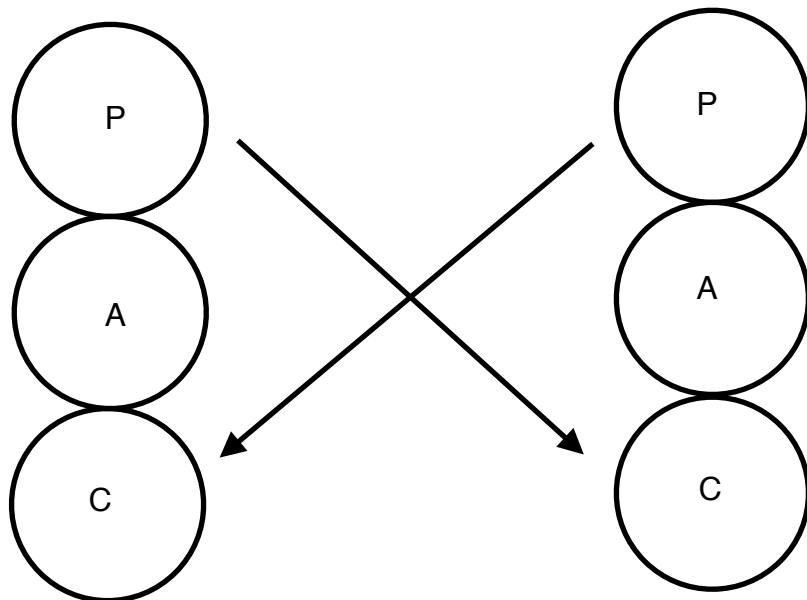


# The Book of Transactions:

## Part Four

The Monograph Series



Tony White

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# **The Book of Transactions:**

## **Part Four**

The Monograph Series

By

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## The time structure transaction

Eric Berne proposed the following ways of structuring time

Withdrawal

Rituals

Pastimes

Activities

Games and enactments

Intimacy

Withdrawal is the only time structure that does not include any interaction or communication between people, all the others do. It is these 'interactive' time structures that can be broken into two separate categories. Each of these time structures can occur in a relationship when two people are interacting.

### 1. Social level time structuring

Rituals

Pastimes

Activities

### 2. Psychological level time structuring

Games and enactments

Intimacy

This grouping of time structures into two different types seeks to answer the question of how do people find others who will play the same games they do? This is called game pairing. We all have games we play and games that we don't play. Some games fit with our life scripts and some do not. One can only play a game with another person if both their life scripts match. How do you discover if the other person does play those games or not? This question I sought to answer in White (2018). I proposed that it was a largely unconscious intuitive process that can be shown in figure 1

The social level time structures (rituals, pastimes and activities) allow for the Adult to Adult transactions to occur. The two people relate in mainly conscious level Adult ego state transactions. One function of this, is it gives both parties time to unconsciously assess the other to see if their life scripts match and they play the same games.

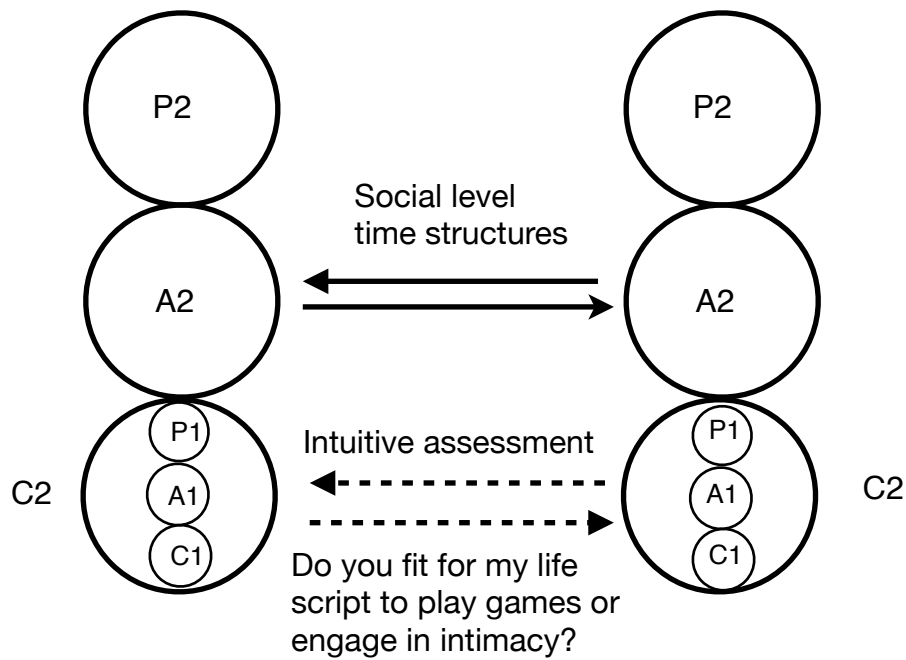


Figure 1.

This is done intuitively by the A1 or Little Professor ego state, all at an unconscious level. It has to be unconscious as all games played are unconscious and outside Adult awareness. Essentially the two people are intuitively assessing each other. The social level time structures give the two people the time to make such assessments.

If they are found to match then they can go onto the psychological level time structuring by either playing games together or engaging in some form of intimacy together.

## Chapter two

### Contradiction of human nature

In the previous chapter it was shown that after people have been given time to intuitively assess each other, then they can both go onto the other psychological time structures of games or intimacy. This raises an interesting question that has no simple answer, why do some people go onto play games whilst others go onto engage in intimacy? Games damage and destroy relationships whereas intimacy provides life giving, healthy strokes and allow relationships to grow and develop. Some people do one more than the other, so why is that so? This question has been asked by many and a clear answer is hard to find.

I have addressed this question before in White (2016). It presents the two driving forces in human nature, eros or the drive towards life and growth and thanatos or the drive toward destruction and decay. This is one way to look at the question being proposed. Figure 2 shows the forces at work with the ego states.

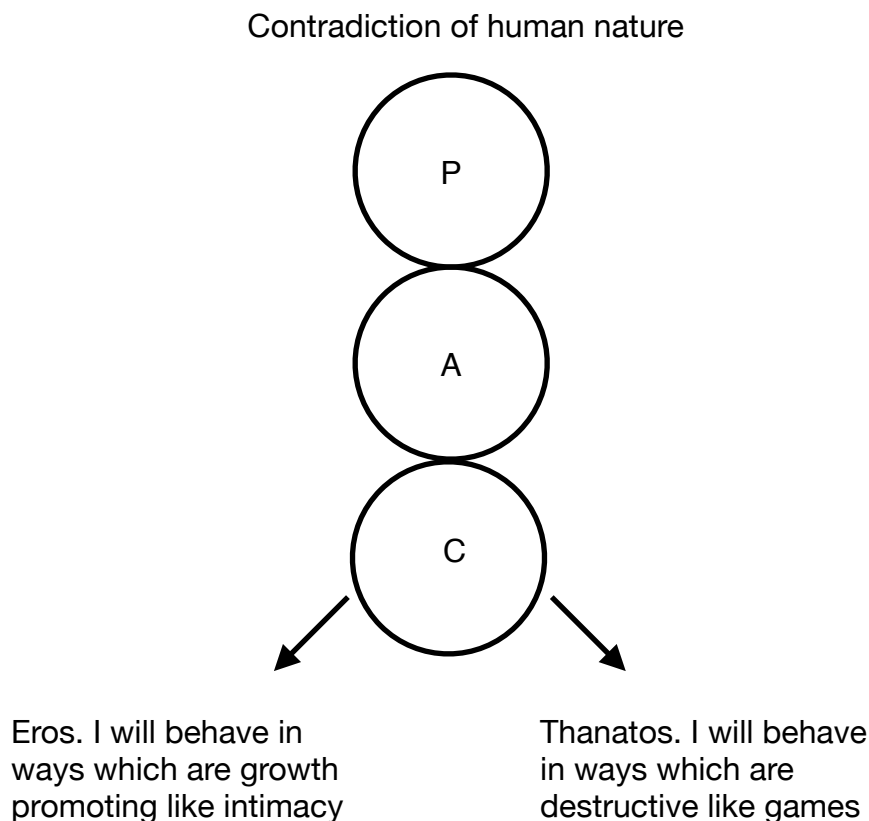


Figure 2.

In every person the two drives which coexist in the Child ego state provide us with a contradiction of human nature. All people will at times behave in healthy ways such as with intimacy and at other times in unhealthy ways as with games. Indeed every therapist has to deal with this in all clients. As soon as a client makes a contract for change, immediately part of them is going to set about sabotaging

that contract from the drive of thanatos. Indeed this could be seen as a reason why psychotherapists exist in the first place. If there was no destructive force in us then people could change quite easily because they would not be fighting against that force inside themselves, so they wouldn't need a therapist to help. As therapist's we are constantly looking for the way the client is sabotaging self in the therapy process. The more we can help them do that, the more change is likely.

This is one answer to the question of why do some engage in intimacy and others engage in games. At a particular point in time eros is stronger in the person and at other times thanatos is stronger. Some people have their lives more influenced by eros and others have more influence by thanatos and thus some people have loser life scripts and others have winner life scripts.



Is human nature good or bad?

