

because toast is better when cooked in an oval rather than rectangular pan. You simply practice what you've been taught and repeat what has been modeled for you.

Because it's important that you're able to determine whether or not unresolved issues from childhood affect your relationships, we present the following exercise to help you identify not only the specifics that tripped you up, but the causes and conditions that may prevent you from dating smarter in the future.

When answering the following questions, please respond with either "Yes" or "No" answers *only*. Answer each question. Keep in mind that "Family Members" applies to your parents, grandparents, stepfamily, or significant family members or individuals to whom you were exposed consistently when growing up.

EXERCISE



Disruptive Lineal Modeling Questionnaire

Yes	No	Question
---	---	1. Did you ever assume responsibilities that were clearly not yours due to a family member's dysfunction?
---	---	2. Did you ever compare your home to a friend's whose appeared more "normal" and imagine or desire that yours could be like theirs?
---	---	3. Did you ever feel the need to physically escape (geographically relocate) to get as far away as possible from the pain you were experiencing at home?

Yes	No	Question
---	---	4. Did you ever hope that your parents would get divorced rather than continue to live in the painful environment resultant of their disruptive behavior?
---	---	5. Did you ever feel that you aggravated or incited a parent or parents into further practicing their dysfunction?
---	---	6. Did you ever find yourself disappointed or hurt because a parent was unable to uphold an obligation due to a compulsion, addiction or dysfunction?
---	---	7. Have you ever taken on the responsibility of guarding, shielding, or distancing a family member from the family member who was unhealthy or abusive?
---	---	8. Did you ever feel as if you were used as a mediator or pawn in fights or arguments between a healthy and unhealthy parent (or even in the case where both parents were unhealthy)?
---	---	9. Looking back, do you carry painful or hurtful animosity toward a parent or your parents for the disruptive lifestyle and painful events they subjected you to?
---	---	10. Were you ever afforded the opportunity to talk to someone who could help resolve the unhealthy issues in your family or have you sought that help since leaving the household you grew up in?



Yes	No	Question
—	—	11. Did you ever hide out or make excuses that allowed you to distance yourself from the problems your parent(s) were causing that you were facing at home?
—	—	12. Have you ever suffered insomnia, hypersomnia, nightmares, or night terrors as the result of a parent or parent's behavior, events or abuse?
—	—	13. Were you ever obsessed, fixated, or excessively worried about a parent's unhealthy behavior or how it affected you, your family, or the people around you?
—	—	14. Did you ever attempt to intervene or did outside intervention push a parent toward seeking a resolution to their problem?
—	—	15. Was a family member's compulsion, addiction, abuse, or behavior the cause of strife and friction between you and another family member?
—	—	16. Have you ever suffered psychosomatic illness due to a parent's behavior?
—	—	17. Did you ever feel frightened, agitated, intimidated, or feel isolated or depressed due to the inability of a parent to overcome or resolve their unhealthy behavior?
—	—	18. Did a parent or parent's problem escalate into physical intimidation with you or another family member?

Yes	No	Question
—	—	19. Did you ever think that a parent or parents suffered from a significant physical, psychological or psychiatric condition or mental health issue?
—	—	20. Did a parent's behavior prompt you to engage them in an aggressive fashion?
—	—	21. Did your parent's dysfunction and their painful interactions negatively affect you without their awareness?
—	—	22. Did you find yourself hopelessly fantasizing that a parent's dysfunction, compulsion, or addiction would miraculously clear up on its own and not exist at all?
—	—	23. Did you ever find yourself ashamed as you bore the burden for your parent's behaviors, actions, or dysfunctions?
—	—	24. Did a parent's dysfunction leave you with the feeling that you were unworthy, unable or undeserving of their love?
—	—	25. Have you ever assumed the burden or responsibility for a parent's unhealthy behavior or dysfunction that you actually had nothing to do with?
—	—	26. Did you ever think that one of your parent's behavior was so dysfunctional, damaging, or disruptive that they warranted being labeled "addictive, abusive, compulsive, or mentally ill?"
—	—	27. Did you ever avoid healthy external contact and interaction with others, essentially withdrawing



Yes	No	Question
—	—	from life itself, because of the association or connection with your parent's dysfunction?
—	—	28. Did you ever undertake an aggressive action to avoid a parent's behavior from being visible or discovered?
—	—	29. Did you ever experience a difficult divorce or were you exposed to multiple marriages as the result of a parent's unhealthy, addictive, abusive, or compulsive behavior?
—	—	30. Did a family member's problem or dysfunction progress to the point where you worried that it terminally affect their physical being and could possibly leave you without a parent at all?
—	—	31. Have you or any family member ever had an eating disorder?
—	—	32. Have you or any family member ever been subjected to profound physical, sexual, or psychological abuse?
—	—	33. Have you or any family member ever suffered long-term chronic illness or intensive long-term care?
—	—	34. During your childhood, did you experience a catastrophic loss of home, life, or property?
—	—	35. Do you relate a personal dysfunction, addiction, or difficulty dating to your childhood experiences or upbringing?
—	—	Totals

