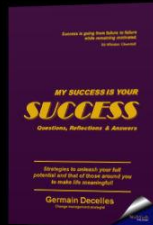




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Manipulation is a contagious disease, much more dangerous than the flu because it can endure for a lifetime.

MY SUCCESS IS YOUR  
**SUCCESS**



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Dr. Dorothy McCoy.  
(1903 -2001)

American mathematician and university professor. She was the first woman to earn a doctorate in mathematics from the University of Iowa, and she worked for many years as a professor of mathematics at Belhaven College and Wayland Baptist College.

## THE MANIPULATION

*We have all known manipulative people whether they are friends, family, or our spouse. These are the people who know how to push our emotional buttons.*

They could frighten, coerce, compel, criticize, guilt, bribe, blame, undermine, intimidate, abuse. Or they flatter, offer sympathy, and act innocently, but not sincerely.

It's all emotional blackmail. It's manipulation!

Here we only trace an outline of emotional manipulation.

But emotional manipulation, for example, in a married life can be more complex and must be handled with great sensitivity and care.

Contact your health department even if you are the only person ready to act.

A specialized counselor can guide you in your first steps towards recovery.

### 1. *What is the manipulation?*

In short, manipulation is a dishonest way to satisfy our needs.

We all have legitimate needs for physical survival and emotional well-being. And healthy people know how to appropriately ask for what they need and how to interact with others to achieve good results for everyone.



However, manipulative people sneakily try to influence someone to reach their ulterior motive. And manipulation involves control and coercion.

- *Manipulate*: to control or coerce another person by crafty, unfair or insidious, harmful, but attractive means, especially for one's own benefit.
- *Control*: not allowing another person to choose their own action or response by controlling it in some way.
- *Constraint*: to fulfill one's own desires by intimidating, holding back or dominating another person.

2. *Why is manipulation bad?*

Manipulation is an attempt to take away the ability to freely determine whether to perform certain acts and to replace them with our own selfish desires or twisted motives, in order to do so in a way that completely disregards the worth and dignity of the other person.

3. *Why do people manipulate?*

People can be manipulative because of their own hurt, pain, or immaturity. They tend to react with anxiety rather than being preoccupied with the particular situation.

They lack the relationship skills necessary for healthy interactions. They never learned or denied self-awareness, humility, empathy, and a willingness to take responsibility for their own actions.

Manipulation is the only way they know to relate to others.

Then there are those who rely on others to fix things, pay for them, or cover them so they don't have to be responsible.

In this sense, some people have a behavioral disorder and enjoy manipulating others, even to the point of hurting them.

A conduct disorder is characterized by socially undesirable conduct, such as poor impulse control or an inability to maintain close emotional relationships, and the absence of anxiety or guilt.

Manipulative people may have different reasons behind their actions, but they generally fall into three basic categories or styles:

- *Master*: these people pose as the one in charge and it's up to you to do whatever they want no questions asked because, they say, it's for your good.

They tend to be pushy and easily angered. This is what we can commonly call brutes. Force is their primary tactic, but they can also coax you into submission with a mesmerizing charm.

- *Savior, facilitator, messiah*: these people have done something for you, and it is believed that because they « saved » you from anything, you owe them a debt of gratitude forever and you should do things their way.



To make you feel guilty and bend to their will, they usually use comments followed by reminders of the things they have done for you. And like the master, the savior personality could also benefit from the phrase « It's for your own good. »

- *Victim*: these people are often overlooked as manipulative because they are « poor me. » These pseudo-victims know there's a lot of power in appearing helpless.

Yes, something legitimately bad could have happened to them, but their main tactic is to use this as an excuse to trick you into giving in to their wishes and demands.

Regardless of the style of the manipulator, their script is the same. They command the action you're supposed to take, and you're supposed to do what they want without refuting. If you notice this pattern in any of your interactions, you might be in an unhealthy relationship with a manipulative person.

#### 4. *What are the signs of manipulation?*

Emotional manipulators are generally very skilled.

They start with a subtle manipulation and raise the stakes over time, so slowly, you don't even realize it's happening.

So, what should you watch out for?

- They undermine your confidence in your understanding of reality.
- Their actions do not match their words.
- They are experts at distributing guilt.
- They claim the role of the victim.
- They are an emotional bottomless pit.
- They eagerly agree to help and maybe even volunteer, then act like martyrs.
- They are always one step ahead of you.
- They know all your emotional buttons and aren't shy about pushing them.

This is not an exhaustive list.

By observing, you may find that it is not always easy to recognize when someone is trying to manipulate or control you.

Remember, the sneakier a manipulator is, the harder it is to recognize their endgame.

Still, with the manipulation being so destructive, it's important to have a general idea of what to look for.

But be careful not to assume that someone loud and, lively is trying to coerce you, it could just be an outgoing personality.

#### 5. *What are the impacts of manipulation?*

Having another person takes or try to take your freedom through retaliation, projections, or abusive behavior that makes you question your sanity can have an extremely negative impact on you, whether physically, emotionally, and spiritual.



You can develop:

- Increased mental stress and physical fatigue.
- Depression or anxiety.
- Compromised self-confidence, which can cause you to doubt yourself.
- A threatened sense of reality that can make you feel if you're going crazy.
- Feelings of helplessness or shame.
- Unhealthy behaviors to try to cope with stress and fatigue.

There is no place for manipulation:

- In the form of threats or physical violence.
- Verbal denigration or insults.
- To try to make you feel guilty for doing what they want.
- A covert type of emotional abuse where the bully or abuser deceives the target, creating a false narrative and causing them to question their judgments and reality.

