

Bullies and Victims from the Schoolyard to the Boardroom

The Abridged Version

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Patricia S. Whitehouse
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Patricia S. Whitehouse
pslwhitehouse@aol.com

CONTENTS

Chapter

1.	Bully		
	Profile...	2
	Proactive and Reactive Bully		
	Power		
	Aggression and Rage		
	Social Development		
	Emotional Development		
	Reinforcement		
	Propensity for Violence		
2.	Victim		
	Profile...	10
	Passive/Submissive and Provocative Victim		
	Internalizing Composite		
	Social Withdrawal		
	Poor Interpersonal Problem Solving Patterning		
	Resiliency		
3.	Destructive Conflict...	16
	Dysfunctional Interactions		
	Communication Styles		
	Conflict Styles		
	Bullying Methods		
	Classic Bullying		
	Victim – Avenger		
	Mobbing		
	Environmental Influences		
	Violence		
	Lack of Support		
4.	Maladaptive		
	Cycle...	28
	Victim’s Maladaptation		
	Bully’s Maladaptation		
	Bully’s and Victim’s Conflict Algorithms		
	From the Schoolyard to the Boardroom		

CHAPTER ONE: THE BULLY PORTRAIT

When people hear the word "bully", they usually visualize a child in the schoolyard intimidating another child into giving them their lunch money but, as we will discover, bullying comes in many different forms and is very prevalent in all of society. The following story reveals the frequency and intensity of childhood bullying:

As many as 8 percent of schoolchildren miss a day of class monthly for fear of being bullied. And in a nationwide survey, 43 percent of children said they were afraid to go to a bathroom for fear of being harassed. Bill Head of Marietta, GA, knows those fears too well. His son Brian endured bloody noses, broken eyeglasses, and cutting remarks about his weight for years. "I figured it was normal kid stuff," Head says. But then one day in 1994, Brian, then 15, walked into a classroom, waved a gun around, and shot himself to death.ⁱ

Brian was a bully. His story reveals a critical element in the bully portrait: the fact that our images of bullies are distorted. While our feelings of repugnance and fear of a bully's behavior have merit, we must consider their motivation and we may find that we should also be afraid for them.

"Bullying is the aggressive behavior arising from the deliberate intent to cause physical or psychological distress to others."ⁱⁱ All bullies show two distinct characteristics, aggression and intent, but the deciding factor that determines a bully is that of their conflict triggering behaviors. Brian is a bully because he used violent behavior with the intent to cause harm as his response to conflict.

Research shows there are two types of bullies: *proactive* and *reactive*.ⁱⁱⁱ Both exhibit a number of common traits and forces that define their personalities and contribute to the motives for their actions.

Linda Wachner, CEO of Warnaco, has increased the company's stockholders' equity by well over \$100 million. She is also reputed to be a bona fide bully. Once she exploded at a meeting of executives from the women's clothing department. Furious at their performance, she announced, "You're eunuchs. How can your wives stand you? You've got nothing between your legs!" On another occasion, Ms. Wachner supposedly told a new company president to fire some people so that his employees would respect him.^{iv}

Linda is a proactive bully. A proactive bully behaves in a controlled, unfeeling, deliberate manner. This bully delivers aggression with the hope of achieving a goal, like coercion and domination, rather than as a response to an external threat.^v The forces behind these bullies are goals and competition driven behaviors. Both are standard behaviors but add power and aggression and you're facing a bully.

Linda exudes competitive behavior. She is considered a very significant contributor, by increasing the company's equity to over \$100 million. She manages through intimidation, coercion and domination, as expressed in her comments and her advice that firing an employee brings you respect.

In schools, these bullies thrive through competitive sports and scholastics. Schools support competition and goal driven behavior, unknowingly reinforcing the unhealthy bully. In

the workplace, these unhealthy bullies thrive even more so. They are perceived as intelligent, significant contributors and aggressive managers, tolerated because they continue to achieve the organization's goals.^{vi} When they achieve their goals, these bullies are reinforced to continue in their unhealthy behaviors. Until our schools and workplaces acknowledge their bullies and refuse to tolerate their damaging behaviors, we

will continue to have unhealthy bullies emerging as the "survival of the fittest".

The second type of bully is the reactive bully. In the story of Brian Head, we see an example of a reactive bully. The reactive bully may be a victim at home and a bully at school^{vii} or, as in Brian's case, a school victim turned avenger.

Both the proactive and the reactive bully may escalate minor conflicts;^{viii} however, there are several behavior characteristics that distinguish a reactive bully from a proactive bully. A reactive bully has faulty perceptions of the provocation, often blaming or accusing another of hostility or provocation that never occurred.^{ix} An example would be when you're merely staring absentmindedly into space and someone angrily asks you the question, "Why are you looking at me?" In addition to faulty perception of provocations, they also have faulty estimates of the consequences of their actions.^x Brian's suicide is an example of this.

Brian is not alone in his choice of violence as a conflict solution. Linda, also, could have turned physically violent. It is this violent characteristic that ties both the reactive and proactive bully together. This violent characteristic is observed in both a violent school bully and a violent workplace bully.

FBI's Schoolplace Violence Perpetrator^{xi}

- indicates low self-esteem;
- cruelty to animal; fascination with firearms or explosives;
- seeks to defend narcissistic view or favorable beliefs about self;
- perceives he is different from others: dislikes those who are different;
- history of expressed anger or manner; acts of aggressive physical contact at school;
- exhibits no remorse or flat affect (emotions) subsequent to the killings;
- may feel powerless, may commit an act of violence to assert power over others;

Mantel's 1994 Profile of a Potentially Violent Workplace Bully^{xii}

- exhibits significant disaffection in the workplace largely resulting from real or perceived injustices;
- is often socially isolated and lacking in an effective social support network;
- shows evidence of poor-esteem;
- can demonstrate a fascination with military hardware, particularly weapons;
- demonstrates difficulties in anger management;
- frequently causes anxiety or unrest amongst co-workers because of aggressive behavior;

As we evaluate these lists, we can see many commonalities, but more alarming and foreboding are the many similarities pointed out in the following warning signs of bullying behavior in children:

Bully Warning Signs for Children^{xiii}

- Enjoys feeling powerful and in control.
- Is impulsive.
- Defends his or her negative actions by insisting that others "deserved it", "asked for it", or "provoked" him or her; a conflict is always someone else's "fault".
- Exhibits little or no emotion (flat effect) when talking about his or her part in a conflict.
- Interprets ambiguous or innocent acts as purposeful and hostile; uses these as excuses to strike out at others verbally or physically.

These profiles begin to reveal the motives and reasons behind the bully.

Power

"...one does not have the option of not using power. We only have options about whether our use of power will be destructive or productive for ourselves and our relationships."^{xiv} In the bully-victim conflict, the bully uses power to be destructive. This is manifested through the use of coercive tactics in order to diminish another's self-esteem or self-concept, allowing the bully to achieve their goal of physically, or psychologically, distressing others.

"We all try to exert some form of communicative influence—to influence others in order to accomplish our goals."^{xv} The bully views power as the means by which they can achieve their goal. The traditional view of power is just this, "...the source of people's ability to compel others to action."^{xvi} The bully's use of power tactics is explained by Folger and Poole who argue that power is exercised in a number of ways.

(1) Some tactics operate through the direct application of power: they are intended to compel the other to respond regardless of what the other wants. These tactics bring physical, economic, and political resources directly to bear in order to force the other to comply. (2) Other tactics involve a direct and virtual use of power: they attempt to elicit the others' compliance by communicating the potential use of direct force. In direct, virtual uses of power, a member openly displays his or her resources and ability to employ them. Threats are probably the purest example of this tactic... (3) Third, tactics may employ power in an indirect mode... In the indirect mode, power or the potential use of power remains implicit and tacit. (4) Finally, tactics may constitute a hidden use of power; in this mode, tactics use power to hide or suppress potential issues. The actual consequences of power are hidden, because the issue is decided before it even develops or emerges.^{xvii}

When a person utilizes power as the means to compel and is corrupted by power, we have destructive conflict. "Bullies enjoy having power over others and using their power to hurt other people."^{xviii} Bullies are corrupted by power. "Corruption means moral decay, rottenness, and inability to maintain the integrity of the self. Constant high power may erode one's view of self and other, forming a perceptual distortion that may take on monstrous proportions indeed."^{xix} This corruption creates an imbalance in the power between the bully and the victim. Once this imbalance occurs, or it is perceived to have occurred, the bully is ready to abuse that imbalance.^{xx} When power is established as unequal, the use of coercive tactics increases over time.^{xxi} This, then, creates an environment that feeds over and over again on this imbalance.

Imbalance in power is also the motivational force of a violent bully. "...it is the powerless who become the most violent. When one reaches the stage where 'nothing matters' (you cannot attain your goals through accepted means), violence or despair is spawned. Too much losing does not build character, it builds frustration, aggression, or apathy."^{xxii}

Aggression and Rage

"Anger is purposefully an uncomfortable emotion so that we do not hold on to it."^{xxiii} However, finding the appropriate release for anger is important since, if you don't release it, it will find a way out. Aggression and rage are two ways anger is destructively released.

A variety of research exists on aggression and rage. Some research addresses aggression by placing it in two categories, *affective* and *instrumental aggression*. Other research identifies aggression as *rage* and declares it contains traits similar to both affective and instrumental aggression. First, affective and instrumental aggression. Affective aggression occurs when anger is provoked and aggression is directed toward the provoker in an attempt to cause harm. Instrumental aggression is

unprovoked anger, using extremely aggressive behavior with the direct intent to cause harm.^{xxiv} These forms of aggression are what we see in the manifestation of a bully's anger.

