

CHILDHOOD REVERBERATIONS

The chemicals in your brain, which you learned about in the first lesson, aren't the only aspect of attraction. How you grew up, your relationship with your family, and the beliefs you formed about relationships are major factors in who you're attracted to. Let's look at some of those influences.

CHILDHOOD INFLUENCES OF ATTRACTION

CONSIDER THESE INFLUENCES FROM YOUR FAMILY:

1. Did you feel wanted or unwanted?

- If you felt wanted in your family, you approach the world with the attitude that people want to be with you. You have a sense of openness which attracts people to you.
- **If you felt unwanted in your family, you yearn to be loved and wanted by a special someone.** Sometimes this yearning leads you to choose anyone who comes along, whether or not they're healthy for you.
- There are also those who are so afraid of being rejected that they stay isolated and alone to avoid being hurt. They won't take the risks needed to form a relationship. The television or internet become their companion.

2. **What is your concept of a relationship?** You learn from your family, mostly by their actions, how to have relationships.

- If you came from a family where communication patterns were positive, affection was freely expressed, and people treated each other with respect,

you'll look for those same qualities in your special someone.

- If you grew up in a home with conflict, you may not have been exposed to or learned healthy ways of relating.
- **Learn now by seeking out couples with healthy relationships.** Read books, get coaching, attend workshops. Then practice those skills so what you learned is ingrained within you.

3. **The familiar feels comfortable.** Think of the family you grew up in as a box. You're familiar with everything in that box. If your box has soft cushy toys, that's what you know. When you leave the box, leave home, you'll be attracted to soft cushy toys.

- The same is true for people. **When you leave home, you'll be subconsciously attracted to people who feel familiar.**
- The difficulty comes when you grew up with people who criticized and berated you. Even though that behavior hurts, it's familiar to you. In a strange sort of way,

it's "comfortable" because that's what you're used to.

- Healthy relationships will seem strange to you if you grew up in an unhealthy family. Later in this course, you'll learn how to identify the familiar that you don't want.

4. **Family beliefs.** Just as families have patterns of behavior, they have beliefs which result in those patterns.

- For example, if the family pattern is to stay isolated and not interact with others, the belief may be that outsiders are dangerous. An element of mistrust is built into meeting new people with the belief that outsiders are dangerous.
- **You also absorb beliefs about family roles.** Typical roles are who is the breadwinner, who does the housework, who does the yardwork, whose job is more important. Many of these roles are gender related.
- There are also beliefs about

communication, anger, money and child rearing.

- It's important to identify your specific beliefs about all facets of relationship. **If you discover you hold a belief not supportive of the type of relationship you want, decide what belief you do want.** Then, consciously begin acting out that belief.

RELATIONSHIP CHOICES AND REBELLION

People don't usually say, "Hey, I'm going to date this person to thumb my nose at my parents." It's often a subconscious choice.

THERE ARE THREE PRIMARY REASONS YOU MIGHT CHOOSE A PARTNER THAT YOUR PARENTS WOULDN'T APPROVE OF:

1. **Independence.** Your parents were controlling, and you want to prove that you can't be controlled

anymore.

2. **Adventure.** The familiar seems boring and you want some excitement in your life.
3. **You just fall in love.** You fall in love with someone who makes you happy but your parents don't approve due to prejudice or because the person isn't "good enough."

Rebelling in adolescence is a natural developmental stage in which adolescents declare their independence. The difficulty is when an adult continues the patterns of adolescent rebellion in choosing their partners.

If you choose someone your parents wouldn't agree with, it's important to make that decision based upon what's healthy for you.

SETTING NEW BELIEFS

In the next lesson, you'll examine how fears can lead to bad choices. But first, take 15 minutes with this fun exercise to begin to install the beliefs you want in your subconscious mind. After you finish, you'll be ready to explore how people are often attracted to those who can fill emptiness in their lives.

1. **Choose a belief that supports you.** Changing your beliefs will provide the foundation to change your actions.
 - It might be easier to begin by changing the beliefs held by your family.
 - **Even if you don't think you share those beliefs, you absorbed them when you lived at home.** Changing them on the subconscious level will strengthen the beliefs you want to live by.
 - Let's say your family has a belief that only jobs backed by a college degree are important. If you are in a relationship with a contractor, you could be subconsciously undervaluing their job. A belief which would be supportive to both of you would be, "Both our jobs are equally important."

2. **Adopt this belief.** To install this belief in your subconscious, give your subconscious mind concrete cues:
 - **Your new belief:**

- What your life would look like:

- What sounds would you hear (conversations, excitement, etc)?

- What feelings would you feel?

- What would you smell?

- What tastes would you experience?