This is a pictorial representation of the contradiction of human nature that I have been discussing. As you can see in thanatos they include reliving trauma and it is this part that is controversial. Many in the field of psychology and psychotherapy would dispute this. For example people who have suffered trauma and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can have flashbacks which includes a relieving of the trauma. Also PTSD symptoms like intrusive memories of the trauma can occur that are a reliving of the trauma. The person experiences memories of the trauma repeatedly forcing their way into the mind of the sufferer for no apparent reason.

The question is - Why would the Child ego state of the person create such situations where the trauma is relived like with flashbacks and intrusive memories? In recent times in transactional analysis, as is often seen in the Transactional Analysis Journal, there is a view that humans are only viewed in a positive light. Everything they do is seen as positive and growth oriented. People only play



games because their unconscious is striving to resolve old issues or people only have flashbacks because the energy of eros in them is seeking completion of a trauma. Every pathology a person has, always has a positive, healthy promoting intent. This view is often seen in the current TA literature.

Of course this is a nice view to have of people and it makes us feel good inside to believe such things. To believe there is only good in people and eros is always working, is a pleasing way to view the world and ourselves.

But, is it true?

This picture says it's not true. It says people have flashbacks, play games and behave in scripty ways because of thanatos or our desire for destructiveness. It says there is an ugly, machiavellian, and destructive side to human nature and that is the reason the person relives the trauma.

For those who object to this are they objecting because their Adult has made observations which lead them to that view or because their Child wants to feel good about human nature, so it contaminates the Adult into believing that people are all good. To believe that there is not an ugly side to human nature.

Perhaps the picture sums it up well. On the one hand we have the grim reaper and on the other hand there is a naked baby like figure with a halo and angel wings. As therapists perhaps we need to be very careful here. We must make clear Adult ego state observations of people and not be contaminated by our Child desire for the halo and angel wings.

Does your Adult ego state believe there is an ugly, destructive side to human nature or not?

## Chapter three

## The intimacy transaction

In his original article - The Intimacy Experiment - Berne (1964) describes a particular way of relating which he calls intimacy. He also provides a better and fuller description of this intimacy in Berne (1970). He acknowledges that people have been trying to define intimacy for a long time and we have ended up with lots of differing definitions.

Berne idea of intimacy is talking about reexperiencing the world and others as a very young child can. There is no thought, there is no control and there is no understanding of what is happening. It is just purely sensing and experiencing the connection with another person. In ego state terms it involves the ability to turn off the Adult and Parent ego states and be purely Child ego state. Obviously this is the same experiencing of being, that a young child has, because it has yet to develop an Adult and Parent.

This is a difficult thing for grown adult people to do and very difficult for some grown ups. We all learn the survival value of thinking, the safety that control can give us, the dangers of being vulnerable and trusting. It is risky to be like this, especially in relationship with others. You can get hurt and hurt badly.

Boyd and Boyd (1980) wrote a series of articles on intimacy where they disagree with Berne and say that intimacy involves simultaneous transactions of Child to Child along with Parent to Child transactions as shown in figure 3.

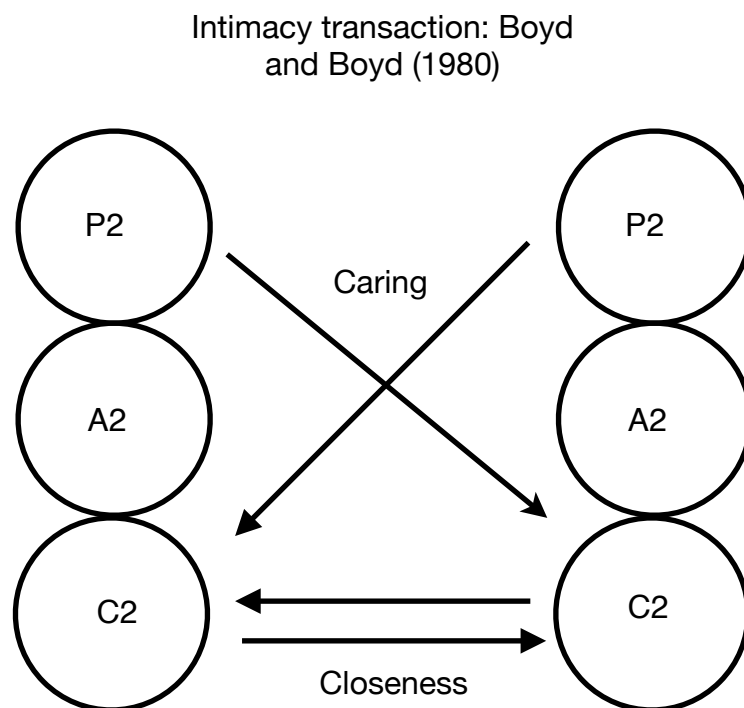


Figure 3

What they are describing here is probably a type of close contact between two people that is rewarding but they miss Berne's point of giving up the control. This transaction shows safer and nicer intimacy because the Parent ego state of both people is activated so there is a sense of control in both people in this relating. However they have lost the ability to be purely sensory where it is only the Child ego state sensing the other person and what that feels like. The Boyd's transaction has lost the sense of surrendering to the Child and its experience. This can be shown in figure 4.

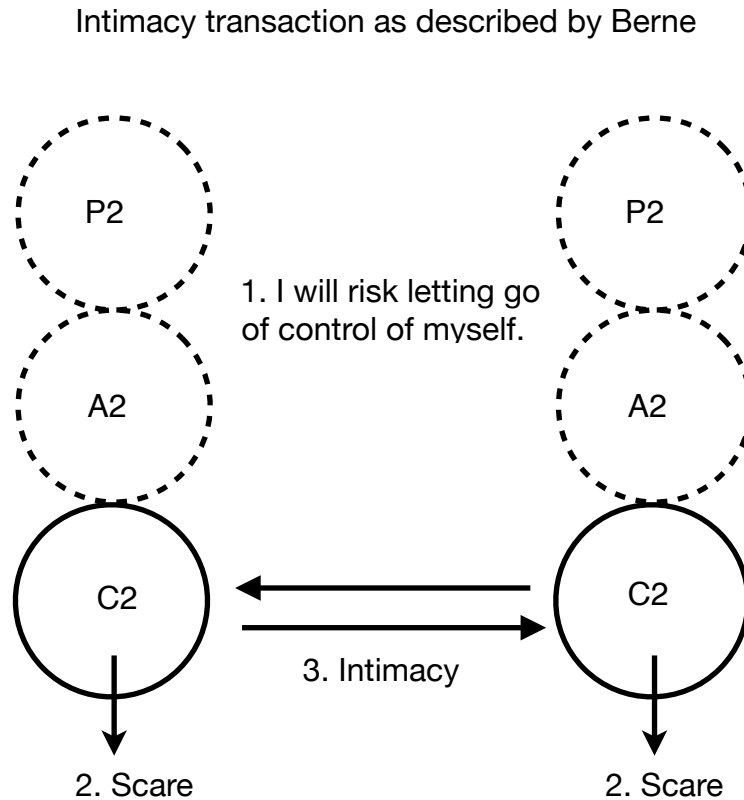


Figure 4

This is what the intimacy experiment was all about. It was inviting people into a state of only sensory awareness of the other with no thinking and with no Parent ego state control. This is why the ego states are drawn with dotted lines, intending to show the level of deactivation of those ego states. As the transaction shows most people have not done this for a long time and will experience it as scary and anxiety producing. As people let go of control they will feel scare. At this point most people will retreat into either their Adult or Parent which immediately reduces the anxiety, they stop being in the purely Child ego state sensory mode and the intimacy experience is lost.

Why would one even want to do this? The answer is because it provides an 'intimate' experience for the couple that is 'unforgettable'. The two experience a closeness and connection that they will rarely experience with each other. It then becomes a memory in their relationship which builds the intimate contact between them. From the point of view of building the foundations of a good long term

relationship it is helpful indeed. If couples can achieve this kind of relating on odd occasions then that can be seen as most helpful to the maintenance of a long term relationship.

#### Wider implications of the intimacy experiment

What Berne is describing is a state of complete awareness where one is simply in touch with their sensing of the world and others. It is possible that forms of meditation or relaxation training are also trying to achieve this state of being purely sensory with no thinking and no sense of control of self or others.

How one achieves that large decathesis of the Adult and Parent is not easy to describe or do. One could say that it is developing the ability to surrender to self. I chose the word surrender as most people see that as a bad thing. Surrendering is not good thing to do and continuing the fight is usually seen as the good option.

Surrendering means giving into or giving up, submitting and conceding. All things which most see as not good or honourable. Most people will fight against it and that's why the choice of word as most people will fight against giving up the thinking and control that the Adult and Parent provide them. We are taught to fight and not surrender.

Surrendering or giving into the Child ego state is a very good skill to have but we are all socialised as young children not to do that. The first advantage is about the ability to experience love for another person. One does not drive into love, decide to go into love or jump into love. Instead one falls in love. It is a passive process of giving up the control of self similar to what is shown in figure 4. You cannot fight for love you must surrender into it. It's a surrendering or giving up to the force of love that will make it happen. You cannot go out looking to fall in love, one must be passive and let it develop in a relationship. The more one tries to make it happen then the less it will.

The same could be said of all feelings such as anger and sadness. They are reactions that arise spontaneously in the Child, to truly feel them and understand them one has to fully experience them. The same process in figure 4. A surrendering process where one lets a feeling come to them, one allows self to be enveloped by the experience. One does not go and get a feeling instead one surrenders into it. As I said before the ability to surrender is a very good psychological skill to have.