Rage is our second category of destructive anger. The following quote from Daniel Goleman's book "Emotional Intelligence" defines rage and the biological process that occurs when we feel enraged.^{xxv}

Endangerment can be signaled not just by an outright physical threat but also, as is more often the case, by a symbolic threat to self-esteem or dignity: being treated unjustly or rudely, being insulted or demeaned, being frustrated in pursuing an important goal. These perceptions act as the instigating trigger for a limbic surge that has a dual effect on the brain. One part of that surge is a release of catecholamines, which generate a quick, episodic rush of energy, enough for "one course of vigorous action," as Zillmann puts it, "such as in fight or flight." Meanwhile, another amygdala-driven ripple through the adrenocortical branch of nervous system creates a general tonic background of action readiness, which lasts much longer than the catecholamine energy surge...This is the anatomy of the rush known as "rage". So how does this chemical rush of rage translate into behavior? "Anger builds anger"...Zillmann has found that when the body is already in a state of edginess...and something triggers an emotional hijacking, the subsequent emotion, whether anger or anxiety is of especially great intensity. This dynamic is at work when someone becomes enraged.^{xxvi}

Goleman states, "Anger builds anger". It is this emotional build-up that we see translated into aggression and rage in the bully's behavior. Researchers have identified two sources for extremely aggressive behavior: lack of inhibitory controls and parenting styles. *Inhibitory controls* are used to control aggression and rage in our interactions. As anger is developed in childhood so, too, are its inhibitory controls.^{xxvii} "Thus aggression develops through various stages (Szegal, 1985) so the controls also grow to modify each state (Cicchetti, Ganiban and Barnett, 1990). This dual system usually acts to prevent aggressive tendencies from developing unchecked."^{xxviii} The following are some of the stages of anger/aggression development:^{xxix}

Affect Regulation - This is where a capacity is developed to redirect, control, change and bring about adaptive functioning in emotionally arousing situations. Here the skills develop for behaving acceptably, even in situations which are tense and emotional. *Cognitive and Behavioral Expression Development* - By 12 months of age, infants start to organize expressions in respect to their caregivers. The quality of these interactions increases the rate at which aggression is controllable. *Aggressive Behavior* - From 18 months to 2 years, children are responding to not having their needs met immediately and are increasing their autonomy and using aggressive behavior to do so. *Possessiveness* - The desire to acquire objects. This causes many outbreaks of aggressive behavior and social difficulties with peers. *Symbolic Play* - Reduces frustration and anxiety through the ability to express oneself verbally and off-loads casual distress. *Rule Adapting* - Increases the child's ability to cope with the inhibition of their behavior caused by 'rules' set by adults through internalizing simple rules and by not relying on the rulemakers' reinforcement. *Empathy Development* - Empathy is an inhibitor of aggression. An increasing social awareness is associated with empathetic response to the distress of others.

These development patterns are crystallizing in childhood so much so that, without intervention, such patterns tend to continue into adulthood.^{xxx} This research speaks to the importance of developing inhibitory controls, otherwise aggression and rage will continue to fuel a bully into adulthood.

Certain parenting styles are found in families of children who are bullies. Their parents ignore, are harsh, use inconsistent discipline strategies and physical discipline.^{xxxi} Parental rejection

and neglect are also strong indicators of aggression. In a recent study of the national incidence of child abuse and neglect, they reported almost 750,000 cases of abuse, but 900,000 case of neglect.^{xxxii}

Researchers have also found that those parents who are authoritarian, permissive, or uninvolved are likely to have children who are aggressive and socially incompetent...^{"xxxiii} Not only do these parenting styles increase aggression, but they also reinforce a child's negative behavior. "...parents use harsh punishment and mainly pay attention to their child's negative behaviors and ignore the positive ones and are unintentionally encouraging aggression."^{xxxiv}

Social Development

"Social Development involves learning how to have positive relationships with other people. It begins in infancy, when babies respond to the familiar voice, smell, and touch of the important people in their lives. These first rewarding experiences support toddlers as they learn to play alongside each other. Preschool children learn to share, cooperate, take turns, compromise and negotiation so they play and get along with each other. Social skills that are developed in early childhood will support children in their school, work, family and community lives."^{xxxv} Social underdevelopment begins to reveal itself in the bully's goal of the deliberate intent to cause harm. It is grounded in the bully's inability to develop positive relationships as a result of his social underdevelopment. Social underdevelopment is the third motivational force of a bully.

Attachment Theory addresses this social underdevelopment. "Attachment describes the long-lasting, caring relationship between a child and the important people in his life. It typically develops during a baby's first year as he and his parents and caregivers spend lots of time getting to know, value, and enjoy each other. Many babies develop attachments to more than one important person, for example, their mothers and fathers, grandparents, and caregivers. Attachment grows when these important people touch, coo, sing to, and rock the baby. Secure attachment is important because it leads to trust—the belief that the world is a safe place, filled with caring people who will meet one's needs. Attachment and trust give a baby the confidence to explore the world. Securely attached children tend to be curious and get along well with peers. They tend to be more successful in school and life than children who lack this protective factor."^{xxxvi} Attachment theory is critical to understanding the bully's aggression. Researchers have identified that "withdrawn, angry and often explosive behavior is shown by infants whose parents are distant, rejective and inconsistent."^{xxxvii} Social development lies within this concept when "...children who don't develop attachment have trouble making appropriate emotional connections. They have trouble with their own feelings and with the feelings of others...In short, they have trouble learning the basics of empathy, sympathy and caring."^{xxxviii} This is a critical element in the development of children and, when absent, useful in explaining the social void they experience when they are adults.

Emotional Development

"Emotional development is closely related to social development. It refers to children's feeling about themselves, the people in their lives, and the environment in which they live."^{xxxix} The development of emotions and how we respond to those emotions is critical in the behaviors we use in conflict. "Emotions are sometimes thought to be the quick and sloppy reaction to an action, since the emotional mind is much faster than the rational mind."^{xl} Bullies react in conflict with an emotional mind.

"...All emotions are, in essence impulses to act, the instant plans for handling life that evolution has instilled in us."^{xli} This impulse is physiologically based. "A visual signal first goes from the retina to the thalamus, where it is translated into the language of the brain, Most of the message then goes to the visual cortex, where it is analyzed and assessed for meaning and appropriate response; if that response is emotional, a signal goes to the amygdala to activate the emotions centers. But a smaller portion of the original signal goes straight from the thalamus to the amygdala in a quicker transmission, allowing a faster (though less precise) response. Thus

the amygdala can trigger an emotional response before the

cortical centers have fully understood what is happening."^{xiii} For anyone in conflict, including the bully, an emotional response is the first response.

The second factor in a bully's emotional underdevelopment is the lack of empathy. Empathy is defined as, "...the ability to imagine and understand other people's feelings without their having to tell you how they feel."^{xiii} In 1920, Psychologist E. B. Titchener used the term 'empathia, feeling into', to describe the ability to perceive the subjective experience of another person. Titchener's theory was that empathy stemmed from a sort of imitation of the distress of another, which tends to evoke the same feeling in oneself."^{xiv} Lack of empathy is known as *affective blindness*.

Affective blindness is where part of the brain did not develop enough to allow someone to feel connected to other human beings.^{xv} Affective blindness is evident in the underdevelopment of the biological response and the underdevelopment of the learned behavioral responses in bullies. A child, or an adult, with affective blindness lacks the capacity to be connected to other human beings and, therefore, is unable to show empathy toward others.

In addition to emotional mind and affective blindness, bullies lack *self-control*. Self-control is a highly underrated concept that contributes greatly to the bully's portrait and their emotional development. In today's society, it frequently appears to be where the largest gap in our emotional development exists. In a world where our needs can be immediately met, self-control has become a harder skill to develop and find useful. "Self-control is the ability to tell right from wrong and behave in ways that society considers appropriate. Children who have self-control experience emotions and impulses, and then think before speaking or acting. Self-control allows children to make decisions, solve problems, cooperate with others, and follow a few simple rules. These are important skills for young children because they will be used in school, on the job, and throughout life. Even adults struggle to control how they respond to feelings and impulses."^{xvi} Self-control is therefore critical in how an individual reacts in conflict. One research study emphasized this through the "Marshmallow Test".^{xvii}

In this study, four-year-old children were made the following proposition, "If you'll wait until after he runs an errand, you can have two marshmallows for a treat. If you can't wait until then, you can have only one, but you can have it right now."^{xviii} Researchers examined the same children 14 years later and found that "The emotional and social difference between the grab-the-marshmallow preschoolers and their gratification delaying peers was dramatic. Those who had resisted temptation at four were now, as adolescents, more socially competent: personally effective, self-assertive, and better able to cope with the frustrations of life."^{xix}

The bully's emotional underdevelopment is characterized by this lack of self-control; their reactions are based on the emotional mind and by their lack of empathy. This emotional underdevelopment is reinforced by the bully's cognitions.

Cognitive Development

Bullies thinking patterns are distorted; they see the world through paranoid lenses, seeing threats where none exist.¹ It is this cognitive underdevelopment, that is the bully's fifth motivational factor.

There are two concepts that contribute to a bully's distorted thinking: *perception* and *justice*.

Perception

In any conflict, perception plays a critical role but in the bully-victim conflict the bully's distorted perception makes the conflict hazardous. "Perception is the process of assigning meaning to the things we see."ⁱⁱ A bully's perception is distorted by *social blindness* and *depersonalization* of the victim.

Social blindness is defined as the bully's inability to perceive themselves correctly in

social situations. This means that bullies do not process information accurately; they make unrealistic judgments about the intentions of other people. Most often they attribute the intentions of others as

being hostile and, therefore, the bully is justified in seeking revenge.^{lii}

In addition to social blindness, the bully perceives their victim through a process of depersonalization. Depersonalization manifests itself through a lack of concern or hatred towards another and is fundamental to the bully-victim interaction. "When we depersonalize others, we fail to see their individuality, their humanity and treat them in an impersonal way. If empathy is the enemy of violence, depersonalization is its ally. The more we are able to create psychological distance between us and others, the more likely we are to commit acts of violence and aggression against them."^{liii} Depersonalization occurs by the labels and stereotypes we create and depersonalization, in turn, affects the way we behave toward those we have depersonalized.^{liv} These perceptions are a critical influence when a bully seeks justice.

Justice

A bully's behavior is motivated through perceived injustice and creating justice. Perceived injustice is a strong motivator for bullies and acts as a filter to all interactions. "An individual with perceived injustice often blames others for their troubles, is a habitual complainer, believes people are out to get them, and has difficulty accepting responsibility for their action."^{lv}

Perceived injustice and the desire to restore equity is one of the strongest motivators for the reactive bully. Perceived injustice is when a bully feels exploited and this motivates the bully to restore justice, changing the equity balance of the relationship.^{lvi} Perceived justice is achieved, for both the reactive and proactive bully, by devaluing their victim which in turn justifies their actions.^{lvii}

Researchers have designed a cognitive model that evaluates this phenomenon of bringing justice, by whatever means.^{lviii} The following seven steps define this process: Perception Assessment, Moral Judgment, Affective Disposition, Anticipation, Apprehension, Perception Assessment, Response to Outcome/Emotion, Moral Judgment.

