



## COMMUNICATIONS

### HOW TO CHANGE YOUR HIDDEN AGENDAS

Hidden agendas serve two basic purposes: (1) to establish and maintain a basic life stance, and (2) to promote ulterior desires and wants. The primary difficulty with hidden agendas is that they are temporary and situational. You can "feel" better for a short time but the long-range result is to isolate, establish distance, and avoid the closeness, satisfaction, and comfort that we all want in our relationships; both intimate and working relationships.

For a week count the number of times that you find yourself caught in a hidden agenda of your own. Be aware of what hidden agendas, of other people, that you are hooked by. Find out which are your favorites, how you use them & with whom.

If you want to change:

1. Let others know that you are changing, and what you are changing.
2. Keep a list of your awareness of "who is inviting whom to do what to whom".
3. Reinforce yourself with a kind thought, positive stroke, or other "goodie".
4. Rehearse some new positions by saying them to yourself, for example:

| HIDDEN AGENDA                    | YOUR NEW POSITION                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>I'M GOOD</u>                  | "I'm a mixture of strengths and weaknesses. I can shape both sides of myself."                                              |
| <u>I'M GOOD (BUT YOU'RE NOT)</u> | "I don't have to tear you down to make me feel better. I will stop comparing so much."                                      |
| <u>YOU'RE GOOD (BUT I'M NOT)</u> | "I can get attention with my strengths and abilities. I don't need to make excuses."                                        |
| <u>I'M HELPLESS, I SUFFER</u>    | "My life is a balance of pleasure and pain, hope and sadness can share both sides."                                         |
| <u>I'M BLAMELESS</u>             | "Nobody's perfect. Decisions I make sometimes affect things that go wrong."                                                 |
| <u>I'M FRAGILE</u>               | "I scare myself a little when someone gets upset, but I know I can handle it OK."                                           |
| <u>I'M TOUGH</u>                 | "I can take care of myself can relax and people will still like me. I can be safe without scaring people off by toughness." |
| <u>I KNOW IT ALL</u>             | "I can listen, can be interested, can ask questions. There are many interesting things to learn and discover from others."  |

adapted from MESSAGES: The Communications Book, M.McKay, PhD, M. Davis, PhD, P. Fanning  
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OPINIONS AND FEELINGS ARE FREQUENTLY A PERSONAL TRIUMPH OVER GOOD THINKING  
YOU DEFINE REALITY BY WHAT YOU KNOW, WHAT YOU BELIEVE, AND WHAT YOU DO ABOUT IT.