophisticatedly walked over to the station. As I got nearer and nearer to the station my bladder got the message that relief was on its way, which unfortunately made me to have to go all the more. As fate would have it (fate is always against me so it seems) the station was closed. At times like that, sophistication goes out the window. There I stood, bent half way over, my legs together, holding it back. I remember getting all
angry at the absent station owner for not being open. Then I re-
membered Veterans Park which was about 500 yards away, recall-
ing a public toilet on the west side of the park. I was a man with
a mission as I ran across the park, and the mission loomed so big
in my mind I failed to see a curb by a sidewalk I had to cross.
I was tumbling on the grass and that's all it took for me to wet
my pants.

By going through back alleys, across a railroad bridge span-
ing the river, and slinking along side streets, I managed to get
home without anyone I knew seeing me.

Until writing this I never saw any humor in the above inci-
dent, and by not seeing the humor in things I can see only one
side of something. This way of seeing helps to disown and keep
doing defeating things.

There's lots more I do to procrastinate, but you can't give
away all your secrets—cause maybe someone else will get better
at it than you. Oops, that tells another thing—I see being good at
something negative, as a virtue. Sort of like I'm the world's best
at procrastination and being the world's best at something, no mat-
ter what it is, isn't all that bad.

Got to run. Lots more I could say, like I said before, but I
don't have enough time to. . . .
RECIPE FOR MALE IMPOTENCY

(If you want to learn about impotency, the book which needs to be read is your inner book of what you do to bring impotency about)
SDB CHARACTER

"RECIPE FOR MALE IMPOTENCY"

Please realize that this is not a rigid recipe which needs to be followed to the letter of the law. There are many ways to do impotency, so if you should choose to do something like this, don't box yourself in. Take some suggestions from this recipe of mine. add to it, listen to others who often are willing to give you assistance, and cook up impotency in your own unique way.

There are many ingredients which are necessary for impotency to occur because it is seldom a natural condition of man. Thus, one of the best ways to do impotency is to take a real sexual failure experience which has a real cause such as—your being tired when you tried, the timing of the sexual experience was wrong, you had too many other things on your mind, you were forcing sexual overtures when it didn’t fit for you, you were inexperienced, you had too much to drink, you tried having sex with someone who maintained a lot of problems of her own and you got burned a few times because of this—and rather than take it as a one-incident mistake or failure and seeing it for what it was, begin to build it up layer upon layer in your mind. It helps if you will hold your performance up to other guys or to some imagined standard so that you do not measure up, then begin doubting yourself. In addition, if you will throw in a pinch of labeling it helps give it a better impotent flavor. Label yourself, based on one or a few incidents, as impotent and with that label on yourself you can more easily find impotency on the shelf of your mind when you are looking to use it.

Another suggestion to do impotency is to drain these real experiences for all they are worth. Take these real failures, mix them all up so they don’t resemble their real nature, and make them look like the following:

"My body is aging early"
"There’s something basically wrong with me"
"Maybe I am a latent homosexual"

These will put the heat on yourself and put you under pressure.

It really helps to pour a few fears into the mix, because these fears can provide the energy and reason to keep doing what is necessary to continue impotency in new moments. With fears boiling high, you can try harder to do well sexually, which will only add to the problem because you’ll be caught in a bind. You will be
caught between fears and trying hard, and it won’t work very well. My suggestion then is to stew over this situation, building it up bigger and bigger in your mind. You can even pepper yourself with derogatory remarks about why you are such a bad guy.

Another fear ingredient you can use is that if I failed in one situation and I keep naturally developing and going into the unknown, I am going to be a continual flop. Thus, I reason, impotence will keep me from trying new things and ward off these possible future failures which I predict.

A technique which takes the cake in doing impotence is to imagine a girl you’re with as a queen, and then when involved with her wilt in front of all this royalty. It helps also to throw a dash of disowning in here, and blame her for the problem. Do this by imagining her to be comparing you to other guys, or to see her as putting expectations on you which do not fit.

To go from the frying pan to the fire is to go to the library and get some books on impotence and to try and get help this way. The book which needs to be read is your inner book of what you are doing to bring impotence about, but don’t go to that source even though it is available. Part of the recipe for doing impotence is to be looking in the wrong place for what creates it and what keeps it stirred up.

A quote from an impotence recipe expert is helpful here: “Now, lest you think my impotence is confined to the sexual area, let me straighten you out on that. People who practice impotence in one area of their lives almost always do it in other areas too. As an example, in staff meetings at my job I keep the lid on my ideas, screw up my real feelings, and when someone confronts me, I often fold there too.”

Many people find it helpful, in doing impotence, to restrict their life’s experiences in areas other than sex. This provides a way to get the importance of sex out of proportion and helps make it an obsession. Keep in mind obsessions don’t just occur by chance, they need to be worked at. Choosing to limit one’s interests and activities serves very nicely as a way to do an obsession.

Another person said, “Once I began doing sexual impotency a method which helped me keep it going was to try and force sex. I’d go out on a date and instead of being straightforward and enjoying whatever we were doing—a ball game, the dance, talking, and so on—I would focus on sexual plans and begin to implement the plans in my head. Of course, plans like this never fit the on-
goingness of a relationship because I don’t listen to my reality timer, and these plans get in the way. Plans of this kind are like a thick crust surrounding what’s simmering underneath, and it’s difficult to make love with lots of crust in the way.”

Something which can interfere with love-making is illustrated by another quote: “I tried forcing love-making when I really was not hot. It’s like trying to bake bread with the oven off. It leaves things cold. In my case nothing would rise, yeast of all me.”

Some people have found it helpful to design real or imagined challenges, and to do it in such a way they can’t succeed in meeting the challenges. The failures are bad enough, but to add salt to the wound, use the failures against yourself. An example of this can be the guy who had a knock-down-drag-out fight with his wife. He was very angry with her and she with him. However, before they got over their anger, they tried to get things straight between them. Of course it didn’t work and this guy used this to question himself and start doing impotency.

One person I knew would only date a fox* and in this way was able to make appearance and clothes too important. This can be used to keep the relationship from having good warm parts to it, which of course are necessary for good sexual relationships. There were a lot of plain dishes that could have been dated, which could have led to fun and confidence, but these people were seen as garbage and then ignored.

Another helpful ingredient is to be with one girl, but then to put your attention onto another one in your mind. This is especially helpful while trying to have sexual intercourse because it will enable you to do various things. Among other things it will help you to:

1. Be insensitive to the person you are with and insensitive to yourself.
2. Set up obstacles that are not in the real situation.
3. Get yourself feeling inadequate if you put someone in your mind that you see as way out of your class.

One time a person who practiced impotency said this: “I was trying to make out with this one woman and I visualized her as a nun. The image I held in my mind was that I was going to try and screw this nun. All of a sudden I imagined the sky opening up and

* A latest term for a real nice tomato.
an angry God pointing his finger at me. I will tell you, that took care of any love-making advances on my part. I have heard that nurses are trained to hit an erect penis on the end in a certain way to make it go limp. I will tell you one better. Have God get after you. That will make you limp for a month and even after that you'll have some trepidation about sex.”

One can try a recipe of love-making and leave ingredients out which need to be there. Or, sometimes you can put too many ingredients in such as fear of pregnancy, fear of being caught, fear of God, and so on. Then when it does not work, think maybe you are a little fruity. Or, take the experience and put it on the back burner of your mind so it can be used against yourself later.

As you know most meals have leftovers. There are leftovers to experiences too, and if they have been bad, keep feeding on them. Chew them over and over in your mind, trying to digest something which is nondigestible to begin with.

To quote a person who is good at impotency, “To the extent I have done impotency and other SDBs, life has not tasted good. I have been stuffing myself so full of bad psychological food that I can’t control the use of my sexual being. The frosting on the cake, however, is that in interfering with one part of myself I get in the way of other parts too. My mind has gone sour and like my stove, I am running out of gas. But, to continue to do impotency I must blame a lot of things instead of fully admitting that it is my use of the ingredients and my method of cooking which is the cause of impotency. I even use a smorgasbord technique where I confuse myself with choices, and then believe I can’t do anything about it.”

Well, that’s my recipe. I hope you benefit from it. If you have some good recipes of your own on how to do depressions, inferiority, worry, ineffective living, and the like, please share them with me as I have done with you, if that be your pleasure.
(Alienation is like a skill. You need to practice it in order to be good at it)
Dear Aunt Alice,

I have been thinking a lot since you wrote me last. Mainly I have been thinking about your question. How do I do alienation? That is really an intriguing question, and a better one to ask than the questions this person asks that I am seeing for help. In this letter I am going to devote the entire thing to trying to honestly answer the question you asked.

First of all I have come to realize that you are right in asking the question concerning how I do alienation. I have concluded that I am the one who keeps bringing it about. I guess I do it because of fears of what would happen and what I would find out about myself if I didn’t do it. I keep using the fear that if I stopped doing alienation I wouldn’t make a difference to anyone. Beyond that I am afraid that if I didn’t make a difference I couldn’t cope with that in a good way. I keep using the fear that without alienation I would be too weak to cope with the results.

As you know my parents have always been professional people. In addition, we have always lived in a professional neighborhood. My parents are good people, but I have figured out that I really made no impact on them as I was growing up. It was like they had their minds all made up ahead of time on how life was going to be for them and for me, and what I was feeling and thinking and struggling with didn’t make any difference. They were on a path, and it seemed to me that my grunts and groans were ignored, by-passed, or trampled.

Out of that backdrop I went to school and it seemed to me to be more of the same. I swear that the structural design of most of the schools and classrooms I went to were set up without people in mind. They didn’t fit children very well nor did they fit the adults. I can remember overhearing one teacher tell another, “It’s like a
rat race and hardly enough time to even go to the toilet during the
day.” I wondered then, and I wonder now, what kind of an organi-
ization is it that people can’t take time and relax and tend to a
bodily function?

Another time I overheard one teacher telling another teacher,
“This would be a good job if there weren’t any kids.” I know it was
a joke, but I believe there was another message between the lines.

The point I am trying to make is that in the early days of
living—in my home and school—I could not have been there and
it wouldn’t have made any difference. Through no fault of my own,
I made no impact. I felt alienated right from the start.

In thinking this through I have come to realize that something
like alienation has to have a start through some bad experiences—
like social systems not fitting human beings—but somewhere along
the line a person needs to take over the behaviors that got started
in the home and school. I have gradually made the transition from
when it was done to me to where I now do it to myself. I can begin
to see that I am probably as good at doing alienation as anyone
I know.

I have wanted to connect to people and things for a long time,
but I am afraid to go ahead and follow those desires. I know they
are real desires. It is like I am afraid to take the chance and let
the behaviors go. There is a voice inside saying, “You’ll get hurt again,
only this time the hurt will be so bad you won’t be able to tol-
erate it.”

That’s not the only fear as to why I keep doing alienation.
Another fear I use (I am beginning to see I use fears and not that
I have them) is that if I bring my deepest self out on outside trips, I
may not like what I discover about myself. No! It is stronger than
that. I really mistrust who I am in my deepest parts. It’s really
funny, though, because as I have withdrawn into myself I always
thought I knew my innermost self. But, now I see that I don’t know
myself. In withdrawing I stayed inside myself, that is true. But, I
kept myself walking around inside the inner defeating data, and
wouldn’t let myself get inside of the deeper me. If I don’t let life
components out on outer trips where others can see me, then I
can’t let myself know them on inner trips with myself either.

Somewhere along the line I made a choice to never let anyone
really know what I was thinking and feeling. In new moments of
living I just keep making the same choice over and over. My best
way of implementing this choice is by talking in a pseudo intel-
lectual way, arguing, and making sure the topic stays "out there" away from me. I am tricky because I will talk "about" my feelings, but it is always a reference to them. I never come right out through them in any honest natural straightforward way. I admit this making reference to feelings is tricky, but in the area of feelings you need to be tricky to do alienation in order to avoid the fears one casts out ahead.

Another thing I do is this. I will talk around feelings and as I do that things build up inside of me because I interfered with my natural flow. This way I get negative feelings generated way out of proportion. Not only that, this way of doing it interferes with the natural and correct timing of a feeling. This incorrect timing and giving it stronger than it really was if it was just followed naturally, will throw people off. What I do then is to use the consequences as proof that I can't show feelings, because I look at the negative things which happened. It is all a big lie, but then I have proof for myself that the way I am meeting life—with alienation—is required because the outer world won't allow it any other way.

Incidentally, in thinking about answering your question I realized there is a truth I have not listened to very much before and that is that I know the outer world would allow me to drop alienation behaviors. I have seen other people in the same situation I am in and they don't use alienation, and life treats them better than it treats me. I have denied that truth until now.

Oh, I am reminded of another thing I do. I surround myself with people who do the same thing I do. With this method we convince each other that alienation is the only way, and almost believe it. We reinforce each other's alienation behaviors and beliefs. With friends like this who needs enemies? We even have an informal club. We sit around the student union and do alienation, helping each other to do our thing. I have learned a lot from these people on how to do alienation and to blame others for it. I have helped quite a few of them do alienation too.

Answering your question is not easy. To do an honest job of it I have had to watch myself very closely these past few weeks. What I saw myself doing was to practice inattentiveness to people. This way I can set myself off from them. I do this by making conversation and when the other person is talking I keep my mind on what I am going to say so that what they say doesn't register. By not letting them register, I never have to connect.

I am beginning to see that this is dumb. I end up being lonely.
I don't think I have ever let myself know how really lonely I am. Maybe because I have never felt what it is like not to be lonely. I think I have adjusted my life around being lonely, and almost think that is the way it must be. I am also bored a lot, and life has a bad taste to it. But, I handle that OK. I twist it around in my mind to make it seem like everyone's life is like that too.

Blowing things up bigger than they are is something else I caught myself doing. For instance, I will take the amount of school work I need to do, or the world situation, or what someone says, and blow that up to immobilize myself with it. Once I have it blown way up I am unable to do anything about it and being unable to move I can't do fun things and get involved.

I am sure there is more, but I feel like I have looked enough for the moment. I thank you for asking the question and getting me to think. I also appreciate this correspondence we have. It is one of the few areas in my life where I don't practice alienation.

Sincerely,

Your nephew Al
SELF-DEFEATING CHARACTER
LAZY LEROY

(Contrary to popular belief, most laziness is an active and not a passive process)
The setting: Lazy LeRoy is receiving the lazy award of the year on behalf of lazy people everywhere. The following is LeRoy's acceptance speech.

Speech

At first I didn't see how I could get myself to come here and accept this award. When the committee called me I asked if the award couldn't be mailed. They said no. This was a disappointment. Then I developed a plan. It took some doing, but I came up with one. I thought I might attend this gathering if I could get someone from the committee to pick me up, deliver me here, and take me back home. It took some conniving to manage to get it going my way, but after two weeks I pulled it off.

Before I go any further I would like to clear up a misconception about laziness. That is the myth that being lazy doesn't take energy and effort. If you want to be good at doing laziness you have to work hard at it. People look down on a lazy person, but there is as much talent and ingenuity going into that as being successful in teaching, doctoring, or digging ditches. Laziness is an active, not a passive pursuit. For instance, some of the skills I have developed to do laziness I have been practicing for a long time. It makes me tired just thinking about the energy I have used in this way.

To do laziness you have to always be alert to situations so you can get out of doing anything if it comes up. See, I have this radar, like a sixth sense, and you might think I'm not active, but I am scanning and surveying all of the time. My outer behavior of laziness is a cover which blankets all the work I'm doing inside.

I would like to tell you that when I was in the army I should have gotten a purple heart because I got hurt getting out of work. I had to run over 400 yards to get out of taking the garbage 20 feet and I tripped and cut my leg.

I would like you people to know that it is not easy carrying the fat around which accumulates because I do laziness. And, it is not easy learning how to handle snide remarks people give because I practice laziness. It's not easy! I have had to learn ways to twist what they say and throw it back on them and I have had to learn
to handle the hostility this twisting behavior brings. In addition, I spend more hours practicing shrugging things off and laughing as though snide remarks don't hurt, than Henry Aaron has hitting home runs. He puts his energy into home runs, I put mine into laziness. You know, different strokes for different folks. I have even become so adept at pretending I am asleep, sometimes I even fool myself. You know they give Oscars out to movie people, but there's more talent going into SDBs by common people like me, than there is in the movies. I am glad this dinner recognizes this fact.

Another thing one has to be good at to do laziness is manipulating. It's not always easy to get people to do things for you. It makes me mad. People don't seem to understand. They want you to pull your own load, but how can you do that when your time is taken up manipulating?