This model emphasizes perception, emotion and empathy - all of which are distorted or underdeveloped in the bully. Therefore, as a bully proceeds through this cognition process, the results will always create a moral judgment based on misperceptions and a lack of empathy, which reinforces in the bully's mind the concept that this behavior is an appropriate means to the end.

Reinforcement

Reinforcement occurs when a bully's behavior is reinforced by their ability to achieve their goal through their behaviors. Victims reinforce the bully by giving them their lunch money, showing distress and exhibiting no retaliation. This materially, and psychologically, rewards the bully and teaches the bully that these tactics work. B.F Skinner, the father of *conditioning* and *Reinforcement Theory*, defines Reinforcement Theory as the following: "Reinforcement...is any event that increases the likelihood of the response that it follows."^{lix} The power of this double reinforcer should not be underestimated in the bully's maintaining their subsequent bullying behavior.^{lx}

Propensity for Violence

Like the moth's attraction to the flame, a bully's propensity for violence can also be deadly. A bully's propensity for violence is demonstrated by their aggressive behavior in conflict but is, also, greatly influenced by the violence he or she experiences through television, movies, video games and the actions of their heroes. These images of violence only work to further desensitize the victim for them and increase their aggression, making the bully even more destructive in conflict.

"American Psychological Association estimated that the average 13 to 14 years old

pupil has seen over 100,000 acts of violence on television of which approximately 8,000 were murders. The same report also stated that the average children's cartoon has an act of violence about once every 15 seconds, a figure which can increase by about 10 percent over the course of one decade."^{ixi} These statistics are

staggering, but do they support desensitization? Research says yes.

In a 1988 study, researchers Daniel G. Linz and Edward Donnerstein studied the effects of horror movies on young men. "They divided male students into four groups. One group watched no movies, a second watched nonviolent, X-rated movies, a third watched teenage sexual innuendo movies, and a fourth watched the slasher films *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *Friday the 13th Part 2*, *Maniac*, and *Toolbox Murders*. All the young men were placed on a mock jury panel and asked a series of questions designed to measure their empathy for an alleged female rape victim. Those in the fourth group measured lowest in empathy for the specific victim in the experiment - and for rape victims in general."^{lxii} Desensitization is only one consequence of the influence of violence. Research studies revealed another critical finding: Aggression is increased in already aggressive individuals after they watched violent television or films.^{lxiii}

"Television is particularly strong influence, in 1991 surveys indicated that 237 million Americans had daily access to television programs. Their televisions were on between four and eight hours each day and so the potential for mass influence is massive."^{lxiv} This influence is of concern when it comes to violence viewed on television. A study was conducted by Wendy Josephson, a social psychologist, who found that "...boys who watched an exciting, violent film clip were more likely to act aggressively in a game of hockey afterwards than those who simply watched an exciting car chase. The boys who were most affected were those who were rated by their teachers as being characteristically aggressive anyway. In other words, the children who were already aggressive by nature were the ones who were most influenced by the violence that they witnessed."^{lxv} Movies, too, play an integral role in the presentation of violence. After seeing the movie, *The Deer Hunter*, 35 young men committed suicide by playing Russian roulette.^{lxvi}

CHAPTER TWO: VICTIM PORTRAIT

Sally was a twenty-nine-year-old graphic design artist from Surrey who worked in a large advertising company with a branch in the north of England. She worked alongside four other women and one man. The line manager and another woman were often scathing about Sally, their harassment of her taking the form of immature jokes about "poor Southerners". She found their other jockey remarks about her distasteful, as many of them were explicitly sexual. Sally found that she was unable to assert herself against these two women but neither could she ignore them. Instead she found herself hearing "flash-backs" to a time at school when she was badly physically bullied by older girls and the mother of one of them. Her recollections were both recurrent and intrusive. In addition her sleep was distorted by dreams in which both the mother and the two co-workers were present. She began to experience profound psychological distress to any kind of hostility, whether real or on the television, and her arousal levels became high causing her to sleep badly, lack concentration and roam around her home aimlessly.^{lxvii}

We can readily appreciate the vulnerability of the victim in the bully-victim conflict when we read a story like Sally's but there is more to a victim's portrait than vulnerability. Research unveils a complex character comprised of two distinct types: *passive/submissive* and *provocative*. Similar to our bully portrait, these types are created through a variety of traits.

Like the bully, each of us has an image of a victim. That image is identified with the passive/submissive victim for most of us. This victim is labeled such because of their reaction to a bully, namely, placating the bully rather than asserting themselves. This submissiveness

encourages the bully and therefore establishes an assurance of continued victimization.^{lxviii} The following is an example of a passive/submissive victim:

Robbie presented as a classic passive, submissive victim when he was first referred. At the age of 12 he had already been hospitalized three times because of violent attacks on him. His parents, themselves quiet, passive but anxious people, pleaded with us to make him more assertive.

Apparently he would not defend himself in any way and had been heard to thank the bullies for not hurting him worse. They were so disgusted by him that they spat on him. Robbie cried every night because he was desperately lonely and because no one had ever invited him to their homes or birthday parties. When asked why he did not try to defend himself he told the psychologist that he was so stupid and horrible that the bullies were better than him.^{lxxix}

Robbie's story is the picture most envision when they think of a victim, but in the following story we meet Nathan, a provocative victim. Nathan, aged 10, was referred by his headteacher because of his tendency to "wind up" the other children to the point where he regularly got bullied by them. He was described by his classteacher as a child who lived "on the edge of his nerves", never still and with "his brain disconnected from his mouth". The latter trait made it likely that he would make loud remarks about other children's appearance or their work and that would make them angry. He would then say to them, "What are you going to do about it then?", thereupon two or three of them might show him, violently. Nathan was described as the most unpopular child in the school, as the one "everybody loves to hate". Even pleasant, kind children egged on the bullies to "smack him one".^{lxxx}

Provocative victims are both anxious and aggressive in their reactions to bullies. They have poor attention control and often act in ways that annoy others. This group of victims represents a much smaller portion of the total victim population, and some researchers have not been able to identify them at all, as a result this group is more controversial.^{lxxxi}

Whether a victim is labeled as a passive/submissive or a provocative victim both are defined as a victim based on their reactions to a bully. Victim conflict research is heavily weighted toward analysis of the bully, yet some research has revealed some significant commonalities in the victims of bullying.

Internalizing Composite

An internalizing composite reflects an individual's internal conflict which is manifested through behavioral problems, such as low self-esteem, fear, depression, and social withdrawal. The term internalizing composite is derived from the Devereux Scales of Mental Disorders. This test is used to identify psychopathological and behavioral problems. When these tendencies exist, a child may score in three composites: externalizing, critical pathology, or internalizing. A child scoring high in externalizing would be characterized as having behaviors that evolve between the child and their environment. If a child scores high on critical pathology, the child would display behaviors of severe disturbances, such as autism. Finally, a child, who scores high on internalizing composite, would exhibit behaviors that reflect a poor state of psychological well-being.^{lxxxii}

Research indicates that most previously identified victims revealed an internalizing composite.

The victims scored high on social withdrawal, excessive worrying, anxiety, over control, depression, fear, high levels of tension, low self-concept and frequent complaints of somatic problems.

Characteristics of a victim in the bully-victim conflict correlates with the behaviors

associated with an internalizing composite. These victim behaviors are as follows:^{lxiii}

- appearing discouraged or depressed; not showing joy or gladness at a happy occasion;
- remaining alone or isolated; withdrawal from or avoidance of social contacts;
- becoming easily upset;

- having difficulty sleeping;
- showing a strong fear of rejection;
- showing an exaggerated fear of getting hurt;
- demanding physical contact from others;
- getting startled or acting 'jumpy'.

These behaviors are strong indicators of a victim currently being bullied but, by looking at the results of an internalizing composite and the behaviors exhibited as a result of victimization, we can identify a victim's catch-22. This catch-22 reveals that the internalizing composite's characteristics and behaviors, such as low self-esteem, fear, and depression are already present in a victim in the form of their internalizing composite and are augmented when they become victims of bullying.^{lxxiv} Therefore, to better understand the victim's portrait, we will need to look more closely at the motivational forces of low self-esteem, fear and depression.

"My relationship to others tends to mirror and reflect my relationship to myself."^{lxxv} This quote defines the destructive relationship between a bully and a victim. As the bully has a poor view of the victim, so too, the victim has a poor view of themselves.

"Self-Esteem is the experience that we are appropriate to life and to the requirements of life. More specifically, self-esteem is (a) confidence in our ability to think, confidence in our ability to cope with the challenges of life; and (b) confidence in our right to be happy, the feeling of being worthy, deserving, entitled to assert our needs and wants and to enjoy the fruits of our efforts. A well-developed

sense of self is a necessary condition of our well-being, but not a sufficient condition. Its presence does not guarantee fulfillment; but its lack guarantees some measure of anxiety, frustration, and despair."^{lxxvi} Poor self-esteem acts as the foundation on which an internalizing composite is built and self-esteem is diminished further through bully victimization.

Dr. Nathaniel Branden, considered the father of self-esteem research, developed Six Pillars of Self-Esteem.^{lxxvii}

1. The Practice of Living Consciously
2. The Practice of Self-Acceptance
3. The Practice of Self-Responsibility
4. The Practice of Self-Assertiveness
5. The Practice of Living Purposefully
6. The Practice of Personal Integrity

Weakness in these pillars reflects the behaviors we see in the bully-victim conflict. In these six pillars, we can see a direct correlation to the two stories of Robbie and Nathan. Both Robbie and Nathan demonstrated weaknesses in at least three of their self-esteem pillars: *self-acceptance*, *self-responsibility* and *self-assertiveness*.

"...self-acceptance is my refusal to be in an adversarial relationship with myself. To be self-accepting is to be on my own side - to be for myself...of being a friend to myself."^{lxxviii} In fact, neither Robbie nor Nathan exhibited self-acceptance, by displaying behaviors that reflected they were in an adversarial relationship with themselves. Nathan exhibited this by inviting others to beat him up and Robbie by identifying the bullies as being better than him.