Disruptive Lineal Modeling Questionnaire Scoring

1 to 8 "Yes" responses (excluding numbers 30 to 35): Chances are you may have grown up with a minor or short-term dysfunction. It has either been resolved through counseling or self-help, or was brief enough that it didn't have lasting effects.

9 to 15 "Yes" responses (excluding numbers 30 to 35): Your character was definitively altered enough to cause problems in your intimate relationships. Your learned habits and behavior probably interfered with your relationships. It's likely that you're either unaware of the level of dysfunction you inherited and its affect on your social life, or you spend excess time blaming others for your present relationship woes.

16 to 29 "Yes" responses (excluding numbers 30 to 35): You were profoundly affected by events of your upbringing. We hope you've consciously addressed these issues with a therapist who specializes in your specific problems. We also encourage you to participate in a support group. The sharing of experiences with others who have similar issues and were able to resolve them can help you overcome your own.

30 or more "Yes" responses (including any numbered 30 through 35): Two things are likely: First, it will be nearly impossible for you to attain and maintain a quality relationship with a healthy person without getting help. If your issues aren't addressed, they will inevitably lead you to a revolving door of relationship failures. Second, you're almost assured to attract someone or be attracted to someone as unhealthy as you are. It's possible you've become immune to your unhealthy behavior. Denial can prevent you from making changes necessary to succeed in relationships. Your unhealthy ways can become so much a part of you that you don't recognize what's wrong.

One special note: 29 "Yes" answers and a "Yes" to any question numbered from 30 to 35 indicates severe denial of your problem and the

consequences of growing up in an unhealthy environment. It also indicates that you should seek professional help immediately.

In the first two SCARS (co-dependency and unhealthy lineal modeling) we examined issues that are more family-based and internal from cause to effect. The third SCARS examines wounds of an external nature

SCARS #3: POST-TRAUMATIC PERSONALITY IMPRINT (PTPI)

A **Post-Traumatic Personality Imprint (PTPI)** is a combination of character flaws resulting from negative circumstances that alters your personality so drastically that it adversely affects your dating life.

People who've been abused learn reactions and responses to survive experiences they've suffered. As a result, their behavior intuitively responds to certain stimuli. They either attract more calamities through bad decisions or they sabotage healthy situations to confirm their insecurity. They have a tough time reaching out to give or receive. Their damaged ego can never be satisfied.

The Confirmation Syndrome

Egomaniacs think the world revolves around them. Those with inferiority complexes believe they're completely unworthy of anything. Yet both types have the same basic problem—they think **only** of themselves. Driven by fear, they need constant validation. Individuals that suffer PTPI exhibit ego-driven characteristics that we call the **Confirmation Syndrome**.

The Confirmation Syndrome comes from insecurity, the need for constant validation that everything is okay and that you have worth. You need to hear or say "I love you" regularly. Many of your sentences end with a version of "Do you know what I mean?" You make numerous calls just to ask, "What are you up to?" Or you're constantly aware of another person's schedule, movements, and contacts. These techniques create a false sense of security. Your need for approval can turn to extreme disapproval for friends and associates who don't buy into your way. When the Confirmation Syndrome reaches an unhealthy peak, what we call a **Parasnooper** mentality becomes evident.

Parasnoopers are people who selectively investigate other people's personal belongings, including their drawers, appointment and address books, wallets, purses, and mail in a desperate, paranoid attempt to uncover evidence to confirm what they already believe. These people have been scarred and become hyper-vigilant. In some cases, their fears are warranted due to their bad picks. However, if they act out these fears with healthy people (picks), Parasnoopers will break their partners' trust, breach their privacy, and drive them away.

Much of this behavior mimics **Attachment Disorder, Separation Anxiety**, and **Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder**, three forms of anxiety disorder in which the sufferer assumes an overwhelming feeling that abandonment is inevitable. Here are examples of each so you can see how they differ:

◆ Attachment Disorder

This condition urges you to put up so many walls that getting close or attaining intimacy is nearly impossible. You may have experienced infidelity in marriage and have an overwhelming fear that everyone will cheat on you. To the opposite extreme, you may cling so tightly to another person that they feel they are incapable of escaping your suffocating grasp.