

## **Your Behaviors Have Hidden Messages That Are Keys to Your Success**

Do you ever wait until the last minute to pay a bill - even when you have the money to pay it? Have you ever instigated an argument and wonder why you were even angry? Have you ever taken on another project when you just told yourself you wanted to be 'less busy'? Do all of your relationships seem to last about the same amount of time?

These behaviors are all forms of self-sabotage. Self-sabotage is a disparity between what you say you want and what you do. When your actions (what you do habitually) are not congruent with your words (what you say you want) you have to first evaluate your patterns of behavior. They may just expose a hidden message or be fulfilling a hidden need. You will sabotage your efforts for either (or both) of these two reasons:

- 1.) The goal or desire is NOT what YOU really want
- 2.) You have unmet needs and your sabotage behavior is fulfilling them

The first thing you need to do is ask yourself, "Is this goal or desire really what I want?" Make sure all your goals are what YOU really want; not what your parents would want, what society says is success, or what others in your field say success is.

When I was a brand new speaker and would go to the National Speakers Association Conventions, I would hear all the 'successful' speakers regaling the number of speeches they gave that year. "I gave 100 speeches this year!" one would say. "I'm over 150 now!" another would reply. It seemed to me, every speaker who touted success, was introduced as a speaker who speaks 5 zillion times a year! It left an impression on me. It gave me a quotient for success. The belief was this: To be a successful speaker I have to speak over 100 times a year.

Seven months into that goal I was burned out, unfulfilled and left wondering why - if I was doing what the 'successful speakers' do, was I so unhappy? After a time of introspection, I decided that success to me was getting even better on the platform, doubling my fee, and speaking only 2 times a month! I learned the importance of figuring out for myself what success means to me. Today, I enjoy a more balanced life and my income actually surpasses that year I tried to be like the other successful speakers. (Note: Some of your colleagues won't understand your definition of success. Be prepared and for warned. You don't have to defend your definition of success to anyone! Just stay committed to it.)

In my book, *Conquer Fear!* I explain the Seven Truths about fear. Truth #6 is: Your everyday habits are broadcasting your belief system, your fear, and your unmet needs loud and clear. For this article I'll address the issue of unmet needs.

Dr. Freud once said, "Humans are insatiable beings. They always get their needs met." The danger in this truth is that if you are not getting your needs met on a healthy, conscious basis you will get them met in an unconscious and

unhealthy way. This will interfere with your efforts of success and even cause you to fear, sabotage, or repel it.

The degrees to which you need these vary by your personality and who you are, but every human being spends some amount of effort getting these innate needs met. The four innate needs human beings have are:

- attention (love)
- excitement
- control
- alone time

As you read through the following stories, identify which one(s) you most relate to. Think about how you have been getting each of the following needs met in a conscious or unconscious ways.

You need more attention (love)

If you are a person who enjoys being in the spotlight and the center of attention, you may experience certain behaviors if you are not getting enough attention. You may start losing your keys or important papers. You may get hurt or begin getting ill often. When you get hurt, ill, or can't find something of importance, what happens to you and the people around you? You guessed it! Other people will come around you and help you find your missing keys, comfort you in your pain, or take care of you while you're ill. You are now receiving the attention you need.

One day my husband, Mark, was standing in front of the open refrigerator. He yelled out, "Lisa, where's the mayonnaise? I walked over to him and showed him where it was (which was right in front of his eyes). This example often becomes more dramatic with stories of people chronically losing items, getting hurt or ill just to shout to the people around them that they need someone to notice them.

When you need more attention and you're not getting it on a healthy level, you will subconsciously behave in a way that will get that need met.

Another way people get this need met is by continuously getting hurt – either physically or emotionally. I had a client, I'll call Sally, with whom I was doing family consultation. She would come every week recalling incredibly sad and unbelievable stories of her family, her job, and her health. It seemed nothing was going right for Sally. My heart went out for her.

One day after sharing one of her heart-breaking stories, Sally said, "My life is a soap opera, and I am the STAR!" This statement was so profound. You see, Sally was getting a huge need met through her negative situations. Since life did not give her the attention she so desperately wanted – and needed - she became her own "star" in her life dramas. Yes, bad things happen to all people, but when it is continuous, you must stop and ask yourself if there is anything you are doing to cause this drama.

