

IDENTITY TRAINING II

Chapter Two

More Ingredients in the Pot

Script is like eating a terrible soup. Nothing you can do will make it taste any better. More salt, more ingredients, more sauces, a handful of noodles, loading it with crackers--nothing works. But since we are on a journey here to really understand, we need to throw in a great big spud, a few carrots, and a bottle of Worcestershire sauce at this point.

To really understand another's script, you need to know The Scene as well as how a person's earliest moments during the Birth Trauma-Attachment phase occurred. You also need insight into how the cards were shuffled during the Oedipal phase and some of the critical decisions the person made in composing their negative Story. A spud, some carrots, and a shot of Worcestershire.

Of course, there were other reigning issues during the exploratory phase (six to eighteen months), the two-year-old phase, or even latency (six to twelve years). Those must be taken into consideration as well, so toss them into the soup along with the appropriate Defense Mechanisms. Rather than complicate things too much, however, we will trust that elsewhere in this writing we are able to pass on information to you about those three phases, their characteristics, and their favorite defense mechanisms. Right now, we have our hands full with the Birth Trauma/Attachment phase, Oedipal and Electra constellation, and the Decision Matrix.

Since you have already taken Identity Training, you have shown your industry and sense of adventure. So, let's plunge on with Script matters.

I

Birth and Attachment

It seems so simple. It has been done so many billions of times. A mother has a baby. She holds it, warms it, feeds it, protects it, and everyone lives happily ever after. There are no

negative consequences whatsoever. All is peaceful. All is at rest. Madonna and child. All cultures have portrayals of the majesty and wonder of birth. Even the father stops his customary survival interests and stands with an expression of tenderness on his face, proud to the core.

Well...yes and no. Yes, there was a mother and undoubtedly she cared; to do otherwise would go against instincts. And there was feeding, warmth, and some nurture. We know the latter from Rene Spitz's studies showing how the absence of touch causes infant death. So there was some goodness in the child's introduction to a world where separateness reigns.

Yet there may be bad news. Sometimes all was not well in the womb, and even if it was Eden, the passage out is pretty slender for a big-skulled child. Further, it is not so much fun to move from a protected environment to a well-lit, noisy world where you are cut, spanked for breath until you cry, have hands pick you up and inspect you, and then are shuttled off to a crib. There is no need to exaggerate it, for all research reveals that the passage from womb to mom's breast is not an easy one. Any long-term therapist knows this from experiences and feelings their clients recall during regression-type therapy episodes.

After a combined 60-plus years of listening to people, we have concluded that there are remnants from birth for everyone. These remnants come out in the form-- wow, hear this!-- of an almost innate fear of closeness. We know, that sentence sounds almost unbelievable! Yet it is as if people know in their unconscious that the Edenic experience of being in the womb is over and that they dwell east of Eden now. It is a matter of time for us, as therapists, to convince clients that the angel with the sword in hand to prevent entrance to the wonderful garden again is none other than themselves. That is a tough realization. Most people want to blame someone else. Frequently, they would rather live with the dreams and wishes and imaginations of a wonderful relationship rather than open the Garden, throw away the sword, and live in peace and love with another. (What we are writing here is sad; it is, however, honest. We can say this because many have laid down the sword and have gone on to love and fulfillment.)

It is attachment, separate but equal, that is the critical phase to accomplish. This time around, unlike a newborn, a grown-up develops the ability to *think when tender, love to the uttermost, feel their way through anything, always honor their own private values and not be swallowed by another*. Identity! A separate autonomous self! Not one searching for symbiosis

where all is wonderful, safe, and beautiful. One separate human wanting another separate human to share moments with in the Garden. That is the new attachment that is necessary.

Unfortunately, this difficulty of birth and lack of soothing, warm attachment can be one of the ingredients that virtually deadens a soup. Colloquially speaking, it is one rotten potato! Tossed erratically into the mixture, it has a kind of poisonous effect as the person demands that the other become the all-nurturing mother like the baby needed long ago and far away. That is too much of a demand upon a relationship. The person needs to receive that kind of re-parenting somewhere else. The choice may be a caring therapist, a loving group, or a kind elderly person that you simply adopt as your nurturing source. But it is necessary to keep the urgent demand of the baby out of a mature relationship.

If you sense an almost screaming demand for the partner to be everything good and wonderful (something mere mortals are incapable of), it might be wise to Sherlock Holmes your way back to the origins of the person. Was there loving attachment? Was there even attachment at all? Or do you discover the original mother incapable of love, the child so plagued with colic that she/he was difficult to hold with nurture, or a very traumatic birth which led the child to avoid closeness? Investigate these carefully. You may be able to save the potato by whittling off a bad spot here or there and then make a most wonderful soup.