Lazy people are discriminated against—of that I am convinced. Perhaps we are the most discriminated against people in the whole country. I am really upset about this discrimination, but I am working hard not to do anything about it. What I am upset about is that a lot of places like schools help you to learn laziness by taking your initiative away through boring experiences, but no one gets it right out in the open in the curriculum. You never see Gold Bricking I and II listed or a unit on the ten best ways to manipulate to get out of work. Learning how to be lazy is never listed, although it is a part of a lot of classes.

It gets me upset. You either get laziness disguised as something else—like Sunday School Class or English and History, or you have to pick it up on your own. I figure we ought to have our own class in school, where the passing grade would be failing. That way it would come easy. Now I have to work for E's. Do you know how hard I work at not listening? Do you know how much effort I put into being distracted so I can miss things and fail? Do you appreciate the talent which goes into misinterpreting directions? Or, how about leaving your pencil in the wrong place, losing notes, and so on?

If you aren't good at laziness you couldn't appreciate the work which goes into an internal battle of shutting off following things you really want to do. But, I manage. There are talents I have I would like to develop. There are interests I would like to pursue. Mother nature calls me to participate with her more, and people always give invitations to get involved with them. So far I have managed to keep blocking these things and keep practicing laziness.
As you can see it is a constant battle, but so far I have won out. I have been doing laziness now for some time and this award is my first. No telling how far I will go and what I will accomplish in the future if I keep "working" at laziness, and if I can continue to delude myself that "That's just the way I am" rather than "I do laziness."
(Starving of the psychic self often leads to overfeeding of the physical self)
Setting: Fatty Fatty Two by Four has come in to have an interview with a counselor. The following is the taped recording of what transpired.

Counselor: It is nice meeting you. Are you the famous Fatty Fatty Two by Four that got skinny with the butcher's knife that we all heard about as kids?

Fatty: No, I can get through the kitchen door. In fact, that is part of my problem.

Counselor: Let me stop you here. Do you know what disowning is?

Fatty: I'm not sure.

Counselor: Owning is laying full claim to what you do to maintain SDBs. Disowning is finding ways to put the responsibility some place else. See, you disown by thinking you have this problem, instead of seeing it as something you do. So, how do you do fatness?

Fatty: Oh, that is easy. I overeat. Gees you're dumb.

Counselor: No, it's not that easy. How do you overeat when the fat gets in the way? How do you overeat when your heart sends you signals something is wrong? How do you overeat when your husband's interest in you wanes? How do you overeat when you look in the mirror and dislike what you see? How do you overeat when you lose money 'cause your clothes don't fit? How do you overeat when your doctor and friends and relatives tell you (in one way or another) to please stop? How do you overeat when you know yourself that it is extremely hurtful? No, it's not that simple. There is more to overweight than overeating. I can see that you lie to yourself and it's probably one way you do fatness. I am going to have to give you a truth pill which I have in my desk drawer for just such occasions. If you don't tell the truth, we won't get anywhere. I hate to put anything in your mouth, but I see no other alternative.

Fatty: Boy, that pill works fast.

Counselor: Yes, it is special made. It costs a lot to buy these pills, but it is worth it. It costs more to keep lying and doing SDBs.

Fatty: I can begin to see that.
Counselor: O.K., tell me some of the negative results which happen because you practice overweight.

Fatty: I can tell you that there are some terrible results in manufacturing fat. It is hard to breathe, it is even scary at times. Sometimes I literally hate myself for doing this to myself. But, I usually manage to put the responsibility for overeating onto something else. In terms of results I should say it interferes with my sex life. First, I am not that appealing and I perspire a lot, and that stinks. I wouldn’t admit that even to myself without the truth pill. I use a lot of deodorant before going out on a date, or being close to my husband, but that seldom works too well. I heard a joke one time that I laughed about, but it is really too truthful to laugh about. The joke goes like this: “What did the fat lady say to the fat man?” Do you know?

Counselor: No.

Fatty: The answer is, “thanks for the tip.” Well, I joke about it, but fat gets in the way.

Counselor: Well, if the results are so bad, how do you manage to keep making the choices which insure you will defeat yourself, maintain the fat, and keep from having good sexual experiences?

Fatty: I do what I call minimize the results. I mentioned joking and this is one way. Lying is another. Another thing I do is to think that my husband loves me even if I am fat. I also compare my life to others and I look good and then I don’t hurt enough to change. I even see my SDBs as beneficial. I see fat as helping me be jolly and I think it’s unhealthy to be too skinny, and so on.

Counselor: I have a hunch you do something which goes along with seeing things as beneficial.

Fatty: What’s that?

Counselor: Seeing the results as a burden—like fate—and then seeing yourself as virtuous for putting up with such a load of burdensome things. You even see God, perhaps, as rewarding you for putting up with so much. Does that fit you?

Fatty: Yes, I do that.

Counselor: What you need to be more honest about is that if you didn’t create the results, you wouldn’t have to live with them.

Fatty: I can see that.

Counselor: I can see some of the results and some of how
you minimize the results in your mind so you can keep the behaviors. What are some of your techniques?

_Fatty_: Well, one of the first things is to work at being unhappy. Get depressed a lot, then use food as a way to cope with the results of being depressed.

_Counselor_: Do you mean to say that you use eating as a way to try and minimize the results of being unhappy and depressed?

_Fatty_: It looks that way. But, back to the depression. It would take too long to go into how I do depressions, but I have a cycle going. First, I get depressed, then I eat, and that makes me more depressed, then I eat, and that gets me down, and then I eat. It's a real cycle which feeds on itself. Pardon the pun.

Another thing I have had to do to keep my fat is to learn to hate diet pop. I won't drink the stuff. Have you ever noticed that fat people dislike diet pop more than skinny people? That is because they use sugar pop to keep the weight.

_Counselor_: How did you learn to hate diet pop?

_Fatty_: One way I learned to hate it was to listen to what a lot of people said about it when it first came out. I have fixed on what they said, which was negative, and use that to hate the stuff. I realize with the truth pill that a lot of them have shifted over to diet pop, but I have fixed on hating it. I have even developed a reputation as hating diet pop, so other people now fall in line with the reputation and that helps, too.

_Counselor_: I have learned that a person can do an SDB just so long before he or she wants to change. Have you ever tried changing?

_Fatty_: Oh, sure, but I got in the way of it.

_Counselor_: How'd you do that?

_Fatty_: My most clever way to do this is to use my SDBs to get in the way of change. I know this sounds confusing, but it works. See, in dieting I impose rules and regulations on myself so that I can't live with them. Then it doesn't work. I do that with emotional things, too. In trying to change I make the change a bunch of restrictive rules, impose them on myself, and in a few weeks I am tired of them and throw them out. I rationalize then that I have tried and it didn't work, so there is no sense in trying anymore.

_Counselor_: I can see how that would work.

_Fatty_: Another method is to see the overweight as only that.
In truth, it's part of a whole defeating web. I stay out on the skirmish area and don't get at the heart of the issue. I need to decide to let go of the whole web, and once I do, overeating will not be that difficult. Then, when I am hungry for just a little piece of pie, I can stop there and not need to devour the whole thing.

_Counselor_: I can see you are good at doing fatness. What else do you do?

_Fatty_: It helps if you can become an expert on dieting. I know all about diets and calories. I can quote Dr. Atkins, Dr. Stillman, low carbohydrate diet, grapefruit and egg diets, drinking man's diet, Air Force and Canadian Army diets, all by heart. How this works is that it helps me to lie to myself that I am doing something about my weight. It is like a smokescreen. It allows me to talk a good game without having to do anything about it. In reality, and this I have kept from everyone, dieting like I do it is designed to help me keep my fat.

_Counselor_: Lay that on me again.

_Fatty_: I know it sounds contradictory. Haven't you ever noticed that fat people diet more than skinny people, and yet stay fat? Dieting helps to stay fat if you do it right. Don't look so confused because I will explain to you how it works.

A favorite technique is not to eat lunch, or to eat a half a grapefruit and this helps me deceive myself. But, the fat gives me away and makes it obvious that the rest of the day, especially at night, I snack and snack and snack. But, in my mind I keep remembering the noon meal, and that way I can lie to myself about the snacking. I think, I must be dieting, look at lunch.

Another thing I do is this. I start making progress, say I lose 15 pounds, but I look for or take the opportunity to get back in the fat swing of things. Parties, holidays, business luncheons, weddings, special events, and so on, provide the incident to kick me back into the SDB orbit. And, I blame these situations or the people connected with them.

_Counselor_: I can see by all the fat you carry around that dieting is really effective in keeping fat.

_Fatty_: A surefire way to do it is to get heavy a little at a time. Add five pounds and adjust to it, add five more and adjust to it, and so on. You can adjust by resigning to it that you are getting older, a little more weight doesn't hurt, you can let clothes out a little at a time and say you needed a new wardrobe anyway. There
is the choice available here to keep the weight down, but don’t take that choice.

Another one of my tricks is to overeat, but to focus on something like preservatives in food, and not to eat foods with preservatives in them. Not eating preservatives is a good thing to do, but not how I go about it. I focus on the not eating preservatives, pat myself on the back for that, and then go hog wild on the rest of the food list.

Counselor: Boy, is that tricky.

Fatty: You have to be tricky and clever to do SDBs. I am also good at making an emotional production out of simple routine tasks. I can take an assignment, a test, cleaning house, keeping my checkbook, and I get all distraught over it. I make everything seem bigger or more difficult than it really is. Then I stew over it, get upset, and think I have to eat. Or, I let stuff go, get behind, and then have a hard time catching up. I eat to settle my nerves which comes about because of letting things go.

Counselor: Tell me a little about the fears you use to keep doing overweight and your other SDBs.

Fatty: I make it fearful to be my very best person. I think I actually believe that without my SDBs—weight included—I’d be vulnerable and couldn’t cope with life. Fat and other SDBs I see as a protective buffer, but now with the truth pill I see it as snuffing the life out of me. Deep inside I have always thought my weight would help protect me from the world—like a moat around a castle—neither letting the world in or my real self out. “Protect” I see should be changed to “Imprison” because that’s what it really is.

Counselor: Maybe we can look at just one more thing.

Fatty: What’s that?

Counselor: Other ways you disown.

Fatty: That is a good thing to look at because it helps me to do fatness. One of the things I do is to separate myself, in my mind, into parts, and then I blame the parts for what I do. I mostly blame my stomach, but I also blame my nerves. Mostly, though, I look in the wrong place for the cause of why I’m heavy. I look every place but at what I do and how I do it. And, I blame these things I am looking at.

Counselor: Let’s end for today. It would be great if you’d take action on what you’ve seen today and quit making choices which continue to help to manufacture fat.

Fatty: O.K., but there is something I realized today. I read
about this woman who wired her jaw shut to lose weight. It really worked, but isn’t that a way to disown, too? Until now I thought it would be a good thing to do.

Counselor: What did you realize?

Fatty: Well, first she does the SDBs and gets bad results. Then, instead of owning her choices, she does a lot of disowning and makes herself seem helpless. She thinks there is nothing she can do and she’s right as long as she disowns. So, while doing a lot of disowning she finds artificial ways to cope with the outcomes of the SDBs.

Counselor: You are seeing clearly.

Fatty: Won’t she run into trouble unless she gets at the heart of the problem—what she does to perpetuate her fatness and other SDBs?

Counselor: No question about it. You are right on. It has been a pleasure talking with you, especially at the end when you began to use your own mind to think on your own to figure things out.

Fatty: Yeh! That’s something else I have done. Kept from thinking on my own. Man, we could go on and on with learning, couldn’t we?

Counselor: Yes, but our time is up today. Thanks again. See you later.

Fatty: O.K., but I hope you will see less of me later. Not only in counseling, but weight-wise as well.
INEFFECTIVE TEACHER OF THE YEAR

(Being competently ineffective precludes having the ability to be effective)
The setting: This particular man has been chosen the ineffective teacher of the year. He won the distinction in a national contest and he barely edged out many others. The speech which follows is his acceptance speech which he gave at the IFTA National Convention. IFTA stands for Ineffective Future Teachers of America.

Before I actually begin my acceptance speech I would like to thank some people for helping me to get here today. I don’t want to take all the credit. Being sort of “my day” I would like to share the spotlight. I would like to thank my mother and father for fighting so much when I was a kid. They put so much anxiety on me that I developed a bunch of defeating behaviors to cope with the anxiety, and as yet I have been too afraid to let them go. Some of my former teachers provided excellent models for my being ineffective and I would like to give them some credit. Especially would I like to recognize Dr. Smith, my educational methods teacher, who was able to lecture on how to motivate students while half of his class slept. The church I went to as a kid helped prepare me for the work I do today in the classroom. They taught me that I was sinful by nature, and this helped me to not trust my inner self. Then there was always the guilt which was piled on, and this helped lead to ineffectiveness.

But, I want you to know that to be an ineffective teacher, and to do it as well as I do, you can’t just have a good start at it. Other people can help you get started, but I have found I have had to take over the job that they began. Let me tell you how I have done that.

A real good technique is to set up class assignments so that some students can’t possibly achieve. This will turn them off and they will make trouble which in turn makes other students angry. Then what I try to do is to communicate to the students who couldn’t achieve, that they are inferior. Making them feel inferior can be accomplished by comparing them with the students who can do well. The best way I have found to do this is by being subtle. That way they aren’t so aware of what is happening and it can even be more effective.
Now this will help other teachers to do ineffective teaching because students will be turned off to learning. But, then you are not so alone in being ineffective. Of course I am not the only person in my school practicing ineffectiveness. When I get students coming into my class from these other teachers and these kids use their self-defeating behaviors with me—behaviors like hostility, boredom, inferiority, not trying, etc.—what I do is to respond back with my self-defeating behaviors. What this does is to set up a situation in which their SDBs trigger off mine, and mine trigger off theirs, and on and on, and then we have a real ineffective thing going.

Another good thing I have found out is to have the children learn something, and have them go over it time and time again. This is especially good to use with real bright and curious students. Once in awhile a child will be brash enough to say something derogatory about having to repeat things already learned. Of course he will be right, but try to get him to doubt himself. Taking it defensively will help here. Try to make him think he is wrong.

Let me make a side comment here to you future ineffective teachers. You probably won't pick all these skills up in your first year of teaching. But, don't be discouraged. Other people will be only too happy to help you along.

Any teacher who wants to do ineffectiveness has got to keep from teaching things of real interest to himself. See, if you aren't that interested in what you are teaching, neither will the students. You might ask how you can keep from teaching things of interest to yourself. Let me just say it is not easy. You will find all kinds of innovative things churning around inside which you will have to learn to deny. I found that if I keep my old notes and use them in new moments that this helps. Teaching like you were taught, even though you may not have liked it yourself when it was being experienced, is helpful to keep from teaching things of interest to you. I have also found that if I use various fears of changing and blame old curriculum guides as to why I have to teach like I am, that ineffectiveness comes easier.

Hanging onto old worn out experiences is something I picked up all on my own. I am sort of proud of that fact. How it works is like this. A student will do something in September that is wrong. Store these facts in your head and hang onto them so that when November rolls around there won't be any room for the live stuff of November because you have your head full of September.
When I walk into the building I put on my "teacher role." The idea is to have a concept of what you ought to be as a teacher (and to be most ineffective make it as far removed from who you really are as a person as you can) and hold yourself up to that concept. It is a little schizophrenic, but to be ineffective a little skitziness never hurt anyone. By being a role you will keep everyone off guard because they'll not know where you are coming from. This has the very nice effect of getting the students doing the same thing and they can help feed your teacher role by being role people themselves.

To help spread this through the school, talk in a derogatory way against those teachers who don't use roles, and praise those who model the role. Say things like this against non-role teachers:

"They are softies"
"They have no discipline"
"Kids go to them 'cause they are easy"
"They sure have a lot to learn"

I have found it to be quite a sacrifice to be a role in teaching because it is so contrary to your human nature. Your insides will churn away, you will have difficulty being happy, and your ole heart will ache at the end of the semester when the kids are happy to leave your class. But, I knew I'd have to sacrifice when I went into teaching so I was ready for it.

Because being a role as a teacher is so contrary to human nature, it doesn't come easy. I stand at the mirror many a night practicing puckering my lips in anger and exasperation. Then there is the lifting of the eyebrows, snapping of fingers and pointing that always needs a little extra work. The thing that needs most work, however, is the denial of laughter and humor. As you know a lot of funny things happen in a classroom. Someone passes gas at an inopportune time, or you yourself say "tit" when you meant to say "tip," or there'll be something in a book we are reading which can be taken two ways and some clever kid will say something that will crack the whole class up. Well, I work hard to deny humor. It helps if you can develop a locked-set jaw and a deep stern voice. I am so good at denying humor that it rubs off on the kids. When something funny happens in our class, no one laughs anymore. I have really made an impact on my kids. If you future teachers want to be able to influence the lives of the youth of this nation, you can see the opportunities teaching provides.