There's a great end to that story. You see, when I suggested she work on her own personal development and life interests, she finally was getting the attention and the confidence she was searching for through her new interests and not from traumatic, dramatic happenings in her life.

You need more excitement

If you are a person who values adventure and loves excitement – and are not getting it – you may be getting this need met through the adrenaline rush that comes from being late or even over-extending yourself. I'm proud to say I am a person who loves excitement and adventure. I am not proud to say I fall into the trap of the unhealthy ways of getting this need met.

Picture this. I'm getting ready for work. I'm on time today. In fact, I'm ten minutes early. So, what do I do? Do I sit down and relax, pray, or maybe read a little? No! I start a new project that gets me so involved, I lose track of time and cause myself to be (you guessed it) late! Why do I do that?

I do it because I love the adrenaline rush that being late gives me. I'm addicted to the rush that I get from rushing around doing the last minute things that get your blood pumping, puts a jump in your step and also makes you crazy, unproductive and irritable! I have to work on not allowing my subconscious to get the need of excitement met on this unhealthy level. What about you?

Do you wait for the last possible day to do a project that should have taken you three days? Do you wait until April 14th to begin collecting your tax information? It could be because you love the adrenaline rush that you get from last minute rushing.

While studying for my Doctorate I read a case about a chronic procrastinator. The doctor prescribed for him to take up skydiving! That was the answer for this chronic procrastinator when the doctor discovered his incredible need for adventure and excitement. Since this man's life was filled with deadlines and structure, he got his need met on an unhealthy basis – by rushing around pumped up and running his business and personal life on a last minute basis. I'm not suggesting you pick up sky diving, but I am suggesting you fill your weeks with activities that excite you in order to get this need met on a healthy basis. You need more control

When you need more control over your life, you will behave in ways to gain more control. Usually, these ways are unhealthy and not beneficial to yourself or others.

Another client was always late to important meetings and dates. When he began working on the reasons why that happened, his rebellion began to surface. He was feeling out of control in his search for a new job. The client (the one who could actually help him solve this problem) represented someone who had control over him and this caused his rebellion. We worked on his beliefs about what he did have control over. He saw that he ultimately could say yes or no to the particular job. When he became aware of his beliefs about the control he really had; he was freed up in knowing he could decide to say no to a job and have a voice over the outcome.

One woman I counseled used to wait until the last minute to pay her bills. She had the money in her checking account, but would not write the check until the very last minute, which caused her to often be late on her bills. She couldn't figure out why she could not get herself to write out the checks early until she faced this control issue. She actually said, "I feel like I'm getting ripped off. I don't want to give them the money until I'm ready to." When she changed her belief about paying her bills, she realized she was grateful for the service. She

also began to see that she had the ultimate control of credit cards. She didn't have to use them. But if she did, she would pay the monthly bill without resentment knowing it was a privilege and her choice to use the convenience of credit.

If you are a person who needs more control, then reevaluate your beliefs about what control you really do have. Afterwards, begin exercising that control. Say no to tasks when you have too much on your plate, so you can say yes to those things you really want to (and should) be doing.

Reevaluate your beliefs about control. Come to truths with being a control freak and find things you can have control over – and choose to release every thing else.

You need more alone time

Beth got home before her husband that evening. She was tired from all the demands at work and looking forward to some alone time. When Tim came home, Beth immediately began to instigate an argument. The next thing she knew, the argument had escalated and she found herself saying, "I'm going for a walk," as she slammed the door behind her. "What just happened?" she wondered to herself. She couldn't even remember what she was angry about.

Look back at Beth's behavior. She got exactly what she wanted. She instigated an argument, slammed the door behind her, and was alone. When you need more alone time, you will behave in ways to get it. Usually, these ways are unhealthy and not beneficial. What Beth should have done is told the truth (without guilt), by saying, "I need a half hour to myself, Tim. I'll be in the bedroom (or outside or in the bath) to unwind and regroup."

The key here is to get your needs met on a healthy, conscious basis. Start telling the truth to your spouse, your colleagues and yourself!

Being chronically late, over-extending yourself and even instigating an argument could be your red flag. When you tell the truth of what you really want, what your innate needs are and find healthy ways to get those needs met, you will be freed up to live more concurrently with who God made you. And the best part of all this is when you have the courage to ask for what you need - from your family, boss, and yourself - you give others the permission to meet their innate needs as well.

Evaluate your patterns of behaviors and have the courage to listen to and discover the hidden messages they're shouting out!

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