## Chapter four

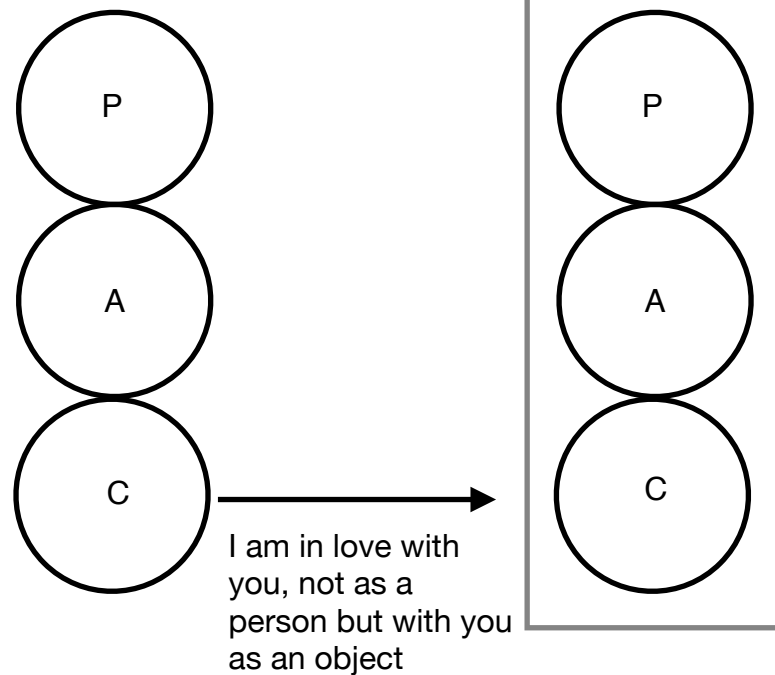
### Love and infatuation transaction

In the previous chapter love was described as an emotion that one falls into by a passive process rather than something that one tries to seek out and enter into. White (2015) discusses love and the teenager. In that he points out that people have to learn how to love another and that most do this in their teenage years when they first establish relationships with a romantic partner. However teenager love is a particular kind of love that is often described as infatuation - an intense but short-lived passion or admiration for someone. With infatuation the person will experience strong feelings of attraction and love but it can be gone the next day. With mature love that cannot happen. Once a mature love develops from one person to another that feeling is then quite resilient and resistant to any change, such as a lessening of it. Mature love is not there one day and then disappears the next.

In this way teenagers can be seen to have superficial feelings of love. Intense, strong feelings of love one day that are gone the next or redirected onto some one else. This can be similar to the histrionic personality type who can have intense expressions and displays of emotion including love and romantic feelings but they are superficial and usually do not last long.

The reason why love (or infatuation) in the teenager is unstable and quite changeable is that they have not yet learnt how to love another person. The teenager feels the romantic love, it can be intense but they don't yet understand how to love another person and hence the love can come and go quickly. They have yet to learn how to incorporate these love feelings into the relationship in an effective and stable way. In essence what is being described here is a type of objectophilia.

I am in love with something, but I am in love with you as an object rather than an individual with all their personality features. See figure 5 where there is a box placed around the focus of the romantic love of the young teenager. This is meant to indicate that the young teenager does not yet understand how to love another person as a person, with all their different personality features. They feel love towards this other person but they are more of an object than a real person. Which means the love can be quickly shifted away from that person unlike is the case with a more mature love for someone.



Objectified love or infatuation that occurs with the young teenager's first experiences of feeling love.

Figure 5

### Objectophilia

An interesting corollary to this object loving stage of human development is the paraphilia disorder of objectophilia or as it is more recently called objectum sexuality. Those people who declare their desire for inanimate objects, loving them like a romantic partner or even as a life partner. For some reason this person gets stuck in this form of love like shown in figure 5. This is found often in the person who may have some autistic features or the schizoid personality type. The inability to love a person as a person and the ability to love an object instead and in figure 5 the person is perceived as an object. It is possible that the objectophile never learns how to move beyond the early adolescent way of loving described here. This can occur because they find strong feelings and intense relationship dynamics just too overwhelming. This is where we find the similarity to autism or those who can feel a need to withdraw from social interactions and diminish the desire to form intimate relationships. In this sense objectophiles can be seen to display some qualities of autistic type relationships, Gatzia and Arnaud (2020) and Kabiry (2020).

To have a close loving relationship a person must be able to handle strong emotions at times and a sense of attachment and connection with another. Some people simply can't cope with these powerful psychological forces so they seek an inanimate object to love or they keep their partner objectified in their own mind. This means there may be many more objectophiles than we realise. In a relationship between two people one party they have their partner objectified so

they are not seen as a real person but as an object. If questioned on this most probably would deny they see their partner as an object and say that they truly love them instead.

This can also explain how some people can be very cruel to others (and animals) and indeed violent to them. It has been recorded by Fromm (1974) that some sadistic characters also have this ability to objectify people, in their mind, “..living beings become things.”(p388) or he has the ability to turn a living person into a thing.

Once done then if one has high levels of aggression and anger they can subject that person to much physical harm and violence without feeling the usual feelings of guilt, empathy or conscience. People who are interrogators and use torture, or perhaps those who are required to flick the switch or shoot the gun in capital punishment situations. One way to ‘handle’ such circumstances is to objectify the person first then one feels they are not doing the things to a person but to an object.

This could also occur in domestic violence where we have one person attached to, or in love with another and at the same time they can subject them to high levels of violence or even death. If one can see the other person as an object and non human first, that makes it easier to engage in such behaviour towards them.

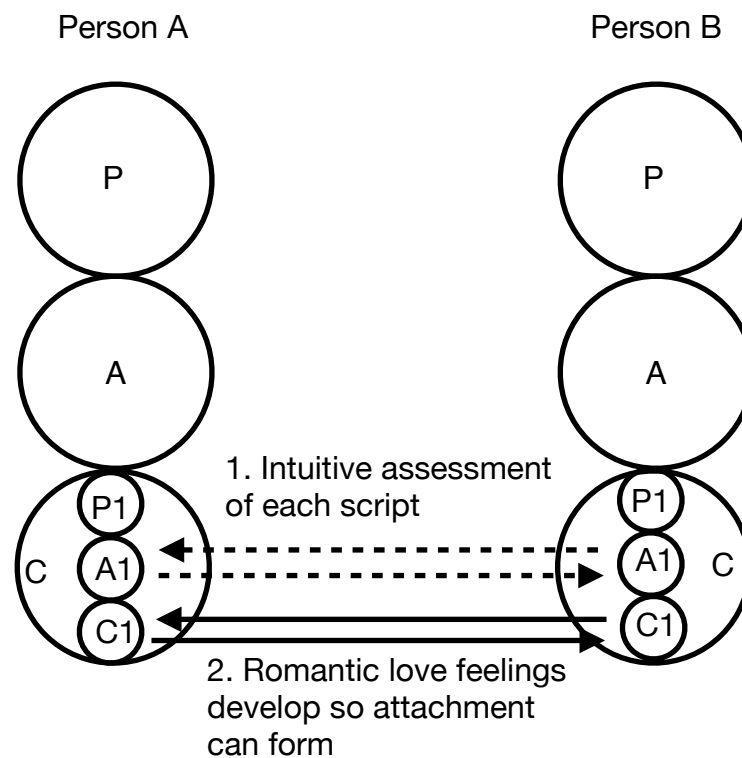
Finally we have the American Psychiatric Association (2013) describe the sexual behaviour of the fetish. Where the individual has “..the persistent and repetitive use of or dependence on nonliving objects or a highly specific focus on a (typically non genital) body part as primary elements associated with sexual arousal.” (p701). The man becomes focussed on the foot, legs or breasts and that becomes the object of his desire. The woman as a person is disregarded and thus she is objectified by him. She stops being a person and in his mind she is that body part only.

Again we have a situation where a piece of human behaviour like objectophilia seems bizarre and strange but on closer examination we find this is an ability that all people do have - the ability to objectify another person. Some people in certain situations have that ability to view the other as a non human or object, giving them certain psychological advantages which they desire at that time. This objectification serves them certain psychological functions in the relationship.

## Chapter five

## Romantic love transaction

Romantic love has been drawn as a transaction between C1 to C1 because it is biologically programmed in us and forms a clear evolutionary function for humans. In chapter 1 I talk about social level time structuring and one purpose of that time structure is to give an opportunity for both people to do intuitive assessments of the other. These assessments are done from the A1 or Little Professor ego states of the people. The assessment is made to see if the life scripts of these two people connect. That is, do they both play the same games and engage in intimacy if that is permitted by the script. All this is done unconsciously which is why the transaction is drawn as a dotted line indicating it is a psychological level transaction. See figure 6.



Romantic love transaction

Figure 6

Once that assessment has been made and both parties decide that their life scripts do match then there is the possibility of romantic love developing. This emotion can of course lead to the development of a long term, even life long partnerships between the two people, the marital relationship. This means that for most people in adulthood, this is the most important relationship for furthering each other's life scripts because it is the main love relationship in their lives. Furthermore it is the relationship where most often children are produced which also makes it one of the most important in many people's lives.



