

Emotional Vampires

By Cheri DeMoss

An Emotional Vampire is someone who does anything that invalidates another adult or child's spirit, sense of self-acceptance or self esteem. We are not taught to notice the understated, subtle and, the majority of the time, unnoticed behaviors that Emotional Vampires do.

Most of us grew up in environments where shaming, blaming and emotional abuse were common place. So common & everyday normal that, now as adults, we don't recognize these thing being done to and around us - nor do we notice ourselves behaving as an Emotional Vampire.

Emotional Vampires deny their behaviors & live in the world of intentions

These routine interactions are challenging to recognize, track or change because they are part of our everyday lives. These exchanges are not seen for the esteem sucking actions that they are because they are considered normal behaviors. The victims of Emotional Vampires are typically unaware they have been bit-



Emotional Vampires are scary because they do subtle, ordinary, everyday behaviors of abuse including shaming, blaming and being right at the expense of the other person.

Breaking Free Classes

As infants & toddlers we felt good about ourselves. We didn't worry if people liked us. In fact, we had every confidence that we were completely lovable and likeable. We didn't try to hide what we felt or who we were from others.

We easily shared our feelings, thoughts & accomplishments. As we grew up we were given the message that what we felt, did or thought was not okay.

Our self-esteem affect all

aspects of our lives and our relationships. By learning how our childhood self-esteem turned into adulthood self-doubt we can easily reverse the process.

You'll learn to:

- Turn obstacles into options
- Expand your self-esteem
- Enhance your relationships
- Recognize your strengths
- Change fear patterns
- Feel consistently confident
- Experience the innovation

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ten except for feeling slightly anemic.

Just as movie vampires live in secrecy so do Emotional Vampires. They use conscious or unconscious denial to hide in plain sight. Just like movie vampires who need to consistently feed off the blood of others Emotional Vampires feed off the esteem of others.

Emotional Vampires live on anything that, on any level, invalidates the other person.

Doing things like correcting someone who uses a wrong word when we know what they mean; interrupting; shaming; making fun of; or talking for someone who is able to talk for themselves - all without realizing that these types of behaviors suck out another person's esteem.

Emotional Vampires, like their movie counter parts, are made by other vampires - other people who fed off of their self esteem when they were children. Just like alcoholism runs in the family or Borderline mothers tend to make Borderline daughters; Emotional Vampire parenting makes Emotional Vampire adults.

Inside...

**Emotional Vampire Quiz
Born With Acceptance & The Need To Be Right
Before the First Bite**

**Page 2
Page 2
Page 3**

Born With Self-Acceptance

By Cheri DeMoss

We are all born with unlimited self-acceptance and an innate feeling that we are okay.

When we learn to walk, we pull ourselves up, take our first step or two and fall on our butt. We either try again or decide that crawling a while longer would be fine.

What we don't do is feel like we failed or like we made a mistake or worse feel that we are a mistake for trying something we were not ready to do successfully.

We are born not feeling bad about ourselves on any level. When we try something

and it doesn't work out we don't feel shame or guilt.

If we aren't made to feel bad or wrong we will naturally try something. If it doesn't work we simply try another approach.

After about age two we become afraid to be told we are bad or wrong. Before age 2 we are excited to learn new things, try new things, share who we are, what we feel & think. We feel good about the world and ourselves .



The Need To Be Right

By Cheri DeMoss

Notice how hard we try to be "right" at the expense of some else's self esteem. We will argue, debate and even deny our own behaviors & sometimes reality as long we can show the other person or child how they are bad or wrong .

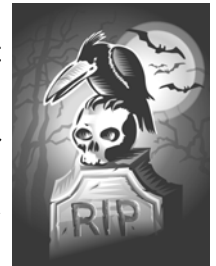
The need to be right comes from being raised by parents who pointed out how the child is bad, wrong or incorrect in some way. They insist children do things their way.

Research shows that over 82% of a child's day - everyday from age two to twenty two - is filled with negative actions or com-

ments about what the child says, does, thinks or feels. This creates a fear in us of being seen as bad or wrong.

This driving "need" to be right causes us to do behaviors that diminish the other person, even if it is someone we love.

While the other person is opening up to us, instead of understanding what they are trying to share with us, we start formulating how they are wrong and we are right.



Examples of Emotional Vampire Behaviors. . .

