

“Notice anxiety” Anxiety Binding Mechanisms*

Relational Resourcing Wise Protecting Patterns

“Notice wise alternatives” Maturity Building Principles

CONFLICT

Anger arises when one feels hurt, harmed or blocked in fulfilling a need or desire. Some people respond to it with Criticism, which leads to Conflict and/or they respond with blame or demanding efforts to Control. This shifts their anxiety-anger from self to others. Thus the pattern rewards the conflictual behavior automatically and unconsciously.

WISE DIFFERING

A. Lincoln and others used it protectively to respectfully differ from others beliefs through clear reasoning with empathy, rather than attacking others. This works when the motive includes no malice, but instead a generous willingness to see the best in others and their views, and pardon/forgive errors. The use of the AA Serenity Prayer** can help people differ wisely.

CALM UNDERSTANDING

The goal of mature people is to understand themselves and others. They seek calm discussion of differences, allowing enough time for each one to share observations, feelings, needs, thoughts, etc. They are good at letting go of expectations of others, and accepting differences. This may calm the other person.

DISTANCE or EMOTIONAL CUTOFF

When our hand is burned by fire, we automatically withdraw it. Sadness or fear, anger or disgust cause many people to avoid one or more people by either talking to them little or not at all, and/or avoiding their presence to a greater or lesser degree. When distance or emotional cutoff is used automatically, anxiety goes from self to other. It is a pattern associated with depression.

WISE DISTANCE

This technique may be used protectively when there is danger of harm from Conflict or Violence/Abuse. Distance periods can be used to increase skills to cope with challenging others effectively. Heart coherence skills (see HeartMath.com) or personal retreats in ample calm silence are self-caring ways to recharge one’s supply of inner strength. Sometimes the best way to connect/love some people is mentally, from a distance.

CONNECTION

Emotionally mature people repair relationships whenever possible, or take a break and try again. Gradual mutual disclosure of your truth, sharing warmth like the sun (without expectation/condition) build a rich mutual support system of relatives, friends, neighbors, co-workers and spiritual/ community organization members. This inoculates one against stress, with many good options for loving/friendly connection or creative ideas/ advice if needed.

TRIANGLING

When some people are stressed, they express it through other people, often automatically and unconsciously. It may take the form of gossip, an affair, or child focus (worrying about, doting on, or abusing a child or a weaker member of the group). This makes them feel better, but at least one other person feels worse.

WISE TRIANGLING

Protective use: bringing a trusted and mutually respected witness who would never gossip to a discussion of clear boundaries (Bowen calls this an “I” position). Witnesses often inspire better behavior. The witness could be a trusted mutual friend who would never gossip, or it could be a tape recorder used with consent.

ONE-TO-ONE

Mature people take calm responsibility for their concerns and if appropriate, communicate directly to all relevant persons. This helps repair trust, lessens stress and strengthens personal relationships. If unsuccessful, they seek a neutral 3rd party (such as a trusted, neutral therapist, elder or supervisor) who can equally help both to listen deeply, appreciate differences, and gain creativity.

OVERFUNCTIONING/UNDERFUNCTIONING RECIPROCITY

(O/U) When some people are stressed, they seek behaviors such as too much work, or substances such as alcohol to distract them from their distress. This rewards their choice. When this choice impacts other areas of life (such as relationships, work, play or spiritual life) under-functioning may result in one or more of the areas and reciprocal functioning (like codependency) in another person. Such imbalance can be inner (within the person) and outer (in his relationships).

HUMILITY/SELF-ESTEEM

Some reciprocity is inherent in life; i.e. due to illness or accident, a caregiver helps a convalescent. If this lasts more than 3 weeks, through learning it can create habits, rigidify roles and affect self-esteem. Humility in the caregiver and self-esteem in the convalescent protect the relationship from a rigidified pattern of O/U reciprocity.

BALANCE & EQUALITY

When mature people discover they are in an O/U relationship, they face it, take responsibility for their part, and communicate a wish for more equality and balance. Out of self-respect, they change their own part. Respecting the other, they request (not demand) cooperation from him or her.