II

Oedipal and Electra Constellation

A new client brought along his mother. He was thirty-three, she was fifty-four and bent upon making her son happy. Her husband had died “when Huey was only seven and he has been my life ever since.” As therapists listening to that, it is about the same as a surgeon opening a patient and discovering cancer. There must be surgery and chemotherapy. Not quite. But similar.

We know that separating Huey from mommy is going to be quite a task. Luckily after a while, he will have the surge of life within him and begin to resent her fawning over him as if he were her husband. To get free, he has to lose certain privileges, stop thinking of himself as The Answer and someone fortunate to have, cease anticipating that someone else is going to have his

wishes be commands, and surrender to creative separateness. In other words, for Huey to give up his Script takes quite a major dose of growing up. And, all the while, his mother will be haunting his life, wanting to grab him back and make him “her little man.”

There are many Electra and Oedipal constellations, and each has a way of reaching out and grabbing a person’s soul. Huey’s mom wanted his time and presence. These take energy: Each of the old jealous routines, elder routines, baby routines, or favored routines. Each of the Please Others, and Be Perfects, and Try Hards. Each of the scared adaptations for dad and for mom. Each of the ways that a child adjusted for love. All of the energy focused around mom or dad that tended to become obsessional. All of them. They are psychologically incestuous and must be deleted.

These constellations are like pouring a whole bottle of Tabasco in the Script soup. Each leaves a spicy aftertaste in the mouth, a burning, a bit of bite that makes others blanch and pucker. If you are late, the Jealous Child starts nagging. If you do not take care always, the Baby Child says, “I’m being neglected” and starts looking for another mommy or daddy who will do everything for them. If you do something spontaneous, the partner seeking to Be Perfect for her daddy or his mommy starts calling you “a slob”. If you are, for the moment, inconsiderate, then the one who lives the life of pleasing makes a generalization that you really don’t care. You are supposed to reward the Try Hards with a bit of attention occasionally, but they don’t get the message that you really do love them because they think themselves unworthy of it. All these items, and many more, are leftover incestuous ties to former generations and are deadly to real love.

And the thing with the Script Soup is that this stuff gets all stirred in and begins to affect every sip of the brew. Script Lock can occur so rapidly in a new marriage that it is frightening. We have seen many people who have gone into Script Stand-off only a few weeks after the ceremony. He gets that jaundiced eye and says she is seeking to ruin him. She gets that glaring look and thinks she married her dad. This stuff is worse than a horror movie when you begin to look at it. It can be a very, very bad soup. And, of course, if this is your fare and you eat it and swallow it without any change, for twenty years or so, you may develop a bad stomach for the entire idea of relationships.

III

Fateful Generalizations

Here come the carrots. Decisions made at early ages prior to any outside-the-family experience and before a person can think logically can be like throwing a few dozen moldy carrots into the mix. The Script Soup may become a little more colorful, to be sure, but its palatability goes way down.

The Tree Structure of Ego Modules can be helpful. That graphic shows how a number of private traumas in which a person made a decision about life, people, work, play, religion, relationships, and a host of other items can have an effect. They are like carrots, orange under the surface with a green top sticking out of the ground. “What else do you expect from a man!” “Women! Can’t live with ‘em; can’t live without ‘em.” “People will always let you down.” “Work is stupid and I’m not going to study.” “I will be good and never get angry like my brother does, which gets him in trouble.” “I will smile and never show anyone my true feelings.”

Along about here, you, the student of this Script material, may be getting the sensation that to even get to the point of closeness, you may well be forced to eat a horrible soup. That is not the intent of this seminar. Our purpose is to give you fair warning before you taste, before you start stirring, and to get you to look at the ingredients that you yourself are tossing into the mixture. Is there a part of you that is still clinging to a pattern begun with mom or dad that happens to be rather nauseating? Is there a part of you that wants to keep some old “generalization” about women or men that becomes self-fulfilling? Physician, heal thyself.

The material you learned in Identity Training I is to be used at the point of early decision generalizations. In that class, you learned the Anatomy of a Trauma, how to recognize when a person was coming out of a Child space, and ask the question, “How old do you feel?” Of course, in most spousal relationships when that question is used, the partner says something about you not using “that IT crap on me.” Once you get by that hurdle, and if you know how to say it from a caring and equal position (plus you have demonstrated your willingness to be open yourself), then your chances of success are much higher. The idea is to use the knowledge you

gained in the original course at this important point in Script confrontation.

