

Work in Progress

Published monthly by Michele Crawford
Work in Progress is an electronic newsletter intended to assist individuals seeking optimum well-being.

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Work in Progress June 2008 Volume III Issue VI  
Feature Article: Two models of transcending adversity: Mindfulness and Assertiveness Part Six  
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In this Issue:  
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- 1) Note from Michele
- 2) Feature Article
- 3) About Michele
- 4) Counselling Services

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1) Note from Michele  
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Dear Reader

The hallmark of being aggressive embraces an ideation of entitlement. Entitlement believers claim to be special and do not need to follow rules or limits. Your specialness means you are unrestricted and can do anything you want. The motto "Rules don't apply to me" predominates and "I am always right."

It is the metaphor of the "boots" that walk over everyone else. An aggressive thinking style includes the kings of the road, the queens of the universe, and all the other royalty of prerogative.

And just like unassertive thinkers, aggressive people fall on a continuum of occasional lapses into entitlement through to the most outrageous single-minded power-seeking that defies good sense.

Since the distorting lens of entitlement places you above social convention and rules, aggressive individuals seem to be oblivious to the unfair burdens his or her position places on others.

An aggressive thinker may ask politely for a ride to Edmonton but you will not accept another's right to say no. Shouting, slamming the phone down, vindictiveness, being so enraged that words are impossible... are frequent responses of a belief system that will not allow for noncompliance to your demands.

If the other person agrees to provide transportation, the outcome will not be equalized. No offers of gas money or any other recompense are made because you "are so wonderful, he or she is lucky to have you along."

So then, aggressive thinking leaves no room for empathy, humility, gratitude, thoughtfulness, compassion or intimate connection with others or self. There is no room for inner peace or powerful emotions that accompany service, contribution, nobility, sacrifice.

Aggressive people usually do not understand why he or she feels alone and empty. Or, inner shame dictates a preference for being isolated.

2) Feature Article: Two models of transcending adversity:
Mindfulness and Assertiveness Part Six

The aggressive boundary is rigid. This means aggressive people absolutely protect their own rights while walking over the assertive rights of others. Aggressors usually do not value self-development or pursue psychological introspection.

Identical to unassertiveness thinking, the roots of aggression begin when childhood developmental needs have not been met and continue into adulthood with irrational beliefs that are both personal and cultural.

The attitude of aggression can have its roots in being spoiled in childhood and treated like the center of the universe. Parents smooth the way through all life's difficulties and heap praise whether there has been the slightest effort or not. Or caregivers do not provide structure or discipline, trying to be a best friend and not a personage of leadership and guidance.

Another parental approach that fosters entitlement is an exaggerated focus on externals or accomplishment(s), like beauty or sports, to the exclusion of character, perseverance or integrity. Often, your entire motivation becomes singularly focused on this one element, neglecting other fundamentals of personality.

A final source of entitlement is a decision to overcompensate for deprivation of affection, attention or material things in childhood. Feeling significantly wronged by unfairness in youth, compensation appears to be achieved by demanding far more than your fair share in adulthood. Or an aggressive stance defends against being hurt again.

All of these parenting styles promote immaturity, selfishness and an excessively controlling nature. Although covered over with narcissistic pride and bravado, a lack of self-confidence and shame lies under the surface.

Entitlement is not genuine confidence that competence and authenticity engenders. Rather, it is an exaggeration and false pride to compensate for insecurity and conceit.

Aggressive people indulge impulses regardless of consequences. So often, lacking the capacity to delay gratification leads to chronic underachievement and giving into urges creates a chaotic life style.

Devoid of empathy, aggressive individuals are only arrested in their selfish pursuits when the price is so painful it can no longer be ignored. For example, relationships end, criminal charges are laid, jobs are lost.

The beliefs of aggression include "I must get what I want," (the infamous problem of masturbation), "I'm right and you're wrong," "Since everyone else is stupid, they must do things my way and when they don't, that's awful!" and "I'm wonderful, you're not."

The dominant emotions of aggression are anger and hostility. Sometimes, rage is followed by guilt, associated with the aftermath of

aggression. Sometimes, depression is linked to the isolation of entitlement. Of course, there are many physical symptoms that can and do lead to illness.

As mentioned in my article on unassertiveness, solutions for aggression start in healing childhood wounds from developmental problems. Resolution also lies in identifying and changing the irrational beliefs associated with being aggressive.

It begins with learning to foster empathy, listening skills and self-control. In addition, outcomes improve when you learn the responsible and confident beliefs of being assertive and have the maturity to be governed by them.

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3) About Michele

Michele Crawford is a therapist who assists individuals who are struggling with trauma, anxiety or depression. Her passion for her work remains embedded in being able to connect with you in your suffering, helping you find real solutions no matter how complex the issue may be.

4) Counselling Services

Are you prepared to live with more happiness, optimism, confidence, self-worth and hope? If your answer is "yes," then your next step is to contact me for a free 20-minute phone consultation. We can then discuss how I might best help you resolve your problems of Trauma, Depression and Anxiety.

The benefits of counselling with Michele include: significantly reduced stress levels, an optimistic outlook in life, increased confidence and hope.

Privacy Policy

I want to reassure you that your e-mail address will never be shared or sold to anyone else.

Pass It Along

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