Taking things literally and going to an extreme with it works
too. I call this my obstructionism technique. Let me give you an example. A friend of mine works in a manufacturing plant. One day the president, who didn't come by too often, was in the engine assembly plant. It was a dirty mess and he chewed people out real good. He was right, it was dirty. So, these guys started cleaning and three days later hadn't turned out an engine. It threw the whole place off. The president heard about it and came running asking why there weren't any engines. The guys said, "Don't blame us, you wanted it clean." See, they took what he had said and carried it to an extreme and then blamed him.

The way I do the above is to take something the administration might say like "We need to tighten up on attendance" and I'll carry it to an extreme and then throw it back on them. They don't know what to do—it stops them everytime and helps to build distance.

A nice way to keep from teaching relevant materials is to make a big deal out of things like gum chewing, if the student's name is in the upper right hand corner of a theme paper, if the desks are dressed right and covered down (a phrase I picked up in the army), if the shades are even, and so on. I timed myself one day and the best I was able to accomplish in one hour was to waste 36 minutes. That's my record so far. I am shooting for the whole hour. In the 36 minutes I chewed the class out for the gum business, lectured them on the importance of discipline, told them the importance of their name in the right hand corner (especially if they were going to college), blamed their past teachers for their poor preparation, talked about the good old days and how kids were better then.

Before you think I am bragging for my 36 minute record, let me say this is not an actual teaching record. This is just my personal high. Of course, as you know these ideas about wasting time are not original with me either. There is a lot of precedence in education for these time wasting activities. Why I had a teacher in elementary school who spent a half hour each day in regards to the pencil sharpener. That was a half hour she didn't spend putting herself on the line. I use the pencil sharpener myself in an irrelevant way, but I have never become as adept at it as this old gal was. You have to admire and respect her skill—especially her consistency at being able to do it day in and day out. Sometimes I am not very good at handling the boredom this pencil sharpener routine brings about, but it never phased her. Day in and day out she did her thing.
If they have an ineffective hall of fame, that old gal will at least be nominated.

I will share something with you people I have never shared with anyone else. Something which really gets to students is this. Hear what the child says, and answer some other question. Eventually he will forget his real questions and you won't have to put up with them.

Another thing which gets to students is to hold them up to their brothers and sisters. Or if you have been at this business long enough to have had their parents, compare them to their parents. Kids will hate it and this will help you be ineffective.

At times in my teaching career I have thought about innovating, and I should say there is innovation in me. But, I shut this off by using fears. Fears that if I change I will be lost, chaos would result, and that I couldn't handle the responsibility of always moving ahead into the unknown.

Predicting the future in a fearful way is a good skill to have. With predictions available you can shoot every innovating idea you may have in the head. In other words, you may think of an idea, predict its failure, and then never try it. Another thing which goes right along with this is to honestly try something and fail, but then to use this failure to prove one can't innovate: You can take this one failure and use it as a cloud over all innovation.

Perhaps one of my most clever tricks is to keep standards not fitting to human beings. When the kids don't achieve, blame the previous school or teachers because they didn't prepare them well enough. If you do this in the teacher's lounge you can often get others to go along with you and help convince you that you are right. Remember, in unity there is strength. One time I was getting some flack about having my standards too high. Right in the middle of a staff meeting I stood up and said in a loud challenging voice, "Who here doesn't believe in standards?" No one said a word. No one can dispute you because standards are OK, but that is not the issue. The issue has to do with standards which do not fit people. Standards look so good on the surface, but they can get a lot of good distance between you and students.

One day a supervisor teacher confronted me on my high standards. I fixed her clock. I said, "OK I will throw all standards out and let them do whatever they damn please." I call this my going from one extreme to the other extreme approach. It sure stopped this supervisor in her tracks. It helps, too, if you can do
righteous indignation when you use ill-fitting standards and students don’t meet them. Or, you can pull a hurt, do an anger, and act shocked. These all tend to shift blame over onto the students.

One time I somehow got into this teacher effectiveness behavior change program. Boy, did I have to scramble like mad and use my wits to keep my ineffectiveness. I stayed up all night, but then I figured out how I could go through the program and still keep my behaviors. The first thing I decided was to pick real shallow behaviors to work on which right away made the program impotent as far as I was concerned. Secondly, I made a choice that no matter what, I was not going to change. Once I made that decision, nothing penetrated.

Bitching is another behavior you want to try and develop. The way I do it is to take something which is important and bitch about it. Bitching really gets to administrators and pretty soon they start to avoid you. See, you are giving them information they need to consider, but you are doing it in such a way they won’t listen to it. I have found it important in my own mind to blame them for not doing anything, rather than to look at my bitching side of the coin.

In this short speech I’ll not have time to cover all the things I do to be ineffective. But, I will mention a couple more. One that really gets to the kids is to ridicule them in class in front of their peers. Do it in such a way they cannot keep their pride. Not only will this turn them off to you, but it will turn them off to the subject matter, because they will associate the hurt they got in your class with the subject matter. Children find it important to have their peer approval. You can take these characteristics of any age group and use them against people.

A teacher who does ineffective teaching needs to be ready for a lot of contingencies. Ineffectiveness doesn’t come easy. For instance, sometimes an administrator will come around to evaluate you, or a school board member may drop by. In my desk I have certain lectures and plans which I can put into operation at a moment’s notice. It is sort of like going into an act. I have shifted into this during a class and the kids didn’t even know what was happening. The shock that class was interesting and well planned kept them quiet so my discipline looked real good. It is pretty impressive and makes it hard for the kids to say things negative about me, because the administration doesn’t really believe them when they complain. One time an out-of-town administrator came
into our school and dropped into my class to observe. I went into my act and the guy told my administrator he would like to hire me. I covered a lot of my tracks that day.

In closing I would like to thank you for this honor. I have tried to share some of what I have learned along this line and I hope it has helped give you some leads on how to be ineffective if you should choose to make that your life goal.
(I panic as I face the worst that I have imagined)
SDB CHARACTER
"PANIC PAULA"

Something difficult happens,
I blank my mind
of all the possible ways to cope
that there are,
and I imagine the worst to happen.
Then, I deny that
I blanked my mind
and did the imagining.
I panic as I face the worst
that I have imagined.
(It takes a definite choice to worry or not to worry in unrealistic ways)
Let me begin by reporting to you that I am no longer worrying William. I used to be Worrying William. In fact, I did worry regularly for over ten years, but I have chosen to stop it. It finally hit home inside of me what I was doing to myself and others while practicing this behavior. So, I stopped. What I will report to you will be a reflection upon looking back on it.

It was only after I stopped worrying that I was able to see the amount of time and energy that can go into something like this. I honestly believe that if I had taken the time and energy which went into worrying, to do constructive things and develop my own self, I would be a much more mature and developed person today and I would have many creative accomplishments to show for my time here on earth.

I'm not crying over spilled milk. If I was doing worrying, however, I would cry over spilled milk. I would take the outcome of past worry and use that to worry about. This is the way I guess most people do worry. First they worry, and then the outcome of their life is less than what it could be, and they take that outcome and worry about it. It is a case where the outcome of an SDB is used to feed the SDB in the moments coming up. There is a more life-giving way to work it, and that is what I did. I took the outcomes of this SDB pattern and instead of building on it in a destructive way, I used the outcome to motivate me to change. I can see now that negative results of these SDB patterns are designed into SDB patterns to get us to quit making defeating choices.

One of the techniques I used to use was to take either side of a coin, so to speak, and worry about it. As an example, some people would do things, and I would worry about it. Or, they might not do something and I would worry about the fact they didn’t do something. Don't tell me it was dumb to do that, because I see it all too plain now. I call this "my either side of the coin technique." Another way I did the same thing was to worry about the fact there wasn’t enough time, and another day I would worry about the fact that there was too much time. I have worried about not having enough money and having too much money. Other examples of the either side of the coin trick are: meeting the right
person—not meeting the right person; there is a God—there isn’t a God; too much work to do—not enough work to do; and so on.

Another thing I would do is to get my mind on something I could use to worry about, and shut out data outside of the thing I’m focusing on. If someone would point out to me that I was distorting the issue by seeing only one side of it, I would use defensiveness with them. I would usually stop the person from interrupting my worrying. When I would practice defensiveness, people would stay away from me; and then I would be able to worry and no one would say anything to me. Clever, huh?

I used to be very adept at selective listening in order to do worry. Someone might say something and I would select out something they said, I might even take it out of context, and use that to worry. For instance, last summer I didn’t get my income tax check back as soon as I had wished. I also overheard someone say, “The State’s computers have broken down so the income refunds may run late, but they are working to correct it.” I only heard that the computer had broken down. I didn’t hear the person say he had only heard they had broken down, nor did I hear him say they were working to correct it. Once I had selectively picked something out to worry about, I proceeded to imagine one thing leading to another, until I had a financial tragedy brewing in my head.

Aside from selective listening, as I said above, it helps if you can shut other data out. As an example, if the computer was broken and the checks were to be late, there are other possible ways to cope with the situation; but I wouldn’t open my mind to them. I would refuse to see what I do to shut things out of my mind, but instead of owning up to what I was doing, I would blame the lack of alternatives as the problem.

Feeling sorry for myself for having so much to worry about was another way I had of getting rid of the responsibility for what I was doing. In feeling sorry for myself I was making myself believe things were being done to me rather than seeing that I was bringing on the results. It is a little embarrassing to look back on it, but what I did a few times when I would have myself in a dither was to go to group counseling and ask people to care for me because I was having a really bad day. There were always people there who must have liked being suckerized in, because they would try to make me feel better. Sometimes I would come out of there
feeling better, but at the same time it helped me to keep doing the same thing.

It is difficult to do an SDB like worry if one keeps life in perspective. There are many ways to keep life in perspective, I guess, but two I see readily are using humor and listening to other people. I would not look at the humor in the worry I did and I shut out other's opinions. Today I can look back at some of my worrying and it is really funny. If I had seen it then, it would have helped.

One day I was not using worry and the day went fantastically well. That night I was in my apartment and I used the fact that I was so happy as cause to worry. Inside of myself it went like this: If I get feeling too good, I am going to have a let down. Better, I reasoned, to bring myself down now and then the thud won't be so big.

At the time of writing this essay I am working in sales. If I was using worry today it would really get in the way of my work. The cleverness I used to put into using worry, I now put into my sales work. An example of cleverness in using worry shows up in what I now call my piggyback method of doing worry. In the past when I was with someone who was practicing worry, I would jump on his worry bandwagon and get one going myself. I was so clever in piggybacking I could do it when there weren't real people involved. I used to watch TV programs and when someone on one of the programs worried, I would worry too, and long after the set was off, I was still doing it.

To show the ridiculousness of worry let me explain that many a time I would be going along worrying—maybe a day or two or a week—and suddenly realize that I couldn't remember what I had been worrying about.

Worrying is contagious, which is good if worrying is what one is trying to spread. When my dad was a boy they used to quarantine people who had a contagious disease. The way my worry used to spread, it was contagious, too. I have also found the opposite to be true. When I am feeling really good about myself and my work, that is contagious. People are affected in a good way around me. One lady I called on even expressed it to me by saying, "I enjoyed talking with you. It has given me a lift."

I remember walking out of her store feeling real good, but then I scared myself about what she'd said by thinking, "Boy, I have got a lot of influence over people, wonder if I can handle it." This was in the period when I was trying to change and I caught myself using the fear. I stopped it.
Upon getting into my car I patted myself on the back for having cut my worry pattern off just after I'd started it. It helps me not to do worry if I give myself credit for doing something good like that. To do worry, or any other SDB pattern, one could not give himself credit for the good things he does.

When you stop using worry it opens your eyes to see what other people do. Not too long ago I was in a sales meeting in Lansing, Michigan. There were people from all over the State at the meeting. On one of the breaks we walked out into the lobby and could see it had started to snow. One guy who lived fifteen miles away began to do worry, using the light snow as reason to justify the worry. There was another salesperson in the same group who lived over 200 miles away, but he was not doing worry. I thought to myself, how ridiculous for a person who lived fifteen miles away to worry when someone over 200 miles away does not. I pointed this fact out to the fifteen-mile-away worrier, but he defended his worry. I shut up. But I could see that a year ago that might have been me doing the same thing.

In my worrying days I used to practice worry in little situations so I would be ready and able to do it in big situations were they to come along. All during my school years I have expected the worst grades on tests and papers, even though I did well, thinking it was better to get ready for the worst than to let life just take its course. I guess I was afraid that I might not be able to cope with life if I just let it unfold.

In case you are reading this essay to learn how to do worry should you want to do it, let me pass on something that works quite well. When you are doing worry, and others around you aren’t, get after them in an attempt to manipulate them to worry too. As a side note, have you ever noticed how much someone practicing an SDB hates doing it alone? They seem to always want company. If others insist on not worrying when you are, it often works to see them as indifferent and cold and insensitive.

Oh, the word insensitive reminds me of something I used for years to help me worry. Something would happen, I would do worry around it; and then I would blame the fact that I was sensitive as to why I had the reaction I did. I would disown the responsibility for what I did by this method.

I used to predict the future to do worry. Now, instead of doing that I leave the future unknown. By taking the unknown and predicting it and then worrying about it, most of my energy and con-
centration was on the prediction and, therefore, could not be utilized with that which would come up. It's like I always wanted to be living with the familiar, and worry provided that for me. It sounds dumb now as I look back on it, but I'd worried so much as a kid about real things that worry was familiar. When there was nothing to worry about, I did it anyway just so I'd feel like I knew where I was.

In my job now as a salesperson there are many opportunities to practice worry. In the days when I used to worry I'd have taken advantage of each of them. For instance, I walked into one place and the secretary made some off-handed derogatory remark about salespeople. Between the time she made the remark and I got in to see her boss there was about a twenty-minute lapse of time. I could have done a full-blown worry; and when I had a chance to present myself and my products to her boss, I would have been on the defensive, apologetic about taking his time, and unable to be very perceptive in thinking on my feet. In effect, I would have defeated myself and then blamed the fact that he didn't like salespeople as the reason things didn't work out better.

I have found that even if I do not use worry and, therefore, do not defeat myself, things do not always work out for the best. There is always the good feeling, though, that at least I didn't bring about the defeat; nevertheless, the defeat is still there. In the past I'd take one of those honest failures and use it to worry about the next sale. I have taken one failure and built it up to spoil a whole week. Since I have stopped worry I have learned that I can have a bad experience and not take it with me to the next sale. It is a great feeling being able to control choices that well. Personally, I have found that when I stopped disowning what I do and laid full claim to what I do, power to control myself came with it.

As you can probably surmise, to let worry go didn't come in one big moment for me. I did make a decision to stop worrying, but I had to work to carry through on this decision. A big moment for me was when I went into this large store, which was a potentially large prospect, and presented myself to the owner. I had said, "Hello, I am William Breck from Durno Sales Corporation."

This guy must have had a bad day, or week, or year, or else he practices a heck of a lot of SDBs himself, because he responded in an angry, nasty, and cutting manner. He said, "Big deal. What am I supposed to do, get up and kiss your ass?"

If I ever had an opportunity to put worry into operation, there
was my chance. What I learned at that moment, however, was that if you truly make a choice inside of yourself that you are going to follow your integrated self and not the substitute SDBs, it is easier to respond to tough situations. In addition, I learned that if I didn’t put worry into gear, there were some clever on-the-money kinds of responses inside of me that I could listen to. If I’d have been practicing worry, I’d have shut these integrated responses out. Anyway, what I said in a non-defensive way was, “Boy, you hit the nail right on the head. What I have is a big deal and not only am I excited about the product (which I was) but many other people I’ve been calling on are too. Here, let me show you what I’m talking about.”

I could see his defensiveness drop way down and he said, “Look, I don’t have much time, but . . .”

While I’m sharing with you let me add something else I learned. When I’d worry, I’d make each sale something bigger in my mind than it had to be. It was as if my worth as a human being and my enjoyment of the day resided solely in each sale. If it didn’t work out I’d feel lousy as a person and would shut out a potentially enjoyable day. Now I don’t do that anymore. Sales are important to me because that is how I make my living, but I don’t over-dramatize each one to the point where it handcuffs me.