The evolutionary function of this romantic love is that it allows for and accelerates the development of an attachment between two people. As Bader and Pearson (1988) state, "When two people fall in love and go through the intense merging of boundaries that occurs at the beginning of the relationship, they are establishing themselves as a couple." (p62). The function of this stage is to form a bond or attachment and the goal is to establish a "coupleness".

White (1997) talks about symbiosis and attachment hunger. That is, we all have a basic drive which is a hunger for attachment. We need to have attachments in our lives and what romantic love does is allows for such attachments to develop quite quickly and powerfully. Attachments between two people can also develop over much longer periods of time but romantic love results in much more accelerated attachments developing. It speeds up the process considerably.

#### Romance and attachment

One of the reasons for this is because in the romantic relationship there is often a sexual relationship as well. This connection between a sexual relationship and attachment formation has been acknowledged for a long time such as by Hazan and Zeifman (1994). A sexual relationship actively hastens and promotes the development of attachment as Josephson (2003) says, "...sexual behaviour between two adults promotes their attachment to each other." (p306)

John Bowlby (1971) discusses the idea of attachment seeking behaviour. Once an attachment between two people develops then they develop a drive, indeed at times a very strong and tenacious drive to seek each other out. What attachment does is provide an often very strong motive to seek out and be with the other person. Attachments keep people together in a relationship. People geographically seek each other out and stay together as a result of the attachment.

A romantic relationship is a special case in relationships because it is the most likely to result in the production of a child. Thus we arrive at the evolutionary advantage of romantic love which can quickly produce an attachment. In some animals when the male has impregnated the female he simply leaves and is not seen again until breeding time comes around again. For example this happens with lions. This is a weak system from an evolutionary perspective. When a child is born its chances of survival to adulthood are significantly increased if the mother and father are both there to protect, feed and look after the child. If the father is not there and it is left to mother alone the chances of that child dying increase. The survival of the species is reduced.

Attachment results in attachment seeking behaviour which makes it much more likely that the father of the child will remain with the mother to help raise the child and keep it protected. Romantic love often results in the quick development of a tenacious attachment style. Thus we have the evolutionary advantage of romantic love and again why I draw it as a C1 to C1 transaction in order to show how basic and natural it is for people.

### Mature love transaction

Bader and Pearson (1988) present a developmental model of relationships, meaning relationships can be seen to progress through different stages over time. The romantic love stage comes first with the development of an attachment and eventually ends up with what they call rapprochement and mutual interdependence. The love experienced at this much later point in the relationship is quite different to the romantic love, as is shown in figure 7.

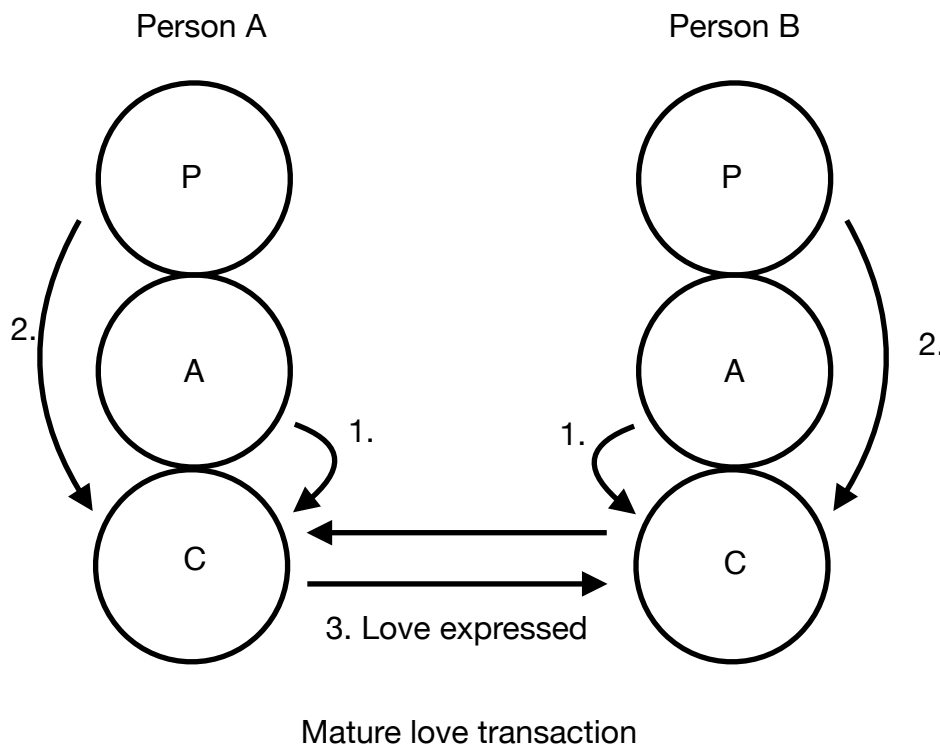


Figure 7

1. Person is aware of their relationship history and their Adult informs the Child ego state. Such as, we have children, we have traveled to special places, we have had times of significant intimacy, we have suffered through hard financial times together, we survived war and so on.
2. Person has compassion and empathy for the other and this is communicated to the Child ego state.
3. Mature love between the two people is experienced and communicated

Romantic love ends and it changes into a more mature type of love in relationships. Obviously the experience and feelings of love are expressed by the Child ego state of each person. However the Child at this stage of the relationship is firstly informed or is aware of the history the two people have. They have had a significant period of time together by now, both good times and bad times. Done many things together, may have produced children together and so forth. In addition the Parent ego state of both also has some kind of compassion and empathy for each other and the Child ego state is also aware of this. So it is in the context of this that the love is expressed and felt between both people and hence

one ends up with what could be called a more mature type of love compared to the romantic love discussed above. Mature love is more of a contextual love, felt in the context of the overall relationship whereas romantic love tends to be more a reactive type of love in the here and now. Simply a response to the other person now, rather than seeing the person in the context of the relationship over a period of time.

#### False love transaction

The comes from a game called, "For the love or money." It is often played between children and parents but it can be played between any two people. Sometimes it is also called the spoilt child game and this is where the child gets love and money (or possessions) mixed up in their own mind. The parents may even end up saying to the child, "Of course I love you look at all the things I have given (done) for you".

The parent is for what ever reason unable to express feelings of love or affection to the child. Their parents may have done the same to them, they may have a "Don't show your feelings" injunction, they may have their own closeness issues, they may equate affection feelings with sexual feelings and that scares them, they may just be self centred and have little interest in giving affection to the child because they want it themselves, and so on.

This results in the parents give things instead showing love or affection. An example can be boarding school in some instances. "I have sent my daughter to a very expensive boarding school so she gets the best education, because I love her and want the best for her", (and by the way it also gets her out of the way so I can go and do all my things for my Child ego state).

In this game, over time the child's bedroom begins to start looking like a toy and candy shop. The child gets a never ending series of toys and things with which it can play or be entertained by. Computers, computer games, bikes, flat screen TV, pets, phones, overseas holidays, swimming pool, and so on endlessly.

The problem with this game is that it half 'hits the spot'. And that can trick both the parent's and child's own Child ego states. They think they are being shown love when in fact they are not. All humans have a need for love. That need can only be fully met when:

It is shown to the person first hand (so not mother telling the child that father loves her)

Is face to face (so not via email or even the phone to some extent)

Has emotion involved

Has some form of physical contact.

If these conditions happen then the Free Child need of the person for love is met and satisfied. Indeed the child will feel loved by its mother or father if the love is expressed to the child in ways like this.