Similarly, both Robbie and Nathan did not process any self-responsibility. Branden identifies self-responsibility as, "...take responsibility for my actions and the attainment of my goals. This means I take responsibility for my life and well-being."^{lxxix} Neither Robbie nor Nathan took responsibility for their well being, rather they actively, or passively, watched it destroyed.

Their final weakness can be seen in their lack of self-assertiveness. Robbie, clearly, did not express any self-assertiveness. He expressed nothing. Nathan did not seek appropriate forms

of self-

assertiveness. His behaviors were acts of aggression, rather than assertion.

By looking at a victim's pillars of self-esteem, we can see how the concepts of self-acceptance, self-responsibility and self-assertiveness are pillars a victim should possess prior to a conflict. If already weakened before a victim interacts with a bully, these pillars will crumble. "Positive self-esteem operates as, in effect, the immune system of consciousness, providing resistance strength and a capacity for regeneration. When self-esteem is low, our resilience in the face of life's adversities is diminished. We crumble before vicissitudes that a healthier sense of self could vanquish. We tend to be more influenced by the desire to avoid pain than to experience joy; negatives have more power over us than positive. If we do not believe in ourselves - neither in our efficacy nor in our goodness - the universe is a frightening place."^{lxxx} The lack of positive self-esteem creates fear for Robbie, Nathan and other victims.

Fear

The victim is repeatedly tormented by their inability to overcome fear. A victim is condemned

to this pattern of repeated failure based on their internalizing composite. "When self esteem is low, we are often manipulated by fear. Fear of reality, to which we feel inadequate. Fear of facts about ourselves-or others-that we have denied, disowned, or repressed. Fear of the collapse of our pretenses. Fear of exposure. Fear of humiliation of failure and sometimes, the responsibilities of success. We live more to avoid pain than to express joy."^{lxxxii}

"Over-coming fear through self-sacrifice. A different negative way of overcoming fear can lead to a destructive development of the self. This happens when an unresolved fear, a priori, makes it impossible for the child to find a positive identity."^{lxxxii} Victims exhibit this negative self-sacrificing response in attempting to overcome their fear. Analogous to a child's first jump into the deep end of the swimming pool, a victim attempts to face their fears by jumping in, or giving up. Unfortunately, this only creates more reinforcement for the bully and deteriorates the victim's sense of self. Destructive approaches to overcoming fear grows more fear, which combined with low self-esteem, creates a breeding ground for depression.

"...depression, loneliness, and social anxiety tend to maintain themselves in a vicious cycle of negative experiences, negative thinking, and self-defeating behavior."^{lxxxiii}

Social anxiety is when, "We feel anxious when we are motivated to impress others, but are doubting our ability to do so."^{lxxxiv} The victim reinforces their depression through bullying, their responses to bullying and their inability to end the cycle. This cycle is uncanny in its similarity to the internalizing composite and the bully-victim conflict.

Social Withdrawal

Although both the bully and victim exhibit weak social development, as is reflected in their destructive interactions, a victim's fate is sealed by social withdrawal. Social withdrawal is characterized by isolation, loneliness and social anxiety.^{lxxxv} Through social withdrawal, the victim becomes more alone and more susceptible to a bully's attack. A victim's social withdrawal is founded in their internalizing composite and reinforced by their peer interactions. Several sources of research support this concept of social withdrawal and its effects of increasing the victim's susceptibility.

Research states that not "fitting in" is the most common reason a child is abused. Children with a disability or with chronic illness are easy targets.^{lxxxvi} This inability to fit in is identified by social withdrawal. If an individual doesn't feel comfortable in social interactions, they withdraw. Others recognize this lack of comfort and behave in ways which encourage the victim to withdraw further. A victim's behaviors in social interactions display strong tendencies towards their social withdrawal.

When in social interactions, victims do not initiate conversations nor attempt to persuade verbally. Child victims spend time in passive play, playing parallel to their peers rather than with

them.^{lxxxvii} In Michael J. Boulton's research, "Concurrent and Longitudinal Relations Between Children's Playground Behavior and Social Preference, Victimization and Bullying", he evaluated behavior of children at play and, based on their social interactions, how it correlated with victimization and bullying. He found that socialization in the form of time alone was positively correlated with a high victimization score,^{lxxxviii} confirming that social withdrawal increases the probability of victimization.

Poor Interpersonal Problem Solving Patterning

The bully-victim conflict is based on several interpersonal problem solving events. Whereas a bully is reinforced in conflict when they achieve their goal, the victim is shaped through their failed interpersonal problem solving. This patterning results from the responses the victim receives when processing social information. The Rubin and Krasnor Model for Processing Social Information^{lxxxix} is useful in explaining the victim's poor interpersonal problem solving patterning.

Rubin and Krasnor's Model for Processing Social Information:^{xc}

- Select some social goal which involves them in the establishment of some cognitive representation of a desired end state.
- Involves their scanning and interpreting all the cues they consider to be relevant to the social goal.
- Accessing and selecting strategies, a process that is characterized by the generation of possible plans of action for achieving the social goal and making a judgment as to which are the most appropriate for the given task environment.
- Implement strategy.
- Evaluate outcome.

When a victim proceeds through this model, four issues come into play which cause this model of effective processing to result in ineffective social processing and the resulting pattern of poor interpersonal problem solving.

First, research shows that, because a victim is socially withdrawn, they possess "...clear social cognitive deficits."^{xc} As a result of these social cognitive deficits, a victim experiences failure as early as step one, when they choose a social goal.

Second, victims tend to choose strategies that show adult dependencies, rather than strategies that reflect their own independent means.^{xcii}

Third, it is more probable that a victim will be rejected in their plan of action. Thus a higher frequency of rejection will pattern the victim for anticipated failure. "Rubin (1985) has shown that socially withdrawn children are less assertive than their non-withdrawn peers and also suggests that, when they do assert themselves in an effort to win their own way with their peers, they are more likely to be rejected than socially competent assertive children. Conversely, however, they are more likely to give way to the requirements of their non-withdrawn peers. Over a period of time, therefore, their behaviour shows a steady trait of failed or low assertiveness and ready compliance....."^{xciii}

Fourth, based on this continued rejection, as well as low-self esteem and other internalizing composites, the victim is patterned to more easily accept failure and abandon all strategies.^{xciv}

These learned patterns of social cognitive deficits, dependent rather than independent strategies, anticipated rejection and willingness to accept failure are directly reflected in the bully-victim conflict.

Lack of Resiliency

The final component of the victim's portrait is resilience. "An individual also needs resilience, the glue that keeps us functioning when we are confronted with life's misfortunes and challenges. It is

the attitudes, coping behaviors and personal strength that you see in people who manage adversity and adjust well to the changes demanded of them by their life circumstance."^{xcv} Lack of resiliency is exhibited in the victim's inability to end this destructive conflict.

In 1984 Emmy E. Werner developed traits of the Resilient Personality:^{xcvi}

- Proactive rather than a reactive or passive approach to problem solving.
- Construct their experiences in positive and constructive ways.
- Are good-natured and easy to deal with; as a result, they gain other people's positive attention.
- Coherence - a belief that life makes sense and that one has some control over what happens.

Each of these four traits are lacking in the victim's portrait. Through poor interpersonal problem solving patterning, the victim learns the passive approach to problem solving. As a result of the internalizing composite's low self-esteem, fear and depression, they construct their experiences as failures. A victim is socially under-developed and socially withdrawn and therefore gains no positive attention. The victim sees life as confusing and out of control.

CHAPTER THREE: THE DESTRUCTIVE CONFLICT

Judy: One day when I came into my office, he was in there whispering to my secretary. I knew they were talking about me. He said: "Is she too stupid to use a phone book?" I was calling directory assistance because that particular number was not in the phone book, I said: "I cannot believe you are saying this. What kind of message does that send?" Then he started screaming at me.^{xcvii}

When a bully and victim interact, it is dysfunctional and becomes destructive. Conflict is dysfunctional when it is not possible to gain any positive outcomes from it: There is no clarification of issues, no change in the relationship, no information gained about the other person. When participants in the conflict lose sight of their original goals, when hostility becomes the norm, when conflict becomes a regular part of the interaction between people, it is destructive."^{xcviii} Bully-victim conflict follows this definition of dysfunctional interaction; specifically, because their interactions are hostile and conflict is their sole source of interaction. In this chapter, I will move forward from identifying the individual characteristics of the bully and victim to focus on the interaction of their portraits which create a dyad destined for destructive conflict, illustrating that it is not necessarily their individual characteristics, but the interactions of these two individuals that create the bully-victim conflict.

Dysfunctional Interactions

The bully's and victim's dysfunctional interactions flow out of the roles they seem destined to play. "Fear does this to us. It has control over us, and can sometimes turn us into 'playwrights,' writing scripts for ourselves that make us say and do things that we may not really want to say or do. If you are afraid that people will take advantage of you, perhaps you take on the role of the bully. As bully, you control other people, telling them what to do, so you don't have to do anything anyone else wants you to do. A victim, on the other hand, acts like an inferior person. The bully and victim take on a 'master/slave' or 'leader/follower' relationship. They are both afraid, but act out their fears in different ways."^{xcix} These roles are established through the bully's reinforcement and the victim's patterning which we discussed in their portraits. The reinforcement and patterning of conflict behaviors are displayed

in their communication and their conflict management styles. It is these communication patterns and choices of

conflict behaviors that create the bully-victim destructive conflict spiral.

Communication Styles

Communication is the essence of conflict expression; communication exchanges make up the conflict episode.^c In any bully-victim interaction the dysfunctional communication behaviors produce the conflict. Communication is the medium by which conflict occurs; it acts in three ways.^{ci}

- Communication behavior creates conflict.
- Communication behavior reflects conflict.
- Communication is the vehicle for the productive or destructive management of conflict.

We can see this pattern in Judy's conflict where all three of these components are reflected. The rhetorical question, "Is she too stupid?" triggered the conflict. Judy's thought, "I knew they were talking about me." reflected an already strained relationship. The exchange of "What type of message does that send?" and his response by screaming was the vehicle for the destructive conflict.

