

More Exercises to Free You!

1) Here's a really tricky one... list every lie your mother told about her relationship with you. Chances are, if your mother or father abused you, your mother lied all the time to everyone about her relationship with you. (This can also include your mother lying **to you** by trying to *tell you what your experience is*, rather than letting you have an experience for yourself.)

It's almost impossible to get a mother to admit that she does not have a healthy relationship with her child. It's extremely difficult to get women to admit this because they're so ashamed of it and desperate about it. Most likely, your mother lied to people like school teachers, principals, school counselors, the parents of your friends, her family, her friends, etc.

Think of events like "play dates," school gatherings, team sports you played, or church events where there were other parents around. At all of those events, people made small talk with your mother about family stuff. Women spend enormous amounts of time and energy lying during these types of conversations, and then behave even *more badly than usual* afterwards because they feel so icky and ashamed about themselves. That's when more of the abuse gets aimed at the kid.

Think of any of these types of events you attended and notice if there was an increase of abuse, criticism, harsh comparisons of you to other children, or your mother being in an unusually bad mood. *Those types of occurrences are the result of the shame she felt from lying.*

List all the lies and set a timer for 2-5 minutes for each lie. Work through the list, feeling the feelings in your gut.

2) Here's another loaded one, especially if you experienced lots of abuse going on around "drama queen" parents -- list everything your parents did to get attention, approval or respect from other adults.

To use my family as an example, my parents:

- got married to get respect/attention/approval
- had kids to get respect/attention/approval
- sent us to Catholic school to get respect/attention/approval
- my father worked a job to get respect/attention/approval

You could say, "Now wait a minute, your father held a job so there would be a roof over his head." *NO!* I'm very clear in my dad's case the roof over his head was not *near* as important as respect/attention/approval. You might respond with "A roof over your head is a basic need. That's a basic food/clothing/survival need."

To my parents, his job choice was far more about getting approval than it was about basic food/clothing/shelter. I guarantee it.

Be really straight with yourself in answering these. How much of your parent’s behavior came directly from the *need* to get respect/attention/approval **from other adults? This part is critical!**

If you can tap into the “energy” of what drove your parents’ behavior, both as individuals and as a couple, you will most likely find there was not a single decision ever made in your household that had anything to do with “what best for the kids.” *The kids didn’t count as people.*

YOU must examine this fully, *for yourself, as an adult*, because your mother probably lied 100% of the time about this. Men are often more forthcoming about making decisions to benefit themselves, especially if they perceive that it will make them look like “more of a man,” because we accept it more as a culture.

It’s almost impossible to get women to even *see* that their decisions are made to benefit themselves. It is so beaten into women culturally that they “must do what is best for the children” that it’s almost impossible to get an abusive woman to even *pause* long enough to examine her motives. As soon as one raises the notion of where a decision came from, mothers automatically spit out a cliché about it being in the best interests of the child, whether it is or not. If you had abusive parents, your mother *never, ever* made decisions that were in your best interest. *She didn’t know what that was!*

Adults are either abusive and disconnected/unrelated, or they are nurturing and related. *There’s no grey area. There’s no “sometimes.”* They are either related and nurturing to the child in an intimate emotional connection, or they are disconnected.

The notion that an abusive adult is at all capable of making a decision in the child’s best interest is ludicrous because that adult cannot even make a decent decision within themselves to benefit their own integrity! They are already so cut off from themselves as a human being that there’s no way they can make a competent decision for a totally separate human being to create more life in integrity and balance for the other person.

On a neurological level (meaning inside the child’s neurology) this is *preposterous!* An abusive adult has already created such a neurological firestorm for the child that there is no way the child *can feel safe* with that adult. That abusive adult couldn’t get related to the child no matter how hard they tried. They’ve already cut the child off internally (inside the child’s experience) so there’s no way for the child to reach out in trust to be related and received. Any decision the adult makes at this point is only from a disconnected place. Therefore, it’s completely outside of anything that includes the child and will not benefit them.

Most adults truly have NO IDEA what is best for a child. They have never studied it. They’ve never seen another adult DO what is best for a child. They have no idea how their actions or what they say effects a child. They are *so wrapped up* in their own thinking and emotions that they cannot connect with or even remotely relate to the child.

The adults have no basis for assessment. They are so *unrelated* and disconnected from the child that nothing they do works for the child at all. The adults usually only perceive *how the decision makes them feel*, and then decide that if *they feel good*, then it means it’s best for the child. No, it’s best for the narcissistic adult!

If you follow this thread to its end on every decision your parents made concerning you, you will find that the overwhelming majority of the time, decisions were made that somehow got your parents respect/attention/approval *from other adults!*

That practice drives more behavior in most people’s lives than they ever notice. People who didn’t want their kids *do almost everything* to get respect/attention/approval from other adults. People who have children they don’t want behave as children themselves. **That’s called “child in a big body.”** (Feel free to steal that and make it your own!)

Child in a big body raising a smaller child only does things so the REAL BIG PEOPLE *out there* will look at them as “good.”

Just like a five-year-old.

From this basis, most likely every decision that your parents, particularly your mother, ever made, came down to her need to get respect/attention/approval from other adults so that she could feel good about herself. You were there so she could show off what a “good mother” she was.

“Drama-queen” parents always consider their feelings to be the most important thing going on. In fact, at the consciousness-level, people who are drama-queens actually have been trained that their feelings and emotions are part of reality. *They don’t know that they are doing this.* It’s an internal driver, but they cling to their feelings as part of their **definition of reality**. “I feel this emotion so I know it’s real and don’t you try to tell me to stop feeling that.” It drives them to constantly *act on* their emotions, rather than learn to process their emotions.

If your parents were drama-queens, *which almost every abusive parents is*, then every decision they ever made that they claim was for your benefit actually was driven directly by how they felt about the decision in the moment they made it. It may have had devastating consequences *for you and your life for the rest of your life*, but their definition of reality *had to include* deciding from their emotions in order for them to even make a decision.*

Now that you have this new context for examination--

3) List every decision *concerning you* that your parents made *specifically* to get respect/attention/approval for themselves.

*If you’d like more information to help you dismantle some of the insanity behind your parents’ *decision-making process*, Richard Bandler and the NLP (Neuro-Linguistic

Programming) body of work are great for this. Bandler actually distinguishes a person’s internal states during their decision-making process in a few of his books, as does Tony Robbins in “Unlimited Power.” To break down a mental process with that level of specificity and exactness is priceless because it *gives you their background context instantly!* As I’ve said in numerous places throughout this book, “Context is decisive!”

This understanding of decision-making was invaluable to me in writing this book because it shed so much light on why and how abuse happens in the moment. I highly recommend finding out more about this if you want a whole new level of clarity on your childhood and why things went the way they did around your parents!