Once, early in our own marriage, we were driving to Chicago. Dixie closed her eyes while Frank drove. Typically, Frank was looking for a new way to go and turned rather abruptly down a different highway, “just so I can see something I haven’t seen.” Dixie opened her eyes with a start and said, “Don’t you ever switch directions on me!” Frank’s response was stubbornly typical: “When I am driving, I will decide upon the course and expect you to trust me!” Impasse. Now one could ask, who was controlling? Dixie? Frank? Both? Well, the truth of the matter is that something from childhood had intruded. This was not Script at all. Rather it was a unique occasion which brought forth a specific trauma Reflexion.

When Dixie was about seven years of age, she was riding behind her eleven-year-old brother on a “cow pony.” He announced that he was going to rope a post at the end of the fence they were galloping alongside. (Cattle horses are trained to come to an abrupt stop when a rope is thrown over their head so that the rancher can ‘throw’ the calf or cow in question.) Realizing she would not be able to hold on to her brother if the pony suddenly stopped, she said, “No, Harrison! – Don’t do that!” He (probably unaware she couldn’t hold on) did it anyway, and Dixie went flying. She crawled into a barn and decided that she would never take a backseat and let someone else determine her destiny in a moving vehicle. When Frank switched directions, she felt the old scare and responded with a demanding comment.

Luckily, we knew enough about particular traumas that we could work through this, once tempers cooled and before generalizations were made. When Frank does his exploratory bits now, Dixie knows that she can trust him and that he will always do his best to make the world safe for her little girl. She snoozes now and knows that nothing erratic will happen if he can do anything about it.

SUMMARY

People tend to cling to their Scripts for many unconscious reasons. This chapter has added major elements that go hand-in-glove with the Scene. Usually, the person is figuring out

the interpretation of the scene based on the three issues of this chapter: Birth, Oedipal, and minor trauma decisions.

A little brother and sister watch the same scene. Little Fauntleroy is his mother's delight, and he hates what daddy does and gets even closer to mommy. Little Iodine watches and hates what mommy does and decides to never, ever be like her! Ugh! Same scene. Different Oedipal and Electra interpretations. Totally different lives and later Scripts come out of such incestuous interpretations.

Again, take the birth trauma and attachment issue. If a person had colic for a long period and did not make a terrific loving attachment to the mother, they have an anticipatory bodily presupposition that another will not be there for them. They may, for instance, look for occasions to prove the early point that no one will really be there when the stakes are high and help is really needed. Unconsciously, the person sets that up by bristling against closeness and seizing small indications that love may not actually be there. This is sad.

As for decisions/generalizations based on traumas, these too, can go along with the larger Script. Dixie's father was a wonderful man. But let's hypothetically imagine that he was a roust-about and she watched ugly scenes between her mother and her father day after day of her childhood. The experience with Harrison Sr. (following her experience with Harrison Jr.), would have strengthened her thinking that "men are no damn good" and Frank's sudden turn (shortly after our marriage, by the way) would simply have initiated the Script between us. *Thankfully, none of this is true and Script did not get set.* We trust that you will spend time thinking about critical incidents of your relationship and check out whether or not they were based on old traumas and became script-fulfilling. That would be the wisest application of this chapter.

When a person does the work involved to get out of the old movies and put on a new show, there is a sense of being awakened from a long, long sleep. Think Ichabod Crane in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." The person rubs their eyes and wonders, "Where was I, anyway? Did I have my head in a sack? Was I blind and deaf and dumb? How could I have been so ignorant? I'll never do that again. How much time do I have to really be with someone and love?"

Every religion talks about awakenings. Shedding the shreds of infantilism in exchange for the dress of a mature human is surely a form of awakening.

The Magic Soup

A good soup is a mystical thing. It is not for amateurs. You have to be careful about each of the ingredients you put in and measure very wisely. You spot a bad potato or carrot and refuse to add it to the liquid. You are very cautious about spicy elements because each of them will be tasted later. If someone tosses in a wrong ingredient, you look at them and say, "That behavior is beneath you; it will not be allowed!" and you remove that from the pot forthwith.

Magic soup can be made by two chefs, each making sure the other does not spoil the broth, and each being very careful that they also avoid any slips of the wrist. Further, each knows this is a soup that will be memorable and therefore use only the best of ingredients. So, that's all you put into the mix: good vegetables, clean liquid, and proper spices.

"Ahh, that's good."