Here, the important thing for your health and your success is to put an end to it.

6. *How to stop being manipulated?*

If you think you are in a relationship with someone who tries to manipulate you or if your work environment is polluted, we suggest you follow these steps:

- a. *Be conscious and open-minded:* ask yourself, is this person really trying to override my choice and make me act the way they want?

Remember that there is a difference between sustained encouragement and manipulation.

- *Sustained encouragement:* it is when you are honestly told the truth for your own good and then left to make your own decision. The person accepts and respects your final decision, even if they disagree.
- *The manipulation:* it's when you're told something that may be true, but it's ultimately for the benefit of the manipulator.

Essentially, he won't let you make your own decision and won't accept or respect your decision. The manipulator will keep pushing until you make the decision, he wants you to make.

- b. *Get advice from a health expert:* this is especially important if the manipulator is your spouse or a family member.

A counselor can help you identify any underlying personal issues you may be dealing with and guide you through the best ways to navigate your interactions with the other person. An outside perspective can help you see things more clearly.

- c. *Is this person secure enough for those around you?*

Confronting someone one-on-one is the best way to address disagreements between two people.



*Ask yourself:* is this person secure enough (physically, verbally, emotionally) to be confronted, or will there be a negative backlash against me if I do it?

If you are unsure of the person in question, do not confront them. Under these circumstances, things will likely be thrown in your face and blamed on you. Here again, the contribution of an advisor can be important.

- d. *Set and enforce healthy boundaries:* stop playing the manipulator scenario. Set and enforce healthy boundaries. Boundaries keep you from being hurt, and they have consequences for people who try to cross them.

The more destructive, the manipulation, the firmer, the boundary should be. You may need to increase the physical or relational distance between yourself and the other person, even to the point of stopping all contact until the unhealthy manipulative behaviors stop.

#### 7. *What to expect when you stop playing?*

When you stop playing the manipulator scenario, you can expect one of three things to happen:

- a. *Discontent:* they will be upset for a while but will eventually admit their behavior and make changes in their personal life. The manipulation will stop. This is the best outcome, the one we hope for and pray for.
- b. *The person will become a worse version of themselves:* she or he will become more forceful, more verbally demeaning, or she or he will increase the pressure on you to back off, go back to the script, and do as she or he tells you.

You might even see all three styles of manipulation in the same person as they work to get what they want: the master turns into a savior who becomes the victim who turns into a master who turns into a savior and then the cycle repeats itself.

It is always possible that this person will change, but it is unlikely. This is why you need a good support strategy.

- c. *The person becomes physically and rationally dangerous:* the person becomes an aggravated version of her or himself and becomes physically and rationally dangerous.

This person may try to ruin you financially, or even file charges against you. Because you won't do what she or he wants, she or he will go out of her or his way to hurt you in some way. This person can be extremely dangerous, and you will need emotional support and possibly legal protection to weather the storm. Luckily, this type of situation isn't as common, but you still need to plan ahead to keep your surroundings and loved ones safe.

#### 8. *Where can I find additional help?*

We live in a broken and fallen world with people who are hurting. We need to be discerning about members of the community, our workplace, our church, our families, and our marriages.

And, as much as it depends on us, we should live in peace with everyone. However, we have to be discerning, especially when you have to rub shoulders with and even deal with a manipulative person.



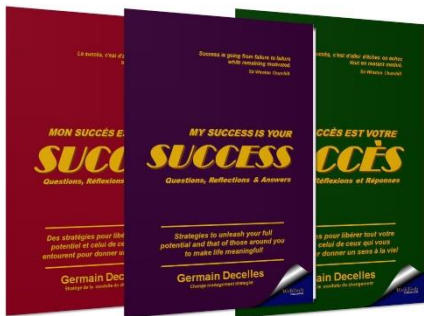
Do not hesitate to talk about it at work with the boss or the human resources department and even to consult the health department in your region.

If you are experiencing discomfort at home or socially, speak with a good friend, clergy member, health counselor and if you experience or perceive verbal and emotional abuse that could lead to violence, do not hesitate to contact the authorities.

All of these contributors will certainly help you make sense of your situation and will give you suggestions for the next steps.

Here we all need to remember Dr. Dorothy McCoy comment, « Manipulation is a contagious disease, much more dangerous than the flu because it can endure for a lifetime. »

Find out more about « understanding each other » with *My Success Is Your Success*. The book through questions, quotes and reflections provides the necessary elements to explore all about motivation so to shape your success and help those around you do the same. Remember that success is all about team efforts!



This 404-page book, available in French and English, is the fruit of forty years of experience acquired with local and international organizations and companies and during consultancy, change management, transition, and marketing services. For more information and to consult the flipbook, go to: [www.webtechpublishing.com](http://www.webtechpublishing.com).

### About the Author

In addition to writing, Germain Decelles acts as Change Management Strategist. He has over 40 years of business and consultation experience with local and international markets, including sectors such as retail trade, distribution, information technology and communications, transportation, manufacturing, financial services, and government organizations.



Other publications: ISO Pour Tous – Le manuel d’information ISO – Le guide de préparation ISO – La gestion du changement en affaires – La gestion de projet d’affaires – Le changement POUR TOUS – Change your future, now! – Mon succès est votre succès.

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***Press Contact***



Germain Decelles, o.s.j.  
WebTech Management and Publishing Incorporated  
514-575-3427  
[gdecelles@webtechmanagement.com](mailto:gdecelles@webtechmanagement.com)

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