When I used to worry as a way of life, I was so caught up in my worry that life inside of me and outside of me would go on, but I’d not be open to it. Therefore, I couldn’t enjoy it. By choosing to stop worrying I enjoy life more, which by the way, actually does help sales because I’m a more alive and interesting person. It is a fact that most of the time now (I’ve still got room for improvement) I can have bad days selling and still enjoy life. It’s not a phony optimism, but a rather deep insight that I need to be open to life inside of me and outside of me, and worry gets in the way of that. I figure I am only going through life once, why not make the most of it. So, I am.
HOW TO ACCOMPLISH A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN

(It takes years of effort on a person's part to take something as beautiful as one's human system and bring about a nervous breakdown)
SDB CHARACTER

"HOW TO ACCOMPLISH A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN"

An excellent way to accomplish a nervous breakdown is to practice self-defeating behavior patterns such as dependency, inferiority, worry, and depressions, for a goodly number of years. Find ways to keep putting these behaviors into gear with the family, at work, in the church, and so on, in order that you can become an expert at them. It helps for you to manipulate things your way to do these SDBs, to get others to "understand" when you are in one of your moods, and to carve out elbow room to get away with using the behaviors. Your loved ones won't like it when you are doing these SDBs, but because they love you, they will put up with it.

Over the years you will be bringing about some negative results in yourself and others, but choose to ignore these things. These negative outcomes are really friendly feelings, although they may not seem like it at the time. They are, however, trying to tell you that you are making some serious mistakes and that you should go back and look at your choices which bring about the negative prices. To work towards a nervous breakdown, ignore the wisdom inherent in the negative outcome of your defeating choices. It is even better if you can take the negative outcome of your using SDBs and make them seem like they aren't negative. As an example, you might see worry as a virtue, proving to yourself that if you worry about your own children, your worrying is synonymous to loving them.

As little crisis things happen in your life, never consider making the choice of trying to meet them without your SDB patterns. Take every opportunity that you can to strengthen your SDBs as a way to meet your world. For example, let's say you are practicing twenty pounds of manipulation (getting others to do things for you) as part of your SDBs. When a crisis comes up, rather than to let the manipulation go and cope instead with your strength, take the crisis as an opportunity to build manipulation up to thirty pounds. What this accomplishes is building up the intensity and frequency of your behaviors, and then the behaviors become more severe.

As you know, or need to know, SDBs feed on themselves if the person who practices them does not let the outcome of defeat-
ing choices work to stop the choices—which, incidentally, is the life-giving purpose of negative results. Thus, by continuing the SDBs, they can feed on themselves (if you don't let the results work for you) and with SDBs feeding on themselves, they get progressively worse.

Through years of practicing SDBs, you can develop doubts about yourself and what you are really like inside. SDBs will help you to see yourself as weak, question your true worth, and build up fears deep inside. These all lay groundwork for the day you finally culminate it in a breakdown.

After spending time in preparation, there are various things which can finally result in the nervous breakdown. A real crisis can occur in your life such as a parent dying, inflation (better throw that out cause that will make anyone sick), a business set-back, someone rejecting you, and the like. Then, too, things can get very bad because of the accumulated results of defeating yourself—your wife leaves you, your children get fed up with your moods, the people you work for have enough of your SDBs and fire you, and so on. In order to have a breakdown it is very important that you respond to these crisis situations in the right* manner. Above all do not take these situations as a learning experience to help you to see what you have been doing that you need to change. As a matter of interest, let me point out that a crisis can be used as a learning experience and as an impetus to stopping the behaviors, but don't take advantage of it. Do, however, take the situation to entrench the behaviors in more deeply.

There comes a time when increasingly doing SDBs does not only make them progressively more efficient defeating systems, but they take on a different dimension. The progression won't only be a jump in quantity of SDBs, but a jump in quality as well. In other words, you can have a breakthrough from being effective in defeating yourself to a higher dimension of imminently expert. Incidentally, this phenomenon of jumping in quality as well as quantity occurs in creativity as well. One can do a number of creative things, all leading to a major breakthrough of a higher order. Thus, I want to point out that this phenomenon can work for or against a human being, depending on the choices one makes. To accomplish a breakdown, make this phenomenon work against yourself.

So OK. We now have the crisis and you need to decide to cope

* Right being used here as the proper thing to do to lead to a breakdown.
with it with the SDB patterns practiced in the past, only decide to cope with increased intensity and frequency. Use more fears, make more defeating choices, get more clever at techniques, hide your true integrated self even deeper, disown with increased tenacity, and take the increased defeating results and feed them back into your human system to make the behaviors worse. Use the fact that you are getting worse as added proof that you are sick and that someone needs to finally take care of you because you are incapacitated. Convince yourself that the worry is real—and use the outcome of your SDB patterns to do that.

Disowning, as you perhaps know, will result in one being helpless to do much with that which is disowned. Disowning leads to splits within the human system, while owning leads to wholeness. When one is disowning, one splits the self from that which is being disowned (stomach, nerves, hands, eyes, mind), and the part operates on its own. It is out of control. Owning, on the other hand, keeps one in contact with the self; and control over the self is available. Take the outcome of your disowning—helplessness—as added proof (which you have been building up over the years) that you are weak, inferior, sick, and unable to cope.

Do not, I repeat, do not, take advantage of your choice-making ability to stop disowning which will do away with helplessness, which will bring yourself under control in life-giving ways.

By now you should have yourself looking and acting in pathetic ways. Present your pathetic self to loved ones and friends and elicit their concern, but if they suggest things that you could do which would move you away from a breakdown, don’t do them. However, if they make suggestions which won’t lead to genuine help for yourself, do follow this advice; and when it fails, prove to yourself that you tried. Fix your mind on the failure which you had from following advice, and then you have a sure-fire way not to follow life-giving advice in the future.

Next, seek professional help, but before you begin, decide that if the help leads to your needing to let your original SDBs go, and intervene in the forthcoming breakdown; you won’t let it work. In other words, before you get the help, firmly decide not to let it be effective. It helps if you will lie to yourself about the choice. You can do this by using the fact that you are seeking help as proof that you have good intentions. The choice to not let professional assistance work, if held firmly enough, will surely undermine help and allow you to proceed posthaste to the breakdown.
A way to implement the choice not to let assistance be effective is to try and set the help up on the same footings which got you into trouble in the first place. If you have been doing dependency to get you into trouble, try to arrange the help in such a way that you can depend on the doctor. If you have been doing inferiority and that got you into trouble, take an inferior stance to the doctor. And so on and so on. Setting up the help on the same footings the SDB patterns rest on is a reaffirmation of the old original defeating choice—I will not follow and trust my integrated self; and therefore, I need SDB substitutes to cope.

Let me point out that to have a nervous breakdown, one does need to shut off following the leads emanating from the integrated self. In other words, to have a breakdown one needs to shut off following the reality of the integrated self; muffle talents one has, deny following fun things, decide not to follow interests, forsake one’s humor, and the like.

Once you have made the choice to defeat professional assistance, there are various things you can do to implement the choice. If possible, seek a professional helper who coincides with the defeating ways you approach life—someone who will make decisions for you—or, if you can’t find one readymade, manipulate the person into that mold. It is also possible to take learnings from the helper, and by twisting them around, use them to get worse. As an example, the helper may assist you to see you are responsible for the choices you make—whether you accept the fact or not. Take this responsibility knowledge and use it to be irresponsible. You can do it like this. When you are about to make defeating choices, you can say, “I know I’m responsible, but . . . .” By overtly admitting one is responsible this can be used as a license to then do irresponsible acts.

If you have been successful in defeating the first help you receive, you should be in better shape to do a breakdown because you may have yourself, and a lot of other people, convinced “you are sick” rather than the reality of “you are continuing to increase the frequency and intensity of your defeating behaviors.” Having defeated help, things should now be getting worse and through pressure from your family, friends, and family doctor, you will probably decide you need more help. However, do not own up to the fact that you defeated the first help; you must see it as the professional helper’s fault.

In seeking help from a second person or agency, try and get
one with a reputation as being the very best. This is important. Again, decide not to let it work. This can be accomplished by doing helplessness and leaving the total responsibility for getting better over to the professional. Another good thing you can do to undermine help and bring on a breakdown is to decide, in your sessions, not to talk about the real issues. A way to get away with this with yourself and with the doctor is by talking about problems somewhat connected to the real issues. Or, you can talk about real issues in general terms, but never get to the specifics. Both of the above work.

After you have wasted one of your sessions and the hour draws to a close, ask to stay longer. It helps to say you understand someone else may be waiting, but you need the time more than that person does. If you are told you cannot stay, turn to pleading. If that doesn't work, there is always begging, crying, or acting bizarre that can be used. This asking for additional time can convince both you and the doctor that you are serious about trying to change when you really are not.

In case you get an extra fifteen minutes to a half hour extension on a session, revert back to talking about irrelevant issues. When the session is over, even though you have not made progress in letting your SDBs go, thank the doctor for being kind and helpful for the extra time. If your doctor is alert and honest enough to tell you that you wasted your time and his/her time, apologize for it. There are two ways to apologize. One is being honestly sorry for mistakes, but which always leads to correcting the situation in the future. In other words, you don't keep making the same dumb choices. The other way to apologize is to do it in such a way that it gets you off the hook for your mistakes, but frees you to do the same thing in the future. Do choose to apologize in the latter manner.

If possible, try and consume more and more of your doctor's time each day. By doing this, while at the same time not letting the increased time help, you will have convinced yourself that there is no hope for you. You will have ample evidence that a breakdown is in order; you received competent help, and it didn't work.

It was important to have sought the best help you could; because by having defeated it, you have made it possible to generate increased fears. With fears now running high, lock your sights in on a particular thing—something you have done, the fact that seeking help didn't work, another's behaviors, how your children
behave, something you imagined, etc.—and dwell on that one incident to the point where you can shut everything else out of your mind. Do not let yourself know that you made a choice to dwell and that the alternative choice not to dwell is readily available for you to make.

Incidentally, when one is practicing dwelling on a particular thing, much life stuff is going on outside oneself. The sun keeps rising and setting, buds keep popping out on trees and leaves continue to fall, rain nourishes the ground, frogs croak, snowflakes make their majestic descent to the ground, squirrels gather nuts, animals mate, people love—but choose to ignore these phenomena bombarding your psyche. Choosing to let these life things into yourself would nourish you and prevent a mental and emotional collapse. Letting life stuff nourish you is indeed a healthy thing to do, but it's not something which can lead to a breakdown, so close it out.

Through locking your sights on something and dwelling on it, while at the same time ignoring all the life stuff going on around you, you will have finally (after expending much time and energy and effort and making many defeating choices) achieved a situation in which the outcome of what you are doing feeds on itself in uncontrollable ways. You will have finally separated yourself so far from yourself that you will need to be taken care of. It is as if the universe is saying,

"Through the creative process I use to create, I have developed a conscious mind in man. I have done this because I am trying to extend life throughout the universe, and I need help. This conscious mind, if used correctly, can serve this development purpose very nicely. But, you see, by developing a way to extend life, I have also created increased ability to choose death. Therefore, I need safeguards. I have a limit on how many defeating choices you can make, otherwise death might run rampant throughout the universe. Thus, I must stop you if you won't stop yourself. In spite of what you might think, until the very end, the breakdown could have been prevented. You could have taken advantage of the thousands upon thousands of choice opportunities
to choose life over death along the way that I kept giving you, but you didn’t. Therefore, I now take your life out of your hands.”
(When one says, “I wish I were dead” most probably she means, “I wish I were alive.”)

Dian Seslar

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Background information: The time is prior to 2000 B.C. and Unnecessary Death is personified as an outer space character. He is having a meeting with other outer space characters who work for him. The names of his workers are: Confusion, Despair, Rut, Fear, Ridiculousness, Alienation, Threat, Germ, Twister, Divider, Jealousy, Anxiety, Minimizer of Death Results, Defensiveness, Technique, Loneliness, Meaninglessness, Disowning, Choice, Deception, and Death Observer. Unnecessary Death and his co-workers are looking down on earth from their vantage point in space and Unnecessary Death is speaking.

Unnecessary Death: My fellow workers, as you know, time doesn’t mean an awful lot to us. Time is different for us than for those human creatures housed on that spacecraft earth. I mention time being different for us because I don’t want you to think you have to rush right out and do the job that I am going to ask you to do. But, we have a problem and I will need your help with it.

Technique: What is the problem, sir?

Unnecessary Death: You always ask the right question at the right time.

Technique: I do exactly as your Death Choice wants me to do and do not think for myself. I thought it would please you, sir.

Unnecessary Death: It does please me because when you do not think for yourself you are one of the best contributors to Unnecessary Death that I have.

Unnecessary Death continues to talk with his co-workers:

As you know, there are two kinds of death in this universe. I hate to acknowledge it, but one is a kind that is part of LIFE, my number one enemy in this universe. As you know, living things can die, but LIFE springs up out of this kind of death. As an example, leaves may die and fall off the trees that we can see down on that earth, but they provide fertilizer and ground for next season’s growth. Then, of course, there is my kind of Unnecessary Death.

All of the co-workers cheer. Unnecessary Death thanks them and takes a bow. He continues:

My Unnecessary Death is the opposite of LIFE. And this LIFE character, it has been reported to me by Death Observer,
is getting the upper hand. There is no cause to panic, but we need to do something about it. We need to get some new blood in our ranks. And as you know that can be a problem, because to come over to our Unnecessary Death camp one has to do it voluntarily.

**Technique:** What do you propose, U.D.?

**Unnecessary Death:** U.D. does have a nice ring to it. Thank you big T for referring to me as U.D. What I propose is this: These humans running around down there on earth are very LIFE giving creatures. They come into existence as part of the LIFE process of this universe. I want you all to come up with a way we can take these human LIFE systems and turn them into Unnecessary Death systems. In other words, develop a design whereby these humans will want to join our Unnecessary Death ranks.

**Jealousy:** I don't know if I want others to join us. We have a full house now.

**Unnecessary Death:** I don't care what you want. Now, you have until the latter part of the twentieth century A.D. to have developed a system of Unnecessary Death on that earth. I want you to have tried it out, tested it, so that when we get to Sally, it will work. If it doesn't work on Sally when I try it out, I will ship you all out and you will have to join LIFE's ranks. That is a threat.

**Threat:** Thank you, sir, for thinking of me.

**Unnecessary Death:** Sometime in the future I will call a meeting and I want you all to have general contributions as to our plan of attack. It will be a brain-storming session, and from there we can get more specific. Go out and do your thinking and scheming.

All the workers leave. A century later they came back to a meeting which Unnecessary Death had called.

**Unnecessary Death:** Let's hear from all of you. What have you come up with?

**Choice:** We should go about this as an engineering feat. We can set up a death assembly line, try it out, get the bugs out of it, and by the time we get to Sally, it won't fail to work.

**Unnecessary Death:** I will withhold judgment on each of the suggestions until I hear them all, but this death assembly line idea sounds good to me.

**Death Results:** Death is contagious I can see that. Death Choice just gave me a great idea. We could plan the assembly line whereby the death output of the line is fed back into the person
to make the death parts within the human creature grow and grow. Existence for the human will get worse and worse and by making it where the output of the assembly line is fed back into the human system, there will be an increased amount of Anxiety and Pain.

Anxiety and Pain: Bless you, Results, for thinking of us in this hour of seriousness.

Unnecessary Death: This is serious, too. If we can’t come up with a good enough plan, LIFE will be surging throughout this universe and then where will we all be?

Helplessness: We could build me into the thing. As you know these humans have LIFE built into them. They have the ability to choose LIFE over Unnecessary Death in spite of what we do because they have the ability to choose.

Unnecessary Death: Dammit man, I know that. You don’t have to remind me of it. Whose side are you on? LIFE or mine?

Helplessness: Your side, sir. And that is my point. We could remove these creatures, particularly Sally, from the choice mechanism handle. Then she will believe there is nothing she can do about death feeding on itself within her.

Everyone thought that was a great idea and were thankful that Helplessness was a part of the Unnecessary Death team. Disowning added a contribution.

Disowning: I can keep Sally from looking in the right place so she can’t see her way out of the dilemma we set up, and this will aid Helplessness in doing his dirty work. I can get Sally looking in the wrong direction so she won’t see the choice ability she has. In fact, if I can do my work well enough, she will think she doesn’t choose.

Then the ideas began to come so fast that Unnecessary Death’s secretary couldn’t keep track of the ideas and, at the same time, report on whose ideas they were. So, only the ideas were recorded:

Find a way to close off LIFE from within and from without of Sally.

Cut off help for Sally if we can get her feeling Helpless and Confused.

We need to find a means to energize the assembly line. It needs a power source.

