

Look For Psychological Traps Set by Others

I find that people very easily fall into psychological traps in confrontational discussion and even relationships in general. These are hard to overcome because they play on our insecurities.

People do things to get a reaction out of you. Sometimes someone says something they believe that you will think is outrageous. If you act outraged, you give them what they want. You are playing their game. You see that the alt-right has made a philosophy out of this behavior.

Feminists say things to illicit shame or defensiveness in you. If you reflect back shame or an angered defensiveness, you are playing into their script and they have subconsciously or consciously rehearsed how to handle your reaction. You will be emotional and bothered, while they will have you utterly cornered.

My grandmother does things to intentionally annoy my dad and then act like she doesn't know. She does this to express power and project her frustration. My dad's reaction is always to snap at her and be angry ... which is exactly what she was shooting for.

I used to have a girlfriend who managed to get to 19 years old without a serious relationship. She did this by acting random, and portraying herself as a crazy enigma. She also harshly judged men and acted disregarding to others. When I confidently showed immunity to her disregarding and judgmental behavior with no shred of defensiveness and I showed her that I believe I understood her fine ... she was utterly lost in how to handle the situation. That's how I got a wife.

These might be slightly more extreme examples of subtle things we all do to frame discussions and control the narrative/script. In relationships there are far more subtle games being played. By breaking the script and leading the conversation in a more productive direction you will be more effective at resolving conflicts and likely even gain more psychological capital in your relationships. Of course, this is very hard due to having natural human emotions and insecurities.

I'm not trying to suggest people take the high ground in all circumstances. Many times it is a great strategy since it does break their script, and if your goal is to convince them of something ... that is your best bet. However, sometimes I take the very low ground. When someone is trying to be a total jackass online with no pretense of anything but a power battle I will often sexualize them (especially if they are a male). When a guy makes a dickish remark and you respond with "I bet you have pretty lips, want to make out?" You will utterly rip all power away from them and you get to write the new script. I often follow

it up with “do you like anal?” I am not bisexual at all. I find gay stuff pretty gross for my own sensibilities ... however, it throws them on the defensive in a way they have never anticipated. I even used this line of strategy in real life at a poker table to some 75 year old guy. Holy shit did that work well. However, I might not try the same exact tactic unless you can do it with total confidence and with no hesitation.

My main point is to not fall into the narratives others wish to play out. When they are trying to make you feel something to control the narrative and you respond with their intended reaction, they control the conversation.