In the false love transaction this does not happen. See figure 8

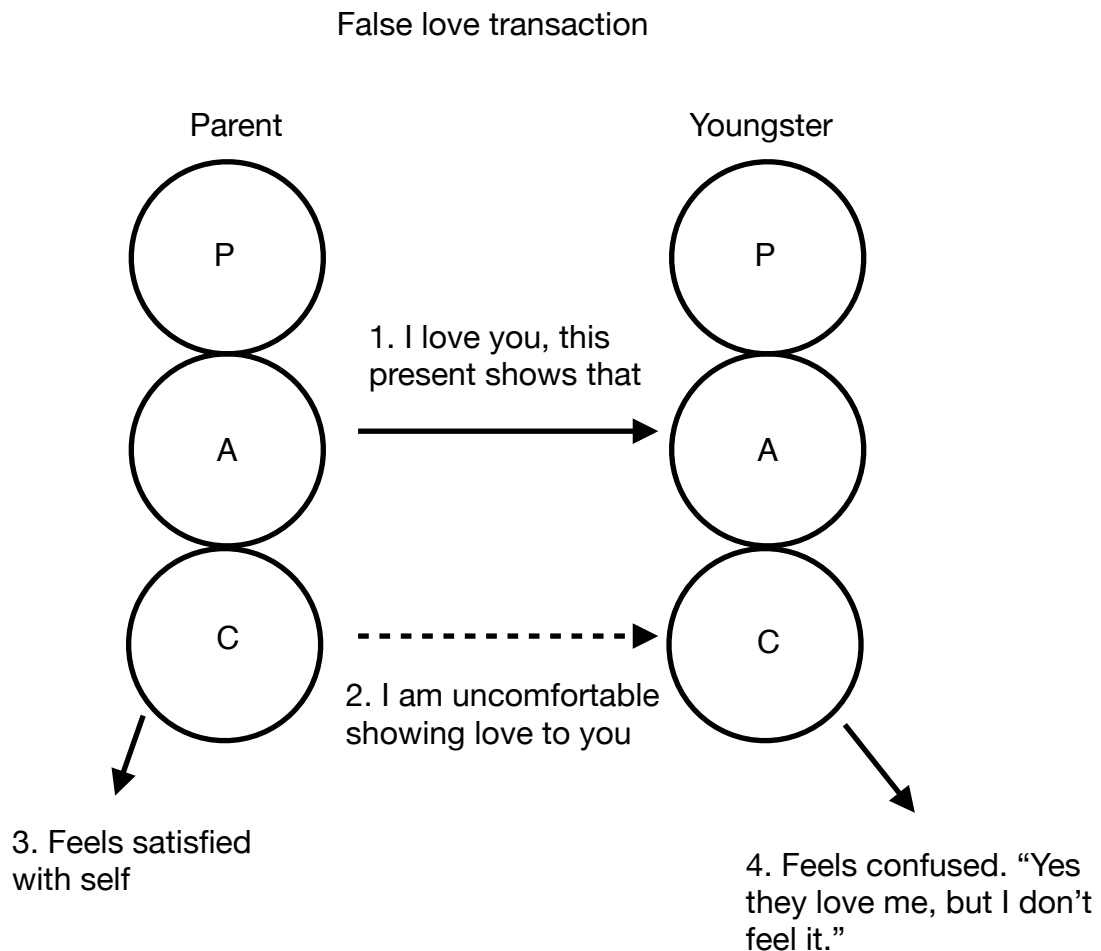


Figure 8

Sometimes people will say; "I know my father loved me, even though he never told me that", or "I used to over hear my father tell others how much he loved me but he never actually told me". Unfortunately these only half meet that Free Child need for love as the above conditions show. As figure 8 shows this is particularly difficult for the child because it is left confused. It hears the parent say it is showing love by giving a gift but the Child ego state of the child is left unsatisfied because the ulterior transaction tells it that it is not really being shown love.

Some societies will even formalise times when the Free Child need for love is meant to be met. That can be on birthdays when the birthday gift is given which is meant to be an expression of love for the other person. But the physical gift is only a symbol of that love and to the Free Child that is seeking the love from the parent, that does not mean much. This is how the child can begin to mix up love with something else such as with presents or physical things. In adulthood such a person can then begin to seek lots of money and all the things money can buy like houses and cars. To the Child ego state inside them they feel like these are the symbols that prove they are loveable and were loved by the parents when unconsciously it really knows that this is not so and thus they need to keep

accumulating more and more things. They are constantly trying to prove to self that they are loveable and were loved by the parents.

This is summed up well by Coleman & White (1988), "To clarify this point, consider the example of a parent and child playing a game of cards. We would invite such a parent to consider the following question : Are you playing cards with your child, or are you playing with your child and that just happens to be cards at the moment? Toys, games and play activities can provide an effective way of avoiding contact with a child. They can allow the parent and child to become side-tracked into the activity and avoid closeness, contact or openness with each other. Parents who provide children with expensive toys particularly need to consider how they play with their children."(P13). This is another type of wall of trivia transaction.

In the book of transactions part 3, chapter 2 I discussed the wall of trivia. This really is just describing another way the wall of trivia can occur. Parents with a fear of intimacy can avoid such intimacy with their children by putting gifts and items in between them and the child and then claim that they are expressions of their love when in fact they are not. Again this leaves the child in a confused position, they are being told they are being loved but they don't feel like they are being loved.

## Chapter six

### The mistress transaction

The mistress transaction is a particularly 'scripty' transaction. As children we all make our early decisions and develop our life scripts. When we grow into adulthood we do certain things to make our life script progress onto its final conclusion. We choose particular types of jobs, some engage with alcohol or drugs, some adopt certain religions and philosophies, others pick activities that support their life script. But most importantly it is the relationships that we choose that encourage and develop our life script to its final conclusion. It is in these relationships where we have certain transactions that develop into games and therefore support our life script. One of these is the mistress transaction where two people have a secret affair or relationship and hence it can be said to be a 'scripty' relationship.

There are various types of affairs. Some are quite short like the man and woman who get drunk at the office Christmas party and have sex in the photocopying room. Only to be subsequently horrified the next day about their behaviour and they never do anything again. What I am talking about here is the affair that can go on for a long time, sometimes years, where the woman becomes the mistress in the relationship. Both parties maintain a long term secret sexual relationship that is hidden from public view. There is deception maintained over a long period of time and hence the value in promoting and developing the script can be large indeed.

Of course there are affairs where the woman is married and the man is not. Even more telling is the emotional affair. For example two co workers discover over time that they have a deep connection and maybe even a love for each other. The relationship never becomes physical but they have this clandestine secret relationship with a strong attraction that only they know about. The husband or wife of the co workers are never told about the depth of it or told of it at all.

However in this case I am talking about the situation where the man is married and he has a secret sexual relationship with a woman who may or may not be married herself. I am also talking about this relationship occurring in a society where having an affair is seen as breaking a moral code, where the view is that 'good people do not have affairs'. The mistress transaction can be shown in figure 9.

Both parties agree to have a secret relationship and they are both willing to break the moral code of that society. However it is what happens in the Child ego state that is most important as this relationship can provide a lot of evidence to both parties which will allow them to fulfil their life scripts.

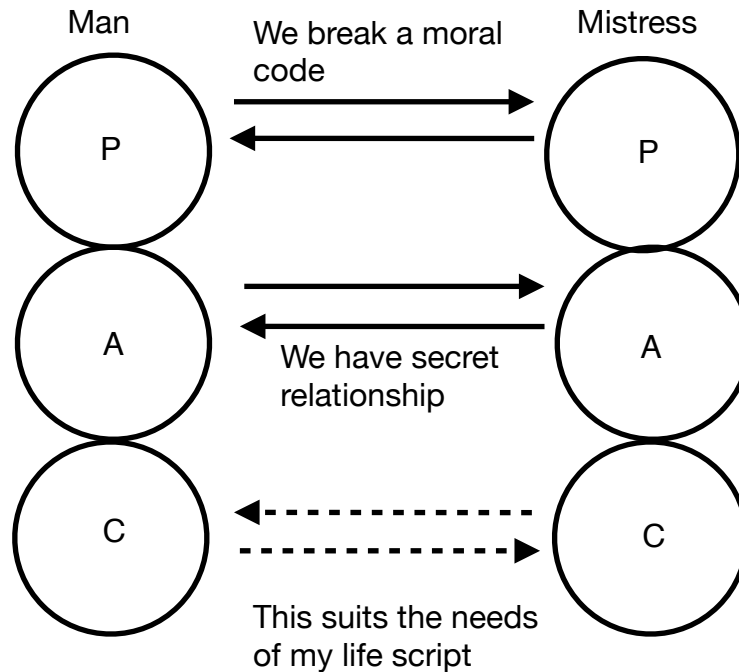


Figure 9

Firstly for both of them it is dangerous and exciting. The mistress relationship is a high stakes relationship in that it can significantly effect the lives of the two people involved and both their families. It can effect quite a number of people. Children who grew up in a family where there was a high level of energy and strokes often negative strokes can become addicted to that excitement and strokes. In violent families or in families where there was a lot of dramatic action most often involving games and negative strokes in relationships. This level of excitement and adrenaline becomes addictive to the person and they repeatedly seek it out in a whole variety of ways. That can be engaging in high risk activities like extreme sports, illegal activities such as transporting drugs, high risk business dealings where one could lose everything or in relationships where second and third degree games are played. The mistress transaction especially over a long period of time can certainly form part of a third degree game where one or both parties could end up in the divorce courts which costs large sums of money. This relationship can certainly fulfil the need for high levels of excitement and adrenaline in the life script.

#### Script needs for the woman

On the woman's side of the transaction she is essentially choosing an unavailable man and for some reason that fits for her life script. It could be a number of reasons.

1. She may have received messages from mother about men such as "All men are ... bad, cheats, just want one thing, and so on." A long term affair could provide her with lots of evidence for such a script belief system that she developed in childhood.

2. Being the mistress is an interesting relational position as she has put herself in a very powerful position as mentioned above. She can significantly effect the lives of many people in a profound way at any time by exposing the relationship. This may reflect a need for power in relationships and a dominance as well. It can also be seen as a competitive situation where she is competing against the man's wife which could be a script issue if she had competitive siblings in childhood.

3. As she is choosing an unavailable man she is getting herself in a relationship that won't work in the long run. This may be because she comes from an enmeshed family and has never fully broken the symbiosis with mother and father. This can result in a series of failed relationships where she finally gives up on relationships and stays near mother and father. It can also be because the parents have groomed her to be the child who looks after them in their old age so again she has failed relationships so she ends up alone with the parents in the end and will look after them.

#### Script needs of the man

For the man it can also be similar reasons to these. He may be proving to himself that, "All women are..." which he learnt in childhood from watching mother and father relate. He may also be having failed relationships for similar reasons to the woman described above. However with the male there is also an additional factor which one needs to consider and why here, I am only considering the affair where the man is married and the woman is the mistress.