Find a way to build Unnecessary Death into Sally when she is a small child and figure out a way to have her take over the task of keeping Unnecessary Death going as she gets older.

We need a system in which the assembly line is a very effi-
cient Unnecessary Death system. The various parts of the system
must work cooperatively together.

Unnecessary Death: I hate the word cooperative. That is part
of LIFE’s team. Why do you bring it up here? Are you for us or
against us?

Twister: Do I need to remind you, sir, that you have taught
us that we can take LIFE’s workers and turn them into death if
we are clever enough. We will get Cooperation working on the
death assembly line.

Unnecessary Death: Thank you for reminding me. It is one
of my principles that I had forgotten myself.

Technique: Yes, we need to take the machinery that LIFE
uses to do his work, and twist it around to work for us. We can
re-tool it.

Divider: As you all know, one of LIFE’s main workers is
Wholeness. We need to find a way to interfere with Wholeness.
How to do it is the problem.

Unnecessary Death: You work on that.

Technique: We can take the cultural system these humans
have developed to give them LIFE and implant Unnecessary Death
ideas in it. Then we can have the cultural system implant death
ideas in Sally’s mind, which may lead to suicide.

Minimizer of Death Results: I suggest that when death Re-
sults are being manufactured by our Unnecessary Death assembly
line, that we talk the people into taking drugs to reduce the Pain
and Anxiety which results from their death Choices.

Pain and Anxiety: Now you hold on just a minute. We got
a right to be intense just like the rest of you.

Minimizer of Death Results: I want you to be there and be
there just as intensely as we can bring about, but if you get too
high and hurt too much, Sally may decide to make some LIFE
choices. Then where will we be?

Unnecessary Death: Over in LIFE’s camp.

Minimizer of Death Results: Precisely! I propose to come
up with ways of keeping the Pain and Anxiety at a high level, but
to have Sally use methods to make Pain and Anxiety not seem so
bad. If I can talk Sally into taking drugs and alcohol, for instance,
she will not be able to get at the cause of Unnecessary Death in her,
and the drugs and alcohol will add to her problems.

Confusion and Twister: You are talking our language now.
It is the universal Unnecessary Death music which soothes us.
Choice: We can build a system whereby we keep the older populace, which raises the children, from clearly seeing the difference between LIFE and Unnecessary Death systems. This can be accomplished by keeping them from using their conscious minds.

Unnecessary Death: Yes, these conscious minds—the latest evolutionary LIFE development in these creatures—can give us all kinds of fits if they use them. We need to devise a system whereby they don't use their conscious minds. If they use consciousness to the degree they are capable, we are all done.

Technique: Don't fret, sir. We won't let you down. Not only do we want the adults to not use their conscious ability, but we need to interfere with the children's ability, too. If we can find ways to keep Sally from using her conscious mind, she'll have no means of standing back far enough and seeing the difference between LIFE and Unnecessary Death and her part in how she perpetuates it. I will work on this idea and report back to you Unnecessary Death, sir.

Unnecessary Death: Good, you do that.

Technique: Is it possible that someone could take the challenge of trying to figure out how Sally could not only facilitate Unnecessary Death in herself but in others as well?

Germ: I'd like to try my hand at that. Maybe I can find a way to make Unnecessary Death spread.

Unnecessary Death: Go at it then. Death luck to you.

Unnecessary Death's workers went out and made their plans. A century or so later they came back to Unnecessary Death and made tentative reports on their thinking and findings.

Unnecessary Death: Someone begin the reports and we will all join in with our suggestions and criticisms. That way our death plans will be bigger and better, and Sally will be sure to join our ranks.

Choice: One of the problems we faced was how to get Sally to take Unnecessary Death materials within her system. Well, these human creatures have these psychic digestive systems which were designed to take LIFE stuff within so the human system could use it for development. I propose that we have Sally's culture feed her a lot of Unnecessary Death material and let the psychic digestive system package the Death materials into death-like computerized programs.

Unnecessary Death: Oh joy! We take what has been developed to give LIFE and use it against Sally. Clever! Clever!
**Disowning:** I know Choice has more to contribute, but I'm sitting on a good scheme and can hardly contain myself.

**Unnecessary Death:** I can see you can't wait, so go ahead and report.

**Disowning:** Thank you, sir! I propose to have Pain and Anxiety hurt Sally badly as a child and force her into a major Unnecessary Death decision such as:

1. I'll not try anymore.
2. I'm going to face life by hiding.
3. You can't trust anyone in this world.
4. Build thick walls around myself.

Then after she has made a basic death choice like those stated above, remove her from the choice so she'll feel Helpless.

**Helplessness:** Glad you are using me. But, how will you remove her from sitting at the control of the Choice?

**Disowning:** By getting Sally to Disown, naturally. I'll get her to blame others and things and even herself and this will separate her from her Choices.

**Divider:** We are working well together in constructing this assembly line. That separating Sally from her Choices is right down my alley.

**Unnecessary Death:** All good death input. Did anyone come up with an idea on how to keep Sally from using her consciousness to impede what we are doing?

**Confusion:** I think I have come up with a winner on that, sir. I thought that we could have some of the human creatures themselves pronounce ideas, theories, and doctrine that does not give solutions to the Unnecessary Death problems, but which looks like they give solutions. With so many ideas floating around people won't know what to listen to and won't be able to wade through to the essentials. We could have some of these ideas given through educational institutions which could be created. I also propose to give what we will call graduate credit for people who will study and learn these confusing ideas. With the society sanctioning the confusing doctrine, it will work all the more efficiently.

**Observer:** The problem presents itself though that the children can distinguish the false doctrine from the life-giving doctrine because they come into life pure and their listening, feeling, and perceptions are clear. We will need a method of clouding their vision.
Deception: I will work on a method of clouding the children's vision.

Later on Deception reports back and he says to Unnecessary Death:

Deception: We can get the children to mistrust themselves if we put a lot of money and effort into building large social structures in the perpetuation of our false doctrine. The children will compare themselves to the structures and figure the institutions must be right and them wrong, or else the adults wouldn't make so much out of it. But, Mr. Unnecessary Death, Sir, this is not going to be an easy task deceiving the children. These humans are structurally made to increase LIFE in themselves from the cradle to the grave.

Unnecessary Death: Excuses, excuses. Phoomp (outer space swear word). Do the job, that is all I ask.

Observer: Sir, I know we talked about it before, but this conscious ability these humans have may be our downfall.

Ridiculousness: Oh, phoomp! I think they are too damn dumb to know the power they hold in their conscious hands. I don't think we need to worry about it.

Unnecessary Death: I think Observer may have a point. If Sally, or someone else actually sees what we are doing, Sally could be kept from taking her own life.

Despair: As much as I hate to admit it, we have no actual power over Sally. We can merely set the circumstances where Sally will do it to herself. If Sally chooses to live, and uses her consciousness to stand back far enough to see how to avoid Unnecessary Death and evolve more LIFE, we are helpless. What would be worse is if she looked and saw how the universe creates LIFE itself and used that process as a guide to create LIFE for herself.

Unnecessary Death: If she does that our whole damn scheme is shot. It is a chance we will have to take. I see no way around it.

Confusion: A way we can help insure that Sally will not use the way the universe creates LIFE as a guide is to fill her mind so full of something else she'll have difficulty seeing the elemental LIFE principles of the universe.

Unnecessary Death: I agree that this is our most serious problem. If Sally uses her mind to see how the universe does its creating, there will be no Unnecessary Death on this planet and you all will die a natural death with me and be turned into LIFE. What a curse that would be on us.
By earthling time, the year is prior 2000 B.C., Confusion speaks:

Confusion: I have a plan, sir. Have the people develop a concept of God which is different than the one they now have. Their present view has Gods residing in the mountains, oceans, lightning, select people, the ground, in the rains, in the sun, and so on. I suggest we have the people package all these Gods into one God concept and have them ship this one God off into heaven someplace.

Unnecessary Death: What would this accomplish?

Divider: I can see the death logic to this scheme. The God will be separated from the people and eventually inaccessible to them. It will be a case of separating themselves from the whole.

Unnecessary Death: I may be dumb, but aside from this separating themselves from the whole . . . hum, they'll eventually come to be lonely as hell . . . good, good!

Confusion: Glad you like the idea, sir.

Unnecessary Death: I do, but what's to keep these humans from developing a new concept of God when they see this one to be contributing to suicide? Surely they can't be so dumb as to keep a God concept which doesn't bring LIFE to themselves. If they are that dumb we got them.

Confusion: I thought about that, sir. I think I have that problem solved.

Unnecessary Death: How's that?

Confusion: First, let's have the new concept of God in heaven be a real help to them in an honest way. Let it free them from the old restrictions of having Gods in everything. Now they have so many Gods all around they can hardly move. Their God concepts are literally strangling them.

Unnecessary Death: I see. At the present time they are afraid to do much because they will evoke the wrath of one of the Gods. With the Gods packaged together and shipped off to heaven they will be able to move about, explore, and with this freedom they will create a lot of good things.

Confusion: Exactly, sir.

Unnecessary Death: Very clever on your part. So, when their God in heaven view begins to strangle them they will look at the good it did, and believe that if they let it go the good will have to go, too. Clever, clever.
Confusion: I'm pleased you saw it. I was afraid you wouldn't appreciate the brilliance of my plan.

Unnecessary Death: I have a good nose for sniffing out Unnecessary Death. But, even though your plan is brilliant, I'm not sure it is quite enough. Go consult with Ridiculousness and see what he has to add.

Confusion reports back after having consulted with Ridiculousness.

Confusion: Ridiculousness helped immensely. He said to get the people to worship their new God concept and to see it as sacred. This way the concept will be fixed in their minds as unchanging. That way they will hold onto the God in heaven concept even though it carries them right into our Unnecessary Death arms.

Unnecessary Death: Splendid, splendid. Thank Ridiculousness for me. I can see that we will build Unnecessary Death into something which gives them LIFE so they won't be able to see the death part. They will have, if I can be so modest as to say it, an Unnecessary Death grip on their concept of the whole (they'll call it God), and as they are being suckered into our Unnecessary Death arms they will think they are achieving eternal LIFE.

Ridiculousness: Yes, and instead of eternal LIFE it will be Sally joining our ranks.

Unnecessary Death: You mentioned educational institutions, Confusion. Could you say more about them?

Confusion: A bunch of us put our heads together and decided we would have the people themselves elect a Board of Education (this will be a group of people responsible for the school) which represents Unnecessary Death, and turn them loose to do our work for us. Deception added an idea, too. Deception said that, although the Board of Education would represent Unnecessary Death, in the campaigns they conduct to get into office they should say they represent LIFE. This will confuse Sally and her friends. As an example, we could have their banners say they are against bussing for the good of the children, when actually their stand against bussing is coming out of Unnecessary Death within themselves.

Divider: That bussing has the potential of bringing all the people together. We don't want that. Keep the people apart is my theme song.

Unnecessary Death: And you sing it well.
Deception: We can have the Board Members have another banner read accountability, which looks on the surface like it represents LIFE, but is part of the Unnecessary Death contribution to Sally. The way we can turn accountability into death will be by having people accountable to tests instead of the life parts of the teachers and children. This will deceive and confuse Sally because she’ll spend years trying to achieve things others set up for her as being important, and without anyone asking her, these things will miss her mark.

Unnecessary Death: I know that what you say will work. If there is one thing we know it is that our enemy LIFE would set education up centered in and through Sally. Sally would be the center of everything done for her, and this would keep her whole and integrated.

Choice: Yes, we will design it such that issues other than Sally become grist for the Board of Education, administration, and teacher mill. We will check their Board Minutes and meetings to make sure they do not talk about the children.

Technique: With twelve years of this, Sally will come out split apart and even if she succeeds extraordinarily well, what’ll she have?

Unnecessary Death: A good case of Unnecessary Death. I’m beginning to get so excited I am salivating.

Fear: We might put a good dose of Fear into the schools. In fact, let’s set it up as the number one way to motivate people. We could have the children afraid of the teachers, the teachers afraid of the administrators, the administration afraid of the Board of Education and the like. We could even get the kids afraid of making a mistake. As we all know, Fear is the prime source of energy which moves humans toward Unnecessary Death.

Unnecessary Death: Well spoken, Fear.

Fear: And while I have the floor, sir, let me say something else. I think someone in one of our earlier discussions wondered what we could use to keep this Unnecessary Death assembly line going in Sally once we got it designed and built. Why not use me? I say scare the people so badly about pursuing LIFE that they will generate a whole lot of energy to walk into Unnecessary Death’s arms.

Unnecessary Death: We will use you for that. Thank you for speaking up.

Ridiculousness: To help carry that idea out why not get the
various parts of the school to group into factions. We might even get the teachers into a union so they can sharpen their claws against the administration. We can also have the administration do stupid things so that the teachers feel they need a union to cope with the stupid things the administration does.

Unnecessary Death: And the beauty of it all is that Sally will be lost and confused amidst the back and forth battles.

Technique: Oh, the beauty of it all.

Observer: I hate to throw a monkey wrench into our whole scheme, but if you look at those humans in their tribes, they always have someone called a medicine man or magician who tries to help people. I can foresee the day when in education they may call these people counselors and have them trying to help Sally. If they do their job Sally might come out whole in spite of all we have done.

Ridiculousness: Well then, we have to make sure they don’t get to her.

Technique: I think I can help out here, sir. A way to do that would be to keep them so busy they don’t have the time nor the energy to get to the center of Sally and help her to stay connected in there.

Observer: A good theory, but it needs the means of implementing it.

Ridiculousness: That is easy. Make clerks out of them.

Deception: Yah, and call them counselors.

Confusion: Damn you Ridiculousness and Deception you are stealing my thunder.

Unnecessary Death: Now, now, Confusion. Don’t you start doing Jealousy’s work for him. We don’t care where the Unnecessary Death ideas come from just so long as we reach our goal. We need new blood in our ranks, and if we can get Sally’s we will all be better off for it.

Choice: It will be easy to get the counselors to make out reports, fill out forms, answer the phone, attend meetings, and neat stuff like that.

Ridiculousness: To make it even better, make the counselors an extension of the administration in order to keep Sally from trusting them if they do manage to squeeze a little time to listen to her.

Unnecessary Death: If I can add a little Ridiculousness of my own we could have the administration reward the counselors who are the best clerks and that will help us to achieve our goal.

Alienation: Sir.
Unnecessary Death: Yes, what is it, Alienation?

Alienation: As you know, I am married to Ms. Meaninglessness and we have given birth to an idea.

Unnecessary Death: Well, what is it?

Alienation: As you know, sir, if one evaluates her own mistakes and her own progress and she learns from them, she will stay whole. And as we all know, Wholeness is LIFE’s number one worker.

Unnecessary Death: I’m not in kindergarten. I know Wholeness is LIFE’s number one worker. Get to the point.

Alienation: We need to interfere with Wholeness. We propose an evaluation system whereby people other than Sally herself grade her work and pass judgment on her. These others can be teachers and they’ll not possibly be able to evaluate correctly for Sally because they do not have direct connection to her neural and psychic networks. If we are lucky enough, Sally might even give the evaluation of herself over to these others and then we will have this suicide thing in Sally pretty well sewn up.

Unnecessary Death: Ah, my workers, splendid, splendid! When Sally commits suicide you can all have some of her blood. You deserve it because you all will have sucked some of the LIFE out of her.

Results: I like the part about disconnecting Sally from her own evaluation of herself and giving it to others, but let’s add some components to this. If she does well enough in satisfying these outside evaluations, give her a scholarship for further education. In that way it will look like it is LIFE giving to give her own evaluation over to others. It will be a good case of deception.

Deception: Thank you for using me more. I have felt a little left out and I really doubted that you could get Sally to take her own life without me.

Choice: As you know, sir, if these humans do things which bring about Unnecessary Death, they can use their conscious minds to connect the death outcome to the Choices which bring it about, and be able to make other Choices.

Unnecessary Death: Look, I’m no dummy. I know that humans can do something about us leading them towards our lair, and by seeing the outcome of death Choices can shift over towards our enemy—LIFE. But, I don’t think they are smart enough to see it.

Choice: Maybe so, but I wonder.
Results: I can add something, sir. A way to get Sally to want to give up on LIFE will be to make her existence boring. We can do this through the schools, too.

Unnecessary Death: How so?

Rut: There are lots of clever ways to do it. Take your pick:

1. Have teachers teach like they were taught.
2. Repeat the same learnings year after year.
3. Teach for the average instead of finding a way each child can go as fast or as slow as needs be.
4. Set up the school schedule in a lock-step manner so that if Sally gets excited about a certain thing, she can’t pursue it in depth because she has all this other stuff to do.
5. Have teachers teach things which do not excite or interest themselves.
6. Keep the teachers so busy during the day and evening that they hardly have time to urinate. This will keep them from preparing in depth and will contribute to boredom.