Emotional Vampires do a wealth of behaviors that are manipulative, covert, overt, conscious, or unconscious. Below are some examples of emotional vampire behaviors. You may find that you or those around you do these kinds of things. Being other observant is the key to changing these behaviors.

_____ **Interrupting someone else when they are talking.** This behavior shows you or what you have to say is more important than the person speaking..

_____ **Raising your voice to talk over someone else.** This behavior shows that you or what you have to say is more important than the person speaking. It intimates the person you're doing it to & will certainly scare a child.

_____ **Walking Away in a Huff, Hanging Up or Threats of abandonment.** These behaviors are designed to give you the emotional power in the situation. They create drama and chaos while creating fear or panic in the other person—especially a child.

_____ **Denying your behaviors.** There are many ways to deny our behaviors: blaming the other person for how we behave; explain the good reason why we did it; talking about our good intentions, etc. Anything other than owning what we do is emotional abusive to the other person and especially children.

_____ **Denying, Making Fun of, Ignoring Feelings.** Not dealing with feelings is the 2nd most emotionally abusive behavior we can do to another person.

_____ **Blaming or Shaming.** Doing this type of behavior changes the focus off of the subject at hand and creates drama and chaos. Creating drama and chaos is an emotional abusive act.

_____ **Telling someone how they should feel, think or believe.** This make the other person feel powerless, wrong or bad.

_____ **Treating someone with suspicion and jealousy.** This is an emotionally abusive thing to do to someone because it is dishonest. Instead of owning your feelings you blame them for your feelings.

_____ **Invalidating the other person.** This puts you in the position of being good, right, righteous and important while at the same time diminishing the other person - especially a child.

_____ **Double messages.** Is crazy making and causes the other person to feel confused, scared and "crazy"!

_____ **Being Reactive.** Is an emotionally unsafe behavior and causes those around you to feel frightened, anxious and scared

Before The First Bite

By Cheri DeMoss

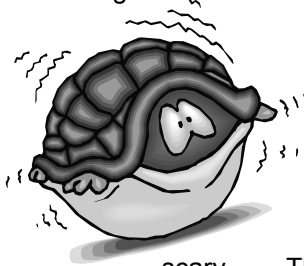
Think about how easy it is to make a child feel bad about themselves. Since they have little understanding of the complexities of the people around them children believe what is told to them. Especially what they are told about themselves.

Children are born feeling okay about themselves until the Emotional Vampires around them use disapproval, judgment, blame or shame to force the child to feel bad about what they think, feel, say or do.

Before the first bite from Emotional Vampires children are unafraid. They view themselves as good and okay. They believe they can accomplish anything. They don't see attempts that fail as failure or even mistakes, but simply something that didn't work out and a new approach needs to be figured out.

They believe they are loveable and likeable. They believe their bodies, their voice, their way of moving and interacting are fine.

But after the age of about two years old the child's world changes and things start to get



scary. The child is told, directly or indirectly, that if they do, say, think or feel what the

Emotional Vampire reactively decides is correct they will get it right.

Before the first bite from Emotional Vampires children are unafraid and view themselves as good and okay.

The child will try for the first ten to twelve year to "get it right" so as not to be bitten & have their esteem drained from them. Children will try their very best at all time to not be seen as bad or wrong.

The child then see their environment as normal, everyday - just the way things are. They get used to these Emotional Vampire behaviors being done to them so that as they get older they can go to school, the playground, the office, their co-workers, the person they love most in the world & their kids and recreate the Emotional Vampire dynamics they were raised with.

Before the first bite children will believe the rationalizations parents give them for being fed off of, even if the rationalizations make no sense because children's brain do not yet have the ability to recognize why what is being said to them feels "crazy".

Once they reach ten to twelve years of age and their brain starts to develop the ability to recognize the double messages, shaming, blaming and crazy making behaviors they, as teenagers, start to react.

Before the first bite it never crosses a child's mind that they will be treated as anything other than likeable.

This is often when the Emotional Vampire parent feels confused, lost and or powerless. The teens begins to act out the Emotional Vampire behaviors that



As some point the Emotional Vampire parent feels truly baffled as to why their teen is behaving the way that they are.

was done to them. They not only do normal teen age rebellious behaviors, but do the same esteem sucking things (double messages, shaming, blaming, denying, demeaning,) that were done to them. And at the same time they go out in the world to find what has missing at home. They go looking for groups of peers - whether than be a group of 4H teens or a group of gang bangers - that make them feel liked and accepted.