Judy's case illustrates that the style of communication sets these three components in motion. The style that existed in this incident is common for bully-victim exchanges. The communication behaviors are unilateral, allowing for only one-way directives and commands from the bully to the victim.^{cii} This is often the case. As in Judy's story, unilateral communication was used in the form of a joke and through screaming. These tactics prevent or delay a response from the victim. These communication patterns are easier understood by identifying them as a group of behaviors enacted in a conflict style.

Conflict Styles

Conflict Styles reflect an individual's patterned responses to conflict.^{ciii} The Killmann and Thomas Conflict Styles Model is based on two competing goals, concern for self and concern for others. Achieving the goal is based on the dynamic created between aggression and cooperation.^{civ} Two of Thomas and Killmann's Conflict Styles, *competitive* and *accommodating*, reflect the styles of the bully and victim in their dysfunctional interactions.

The competitive conflict style "...is characterized by aggressive and uncooperative behavior - pursuing your own concerns at the expense of another...the conflict is seen as a 'battleground' where winning is the goal and concern for other is of little or no importance."^{cv} This style emphasizes aggression as the primary tool in conflict. The competitive style reflects the bully's patterned responses toward the victim; the bully uses aggressive behavior, expresses no concern for the victim, and selects tactics that will enable the bully to win the battle.

The use of aggression is demonstrated by the bully's behavior in conflict when it is used to accomplish goals at the expense of others, seeking to win against another party by destroying, or actively working against them.^{cvi} Aggression is also revealed in the choice of conflict tactics.

A competitive style uses competitive tactics, "...these tactics reflect a win-lose orientation. .. Competitive tactics tend to place blame on the other person and focus on the people involved in the conflict rather than on the issues. Labeling the other, expanding the issue, forming coalitions within groups, and breaking relational rules. all are instances of competitive escalation behaviors."^{cvii} The following is a list of tactics used in the competitive style:^{cviii} These tactics are commonly used by the bully in the schoolyard and at the workplace.

- Faulting - Statements that directly criticize the personal characteristics of the partner.
- Rejection - Statements in response to the partner's previous statement that indicate

personal antagonism toward the partner as well as disagreement.

- Hostile Questioning - Directive or leading questions that fault the partner.
- Hostile Joking - Joking or teasing that faults the partner.
- Presumptive Attribution - Statements that attribute thoughts, feelings, intentions, or motivations to the partner that the partner does not acknowledge.
- Avoiding responsibility - Statements that minimize or deny personal responsibility for conflict.
- Prescription - Requests, demands, arguments, threats, or other prescriptive statements that seek a specified change in the partner's behavior in order to resolve a conflict.

Danielle had gone back to work as an accounts technician when her third child started school full-time, she was then 37 and felt rather old along-side the other, much younger women in the council grants office. She had been appointed over the head of her office manager, Linda, who was twelve years her junior. Linda told her on the first day that she hadn't wanted someone as old as Danielle; she didn't like older people and she would make sure that Danielle left or transferred.

From that time onward she: made a point of criticizing the quality of Danielle's work; put her down in front of other women; clock-watched to make sure that Danielle, a punctual person by habit, did not lose a minute of work; refused Danielle the leave days she wanted to take; and harassed her verbally whenever the opportunity arose.

Danielle lasted seven months and then asked for a transfer. On the day she left Linda told her that it wasn't anything personal. She simply didn't like older people and she had to make a point about Danielle being appointed without her approval.^{cix}

In this case Linda employed many of the tactics used in the competitive style. She faulted Danielle when she stated that she didn't like older people. Linda used the rejection tactic by not approving Danielle's requests for leave. The case states that Linda criticized, put-down and clock-watched Danielle, all of which are reflective of behaviors used in hostile questioning, joking, presumptive and prescriptive tactics. Linda's behaviors reflected these tactics through demanding, threatening, and attributing negative characteristics. Finally, Linda used the tactic of avoiding responsibility when she said that it wasn't anything personal but she had to make a point of Danielle being appointed without her approval, shifting the blame for her actions onto the company. In Linda and Danielle's conflict Linda is victorious with her competitive style because Danielle uses an accommodating style.

The accommodating style reflects the victims patterned responses to the bully. "Accommodation occurs when one is nonassertive and cooperative. It is the opposite of competing. When adopting the accommodating style, the individual puts aside his or her concerns in order to satisfy the concerns of the other person. One may obey another's directives, when preferring not to do so, or may gladly yield to another's point of view."^{cx} In the victim's portrait we identified lack of assertiveness, low self-esteem and a pattern of poor interpersonal problem solving; these qualities support the choice of an accommodating conflict style.

When a victim has interactions with a bully, the victim accommodates. They sacrifice their interests and concerns while enabling the bully to achieve their interests.^{cxii} This is reflective of the victim's portrait in which the victim is characterized by their lack of assertiveness and low self-esteem.

The victim uses the accommodating style when there is not much of a chance of achieving one's own interest.^{cxiii} In any interaction with the bully, the victim believes there is not much of a chance for winning against the bully. This belief is based on the victim's poor interpersonal problem solving. The choice of accommodation can be reflected back to the victim's pattern of anticipated failure, ability to more easily accept failure and abandonment of

all strategies.

Thus, the choice of accommodation is almost pre-destined based on the victim's individual characteristics. The inevitable choice of the accommodating style for the victim is disastrous, since once

these two styles are combined, the conflict's momentum is in favor of the bully.

More important than the individual's conflict style is the interaction of the two conflict styles. Competitive and accommodating are conflict styles on the opposite ends of the continuum. While the competitive style is high in the use of aggression and low on cooperativeness, the accommodating style is low in aggression and high in cooperativeness.^{cxiii} This dynamic establishes their dysfunctional pattern of interaction and is reflected in their behaviors. Each tactic used by the bully is followed by a single choice from the victim which accommodates the bully's position. If the bully uses a prescriptive tactic, such as a demand or threat, the victim responds by accommodating that demand or changing their behavior in response to the threat.

Although competitive and accommodating conflict styles can be styles used in productive conflict, in the bully-victim conflict they are destructive. These styles become destructive as a result of the harmful abuse present in their interactions. Harmful abuse contains six components.^{cxiv}

1. Intent to cause harm.
2. Intensity and/or duration.
3. Corruption of power.
4. Vulnerability of the victim.
5. Lack of support.
6. Long lasting consequences.

Therefore, it is harmful abuse combined with the interaction of the competitive and accommodating conflict styles that distinguishes destructive bullying conflict from other conflicts. These styles combined with harmful abuse are described in the different methods of bullying.

Bullying Methods

Twenty-seven-year-old Greg Roberts committed suicide two days after his son's sixth birthday.

His widow Jane, recalled how he had endured two years of misery at the hands of his Departmental Manager, a tough, abrasive and bullying woman who called him "No Balls Roberts" whenever no one else could hear. The young accountant had twice complained to the Personnel Manager for the area, who refused to believe that the departmental Manager would bully anyone. Greg was described as a "complaining neurotic man prone to attention-seeking" on his personnel records. That was the end of his promotion or reemployment chances. In desperation, Greg left the firm and tried to go private. He failed, became very depressed and gassed himself in the car.^{cxv}

Greg's story discloses a covert form of bullying, by which he became isolated and ostracized to such an extent that it led to desperation, failure and, eventually, to his suicide. This bullying story is reflective of some commonalities in most bullying conflicts in which the victims are harassed and isolated to the point of destruction. In this section, I will identify several bullying methods, including *classic bullying*, *victim-avenger*, and *mobbing*.

Classic Bullying

(1) Bullying is a form of aggressive behavior with an imbalance of power; the dominant person(s) intentionally and repeatedly causes distress by tormenting or harassing another less dominant person(s) (Besag, 1989; Always, 1991; Roland, 1989; Smith, 1991; Smith & Thompson, 1991; Stephenson & Smith, 1989; Tattum, 1989). This aggressive behavior can be expressed physically (e.g., kicking, hitting) or verbally (e.g., name calling); it can be direct or indirect (Always, 1978, 1991, 1993). Direct bullying refers to open attacks on the victim-- kicking,

pushing, hitting, teasing, taunting, mocking and threatening and intimidating (Farrington, 1993; Always, 1991). Indirect bullying refers to social isolation, social ostracism,

exclusion, and nasty gossip (Always, 1991, 1993; Roland, 1989). Indirect bullying involves manipulating the social status of an individual within his or her peer group changing the way others perceive and respond to that individual (Bjorkqvist, Osterman, & Kaukianinen, 1992; Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, & Peltonen, 1988).^{cxvi}

(2) I think that because I am a small man both patients and staff have tried to intimidate me at various times in the past. Usually I can cope but one really large nurse-manager got the better of me. He called me into his office and without a word kicked me hard in the stomach. Next he put a needle against my eye and told me that if I didn't obey his every order then I knew what to expect.^{cxvii}

This bully used direct and covert physical and nonphysical bullying tactics by kicking him in the stomach and threatening him by pointing a needle at his eye. This bully's choice of tactics presents several important distinctions as they relate to bullying control, prevalence and gender.

Overt bullying consists of visible acts which can be more easily controlled with good policies and reinforcement of those policies. *Indirect* and *covert bullying* is hidden and may involve a lack of concrete proof. It is more about morals and values, "He said", "She said", and is a gray area of definition. Therefore, indirect or covert methods are less likely to be subjected to discipline and control, whether at school or at work.

Due to the use of these covert bullying tactics, the prevalence of bullying is unknown. "The problems of bullying in the workplace are insufficiently recorded for researchers to know the extent of the problem. My own experience of employee assistance programs suggests that it is not only a massive problem but one that is largely unrecognized by employers."^{cxviii} A recent study showed that bullying is a major problem and told of its prevalence. "In the United States 500,000 high school students stay home once every 30 days because they are afraid to go to school."^{cxix} And in the workplace, according to a 1993 survey conducted by Northwestern National Life Insurance Company, 1 in 4 workers are mistreated by workplace bullying.^{cxx} These statistics show the need to learn more about bullying and its prevalence in our society.

Some research does reveal a distinction in the methods and effects of gender in bullying. Atlas and Pepler found in their study that boys and girls engage in bullying at the same rate. However, the gender of the victim does influence the type of bullying they may encounter. Victims who are girls are more likely to be subjected to indirect methods; whereas, victims who are boys are more likely to be subjected to direct methods.^{cxxi} Additional research agreed with the Atlas and Pepler study.