We can devise other schemes if you want us to, sir.

Unnecessary Death: No, that is enough for the school. I’m concerned about the human family. Sally will spend a lot of time there, so we need to get to the family, too.

Rut: Do more of the same.

Unnecessary Death: What do you mean do more of the same?

Results: I think I know what Rut means. Have the home do some of the same things the church and school do to push Sally towards unnecessary suicide.

Ridiculousness: Why not? Great idea! Get them to buy this outer evaluation done by the school. Parents could give money for high grades even though the work to get grades doesn’t fulfill Sally. Have the parents paste the report cards on the refrigerator door for others to see so they can brag about them.

Threat: We could have parents threaten Sally that they won’t love her unless she goes along with outer evaluation.

Helplessness: Parents could also practice Helplessness as a way of life. They can make a lot of defeating Choices and then blame other people and things for their Choices. Sally is bound to pick up some Unnecessary Death things from that.
Fear: Have the parents scare the children deeply if the kids don’t have the concept of God the parents do.

Divider: Sally will someday question the view of God her parents teach her, particularly when it has Unnecessary Death in it, and we can get the parents to be threatened by this.

Defensive: You can use Threat here if you want to, but how about using me, too? Let the parents get Defensive if Sally even questions their God concept. Not only will this serve to divide parents from children, but it will help divide Sally from herself, too.

Unnecessary Death: These are all good workable suggestions. We need to keep going and create more Unnecessary Death because LIFE is strong in these humans.

Alienation: Have the family members poke fun at authentic ideas and feelings Sally has, because this will divide her from these true parts of herself.

Results: It wouldn’t be a bad idea to build up Anxiety in Sally as a child by having her parents fight with each other.

Ridiculousness: Even better if we can get them to leave each other so she’s caught in the middle. She will be pulled two ways and have to develop some behaviors to cope with the Anxiety of being pulled two ways.

Loneliness: Jolt Sally with a good case of Loneliness. That will bring Pain into the picture and she will develop behaviors to cope with the Pain.

Fear: That will give me a great opportunity to get into the act, too. I’ll stick around so Sally can be fearful of letting the behaviors go which she developed in order to cope with Pain and Anxiety in the first place.

Unnecessary Death: You co-workers are doing well. Keep it up and we will snuff LIFE out of Sally and the Universe.

Observer: What my co-workers are reporting reeks of Unnecessary Death. I can see that. But, Sally will have a core of LIFE in her, and no matter how much we make it rough on her, she will try and follow her integrated LIFE self. What are you gonna do about that?

Ridiculousness: Work it out so that no one listens to Sally’s true and deep self as she expresses it. If no one listens to her true self, she will begin to doubt the validity of it herself and eventually she will cease trusting it.

Unnecessary Death: Very good. I can see the Unnecessary Death wisdom in what you are saying.
**Choice:** Let's figure out a way so church people and school people don't really listen to Sally's true self.

**Technique:** That's easy to program into our Unnecessary Death assembly line. Have the church people who represent the God in heaven concept sell that concept. With so much to sell there will be no room for listening. As far as the school people are concerned we can have them keep themselves so busy they won't have time to listen to Sally if they wanted to.

**Doubt:** How you gonna get the parents not to listen to Sally?

**Choice:** I think that is easy to work out, too. Get the parents to listen to Unnecessary Death parts they have taken into themselves instead of their own inner LIFE material. If they don't listen to the LIFE in themselves they won't be able to listen to it in Sally.

**Loneliness:** Yes! Yes! Great! Great! Sally will be trying to get someone to listen to LIFE within her and nobody will pay much attention to her. She will then experience such a shivering loneliness that she will run away from it.

**Divider:** And that will help separate her from herself even further.

**Unnecessary Death:** I think you have all done good work. We have a good plan. Now, go out and start implementing it, and when we have the Unnecessary Death system in full gear, we will try it out on Sally. I know she can always choose LIFE over me, but we will have to take that chance.

Twentieth Century A.D.—Unnecessary Death has had his co-workers down on earth trying to bring about Unnecessary Death in human beings. He has called them all back to have an evaluation session to see how things are going. He wants to test the whole thing out on Sally.

**Unnecessary Death:** Would you begin to tell me how things have been going all these years?

**Everyone in chorus:** Quite well, sir! There is much Unnecessary Death on earth. We have the people killing LIFE not only in themselves, but in others as well. There is much Unnecessary Death throughout the human culture.

**Ridiculousness:** You would be pleased to know, sir, that the humans have built a lot of Unnecessary Death into their cultural organizations.

**Unnecessary Death:** I hadn't thought of it before, but maybe I should have each of my workers report on how it is going from
his/her particular angle. Let's begin with you, Ridiculousness, as long as you are talking.

Ridiculousness: It is going very well, sir, as I said. Humans are doing a lot of Ridiculous things to themselves which is leading to Unnecessary Death.

Unnecessary Death: Like what?

Ridiculousness: Oh, they are holding onto a concept of God which is killing them. They expel children from school because the children are absent. They develop these armies and kill people in the name of peace. They are destroying their environment which they are dependent upon for LIFE. Things like that.

Loneliness: I think I have done well. People are separated from themselves and ache to be re-united with themselves. People are lonely for each other because they are so separated. Best of all, though, they are separated from the whole of life, and lonely for God.

Unnecessary Death: Someone else report.

Fear: I think I have probably done as well as anyone. People are afraid to walk the streets. I have Fear in many of the schools. I even have Fear in the churches—they are scaring people about what will happen if they think in ways different than the churches think. In business there is a lot of Fear of back stabbing. And, you wouldn't believe the Fear I have running rampant in Government. It is a joy to behold.

Germ: Death is contagious and spreading. What more can I say?

Results: Most of the contagion is because of me, sir.

Anxiety: I am working especially on the children. They are helpless and because of that they are easily overwhelmed. I have got parents creating anxiety over toilet training, eating, watching TV, and the like. I can truthfully say anxiety is running high.

Rut: A lot of people are bored. It has been worked out that the institutions these humans created to give LIFE to themselves are now telling them what to do. They don't know how to reverse it and they are bored.

Results: I'm using Pain and Anxiety to hurt people through their institutions.

Disowning: I have got people blaming all over the place. Some blame God, others the devil. There is a lot of blaming of each other and the past. I have been able to do so well that I have
Disowning permeating the human language. People disown through language and hardly know they are doing it.

Confusion: I don’t need to blow my own horn. Everyone here will tell you there is a lot of Confusion on earth. The politicians are doing a lot of my work for me. I have people saying one thing and meaning another. A lot of physicians espouse that they are concerned for people, but treat them just the opposite. Boy is that confusing. I have got some of the churches preaching brotherly love, and at the same time practicing bigotry. It really throws people for a loop.

Results: There again, sir, I must take much credit.

Meaninglessness: People are doing work that doesn’t mean a thing to them in many cases. I have students studying things in school that are of no interest to them. I have helped remove people from nature and that takes meaning away.

Unnecessary Death: Sounds good to me.

Meaninglessness: As you know, sir, we do not always work alone. As Alienation, Disowning, Despair, Fear and some of the others have done their work, it has led to Meaninglessness. And as I have done my work it has led also to Fear, Despair, and the like.

Unnecessary Death: I understand that and am pleased for the coordinated effort. Minimizer of Unnecessary Death Results, how is your work going?

Minimizer of Results: Quite well if I may say so myself. I have people practicing Unnecessary Death and bragging about it to Minimize the Results. Others see themselves as martyrs for putting up with so much when they don’t see they are doing it to themselves. I have a whole bunch of people eating to try and cut down on Pain and Anxiety and Fear and Boredom and Meaninglessness. I am really proud of the fact that I have whole nations on drugs and alcohol to try and Minimize the Unnecessary Death Results so they don’t have to change what they do to bring Unnecessary Death about. What is so beautiful about the whole thing is that not only do the people not actually minimize the Pain, but these methods they use bring more Pain.

Unnecessary Death: Things are going so well there is no question but what we will be able to get Sally to join our ranks. I can taste the blood now.

Death Observer raises his hand.

Unnecessary Death: Yes, what is it?

Death Observer: The reports have been going so well that
I hate to bring up this subject, but there are some alarming aspects down there on the planet earth, too.

*Unnecessary Death*: What is it? Tell me quick.

*Death Observer*: Some of the people are working to expose us and how we work. They are clearly laying out what goes into a death system and helping people use their conscious minds to avoid Unnecessary Death and bring about LIFE.

*Unnecessary Death*: Oh, phoomp. I was afraid of something like that. Deception must have done his work and someone saw right through it.

*Death Observer*: There is even something worse if you can imagine.

*Unnecessary Death*: What the hell could be worse than exposing how we work?

*Death Observer*: Some damn LIFE giving bastard has had the smarts and the guts to name how the universe creates LIFE, and is passing that information around. And, in spite of what we have done, people are beginning to take direction from him. If that thing gets going too strong, the whole place may be teeming with LIFE and there will be no place for us.

*Choice*: I don't like the sound of it all, but let's leave it up to Sally. Unnecessary Death is available and so is LIFE. If she and a lot of her companions choose LIFE over us, well, we will have to go to another planet and start all over.

*Unnecessary Death*: I don't argue with you Choice, but I want to hear more about what these people down on earth are doing to expose how we work and what they are doing to give people direction to LIFE. I think I am beginning to get sick over this whole thing.

*Unnecessary Death Observer*: I can tell you some of what is going on, sir. It is being pointed out to the people that there are definite Choices between LIFE and Unnecessary Death. They keep reminding the people that they do possess this Choice ability and they urge them to use it. Others are trying to get the people to see that Disowning removes them from the ability to choose and makes them Helpless which leads to Death Results such as Pain and Anxiety.

*Results*: Phoomp! Phoomp! Phoomp! I thought I was getting away with getting people to experience Unnecessary Death Results and turn them back on themselves to increase Unnecessary Death.

*Death Observer*: I hate to lay this one on you because you
got so upset over what you just saw, but it is even being shown how to take Unnecessary Death Results and turn them into LIFE giving behaviors.

*Results*: Oh, where will this all lead?

*Unnecessary Death*: To LIFE I am beginning to be afraid.

*Death Observer*: Speaking of Fear, sir, that is even being undermined. People are beginning to see that Fear is the source of all Unnecessary Death and they have even developed ways to reduce and eliminate Fears.

*Unnecessary Death*: I might as well hear the whole story.

*Death Observer*: It is even being put in writing that Fear closes people off to LIFE. People are seeing how Ridiculous some of the things they have done are, they are cutting through Confusion, getting out of Ruts, and doing away with Alienation and Despair and Loneliness by following the Wholeness within themselves.

*Unnecessary Death*: I don’t know if I can take anymore. Is there more? Tell me there isn’t, please.

*Death Observer*: I don’t like being the carrier of LIFE tidings, but there is quite a bit more. Techniques, with all his Deception and cunning and ingenuity, is being exposed. What is worse people are starting to use Techniques to travel the LIFE Road.

*Confusion*: Your message is too clear. Couldn’t you cloud it a bit?

*Death Observer*: I could, but then we would be confused about how to bring about Unnecessary Death and we can’t have that. What’s more alarming about the whole scene down on earth is the fact that they have started to identify and name the integrated LIFE self within each human being, and the people are being encouraged to follow it. Some of them have been getting so many LIFE results that I think Results has shifted camps.

*Unnecessary Death*: Death Results, I want you to say something about the above accusation.

*Results*: I can go either way, sir, you know that. I have no power of my own, it depends on how these humans use me. They can use me to bring LIFE or Unnecessary Death. I can’t be held accountable for what they do with me. They must own what Choices they make.

*Unnecessary Death*: I know it. I just don’t like to be reminded of it. If there is more lay it on me now.

*Death Observer*: There is more, sir. How the universe does
its creating is being circulated around, and in a beginning way people are seeing that the old God concept needs to be let go in favor of taking direction from how the universe creates. People are seeing the importance of openness both within themselves and out into the universe and how that contributes to LIFE. They are seeing the difference between Death and LIFE Choices and are seeing how to use Techniques to carry out LIFE Choices. They are even becoming so bright that they are using their conscious minds to see the LIFE fittings created by achieving new openings, making LIFE Choices and carrying the LIFE Choices out with LIFE Techniques and they are beginning to direct the process.

Unnecessary Death: Bad news, bad news. Tell me. Have these LIFE perpetuators gotten to Sally yet?

Death Observer: That I don't know, sir. Why don't we all look in on her?

Unnecessary Death: Good idea. Let's watch to see who wins out with her.

The following is what is observed as Unnecessary Death and his co-workers observe Sally.

Unnecessary Death and his co-workers observed that Sally came out of childhood being the possessor of many self-defeating behavior patterns. Sally failed to see that she had taken over and kept alive the SDBs she had learned in the past. She made some defeating choices to do this, but disowned that she had made the choices. She blamed the past and all that she had been through in the past as to why she kept doing harmful things to herself today. In essence, Sally had a wall of fear around herself, but she did not see her part in keeping the wall. Even though Sally valued people very much, she would not let them close.

Sally's true self was covered over with her SDBs. She protected herself so much that she couldn't reach into the heart of herself and make a connection. Not being able to be connected into herself, she couldn't let others connect in either, nor could she reach out and connect into other people. The result was that she was very lonely. She was so lonely she was afraid to talk about it.

Having disowned that she made choices to continue the defeating patterns she learned in the past, Sally was unable to quit using fears. The fears energized her patterns and she kept getting worse and worse. She had it worked out that the outcome of her defeating behaviors were fed back into her human system and her
life worsened. She thought about ending it all for the pain was beginning to be unbearable.

However, there were many drug and alcohol users in Sally’s culture and this gave her an idea. Maybe by using drugs and alcohol her pain would go away and her life could take on some meaning. It worked the opposite from what she had hoped. She again thought of suicide.

Before she could become too serious in carrying out the suicide, life within her said to seek out help. She did. However, in seeking help she made two mistakes. One mistake was to approach the help in defeating ways so that it did not work. When this did not work she made half an attempt to kill herself. She wanted to die, but she was also reaching out for help.

She sought out help a second time, but this time she made a second mistake. She sought out a person whose shingle advertised life but really represented the opposite. This help didn’t work either.

Finally the results of her defeating actions became so severe that Sally took her own life.

Unnecessary Death and his co-workers felt very good about Sally. However, in looking down on the earth they saw that there were many Sallies and although one may have chosen Unnecessary Death over LIFE, many others were choosing the opposite. Unnecessary Death sat back and said:

We have a lot of time. Let’s just sit back and watch what goes on down there before we can make a decision to keep doing our work on earth or to move to another planet.

And that is where it was left, in the hands of the human beings who inhabited the earth.
(Perfectionism is essentially a matter of imposing standards on oneself which do not fit)
I work as a secretary and my job lends itself to doing perfectionism. In fact, I think that was the main reason I took this job. As a secretary, I do need to be accurate and my boss expects that of me. Thus, it makes it easy to practice perfectionism.

To be honest, which I will be throughout this paper, I was doing perfectionism long before I ever became a secretary. I learned it initially from my parents who were very demanding. I also went to a church school and perfectionism was preached there a lot too.

Again, in trying to be honest, let me say that one of the ways I have done perfectionism for so many years is by my thinking that the way I was behaving was just the way I was, and not something I was doing. My head was so filled with “that’s just the way I am” that I didn’t have any room for seeing that I kept doing perfectionism in new moments of living. Therefore, I didn’t think it was something I could change.

Not only that, but I have not always been so sure it is something I want to change. Admittedly, doing perfectionism is demanding, and I get uptight, edgy, and tense. I even get pushy with other people who don’t go along with the way I see things. See, I impose standards on myself to be perfect, and I also impose them on others. Others don’t usually like it, but I try to manipulate them into it anyway. I have even lost a tooth because of perfectionism. My dentist told me that I was grinding my teeth and that it was affecting them in a bad way. I couldn’t seem to stop the grinding, because I kept getting up-tight by trying to force myself to be perfect. Finally I cracked a tooth and it had to be pulled out. In spite of these negative results I have seen the behavior as a friend. Seeing the behavior as a friend makes seeing it as an enemy rather difficult. It is as though I have my head so filled with the notion that the behavior is a friend that the evidence hitting me in the face that it is an enemy goes right past my seeing.