In the male the possibility of an affair is particularly highlighted with the anti social personality who are well known for promiscuous behaviour. Indeed this is often described as one of the diagnostic criteria for the personality type, American Psychiatric Association (2013). Also Midgley (1993) states this personality type has characteristics which include lack of acceptance of moral standards, can have an irresponsible, impersonal and a promiscuous sex life. Others also support the view of promiscuous sex lives as an important diagnostic criteria for the anti social individual including Samenow (1986) and Ogloff (2006). Of course people with any personality adaptation can and do have affairs but the anti social personality is especially noted for this.

In addition to this it is the anti social male in particular who is noted as having what has been called the madonna - whore complex, which has also been named the madonna - whore dichotomy or the madonna - mistress complex, Neff (2021). Freud (1905) originally proposed this idea to describe men who had a psychological struggle with feelings of affection towards sexually desirable women that were once directed to their mothers. Having a sexual response to a woman who is also kind and motherly is too repugnant for the man. This can result in the man perceiving the women as being either:  
Pure, chaste and good - Madonna, or  
Promiscuous, seductive and bad - whore or mistress

Freud also hypothesised that this complex could result in male sexual dysfunction and was due to the unresolved feelings that a respected female like their mother



should not be sexually desired, Bareket et al (2018). One way to resolve these confused ambivalent feelings involves a splitting of the woman, by the male. In his mind he splits the woman into two different types, either the bad promiscuous whore (mistress) or the good chaste madonna (wife) and Hartmann (2009) says this is done by the process of dissociation. He goes onto say that this dissociation is on a continuum and can either be partial or total. This idea is supported by Hargaden and Sills (2002) who also talk about larger and smaller splits occurring in the child due to different childhood experiences.

Of course in reality it's not possible to split another's personality one can only do that to self. The man makes a split in his own psyche and then projects that onto the woman. See figure 10.

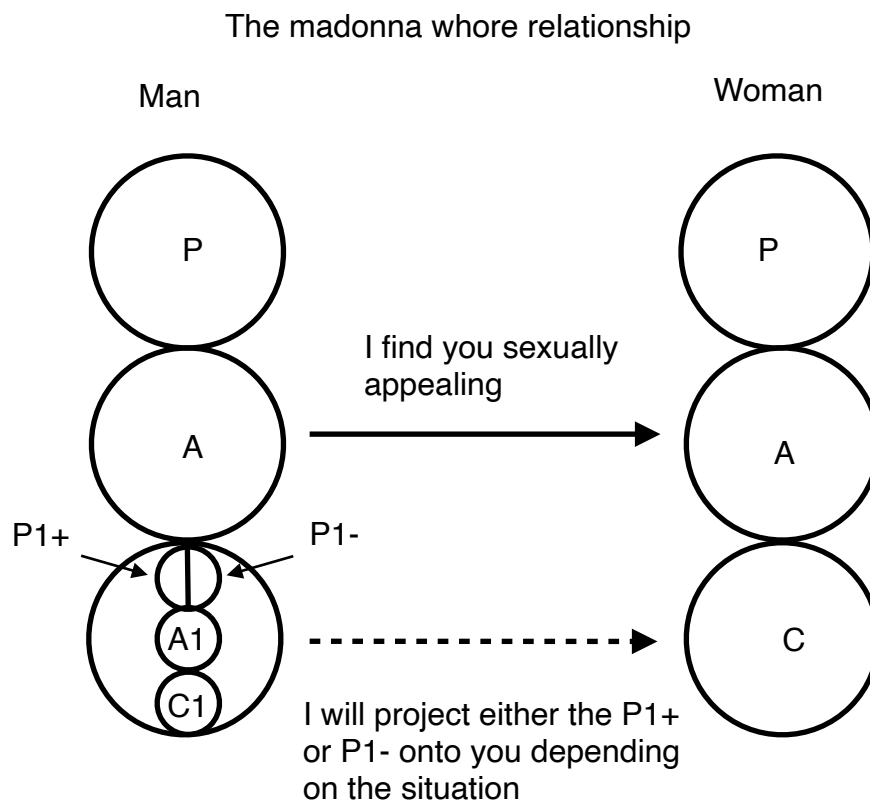


Figure 10

### The splitting process

As mentioned before Hartmann (2009) says the splitting is like a dissociation and is on a continuum from partial to total. Hargaden and Sills (2002) also talk about this splitting and what happens in the schizoid process, where the child splits off the traumatic experiences in their personality. Another view on this is provided by Masterson (1985) who like Berne uses fairy stories to illustrate psychological phenomena. In the story of Cinderella, she identifies both her good birth mother and the bad evil step mother and he states, "The splitting defence mechanism is reinforced by the image of the bad stepmother." (P118). He goes onto say that envy and rage is felt towards the bad step mother. In the madonna-whore dichotomy the same process occurs. In the mind of the man, due to early sensual

feelings towards mother which result in confusion for the child, he uses the defence mechanism of splitting to develop two images of women. The good chaste madonna and the bad sexualised whore.

Although Hargaden and Sills (2002) confuse second and third order structure of the Child ego state in explaining this splitting process their view that these two disparate images can be seen to be held in the P1 ego state seems sound. The man creates a split in the P1 and gets the P1+ and P1- to hold both images of women as shown in figure 10.

It is here where the mistress relationship finds its place in the man's mind. One way to resolve the confusion is to have two types of women in your life. Women who are viewed as the good chaste type, like a wife and the others who are viewed as the bad promiscuous type, like a mistress. The affair allows the man to reinforce his script beliefs about women who are either like the mistress or like the wife. He uses these relationships to support and further his life script as we all do with various relationships in our lives.

In more recent times there has been extensive research done on the objectification of women by men and how this can relate to the madonna-mistress complex. Bareket et al (2018) and Neff (2021) both examine how the this complex involves the objectification of women which allows them to be seen in the role of the mistress but also the role of mother by the man. Such research has shown that such objectification of the woman can occur from mild to significant levels and as Gervais, Bernard and Riemer (2015) notes it is done by a significant number of men in western cultures. However men in other cultures have also shown to engage in the objectification that is needed for the Madonna-mistress complex, Bareket et al (2018) reports similar findings in Latin and South America, the Middle East and East Asia.

Indeed every male child who has had a female mothering figure has had to deal with the dilemma we find in the madonna-mistress complex. People will resolve this dilemma with varying degrees of success. What the recent research on the objectification of women tells us that is that this complex is far wider than it was originally thought. It is possible that in the male psyche some can split their perception of the single woman in to either side when the circumstances present themselves. The same women at times can be viewed as the chaste nurturing figure and at other times be viewed as promiscuous mistress. For example when the relationship gets sexual the man can objectify the woman at that time. At other times he doesn't objectify her and he sees her as a figure of affection and nurturance. And hence we get to the final part of the transaction in figure 10. The objectification can occur in single woman on both sides.

## Chapter seven

### The domestic violence transaction

This transaction discusses domestic violence (DV) or as it tends to be known in the literature IPV, intimate partner violence. Most often men are the perpetrators but it occurs in all types of relationships thus including the LGBTIQ+ communities. Most of the literature on this topic is written from the perspective of the feminist theory approach, Day (2015) and Warren (2021). As a result it focusses on its role in a patriarchal society where it is seen to allow men to control women. The focus is on the power structure between the two sexes.

Here I will be looking at it from more of a psychological perspective so it's not directly about men controlling women but as we will see the man maybe seeking to control the woman but for psychological reasons not sociological reasons as described in feminist theory. This at times leads to a clash between feminist theory and psychological theory.

Having worked with many men who have been perpetrators of domestic violence I find there is a sub group who I will discuss here. This does not seek to explain all perpetrators but does discuss what I believe is to be a sizeable subgroup. When I worked in a prison there was a "special notification of release" list connected to some prisoners. Relatives and associates of a particular prisoner could have their names and contact details put on this list. When the particular prisoner was released (or escaped) the people on the list were meant to be notified quickly and directly. The reason why is because everyone knows that as soon as he gets out he is going to go straight around to the homes of the people on the list and there will be some very dramatic scenes and a high likelihood of violence.

This person may have been in prison for seven years and still he is very likely to do that. What this indicates is the level of emotions that we are talking about here. Very intense and extreme emotions are involved here in the relationship which the perpetrator and victim have. What could explain the extreme intensity of emotions that are involved in these relationships?

One explanation is to see this category of DV as a psychological version of matricide, or the killing of mother. Our most extreme emotions are usually related to the early childhood experiences and attachments in our lives. Usually the most important attachment for us is the original attachment with the mother (figure). It is this relationship and attachment that engenders very intense and extreme emotions for most people, especially when the attachment is not secure.

Indeed Holcomb (2000) describes this in his discussion on the psychoanalytic and family systems views of matricide. He describes various disturbed attachments that exist between mother and the child. Common features are emotionally distant (abandoning) mothers, and relationships that amount to a second order symbiosis between mother and child. The child is seen to exist to satisfy mother's needs and sometimes there can be some level of sexual component engendered by the mother in the relationship with the son. However this maybe at an emotional level

only in the relationship. Interestingly enough John Bowlby (1973) also highlights multiple times the possibility of a second order symbiosis between mother and child as a potential source of anger and aggression against mother by the child. He states,

“Frustrations of another kind that can engender much anger towards a parent occur when a parent demands that his (or her) child act as a caretaker for him (or her), thus... inverting the usual parent and child roles.” (p296).

“In such cases it is the parent, not the child, who is overdependent or, to use the better term, anxiously attached.” (p283).