Smith and Sharp revealed that, because boys are more overt in their bullying behavior, researchers have studied them more. There is evidence that girl bullies are at least as common but are less noticeable, more subtle and use more covert methods.^{cxxii} Boys will be 3 to 4 times more physically aggressive than girls. Boys tend to learn more open, blunt aggression and consequently get caught more than girls who use less obvious bullying tactics.^{cxxiii} The girls' covert methods, which are more psychologically aggressive, are displayed in the form of manipulation, ostracizing, ignoring and playing mind games.^{cxxiv}

"Further noticeably with girls is their fine-tuned aggression. Violence is aimed directly at the weakness in the personality of the opponent...female aggression is often more personally directed and in a certain sense, more effective."^{cxxv} Female bullies tend to choose the method of indirect bullying in the form of *relational aggression*. Relational aggression can be defined by the following behaviors: spreading vicious rumors, telling others to stop liking another, threatening to withdraw friendship, attempting to control, sending others to conventry.^{cxxvi} Since

other females are particularly dependent upon having good relationships, this form of bullying is very effective.^{cxvii} Gender is one indicator in

the type of tactics a bully will use. Research also reveals some indication of the more commonly used tactics. The following statistics reflect school bullying by choice of tactic.^{cxviii}

- 31% Physical (punching, poking, beating)
- 40% Verbal Abuse (namecalling)
- 50% Emotional (terrorizing and rejecting)

Verbal abuse and emotional abuse deserve our special attention since they are the most frequently used tactics by school bullies.

Verbal and Emotional Abuse

Verbal abuse is holding power over. A bully finds great pleasure in exerting power over their victim through verbal abusive tactics. Verbal abuse comes in many forms and supports the bully's competitive conflict style.

Categories of Verbal Abuse^{cxix}

- Withholding
- Discounting
- Verbal abuse disguised as jokes
- Accusing and blaming
- Judging and criticizing
- Trivializing
- Threatening

These categories originally were developed to identify verbal abuse in an intimate relationship but are also present in the bully-victim dyad. Of particular concern is number four, verbal abuse disguised as jokes.

Teasing is a common occurrence in adult and child interactions. Teasing can be innocent and can be a sign of affection.^{cx} However, when teasing matches our six factors for harmful abuse, teasing can be extremely destructive. Teasing with the intent to cause harm, occurring with immense intensity, or long lasting in duration to a vulnerable victim with lack of support can destroy the self-esteem of a child or an adult, causing them long lasting consequences.

Teasing is a subversive form of verbal abuse, yet often ignored by others at school and at work. "Covert verbal abuse is subversive because of its indirect quality. It is a covert attack or coercion. This kind of abuse has been described as 'crazymaking.' It is a form of interpersonal interaction that results from the repression of intense aggression and which seriously impairs its victim's capacity to recognize and deal with the interpersonal reality."^{cxxi} Even when the intensity or duration increases, children and adults do not see it slowly destroying them, but the abuse will, finally, leave its impact. In the Columbine incident, students told many stories how, in the past, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebod were frequently ridiculed by their peers.^{cxvii}

Teasing is a form of verbal abuse often condoned and accepted by others. Teasing, although clearly destructive, has long been ignored. "Often children view teasing as an inescapable hazard of their environment, especially when it is not identified by adults as a problem."^{cxviii}

It is often hard to distinguish between verbal and emotional abuse, since verbal abuse always has an emotionally abusive implication. Keashly, a professor and researcher at Wayne State University, has developed dimensions of emotional abuse that can directly relate to our bully-victim dyad of interaction.^{cxvii} Keashly studied the increase in workplace emotional abuse and how it has increased in the 1990's. Her research looked at emotional abuse - socially acceptable forms of verbal violence in the

form of incivilities, intolerable behavior, interpersonal sources of job stress, and workplace aggression. Her research resulted in labeling these behaviors and defining emotional abuse as "...hostile verbal and non-verbal behaviors, independent of racial or sexual content, directed at a person to gain control over, even subservience from that person."^{cxv}

Keashly's Dimensions of Emotional Abuse are as follows:^{cxvi}

1. Emotional Abuse can include verbal and physical expressions.
2. Pattern of repeated behaviors.
3. Emotional Abuse behaviors are unwelcome, unwanted, unsolicited.
4. Emotional abuse violates standards of humane treatment, moral obligation, ethics.
5. Emotional abuse behaviors cause harm.
6. There is intent or an ability to control.
7. Power differences.

Through Keashly's research we can see a direct correlation with bullying behavior, as specifically designated by the intent to cause harm, use of power over, verbal and physical expressions of violence and moral violations. Victim-avenger and mobbing are two forms of bullying that have created a new destructive twist on these classic bullying methods.

Victim-Avenger

Bullies who perceive injustice may begin to create fantasies of retaliation. Some reactive bullies may pursue the pathway of violence from victim to avenger.^{cxvii} "The revenge motif allows bullies to hold a very favorable attitude toward violence and the use of violence, or other forms of aggression to solve problems. This short-term problem solution is a rudimentary reinforcer for subsequently refined bullying behavior, whereby the bullies come to believe that aggression is the best solution to solve problems whether they are of a complex nature or not."^{cxviii}

There are four predictable psychological stages on the pathway from victim to avenger.^{cxix} Stage one, Feeling Victimized; Stage Two, Perceived Injustice; Stage Three, Initiate Resolution.

We have discussed stages one and two in our bully portrait. It is stage three that expands on our earlier discussion of the bully's conflict management style. In stage three the reactive bully practices conflict solutions which slowly shift to the violent end of the continuum. Once in this stage, when they experience a trigger event, the reactive bully will use an extreme form of violence as their conflict resolution.

The victim-avenger pathway exists at work and at school. Ten postal employees, between 1983 and 1993, in their workplace pursued the victim-avenger pathway and murdered 34 supervisors and co-workers.^{cx} Since 1993, there have been 14 school victim to avenger deadly conflicts enacted; these conflicts left 59 wounded and 35 dead.^{cxli} The numbers are startling and overwhelming but victim-avenger bullying is not as common as mobbing.

Mobbing

Mobbing is defined as, "...a malicious attempt to force a person out of the workplace through unjustified accusations, humiliation, general harassment, emotional abuse, and/or terror. It is a 'ganging up' by the leader(s) - organization, superior, co-worker, or subordinate - who rallies others into systematic and frequent 'mob like' behavior. Because the organization ignores, condones or even instigates the behavior, it can be said that the victim, seemingly helpless against the powerful and many, is indeed 'mobbed.'"^{cxlii}

Dr. Heniz Leymann, the leader in Mobbing research, has done extensive studies on this form

of

bullying and has developed several components to use in understanding this phenomenon: *The factors of mobbing, the typologies of mobbing behaviors, the five phases of mobbing and the degrees of mobbing.*^{cxliii} Leymann's factors of mobbing describe specific bullying behaviors that commonly appear in the workplace.

Factors of Mobbing^{cxliv}

- Assaults on the dignity, integrity, credibility, and professional competence of employees.
- Negative, humiliating, intimidating, abusive, malevolent, and controlling communication.
- Perpetrated by one or more staff members - "Vulturing"
- Portraying the victimized person as being at fault.
- Engineered to discredit, confuse, intimidate, isolate, and force the person into submission.
- Not recognized, misinterpreted, ignored, tolerated, encouraged, or, even, instigated by the management of the organization.

From these factors of mobbing Leymann has created five categories of 45 bullying behaviors. They are as follows:^{cxlv}

First Category: Impact On Self-Expression and the Way Communication

Happens Second Category: Attacks On One's Social Relations

Third Category: Attacks on Your Reputation

Fourth Category: Attack on the Quality of One's Professional and Life

Situation: Fifth Category: Direct Attacks on a Person's Health

Next, we need to consider Leymann's behaviors and typologies as they advance through the conflict's five phases in the mobbing process.

Five Phases in the Mobbing Process^{cxlvi}

Phase One: Conflict is characterized by a critical incident or trigger event.

Phase Two: Aggressive Acts and Psychological Assaults set the mobbing dynamics in motion.

Phase Three: Management Involvement, through misjudging the situation or extending support, begins isolation or expulsion process of the victim.

Phase Four: Branding the victim as difficult, or mentally ill.

Phase Five: Expulsion, trauma of this event can lead to post traumatic stress disorder.

Degrees of Mobbing^{cxlvii}

Once the conflict occurs, a victim responds in one of three different degrees based on the intensity of the bullying. These degrees, like burns, represent the intensity of the bullying. "The degrees are determined by a number of factors. In addition to the intensity, duration, and frequency of the mobbing, the psychology of the mobbed individuals, their upbringing, past experiences, and general circumstances are also considered. The scale only indicated how people can be affected differently by similar experiences."^{cxlviii}

First Degree: The individual manages to resist, escapes at an early stage, or is fully rehabilitated in the same workplace or somewhere else.

Second Degree: The individual cannot resist, nor escape immediately, and suffers temporary

or prolonged mental and/or physical disability, and has difficulty re-entering the workforce.

Third Degree: The affected person is unable to re-enter the workforce. The physical and mental injuries are such that rehabilitation seems unlikely, unless a very specialized treatment protocol is being applied.

This destructive conflict is a frequent occurrence in the workplace. "Extensive research conducted in Sweden in 1990 extrapolated that 3.5% of the labor force of 4.4 million persons, i.e., some 154,000, were mobbing victims at any given time. Dr. Leymann also estimated that 15% of the suicides in Sweden are directly attributed to workplace mobbing. If we transpose these figures to the U.S. workforce, comprising some 127 million people, well over 4 million people yearly are, or may become, victimized by mobbing. Hornstein, in his book, *Brutal Bosses and their Prey*, estimated that as many as 20 million Americans face workplace abuse on a daily basis—a near epidemic."^{exlix} The scope and seriousness of this form of bullying may be better appreciated by evaluating what influence the environment has on our choices of conflict resolution methods.

Environmental Influences

Today's work and school environments frequently encounter violence as the means for resolving a conflict. Assaults are the third largest cause of injury in schools, after falls and sports injuries.

