

Emotional Control Styles

By: Neville Knowles

We all have one and in some cases a combination of two with one being most dominant. We each learn our EC styles at an early age within our families. Parent and sibling interactions imprint our reactive styles in our subconscious.

In experiences of emotionally charged encounters our ego's fight/flight responses (EC styles) will surface from the subconscious for self preservation and/or the need to be right. An emotional tug of war ensues between egos. Emotionally each party is attempting at a subconscious level to be winning the others emotional energy, thus validating and strengthening their ego's need to be right (justified).

There are four EC styles which include Intimidators, Interrogators, Aloofs and Poor Me's (or victims).

When dealing with each of these styles in a heated emotionally charged moment you will feel one or a combination of two of the following:

Fear....when dealing with the Intimidator (they are the bully's)

Criticism.....when dealing with the Interrogator

Emotionally abandoned.....when dealing with the Aloof (they check out)

Guilty.....when dealing with a Poor Me (you've brought them to tears and/or emotional calamity)

Once we become conscious of these styles we have a responsibility to show up to these emotional moments in a different way, first for our selves and second for the other persons well being . We must recognize that it's the ego at the subconscious level that need be addressed and not Tom/Harry or Sue.

The following four responses will neutralize the ego's pattern of behavior. In my client work with these modalities of behavior I've seen it only necessary to use the responses below 2 or 3 times with the person to effectively eliminate their ego's EC style in the relationship. **Greater respect and trust is created in relationship** from initiating these responses.

With Intimidators:

- “Why are you so angry?”
- “You seem to want to make me afraid of you?”

With Interrogators:

- “I like you but when I’m with you I feel criticized.”
- “Is there something else that’s bothering you besides this issue?”

With Aloofs:

- “I feel like you are withdrawing and being distant. How are you feeling?”

With Poor Me’s:

- “It feels like you’re trying to make me responsible for all that’s wrong in your life.”
- “You may not mean to, but it feels like you’re trying to make me feel guilty.”

NOTE: To be fully successful in this work one needs to stay centered, free of anxiety and calm in delivering these responses. It is not unusual to feel a little awkward at first for you are changing a life pattern. Delivering these responses from a place of surrendered humility and empathy works best. The intention must be to help the other person beyond their limiting emotional control style...releasing them from it.

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