Figure 11 shows this transaction where mother wants an equal relationship, so child is treated as a friend or even the spouse of mother. For example the mother may confide her marital problems with the child and use the child as an emotional support for herself. Just like she may do with a girlfriend. This creates a second order symbiosis where the child becomes ‘parent like’ to the mother and she is treated as the child in the relationship. This can be quite destructive to the child and leads to an insecure attachment style where the child will feel intense anger and fear.

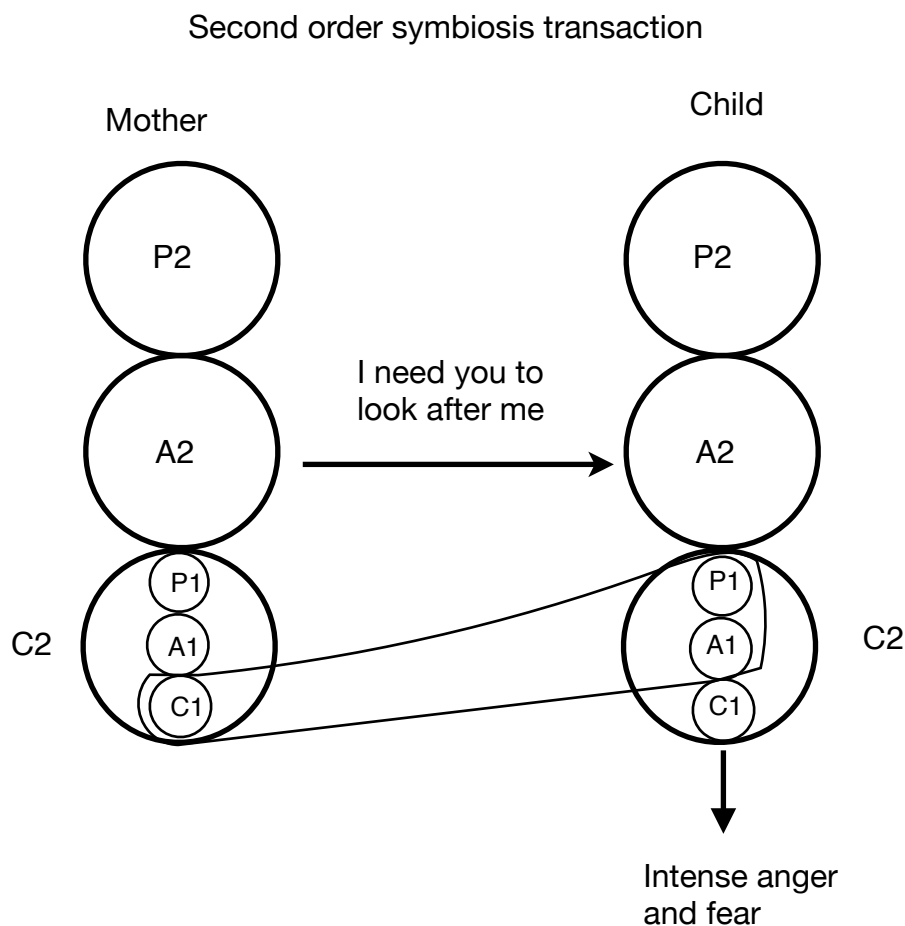


Figure 11

Bowlby (1973), who's book is titled “Separation: Anxiety and Anger” discusses those children who are raised with an insecure attachment. The insecurity in the

child is created by either repeated separations or threats of repeated separations from mother. Indeed the emotionally unavailable parent also imposes a separation on the child as does the neglectful parent. In both cases they are there physically there but psychologically the child is abandoned.

When this happens you get anxiety and anger in the child. This can begin to explain some of the very intense emotions that one finds in DV situations. A child who endures repeated separations from its primary attachment figure will experience intense fear and intense anger that is almost impossible to replicate in any other relationship the person may have. See figure 12. In this case the parent may still be physically there with the child but she has little to no emotional involvement with the child. This is communicated by all her ego states and the young child will experience her as being cut off and hence her Child ego state is drawn with a barrier in front of it. This leads to the child having an insecure attachment style with mother and then it will have very strong feelings of anger and fear in response to that attachment.

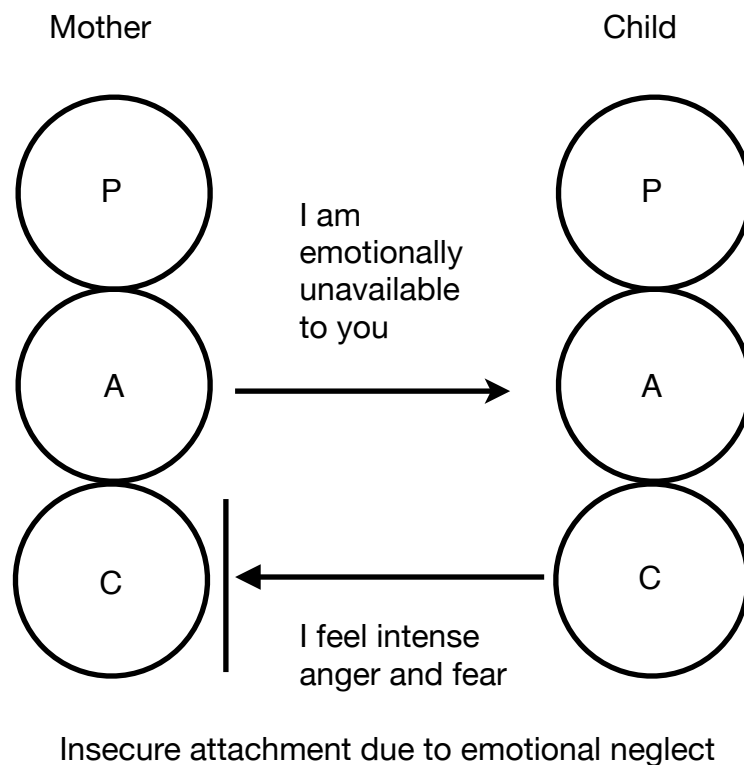


Figure 12

Indeed Bowlby, writing fifty years ago, warns us about how DV can result from this insecure attachment.

“As a result, following experiences of repeated separation or threats of separation, it is common for a person to develop intensely anxious and possessive attachment behaviour simultaneously with bitter anger directed against the attachment figure, and often to combine both with much anxious concern about the safety of that figure.” (p296).

He also states,

“It seems not unlikely that a number of individuals who become literally murderous towards a parent are to be understood as having become so in reaction to threats of desertion that have been repeated relentlessly over many years.”(p290)

The anger and violence in insecure attachment has two functions

1. Revenge or a punishment of the parent for hurting the child.
2. A deterrent to the attachment figure against doing it again.

Bowlby continues writing about attachment and DV when he describes two cases of matricide by adolescents. After the murders of their mothers they are quoted as saying:

“I couldn’t stand to have her leave me”

“I decided that she would never leave me again”. (p290)

Obviously this is illogical thinking. If a child kills mother then on the one hand the mother can never leave them again but on the other hand the mother has also now permanently left the child. However children often thinking illogically so it doesn’t have to make sense. Also all adults have a Child ego state. They all can and do regress into their Child ego state at times, some much more than others. So we all engage in illogical thinking at times.

### Transference

This leads to the final part of the process in IPV, as a result of insecure attachments. In the Book of Transactions - Part 2 the transference transaction was discussed. We all do this in our adult lives. We all do transference where we see people and relationships in adulthood the same as we experienced them in our childhood. We all transfer the faces from mother, father and others in our childhood onto those in our current life with whom we have relationships. Indeed the more important the current day relationship is, the more likely transference will occur. For most their husband, wife or partner will be the most important in their life where the most emotions occur and where the biggest attachments occur in our current lives. The more pronounced the current day attachment the more likely transference will occur in more significant degrees.

If a son had an insecure attachment to mother in childhood then that is likely to be transferred onto the most important woman in his current day life, usually his partner but it can be anyone he has a strong attachment to. As was shown above and as Bowlby repeatedly warns, if a person has experienced separations then they can have an intensely anxious and possessive attachment along with bitter anger. So much so that the safety of the attachment figure is brought into question.

If the man transfers the insecure attachment from childhood onto his wife then her safety automatically comes into question. He will begin to feel intense fear and consuming rage at her. Sometimes his anger is so much that he will kill her and

hence we have original proposal that some DV is a form of psychological matricide or the killing of mother due to her repeated abandonments or threats of abandonment that have been transferred onto his current partner.

Hence we arrive at the disagreement between feminist theory and psychological theories of domestic violence. As stated above feminist theory views it as a way in which men can maintain control over women which is evident in patriarchal societies. The psychological theory says that this subgroup of domestic violence occurs because of the transference of insecure attachments from childhood onto the current day partner.

#### Coercive control

This topic is receiving a lot of attention currently because some countries are deciding to legislate against it. There is more to IPV than just the violence, instead it is an overall relationship style as well. One that also includes attempts by the perpetrator to control the everyday life of the partner. This includes emotional manipulation, gaslighting, financial control, isolation from friends, family and support networks, pathological jealousy and eroding the person's independence and lack of self worth, Stark and Hester (2019). It ends up as a unilateral relationship where the person employs tactics that are found with the mental destruction of hostages, cult members, torture victims and prisoners of war, Warren (2021).