Assaults include beatings (54%), gunshot wounds (14%), falls from pushing or shoving (11%), stabbings (9%) and being struck by a blunt object (8%).^{cl} The majority of assaults (47%) occur to youth ages 10 to 14; 18% of those assaulted were five to nine years of age.^{cli} 270,000 guns go to school every day in the United States.^{clii} An estimated 9% of eighth graders carry a gun, knife or club at least once a month.^{cliii} Murder in the workplace, is now one of the fastest growing types of homicide in the United States.^{cliv} Murder is the greatest single cause of death for women in the U.S. workplace.^{clv} On any given day, as many as 20% of employees reported abusive bosses.^{clvi} In 1990 The American Bureau of National Affairs estimated that between \$5 Billion and \$6 Billion was lost each year due to abuse of employees.^{clvii}

The environment itself has an immense impact in the prevention or encouragement of destructive conflict. When we look to the environment, we can identify two factors that contribute to the unsuccessful resolution of the bully-victim conflict. They are violence in the environment and lack of environmental support.

Violence in the Environment

We learn violence in a variety of ways. Peer support groups are one reinforcer of aggressive conflict resolution methods. "Most violent perpetrators are described as loners, but when they did socialize it was with others who have hate ideologies; including, racism, devil worship, and Hitler worship. Like the violence observed in television, movies and video games these peer support groups also reinforce their aggressive feelings and have no reality testing for their thoughts and ideas."^{clviii} In addition to our peers are our role models: "Many children choose violent role models out of a certain tendency and lust for violence. An aggressive potential searches for a figure through whom a child can express itself."^{clix} Today, there seems to be a proliferation of negative role models. Throughout the media, superstars and sports figures receive much attention for their violent acts. Dennis Rodman was accused of kicking a cameraman who got in his way. Latrell Sprewell allegedly choked his coach during an argument. Mike Tyson bit off the ear of his

boxing opponent, Evander Holyfield. Also, our nightly news often relates cases of domestic violence committed by sports heroes and stars.^{clx}

Research discloses the incredible influence the media has on people's choices in conflict. In 1983 researcher David P. Phillips conducted a study to see if there was a correlation between televised heavyweight boxing matches and violence on the streets of America.^{clxi} "Looking at the crime rates after televised heavyweight championship fights from 1973 to 1978, Phillips found that the homicide rate in the United States rose by an average of 11 percent for approximately one week. Phillips also found that the killers were likely to focus their aggression on victims similar to the losing fighter: if he was white, the increased number of victims were mostly white. The converse was true if the losing fighter was black."^{clxii}

Research has shown that violence increases after a major violent incident. Assaults, murders, and workplace violence incidents have been shown to increase after highly publicized acts of aggression, like a state execution or a major prize fight.^{clxiii} "On April 19, 1995, the Murrah Building in Oklahoma City was bombed. Not to be upstaged, the Unabomber, Ted Kazinski, put one of his package bombs in the mail the very next day. On April 21, 1995, there was a workplace violence incident in a grocery store in the Denver area where Albert Petroski killed his estranged wife, a deli manager and a sheriff's deputy responding to the 911 call. During his police interrogation, Petroski made reference to the Oklahoma City bombing, pointing out that 163 people had been killed in that incident whereas he had only killed three."^{clxiv}

Considerable debate has occurred over the effect the news media has on people, who are considered "copycats", by showing and reporting on violent acts. Most research has shown that the violence exhibited in television, movies and video games desensitizes violence and makes violence appear as an acceptable choice to some people.

"The real damage, however, is perpetuated by society's response to these incidents. Too many cases, and especially when a sports figure or famous person is involved, the message is one of excessive tolerance. Unfortunately, excessive tolerance breeds negative role modeling."^{clxv}

A recent incident showed that adults also learn from violent teens. "Two months after Columbine, a workplace violence incident occurred in the Denver metro area that was eerily similar to Columbine. Two employees had written a threat letter that outlined their plans to detonate bombs at their workplace. In this letter, the two alleged assailants referred to the Columbine incident in an admiring manner. They distorted the positive aftermath of Columbine, the community rallying together, by implying that a tragedy like Columbine should happen more frequently."^{clxvi} But this scenario was not solely a consequence of a "copy-cat" syndrome. Today's work climate is a prime breeding ground for violence in the workplace.

The world of work is changing at lightning speed. The force of change creates a work environment we have never seen before. "Bosses now are operating in a context unique to the 1990's, whose pressures and effects create a psychological brutality on the job that was unknown in the past."^{clxvii} These changes have created a climate that is conducive to bullying. "Reasons for protecting the abusers and punishing the abused are profit, power and self-protection."^{clxviii}

The following are characteristics of an organization that supports bullying.^{clxix}

- Bad Management: excessive bottom-line orientation at the expense of human resources; highly hierarchical structures; no open door policy; poor communication channels; poor conflict-solving abilities and no, or ineffective, conflict management or grievance procedures in place.
- Weak leadership: pervasive scapegoat mentality; little or no team work; no, or ineffective, diversity education.
- Stress-Intensive Workplace
- Monotony
- Disbelief or Denial by Managers

- Unethical Activities
- Downsizing, Restructuring, Mergers

In this environment values become distorted. The following list shows how these cultural values become distorted into the toxic behaviors of a bully:^{clxx}

Trait	Ø	Exaggerated Trait
Competitiveness.	Ø	Ruthlessness.
Success Oriented	Ø	Climb the ladder, by stepping on others. Measured in
\$. Individualistic	Ø	It is your choice to go if you don't like it here.
Direct and Practical	Ø	Sacrificing individuals for the bottom line.
Efficient	Ø	Efficient doesn't mean open
communication. Hard-working.	Ø	Too dedicated may be seen as a threat.
Antagonistic	Ø	If you don't like it here go somewhere
else. Innovative	Ø	Creating change can create unrest.
Direct interaction	Ø	Personal attacks.
No Relationships	Ø	Workforce is a means to an end.

Two additional environmental factors support the organization that tolerates bullying, lack of legal support and an uncivil workplace.

"Abusive behavior creates a hostile work environment, but courts seldom see it that way,...the bully's behavior was not sufficiently extreme and outrageous to meet legal requirements."^{clxxi} Therefore, bullying is rarely illegal. Under Title VII a case may be pursued if it is proved that there was an intentional infliction of emotional distress.^{clxxii} However, a civil action will not end the behavior, nor will it assist a victim, while still employed in the abusive situation.

Contributing greatly to our phenomenon is the level of aggression found in the workplace. The following stories examine this level of aggression through a lack of civility. A survey of Ontario, Canada Health Care workers revealed the following, "...acts of emotional harassment...were perceived the most difficult to control. During the five days workers tracked their experiences as part of this study, they reported being glared at (53% percent of the respondents), shouted at (39 percent), subjected to insulting or harsh statements (37 percent), sworn at (35 percent), ignored or given the silent treatment (35 percent), gestured at in a threatening manner (34 percent), and threatened with physical harm or death (20 percent)."^{clxxiii} Closer to home, in a Michigan survey of 1,110 residents, "38 percent said they had been mistreated at work in the past 12 months. About half the time (51 percent), it was the boss engaging in the mistreatment; a co-worker was the bully 35 percent of the time...."^{clxxiv} Why are these numbers so great?

Lack of Environmental Support

The final element of the environment's encouragement of this destructive conflict is the lack of support for the victim and the blame the victim receives from others in their environment. The following two separate studies relayed these critical findings:

The first study, Rigby and Slee,^{clxxv} looked at four interpretable factors: Anti-bullying opinion, rejection of victims, approval of hostile behavior toward victims and behavior aimed at stopping bullies. The percentage expressing anti-bullying opinion was far greater than any of the other factors. This confirmed our belief that most children were opposed to bullying. However, the second largest percentage expressed was in the tendency to reject victims. This was, again, confirmed by the significant number of children who have a negative attitude toward victims. In fact, children want to distance themselves from victims and believe that they get what they

deserve. "It is probably the fact that victims are often not liked by other children that leads to the circumstances whereby they are not supported

against bullies."^{clxxvi}

The second study, Atlas and Pepler,^{clxxvii} found that "peer involvement may be a salient factor that perpetuates and sustains bullying interaction whether or not peers become active participants."^{clxxviii} In addition, "Even when teachers are aware of bullying, they may do very little to intercede."^{clxxix}

Observational research on bullying on the playground revealed that peers were present in 85% of the bullying episodes and only intervened to stop bullying in 11% of those episodes (Craig, 1993). Peers may inadvertently reinforce the behavior by not reprimanding the bully, or they may be drawn into the interaction to participate actively (Craig, 1993; Olweus, 1978; Tattum, 1989). On the playground, peers were actively involved in two thirds of the bullying episodes (Craig, 1993), suggesting that peers may be pressured to get involved in the interaction for fear that they too may be victimized (Tattum, 1989). From a social ecological perspective, the assessment of bullying must also include the role of the teacher in bullying interactions. Survey indicate that teachers are generally unaware of bullying and may do very little to intercede (Besag, 1989; Olweus, 1991; Smith, 1991; Ziegler & Pepler, 1993). Ziegler and Pepler found that 47% of victimized primary school students reported that they had told a teacher. Victims of peer abuse may not be inclined to report attacks to their teacher because they fear reprisal from their aggressors or they blame themselves (Smith; Besag). Twenty-eight percent of victimized primary students reported that they had not told a teacher or a parent about being victimized at school (Ziegler & Pepler). Smith referred to bullying as the "silent nightmare" because there is a code of secrecy whereby victimized students and witnesses to bullying do not report the act. Yates and Smith (1989) found that only 15 out of 51 students who had been bullied told their teachers or school counselors about the incident. Even when teachers are aware of bullying, they may do very little to intercede. Self-report questionnaires revealed that approximately 40% of students in the primary grades responded that teachers intervene to stop bullying only "once in a while or almost never."^{clxxx}

This research summarizes some critical findings. First, peer involvement is a reinforcer for bullying behavior. Second, teachers are either unaware, or do very little, to intercede. Third, bullying possesses a code of silence, in which the victim isolates himself/herself; thereby, ensuring the continuance of their victimization.