To see it as a friend I have done the following: Seen the behavior as helping me get through school, seen the behavior as the reason I got the job I have, and seen the behavior as to why I am a good person. I never look at the fact that as long as I impose
perfectionism on myself I cannot get to know who I am without the behavior, nor can I learn to trust myself to face life just as myself. I also don't look at the fact that the behavior causes me to redo a lot of tasks nor do I look at the fact that being so afraid that I may make a mistake causes me to make many of them. Then I get frustrated because I make a mistake and make more of them. It is a vicious circle, but I don't look and really see it.

As I have begun to look at perfectionism as a self-defeating behavior pattern, it has opened my eyes. My boss often asks me to type something up as a rough draft, and he really means it. He has told me time and time again to merely XXX out mistakes and to leave in misspelled words. It would save me a lot of work and time and him some money, but while I am doing perfectionism I have to make the rough draft perfect.

My main method for doing perfectionism as a secretary is to have an image in my head of what a perfect secretary should be like. I have picked Della Street, the private secretary from the old Perry Mason show, as an image I hold myself up to. Della is available at all hours of the day or night, never makes a mistake, is always the epitome of graciousness, perfectly mannered, and the like. When I am doing perfectionism don't tell me that what I am doing is ridiculous. Don't tell me that she is only a secretary on TV and not a real person, because I wouldn't listen to you. If I listened to you I would have to let the behavior pattern go, and I scare myself about doing that.

Fears I use to keep perfectionism include the following:

1. That I would be lazy if I didn't keep forcing myself to do things.
2. I wouldn't like the person I would be if I let perfectionism go. I might find a slob underneath the behavior pattern.
3. People would reject me if I just did what was natural.
4. I'd lose my job.

Oh, I just thought of another defeating result in doing perfectionism. I build up a lot of resentment this way. For instance, the image in my head of what a perfect secretary should be like keeps me from saying no to things I really should say no to. By never saying no, my boss doesn't know when he is giving me too
much work. I keep taking it on, kill myself to get it done, and re-
sent him and the job because of how they are making me feel. I
also complain a lot that no one ever thinks of me. It is as if I think
I am a martyr, and my lot in life was to be burdened. I think that
everyone is doing these things to me; I don't see that I am doing it.

I am reminded of how I disown what I do. First, I put my ex-
pectations in others' heads, live up to the expectations, and think
that they really have put the expectations on me. I have gotten so
good at blaming other people and things that I can blame the
typewriter, stapler, and office arrangement for things which are
getting to me.

The first step in letting go of any defeating pattern is to recog-
nize that you do it and that it is getting in your way. I have taken
those steps. I'm about to take the next step because I am beginning
to see that while I'm doing perfectionism, there is too much I am
missing out on. I know I don't appreciate my boss as much as I
could. He is a kind and sensitive man, but I'm often in such a stew
I don't think about him in good ways. Other people seem to be
able to relax at times, but not me. I'm always on guard. It gets
tiring. Then there is the fact that I never seem to get close to others
in the office. It is as if the perfectionism is a wall between me
and others.

The more I think about it I have everything to gain and
nothing to lose with letting this behavior go. The thing that I need
to be careful about is that I don't impose perfectionism on myself
as I try to change, because that will be a subtle way to keep the
behavior while I think I am trying to get rid of it. I'm tricky in keep-
ing the behavior, but by knowing how I keep the behavior going I
think I will be able to drop it. Check back with me in a year or
two, and I'll let you in on my progress. I may not be perfect, but
it will be a lot better than what I'm doing now.
FIXATION FRANK

(It's a matter of doing it to oneself)

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Letting new life into oneself causes the self to grow.

Shutting new life out, causes the self to stagnate.

That's strange! I was always told I had a fixation.

I begin to see that, it's not what happened back then as to why I have a fixation today, but what I do today to keep it going.

Boy, is that neat to see because it gives me freedom. I'm not stuck with a fixation if I look and see what I do today to keep my fixation alive.
(Once a decision is made to fail, and the decision keeps being reaffirmed in new moments, then time, energy, and ingenuity need to be devoted to continually implement the failure decision)
Background information: Freddy failed high school and had to drop out. He is now in night school taking courses and doing very well in achieving credits towards his graduation. One of Freddy’s night school classes is a one-credit self-defeating behavior workshop, and while participating in it he wrote the following:

When I first entered kindergarten, and for a number of years after that, I really tried to do well. I can honestly say that many of the school experiences I had did not fit me very well. Somehow, adults were able to design a school without me in mind. When I finally got to high school I realized that many of the unfitting things which were true of my elementary and middle school, were also characteristic of my high school.

Soon after I entered high school I was faced with a major decision. The choice was this: Was I going to take this school with all of its obvious faults and anti-human underpinnings, and get the most out of it by letting it work for me as best I could, or would I try to find loopholes in the system and try to beat it. My decision was to try and beat the system. As I look back on that choice now, it was a choice to use my abilities against myself instead of using them for my best behalf.

Either way I had chosen—to work to use the system and get as much out of it as I could or to fight the system—required that I use my talents, my energy, and my brain-power to fully implement the choice. While some of the kids were putting their energy and brains into learning math, biology, history, and electricity, I was using my talents to find loopholes in the school.

Once I had made the decision to spend most of my time finding loopholes in the school, I could not let myself know I had made the decision. If I had fully faced the decision I had made, which in many ways was defeating, I would not have carried it out. Thus, I had to keep myself from honestly facing the decision. My main method for accomplishing this “clouding of my own major decision” was to gather friends around me who were doing the same thing and, rather than to see my decision, it looked like that was just the correct thing to do. Incidentally, the people at school tried hard to get me to quit defeating myself, but they focused on such
things as being late to class, being in school, doing assignments, fighting, and the like. What they should have helped me with was the basic decision I had made. I can see now that they put their energies in the wrong place to help me. As long as I had made the inner decision to fight the system, then I needed to carry that out by skipping, fighting, trying to get away with things, and so on. If I would have changed that choice, these methods I used to carry out the defeating decision would have dropped off.

One of the first things I did after deciding to beat the system was to assess the personalities of the teachers, counselors, and administrators of the school. I didn’t have tests to give them like they gave us, but I developed my own system. I believe today as I look back on it, my system was better than theirs. One of the ways to try and figure out teachers is to listen to the nicknames the older kids have pinned on them. These nicknames usually speak to idiosyncrasies of the teachers and these idiosyncrasies can be utilized. In our school we had Up-Tight Annie, the Mouse, Leaping Lena, Beaky Beakman, The Stinger, Armpits Armstrong, Big John, Pop, and Doc. I was clever enough to take the nicknames, determine what the names represented and used the information to my advantage (or disadvantage depending on how you look at it) to beat the system. Leaping Lena, for instance, was slow afoot and slow of mind. I got away with murder with her. I had her so she didn’t know if she was coming or going. Some names such as Pop were affectionate and these could often be used to manipulate the person. The Stinger hated kids so I stayed away from her, which I have always figured was smart. Up-Tight Annie was like a wound-up spring, and the right thing at the right time would set her off.

One thing I learned about teachers is that some of them are consistent in their idiosyncrasies, while others have ups and downs. I spent a fair amount of time determining the ups and downs. To do this I had to develop my listening skills and while in the hall or the cafeteria or before and after school, keep alert to what the other kids were saying. When I was alert in listening to other kids they would let me know where teachers were day by day.

My older brothers and sisters and older kids in the neighborhood were good ones to listen to, also. Apparently they had spent time trying to figure out the teachers, and they had lots to pass on to me when I was alert and open to it. For instance, my older brother told me that if I brought up certain subjects with certain teachers, the teachers would get sidetracked for the whole hour and the sub-
ject matter we were to study that day would never get covered. One day we were going to do a project I hadn’t prepared for and I brought up this one sidetrack subject. The teacher was off and running and didn’t stop until the bell rang. I have found that for some teachers you can get them sidetracked by bringing up sports, with others you can use politics, and others like to spend time on religion. More than a few of the teachers like to talk about the good old days, and a well-timed question can do wonders. In my last year in school, I noticed that both the men and women teachers liked to talk about inflation and the women’s movement. I can’t say getting teachers sidetracked from what was planned to do always ended up being a waste of time, because sometimes our discussions were interesting and alive, and everybody got involved. Even me!

Once having made the decision not to get the most out of school, I had to figure out ways to carry out that choice. One of my best methods for doing that was to come to class without paper and pencil or my books. This drives most teachers up a wall. Often they will send you back to your locker, and I used that as an excuse to grab a cigarette in the bathroom and wander around the halls. If I was caught in the halls I would merely say that my teacher had sent me to my locker.

In going to class without paper and pencil I needed ways to convince myself that what I was doing was o.k. When I went from one class to another, the trick I used on myself was to fix in my head that I didn’t have time to go to the locker, and I then felt justified in going to class unprepared. If the teacher got on me for being unprepared, I would look into my mind and find the justification I had set up for myself, and I would think the teacher was getting on me when he shouldn’t. I even got angry at the teachers for being on me when I was unprepared, and thought I was right for trying to put the blame on them. Often I would feel sorry for myself, never seeing that I was bringing difficulty on myself. Occasionally, but not too often, I could even get a teacher to feel bad and apologize for something I had done.

I was in this one class and the teacher was on me real good. She had a right to be, but I didn’t think so at the time. I figured that I needed to show the other kids that the teacher wasn’t bigger than I was. So, I told her off. She gave me a referral, and I ripped it up in front of the whole class, threw it in the air, and walked out in what I thought was triumph. After class I saw some of the kids and I said, “Boy, did I show her up! Did I tell her off or what?
Didn’t I?” One kid said to me, “You were the one who looked dumb, not her.” I jumped right on him saying, “Just 'cause you like her, nobody else does.” Some of the other kids nodded my way and this other kid shut up. I felt like I had put him in his place.

I can see now as I look back on it, that once you make a decision not to do well in school, you need to keep doing things to carry the choices out. I hate to think of the time, energy, and talent I wasted this way. For instance, I’d ask teachers if I could go to the nurse to get out of class. With some teachers this works and with some it won’t. One time a teacher wouldn’t let me out of class to see the nurse, so I said right in front of the other kids that it was a very private matter and that if he didn’t let me go I was going to hold him personally responsible when it dropped off. This broke up the whole class. He let me go. The best excuse to get out of class, however, is to say you need to go see the principal. This again won’t work with all teachers, but if you can figure out the teachers who have hangups with authorities, it will almost always work with them because they’ll be scared to say no to you in case the principal really does want to see you. This will also work in a school where the principal maintains a big boss relationship over the teachers instead of a relationship on a more equal footing.

Some teachers have emotional problems of their own, and if a student wants to get out of stuff he might say he has to see the counselor about an emotional problem. If you are clever enough to know the exact emotional difficulty the teacher has, and say you have the same one, this works even better. You have to find soft spots in teachers like that, and use those soft spots to keep from doing well in school once you have made the decision to get the least out of the experience. I noticed, however, that some of the teachers had it together and this counselor excuse wouldn’t work with them. I don’t mean that they were the strict ones either. I think that if teachers themselves didn’t practice a lot of their own SDBs, it would make it hard for the kids to use theirs.

When I was in high school, another mistake I made was to leave the responsibility for the class to be interesting, totally up to the teacher. I took no responsibility for it. In my night school classes, I don’t do that anymore and, to my surprise, I am getting so much more out of them. In high school it was like the teacher had to put on a real good show for me to get the least bit interested. I now realize, maybe it is because I am a little older, that if students don’t show interest in class, it has a bad effect on most teachers and
pretty soon the teacher is doing less than his/her best. Then, this affects the kids in a bad way which in turn has a worse effect on the teacher which in turn has a bad effect on the kids and on and on the vicious cycle goes. Class can end up boring for both the teacher and students this way. Another way I made it boring was to daydream. I did this quite a bit as a way of escaping the class and what was happening. I would often think of what I would be doing after school, or think about my girl, or about working on my car. I would even get my mind on something which happened before school or earlier that day.

Earlier I mentioned trying to figure out the teachers. This was mostly by trial and error. It was like putting my hand into a hole in a big piece of cheese. If I got bit I wouldn’t go into that hole at that time, but if I didn’t get bit I kept using that hole time and time again. If once I found a weak spot, I would register that in my mind and keep using it, until of course the teacher got close to being mad at me. I used to install a cooling-off period when a teacher got mad, and would go back to using the weak spot when I thought it was safe again.

One of my better tricks for failing in high school was my method of building up trust with a teacher or counselor or principal, and then taking advantage of it. One of the teachers who I took advantage of found me out one day and was on my tail after that. I went to the counselor and asked for a transfer, using the excuse that the teacher and I didn’t get along. I didn’t exactly lie about it, because me and this teacher didn’t get along, but I didn’t say why. Another time I transferred out of a class by going to the counselor who I had built up a friendship with by saying that the kids in the class weren’t serious enough. Most counselors are so busy doing all kinds of things that they don’t have time to check out the problem to the bone, and they will often go along with you when you are trying to defeat yourself.

One day I was in the cafeteria and a kid announced he had figured out a new way to skip and not get caught. I listened to the idea and it sounded pretty good, but I added a trick or two of my own to what he had discovered to make it even better.

I used this particular approach to skip school until school people started closing in on me, and then I switched tactics. This switching tactics throws everyone off guard and if you do it right they will just about get to you and you can switch. I know a kid
who used to switch so often and do it so well, they never did catch up with him.

In skipping you need ways to pull it off—if only in your own mind. Some of us used to sit in front of the school and debate if we would have more fun and get more out of the day by going to school or by skipping. Some days I think we actually did learn more out of school than we would have in school, but most of the time we lied to ourselves and if we wanted to skip we would stack the deck in our minds in favor of skipping. In a way we knew we were stacking the deck, but we never fully faced it square.

Another way to keep failing in school is to do defeating activities and then to brag to yourself and others about how clever you were to get away with certain things. We never used to look and see that we were the ones losing out the most, we just looked at how clever we were. The fact of the matter is we were clever. Only, we were putting our cleverness in the wrong direction and it was working against ourselves.

Sleeping in class was one of my familiar behaviors. Most of the teachers didn’t seem to mind too much. I guess they figured it was less of a hassle if I slept because if I was awake I’d be interfering. After I would sleep I would brag about how late I was up the night before, or I might even hint that I had a few too many drinks just to act big. Usually I would throw in a derogatory remark or two about how boring the teacher was in order to get the kids looking away from the mistakes I was making.

It helps to fail high school if you are not there for yourself, but convince yourself you are only there because your parents are pushing you. In doing things for your parents and not for yourself you can do just enough to get by, or it can give you something you can resist and fight against. While I was resisting it never dawned on me that I was being more hurtful to myself than to anyone else.

Some people might think I was really a dumb kid for not seeing what I was doing back then. However, I wasn’t dumb in one sense of the word. To fail as cleverly as I did it took some brains. As an example, it takes ability to be able to distract oneself away from the truth. The truth used to be pricking away at me, but I wouldn’t look at it. I can remember one time I started thinking about a guy that I knew who had flunked out of school and who ended up successful, and in my mind I would look at him and have a method to avoid the truth.
In my particular case I didn't have a father at home. In many ways my mother was helpless in making me do things, and I would use her helplessness against her. She would try to get after me and I would just laugh at her. Finally, in exasperation, she just gave up. She cried a lot, though, and that wasn't easy to live with, because I never found a way to put the blame for her crying on any shoulders other than my own. In fact, her reaction helped me to see what I was doing and got me started facing myself.

Finally, after my working so hard to defeat myself, the school had it with me and kicked me out. I just sat around for awhile doing nothing, except a lot of thinking. It was then that I saw what happened. I had chosen to do poorly and had put so much effort into failure that it was no wonder I was successful at failing. I realized, however, that if I was so clever in failing I could be successful in winning. Since enrolling in night school I have completed three courses all with grades of B or better. In my case it was just a matter of choice. Upon entering high school I had chosen not to succeed and I put effort into carrying out that decision. Now I have decided to succeed and I am putting effort into that choice.

It all boils down to choices.
CARL THE UPTIGHT CLERGYMAN

(Carl’s adult defeating behaviors are disguised versions of those he learned and used when he was a child)
Background Information: Pretend with me that Carl developed a non-malignant small brain tumor. As the medical doctors were using some electrical apparatus to probe for the exact location of the tumor, they accidentally poked into a cluster of memory cells. To the doctor's surprise, various cells had accumulated and integrated knowledge concerning various facets of Carl's life. One cell stored knowledge concerning Carl's father, another had a capsule summary of his elementary school experience, another cell had all the data Carl had taken in about the female sex, and still another had Carl's honest and integrated knowledge of where he stood with God. The doctors, knowing they had by chance discovered something very valuable, quickly hooked the electrical responses to a computer and in a few seconds time were able to record all the data each individual memory cell had stored.