The reason why this occurs according to feminist theory is to establish and maintain power and control in the intimate relationship by the male over the female. The psychological explanation is different and indeed coercive control further supports the idea of an insecure attachment felt by the perpetrator. Such control is seen as an unsophisticated, childlike attempt by the perpetrator to finally have mother not leave him. The magical thinking is, "If I can just control her enough then I can finally stop her leaving me. It will finally make me feel safe and secure in the attachment". The control does indeed provide short term relief from the intense anxiety and anger but of course it does not work in the long run. Indeed ultimately it is pushing the woman away and making her more likely to eventually leave the relationship, which of course is the ultimate life script payoff for the man. Coercive control by him is an attempt to try and make the relationship psychologically safe for him, where he won't be abandoned yet again. This is shown in figure 13.

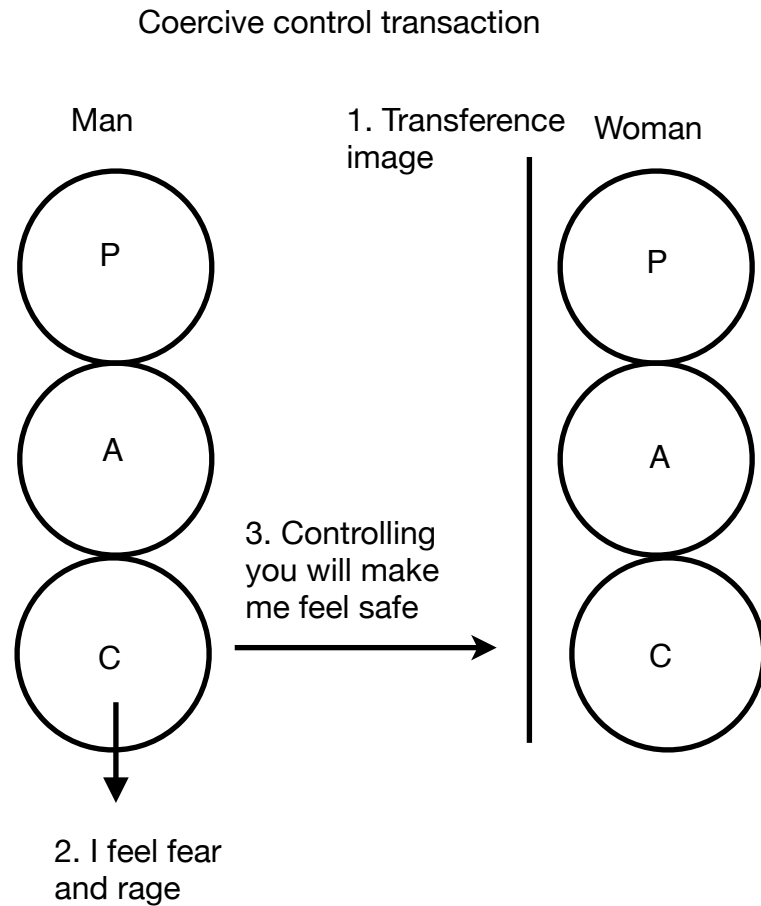


Figure 13

1. Man transfers the childhood image of an insecure attachment onto the woman
2. He feels intense fear and anger at her (for abandoning of him)
3. Magical thinking is: "If I can just control you enough then you won't leave me again"



## Chapter eight

## Object constancy transaction

In normal child development the child develops an internalised image of the parent (object) as safe, trusting image that will not abandon them. This is the habituation of a feeling, a sense of self and the relationship with the object. Around two to three years of age the image or imago of secure mother is internalised into the child. This allows the child to feel an inner security that it can cathect when it needs to. The person is then said to have achieved object constancy. This is shown in figure 14.

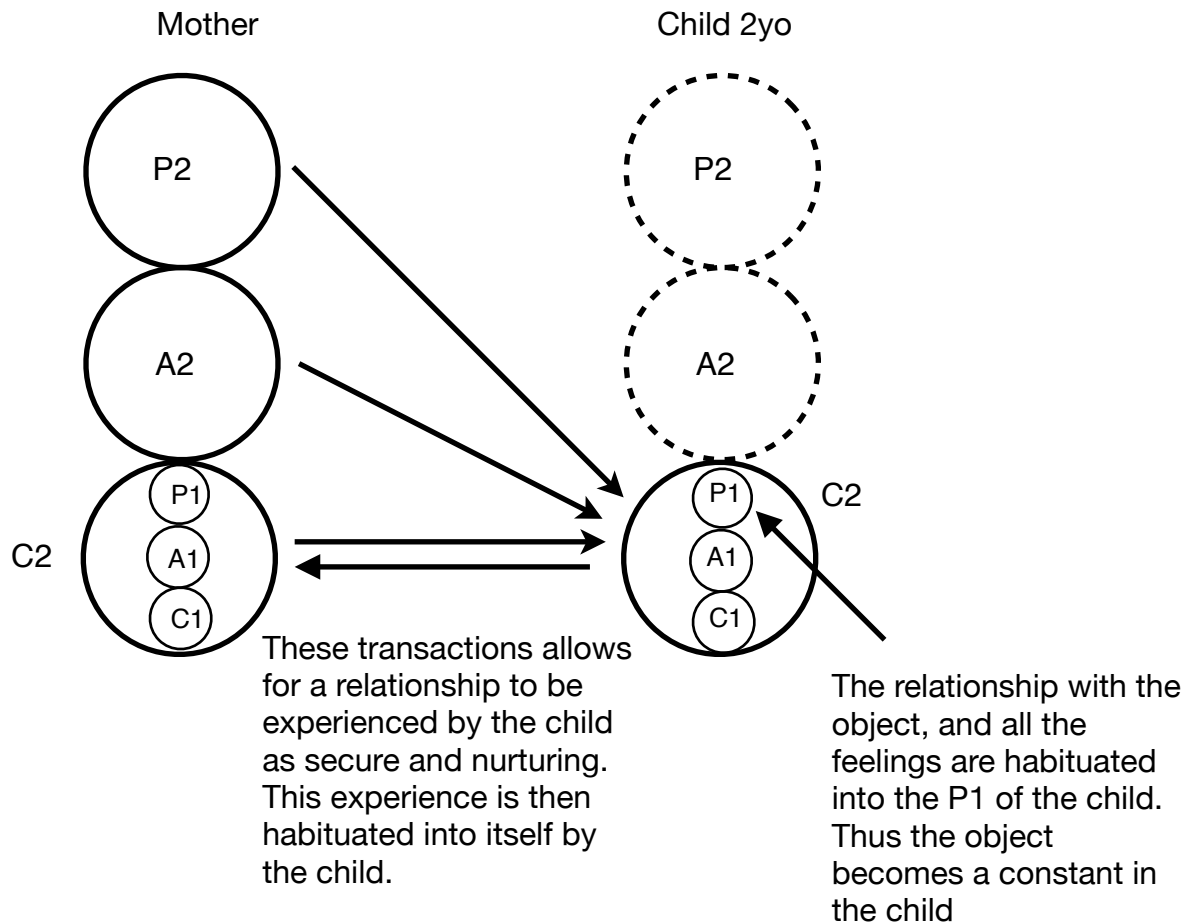


Figure 14

If the child does not develop object constancy they have ongoing fears that the relationship with a parent or the object will end and then they will feel a disorganisation and a dissolution of self. As Thomson(1983) notes this is not just a normal or average fear but a very intense fear. There is a sense of obliteration and the annihilation of the self. The child thinks, "If the object goes, then I also go because I do not have a constant object in me". The person feels they will lose part of self, not just another person, so the fear is magnified considerably.

If a person talks with these types of terms such as annihilation or a complete obliteration of self then it is possible they do not have object constancy. To the

individual it is more than just death, it is a sense that everything will be destroyed because when the child is that age it believes it is everything and the centre of the world. So not only does it die but the whole world is smashed into little pieces including the object. This is why in object constancy problems it is more than just anger and scare instead it is extreme fear and rage. The person who lacks object constancy will talk about these feelings in this way.

#### Object constancy and domestic violence

In the previous chapter Bowlby (1973) provided us with examples of actual acts of matricide due to threats of abandonment by a parent (object). The act of matricide seems extreme but when you view it in terms of object constancy and what that means it becomes more understandable. If the child is abandoned then not only is it left alone but self, mother and the world are seen to be obliterated and destroyed. The child feels that its own sense of self will be annihilated. Matricide then in this case, is perceived by the child psychologically, as a homicide - suicide.

In terms of intimate partner violence as was discussed in the previous chapter, you are going to have much stronger feelings of fear and anger in the perpetrator. If the man does transference onto his partner of the original attachment style that also lacks a sense of object constancy that he originally had with mother, then his anger is going to be rage like and his fear is felt as acute panic. Thomson (1983) in discussing the child's fear says, "Dynamically the panic attacks are related to ongoing and extreme fears of being left by the caretaker." (p27-28).

In some instances of DV a homicide suicide occurs where the perpetrator kills a family member and then self. In these cases it could be that the perpetrator has transferred a lack of object constancy onto the partner so when he kills her he is also annihilating himself and the world, so killing self then seems logical. Unfortunately with such extreme emotions being felt any deterrent effect of the law becomes next to zero. If there is a violence retaining order against the perpetrator who is feeling like his world and self are being obliterated, then such a legal document will have very little meaning for him at all.

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