With Your Parents or Partner Have You Felt?

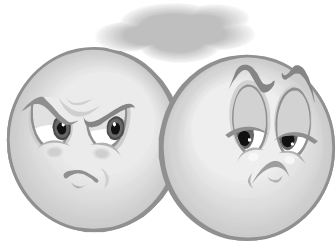
- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scared | <input type="checkbox"/> Belittled |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confused by Double Messages | <input type="checkbox"/> Scapegoated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Judged | <input type="checkbox"/> Negatively Compared |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guilty or Shamed | <input type="checkbox"/> Told Your Intentions or Feelings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not Listened To | <input type="checkbox"/> Dismissed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crazy-made | <input type="checkbox"/> Ridiculed or Called Names |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Like you can't get it right | <input type="checkbox"/> Interrupted While You're Talking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anxious | |

Vampire Tricks of the Trade

by Cheri DeMoss

There are many behaviors that Emotional Vampire use to take a child's or other person's sense of self-esteem.

Anger, pouting, "the-cold-shoulder" and other things that will make the other person fear the feeling of being disconnected or bad about themselves is typically the first choice of Emotional Vampires.



Denial is also one of the more effective "tricks" used because its' extremely effective, especially on children. Denial of behaviors, feelings or reality is how Emotional Vampires live in the shadows. By denying what is actually occurring or what themselves or others are actually feeling they keep secret their esteem sucking actions.

Those around them, especially children, feel powerless, sad, wrong and/or bad about themselves but can't identify why. We cannot get close to someone who is doing denying be-



haviors.

Imagine being raised by or in love with someone who, in order to feel good about themselves, needs to diminish your self-esteem

Denial is anything we do that leads ourselves or someone else to believe something other than the

behavioral or emotional reality of a situation.

Since Emotional Vampires and their food source react with an incredible amount of fear of being bad, disliked or wrong, a circular food chain is created.

Other tricks include repetitive negative comments or correction, rejections of feelings, thoughts or ideas, not being listened to, not being understood, sar-



casm, and/or scapegoated. All of these drain our natural sense of self-acceptance and cause us to feel diminished, powerless, bad and wrong.

About Empowering Options - Counseling Innovations

Empowering Options Counseling Innovations is remarkably effective because our philosophy is to be on the side of the client. We concentrate on helping you learn, explore & create your options; your life adventure. The adventure is in the perspective – the beliefs that you view yourself & the world through.

Empowering Options uses a unique combination of information, observation & awareness to help you view yourself & your life differently. That's what our individual, couple's & group sessions, workshops & trainings are all about – being on the side of the client & giving you more accurate observation, insights & effective, innovative options. There is no assumption that what you are doing or feeling is wrong. We don't presume that you need to be fixed. Our goal is for you to feel empowered, esteemed & effective in your own life.

We strive to keep you interested & interactive; energized & supported. The goal is that you leave each session with a new, more powerful way of looking at things. We focus on a collaboration of our expertise combined with your concerns, feelings, behaviors & thoughts. We fit people's lives by providing options that make it possible for you to create the changes you want at the pace you're most comfortable with.

Empowering Options brings an original, distinctively refreshing approach to the counseling experience. The focus is always on empowering the client & teaching clients how to empower themselves. Using a unique combination of insight, perspective, & objective observation clients are given the information, tools & self-belief to permanently change their lives.

We provide unique feedback, concrete options, clarity & increased self esteem. Sessions are filled with interactive conversations not empty stares, silence or rhetorical questions. You don't have to assume we understand your feelings or concerns because we consistently demonstrate our understanding. If you ask a question you can expect a direct & straightforward answer. We don't believe you should spend your valuable time & money with a therapist that responds "What do YOU think?" or "How does that make YOU feel?" when you ask for their input. We teach you how to create options that will empower you throughout your life. Our innovative style, along with a fun & thought-provoking manner is distinctively client positive & client empowering. We present new ways to look at old beliefs & behaviors that will enhance your life & give you extremely effective tools to help you with the changes you want to make. We help you create life innovations, insights, esteem & options. You can get more information about our approach, services & download our newsletters at www.EmpoweringOptions.com.

Inside . . .

**Before The First Bite
With Your Parents or Partner Quiz
Vampire Tricks of The Trade**

**Page 3
Page 3
Page 4**