For your information Carl's tumor was removed without complications. Carl, upon recovering, was told about the amazing thing which had occurred when he was under the anesthesia. Doctors asked permission to use the data from his memory cells in further research. Carl consented after receiving a guarantee that he could have a copy of all the computer printouts.

Carl was particularly interested in one of the printouts. It came from a memory cell which had all the information about how he did uptightness. In essence the following is what the printout said.

Computer Printout About Carl's Uptightness

Carl has never admitted it to himself, but the truth about how he does uptightness is stored within him and the truth is available. Carl needs to decide to open the door to truth before he can see it. The door to the truth is closed through Carl's use of fear. Carl fears learning that he is the one doing the uptightness to himself, and he fears the unknown that he thinks lurks behind the fear door.

The uptightness Carl does as an adult is basically the same behaviors he used as a child. On the surface the behaviors do not look to be structurally the same, but they are. What Carl does to disguise the behaviors is to take adult learnings and make the behaviors look sophisticated. While he is doing this, however, he does not admit to himself what he is doing. An example of disguising behaviors can be seen if one looked at the tattling behavior Carl used as a child. As a child, Carl would tattle to his mother about
his brothers and sisters, but as a minister he would reprimand his congregation in order to get his way. On the surface the behaviors do not look anything alike, but structurally they are the same thing in that they manipulate in defeating ways. In his reprimanding Carl quoted from the Bible and from learned authors, which made it difficult to see that the reprimanding was a polished version of tattling manipulation.

Other examples of Carl taking a childhood defeating behavior and disguising it as an adult include: (1) As a youngster in high school Carl was overly concerned about being a member of the high school clique. He did nothing to jeopardize his status within this group. As a minister Carl kept an alert eye and an alert ear out to determine which way the congregation wind was blowing. To keep from seeing that he was overly concerned with his congregation’s opinions, Carl looked at his behavior as fitting for a leader who was tending his flock. (2) When Carl was a youngster he took on and followed rules which his parents, the school, and the church set up for him, and he followed them even when they did not fit him as a person. As an adult he did the same thing, only he made his adult rules sound spiritually and philosophically solid. (3) As a child Carl cried to get his way, and as an adult minister he complained a lot. (4) As a child Carl would disown by blaming his brothers and sisters. As an adult Carl learned a great deal about various psychological schools of thought, and he blamed his id, the child in him, and the reinforcement surrounding him for the defeating things he did. In essence he took adult learnings and used them to perpetuate his defeating behaviors which he had learned as a child. Carl was doing what many adult professionals do in order to keep their self-defeating behaviors which they learned in the past, and that is to take various aspects of their profession and use it in a disguised way to keep the behaviors.

As a clergyman Carl has had great difficulty with his congregations but he has never fully faced the fact that he had difficulty. His technique for not seeing the difficulty is to look around at other clergy, find himself not much worse off than they are with their congregations, and then use this perception to ignore his situation. It is a very elemental thing, but if a person does not look in the right direction he won’t see the things that are there. Thus, one of Carl’s methods to do uptightness is to do it and look in the wrong place for the cause.

It was pointed out earlier that Carl took on rules when he was
a child and that he kept them as an adult. Some of the rules were
good ones, but some of them didn’t fit Carl. Carl kept both sets of
rules, and as a clergyman, imposed further sets of rules on himself.
Through imposing rules on himself Carl had a method whereby
when he was confronted with a situation, instead of having to run
the situation through himself and come out with his current (where-
ever-he-is-at-the-moment) response, he could go inside and grab a
rule and use that to cope. Thus, he never had to truly rely on him-
self. One method Carl used to keep from seeing how he used rules
to do uptightness was to see the rules as God’s will. Once he had
that mindset, he was guaranteed a means for being able to cope
with life by answering it with rules, instead of answering it straight
out of himself. Another technique to make certain he could keep
rules for himself, was to preach about and convince his congrega-
tions that they should do the same thing he was doing. What this
accomplished was that not only was he able to keep his own rules,
but others around him were doing the same thing which meant the
likelihood of his being without rules was lessened.

One of Carl’s major rules he imposed on himself was that he
needed to help others. Helping others is, of course, a good thing
to do; but a rule does not have to be made out of it. To make a
rule out of helping others is built onto the fear that without the
rule maybe he wouldn’t be doing enough good things. Rules which
do not fit and which lead to defeat are always built on top of sus-
picion of who the person is behind or under the rules. Carl really
got uptight with this rule of helping others because even when he
honestly did not want to help others, he couldn’t listen to these
data. In overdoing this helping others, Carl neglected himself, his
family, his own sex life development with his wife, being with his
children as they grew up, and he neglected recreational and fun
activities. Paradoxically, Carl was so busy doing things for others
he neglected his own spiritual development. Through the confine-
ment of his own spiritual development Carl was unable to satis-
factorily lead others in their spiritual development, and this led to
further uptightness.

The way Carl got away with ignoring his wife and children
was to see his total commitment to the church as a virtuous act on
his part. By seeing his behavior as virtuous, he could then ignore
or distort the feedback from his wife and children which was say-
ing in effect that he was not spending enough time with them.
With his wife and children somewhat unhappy with Carl's behavior, he was getting himself further into a bind.

Carl's behaviors not only got him into difficulty with his own family, but led him into difficulty with his congregation too. One of the techniques to keep from confronting himself with his defeating behaviors was to change jobs about every three or four years. What this accomplished was to allow him to run away from that which he had brought about, and he never had to face himself head on. Of course, Carl made the move seem like a Christian thing to do, but most of it was a way to minimize the results of what he did to defeat himself. To move every three or four years means that there needs to be a congregation that wants you. Carl developed skills to make this possible. One of them was to have a sermon that was so well organized and researched that when he was invited to a new church to give a sermon he would always give this pet sermon. He even had jokes in the sermon that were sure to get a laugh. The sermon never failed to impress people and make them want him as the minister.

Carl complains a lot about restrictions he feels in his life. Yet, when he went to this one new church he had many opportunities to develop some elbow room for himself, but he failed to take advantage of it out of fear of rejection. At one of the houses he and his wife visited, the host and hostess had four kinds of drinks available for dinner. They had milk, coffee, pop, and wine. Carl would have liked to take some wine, if for no other reason than to make some elbow room for himself, but he failed to partake even when it was offered. Carl was so busy maintaining an image of the perfect person, that he had no time to do the things he really wanted.

One day Carl's son came home and said he wanted to attend another church. Carl would not hear of it, believing that his parishioners would get upset to have the preacher's kid going to another church. It was just another case of Carl letting what he thought the parishioners were thinking or what they actually did think, dictate how he was going to conduct his life. The interesting thing which happened, however, was that the more Carl let others dictate to him, the more they did, until he had himself convinced there was nothing else he could do but go along with them.

It got so bad that Carl felt like he lived in a glass house, and instead of deciding how he was to conduct his own life, he figured out what he thought others wanted and he followed that. The funny thing that resulted from that was not only did he not like doing what
he thought parishioners wanted, but neither did the parishioners like it.

Not only did Carl let others dictate to him, he passed it on to his family. One day his daughter was at a school dance, having a good time, and dancing up a storm. One of the very critical parishioners heard about this and told Carl he thought Carl's daughter should not have been having such a good time in an activity like dancing. Carl had an opportunity to confront the parishioner with this and he had the opportunity to keep this information from his daughter so that she would not be saddled with the remark, or Carl could have ignored the remark. Carl took none of these alternatives. Instead he told his daughter she would have to quit her dancing activities because it was not appropriate to a preacher's child. Carl was now getting his daughter to do uptightness to herself like he was doing to himself.

Deeper and deeper into a restrictive box Carl went, not seeing that he was digging it for himself. He kept blaming others and circumstances for what he was doing. One disowning method he used was to see restrictions as natural things one has to put up with if he is going into the clergy. Carl also would say to himself as a way not to see his defeating activities, "God never intended this job to be easy."

Finally things started closing in on Carl. His wife and children had honest complaints, his congregation was getting upset, and the superintendent, who was Carl's immediate boss, started putting pressure on Carl to change his behaviors. Carl couldn't keep from facing the fact that he was doing some defeating things and that this led to his uptightness. He vowed to do something about it. He honestly wanted to make life better for himself, his family, and for the people with whom he worked. However, even though Carl wanted life to be better, he thought he could accomplish it without letting go of any of the defeating behavior which led to his uptightness. In other words, he wanted things to be better but he was not willing to let go of the behaviors which would make it so.

Carl sat for a long time reading the printout. He could begin to see what the printout was saying, and he made plans to initiate change. Only time will tell if a later printout will give the same old story about how Carl brings about uptightness or if he will have really quit practicing uptightness.
(The way it felt to me was that complaining was like a protective buffer between my tender self and a cruel world)
My name is Connie and I have been on this earth now for twenty-two years. That isn’t a long time by some standards, but I have been through quite a bit in my relatively short existence, and I have gained some wisdom along the way. I very much want to share that wisdom, because I know it can be helpful to others.

On my eighteenth birthday I finally came to the realization that there was something wrong with my life. I knew it before age eighteen, but I wouldn’t look it square in the eye. I didn’t really understand what was wrong, but I knew something needed to be done. After much deliberation, I sought out counseling and through my counseling experiences I learned a lot about how I defeated myself. That’s what I want to share.

I was not born a complainer, but I sure became an expert at it at an early age. I got so good that I think a lot of people must have thought that I was born with special talents along that line. As best I can determine, my complaining started with three different experiences, all of which led to my feeling overwhelmed. (1) My family was poor and because of this fact I was compared to the other children at school, and I got the message that I wasn’t good enough. (2) My mother became ill when I was six and I was frightened out of my wits at the prospect of losing her. I remember asking my dad if she was going to die. (3) I was a sensitive child and other children often said things and did stuff which hurt my feelings. I often felt very lonely because of this.

I began to complain about almost everything. As best I can tell, I must have felt like I needed something to put between me and my world. Even in those early years I somehow knew that what I was doing wasn’t right, but the reason I kept on was because I now had something to put between me and the world and it felt safer that way. The way it felt to me was that complaining was like a protective buffer between my tender self and a cruel, harsh world. The counselor and I figured that the drawing below accurately pictures this dynamic:
Once I had started to complain, one of the ways I was able to keep this SDB was by being proud of what I had done to build the complaining wall around myself. I used to congratulate myself on the fact that no one could hurt me anymore. I would look for things to complain and bitch about and I can remember feeling good about being clever in seeing other people's faults, picking out shortcomings of teachers, cutting my parents down, and the like. Another thing I did was to keep scaring myself about facing my world without the complaining behavior. Somehow I kept thinking that if I didn't complain I would be hurt again, overwhelmed, lonely, and not come off as good enough. I didn't look at the fact that by keeping the complaining SDB I was making these negative things happen. I also became good friends with another little girl who complained a lot too, and this helped me to think I was right in what I was doing.

The main way I kept the complaining behavior, however, was to take the reactions of people and life's situations, and instead of running them through my inner self system which was behind the complaining, I stopped them from penetrating. When the counselor first suggested that there was a choice to complain or not to complain, I thought he was kidding. It seemed to me that that was just the way I was. I even argued with him about that point. He kept telling me that my negative complaining wasn't me, that it actually kept me from being who I really was, but I didn't believe him. I even remember complaining to a friend about this counselor who
was insisting on things that weren't true. But, I found that it was a choice to let other people's reactions into myself or to run them through this complaining behavior pattern which I had developed over the years. But, I want to tell you that at first it didn't feel like a choice to me. That is why I was so stubborn with the counselor and argued with him. He insisted it was a choice; I swore it wasn't. The reason I didn't know it was a choice boiled down to two things. 

1) I scared myself so much about letting the behavior go that I couldn't see the choice opportunity, and 

2) I disowned what I was doing and through this disowning it was like removing myself from my own choices. It was as if I was in one spot making a choice, and at the same time removed myself about five miles from that spot. Therefore, I couldn't see or feel the choice. I guess I thought that if I disowned that it was me making the choice, that meant I really wasn't making it.

I would like to take some space and elaborate on this choice business. When I used complaining, I would come into contact with something such as: (1) A new snow, (2) A job task, (3) A person's reaction to me, (4) A class assignment, or (5) A present my boyfriend bought me, and I would quickly take this phenomenon into myself. Once I had this outer world stimuli inside myself I had a choice to make. Would I send the response into my integrated non-defeating self, and come out with a response from there, or would I send the signal to the complaining SDB and let the SDB respond to the signal? The diagram below is one which my counselor used with me and it helps to illustrate what I did to use complaining:
At this point at which the outer world stimuli could penetrate into my non-defeating self, I blocked its entrance. I used fears to do this blocking. Once I had the entrance blocked then all I could do was to use the SDB pattern. The SDB was a substitute for my real self.

As I grew older, I got more and more effective at complaining. When I was sixteen I remember going to a church conference which was held in a rustic setting. In actuality the setting was very nice and we slept in a very modern building with good beds and all. To complain I did a trick in my mind. I looked at the rusticness of the place and said to the other kids that I didn’t go for this camping out. I made the place seem second rate and was putting it down. My comment about camping out was a ridiculous statement, but it gave me something to complain about.

Cutting off feedback was one of my methods for continuing complaining. When I made my statement about camping out a couple of the kids made some remark about what I had said. I made their liking the place seem stupid and in so doing was able to take their feedback and undermine it so it made no difference to me. If I had listened to their feedback, I would have been able
to see some of the mistakes I was making, but I ended up defend-
ing my SDB.

The longer I kept the complaining behavior the more and
more familiar I got with it. In a way, the behavior seemed like a
friend. At least when I was using the behavior I didn’t have to go
into the unknown. The SDB was like being in a rut, but at least it
was familiar. On the other hand, going with the integrated self
behind the SDB meant going with something that was changing,
developing, and always in the process of becoming. The integrated
self system is not a system that one can know once and for all. I
was afraid to trust life enough to go with this in-process system.

In my counseling, up to a point, I was learning quite a bit.
However, I hit a snag and had great difficulty getting beyond it.
To go beyond the snag meant making a decision to let the behavior
go. That I was unwilling to do, even though I was getting the idea
that the behavior was not my friend. I guess I knew in my head
that the behavior was not my friend, but my guts were not

Then the counselor asked me if I would do a task. The task
was to try and see, in depth, what keeping the complaining behavior
did to me and people around me. He asked me to take a piece of
paper and place a circle in the middle of the paper and to draw
four lines out from the circle and place a circle on the end of each
line. The following diagram illustrates what he asked me to do:
Then he asked if I would place my complaining behavior in the middle circle and identify a negative result which stemmed directly from the behavior and place the result in the four circles around the complaining SDB. It came out like this:

Next he asked me to take any one of the four results and draw three lines out from it and fill the circles with negative results which came from the original result. He told me to continue drawing lines out from results and looking at what stemmed from each result until I ran out of paper. When I finished it looked like this:
When I finished doing this task I just sat back and looked at the paper. It reminded me of a picture I had seen of a nuclear reaction. Then it hit me that the same phenomenon occurs in defeating behaviors as occurs in a nuclear chain reaction. One thing leads to another, which leads to another, until the results of one self-defeating behavior are exploding all over the place. I could see that the behavior feeds on itself and becomes cancerous-like.

As I sat looking at the paper, I began to open up more and more to the results. I could see how the complaining I did brought about the exact results I did not want. It interfered with my goals and got in the way of my using my creative abilities. I could also see that by using this one behavior, I sent out negative results that eventually came back and restricted me. I could see my life getting increasingly worse as I used the behavior, and could accurately predict even greater trouble if I kept it up.

What hit me the hardest, though, was the impact my SDB had on others. I had always realized some negative consequences to my complaining, but I always thought I was the only one affected. The reason I only saw the negative consequences which hurt me was because I was looking at it narrowly and not from a large enough perspective. In the diagram, however, I could see that the further and further my behavior went out, the more and more it hurt other people. In a good way I became ashamed of myself for keeping this complaining behavior.

With consciousness I knew I had to open up to the full impact of the results. I decided to let the results make a full impact on me. I even cried. I vowed to let the behavior go. I did not want to keep hurting myself and those around me. I could see that the more I used SDBs, the further and further out of touch I became with myself, with others, and with reality. I let these results of complaining motivate me to begin practicing better choices. When something would happen to me I tried letting it come all the way into me and reacting to the situation from my integrated self instead of sending a self-defeating pattern out to represent me. I have slipped sometimes and defeated myself, but I am getting better and better all of the time. You can too!