The classic bullying methods, victim-avenger and mobbing represent destructive forms of conflict. Through harmful abuse, violence and gang-like behavior these methods reinforce the already destructive bully and victim individual characteristics.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE MALADAPTIVE CYCLE

A scientist conducted an experiment. She put frog number one into a pan of very hot water. The frog jumped right out. Then she placed frog number two in a pan of cool water. This frog didn't jump out. Very gradually, the scientist raised the temperature of the water. The frog gradually adapted until it boiled to death.^{clxxxi}

— Anonymous

Parallel to the life of the second frog, bullies and victims are conditioned from years of learning and practicing their dysfunctional behaviors in conflict. They slowly adapt so that, when a bully recognizes a victim or a victim encounters a bully, their interactions and conflict are on automatic pilot. These patterns continue, unknowingly to the bully and the victim, from childhood to adulthood in the form of maladaptation, creating a cycle of destructive conflict

for an entire lifetime.

In this chapter, we will examine the sources of the victim's and the bully's maladaptation, reveal

the algorithms established between the bully and victim, analyze the similarities between school bullying and workplace bullying and show how each of these factors is instrumental in the maladaptive cycle.

Victim's Maladaptation

"Many of the regular victims of childhood bullying are able to set aside their experiences and develop normal social skills for life as adults. It is also clear that many do not.

.....Severity
and

frequency of bullying during childhood are obvious factors which strongly correlate with later submissiveness to dominant and aggressive individuals during adulthood.

..... Childhood PTSD
is

known to have significant influence on adult social behavior and may well act to predispose individuals in adult life to block effective responses against would-be bullies."^{clxxxii}

Researchers are now investigating unresolved childhood Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) resulting from bullying incidents and how it extends the victim's maladaptation cycle from childhood victimization to adult victimization. PTSD is based on the following major clusters of symptoms:^{clxxxiii}

- Exposure to an event which would be considered traumatic for most people.
- Intrusive re-experiencing of this trauma.
- Numbing of responsiveness to or reduced involvement with the external world which may include an inability to reveal an important aspect of the trauma.
- Persistent evidence of hyperarousal.

These symptoms can manifest in two types of PTSD. Type I " results from a single-impact traumatic event..."^{clxxxiv} Terr claims that in those who experience Type I, PTSD results in the re-experiencing of their symptoms.^{clxxxv} Type II " is the product of a series of traumatic events or prolonged exposure to a particular stressor or stressors."^{clxxxvi} In Type II, PTSD results in dissociation numbing and denial.^{clxxxvii} "The experience of bullying may provoke both Type I and Type II PTSD. A very severe encounter with a bully may be of sufficient single-impact trauma to provoke a Type I response and, alternatively, Type II responses may be provoked by regular and severe exposure to bullying. In both cases, the children involved would require therapeutic intervention designed to alleviate the effects of PTSD in order to reduce the associated long-term difficulties; it is unlikely that simply treating them as the victims of bullying would have the same beneficial effect."^{clxxxviii}

This research is a significant discovery in understanding why some child victims become adult victims cognitive of different responses to a bully but are still, nevertheless, paralyzed in their ability to use more assertive responses. Whether or not a victim suffers PTSD, the trauma resulting from bullying victimization needs to be healed or it will be carried into adulthood.

Lack of forgiveness, or rather the lack of the healing process associated with the concept of forgiveness, paralyzes the victim into their maladaptation. The healing process developed by Simon and Simon offers counsel for the victim:^{clxxxix}

- Acknowledge that you were hurt and what you have done because you were hurt.
- Get rid of guilt and shame and stop taking all of the blame for everything.
- Recognize that, in spite of it all, you did survive, that you developed personal strengths and compassion as a result of your past experiences.

- Put the past in its proper perspective, neither dwelling on it, nor forgetting it, but rather seeing it for what it is - a part of who you are but not all of what you are.

Guilt is one of the components needing management in the healing process, but is often found unmanaged in an adult victim. "Victims also experience great shame in their inability to control their

own lives...."^{cxv} Guilt frequently resurfaces in the adult victim when it bridges the past childhood victimization with their current adult victimization. The effects of this guilt are tremendous. The victim's guilt for not being able to handle the bully may cause the adult to feel and behave like a child again. This guilt triggers the self-destructive behaviors of self-pity, anger and the expectation of the worst, thus perpetually repeating the past.

The workplace itself nourishes this guilt. Most adults identify bullying as a child's problem and feel adults should surely be able to handle a child's problem.^{cxvi} The fear of being labeled a whiner, or a child, silences the adult victim and they experience isolation similar to the isolation found in childhood victimization.

Victims can create closure to their childhood victimization and begin to develop skills that are more constructive once they engage in a healing process. Bullies could also benefit from this healing process but, more importantly, bullies need to learn how to manage their aggression.

Bully's Maladaptation

I noticed, growing up with bullies all around me, that I had turned into a bully myself. I had learned to believe that I needed to be aggressive if I was going to survive in this world. Even today I sometimes find myself unfairly bullying my wife and daughters, asserting my "power" over them with words or gestures. And at times they do the same to me. At one time or another, we all do it. Teachers occasionally use their authority to bully. Parents will sometimes aggressively pursue their own needs over the needs of the family. Political and military bullies get power hungry and want to dominate the world. You can be sure, any war we've gotten into was started by bullying. Kids are not born bullies. We learn how to be bullies from adults. Then we grow up to become adult bullies.^{cxvii}

Aggression is the main source of the bully's maladaptation. "Parents of a neighborhood bully may shrug their shoulders, mutter, 'Boys will be boys.' and hope that he will grow out of it. For some, it is 'just a phase' but for many it's a sign of things to come. A 22-year study of 800 children in New York found that both antisocial and positive or prosocial behavior persist over time. Aggressive 8-year old boys and girls were still aggressive at 19, and by age 30 were more likely to be social and educational failures, to have been in trouble with the law and to have emotional problems. Psychologist Leonard D. Eron and L. Rowell Huesmann, who conducted the study, found that children as young as 6 have already developed dominant behavior patterns - either aggressive or prosocial - in dealing with others."^{cxviii} This study reveals that bullying is not just a phase and that the bully's use of aggression becomes their dominant behavior pattern as adults when dealing with others.

Additional research also supports these findings and details the destruction caused by their aggression. The following are some findings on the effects of childhood bully aggression as it transfers to adulthood:

- Young bullies carry a 1 in 4 chance of having a criminal record by age 30, as compared with a normally behaved child's chance of 1 in 20.^{cxix}
- Early bullying behavior is strongly associated with domestic violence.^{cxv}
- Bullies will have children who are bullies. This has been traced back for three generations.^{cxvi}

"This is clear evidence that aggressive children grow up to be aggressive adults with poorly inhibited behaviour and an increased likelihood of negative outcomes in virtually every sphere of human activity including relationship-building and employment."^{cxvii} Changing a bully's patterned behavior of aggression is key to ending their maladaptation.

There was a man who had a son with a bad temper. The father knew the danger of anger, so he gave his son a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must

hammer a nail into

the back of the fence. This first day the boy had driven 27 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, as the son learned to control his anger, the number of nails he hammered daily gradually dwindled. The son discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence. Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it, and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day he was able to hold his temper. Days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone. The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, "You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one."^{cxviii}

This story emphasizes the permanent destructiveness of unmanaged anger. Because anger is a communication skill, the damage is exponentially increased for the bully as it moves from childhood to adulthood. "A communication skill is 'the successful performance of a communicative behavior...[and] the ability to repeat such a behavior.'"^{cxix} Like other skills, with practice, aggression accelerates, becomes more refined and is more easily repeated in similar situations.

Communication research reveals that aggressiveness is an enduring characteristic that manifests in fairly predictable communication patterns.^{cc} Therefore, as the bullies, victims or the community begins to recognize the conditions which trigger this aggressive communication, they can begin to change it.

Three reasons for using aggressive communication are as follows:^{cci}

1. Psychopathology - Someone might attack you verbally because you remind them of another person who caused them some kind of hurt which they have been unable to resolve.
2. Disdain - People may express extreme dislike for someone because they feel that person is far beneath them in some respect.
3. Argumentative skill deficiency - People sometimes verbally attack the other person because they can't think of a counter argument to the other person's claims.

In almost all of the bullying cases, the bully's aggressive behavior indicated one of these triggers. Therefore, identifying potential triggers can assist a bully in predicting aggressive behavior and enable the bully to choose a different response.

The final key in understanding aggression's power in the bully's maladaptation is an understanding the long term desensitization effects. Aggressive individuals send and receive more aggressive messages and, thus, are not as bothered by the hurt they cause.^{ccii} "A recent study compared people who scored high on the trait of verbal aggressiveness with those whose scores were low. People high in verbal aggressiveness created messages with competence attacks, teasing, nonverbal emblems, and swearing much more frequently than did those who were low in this trait. In addition, people high in verbal aggressiveness viewed threats, competence attacks, and physical appearance attacks as less hurtful than did people who were low in verbal aggressiveness. People high in aggressiveness used aggressive messages to appear tough to the other, to be mean to the other, to express disdain for the other, or to fight with the other when a rational discussion had degenerated."^{cciii} Constant use of aggression from childhood to adulthood has a tremendous desensitization effect on the bully.

Aggression is a maladaptive skill initiated in childhood and is built on and refined in adulthood.

Aggression, as a skill, develops over time until it becomes a naturally repeated behavior used in predictable circumstances. As the skill builds, it affects the bully's ability to see its impact, particularly on a victim who is less aggressive.

Although aggression and the victim's PTSD seem to be the main causes of the bully-victim maladaptive cycle, there is one more critical element and that is the algorithms of the

bully-victim interaction.

Bully-Victim Conflict Algorithms

"Increasingly, researchers view bullying and victimization less as the products of individual characteristics of bullies and victims separately and more as the manifestation of a unique interaction."^{cciv} Algorithms represent this manifestation of the bully's and victim's unique interaction. Although we have already discussed patterning and reinforcement of the bully-victim conflict, we can take this concept a step further when we examine it as algorithms carried from childhood to adulthood.

Algorithms are patterns stored in our brains. Algorithms are created when we store an idea alongside memories of familiar situations.^{ccv} We use algorithms everyday - "...where predictable events occur and we need to make a similar response each time".^{ccvi} In the bully-victim interaction, algorithms are patterned responses learned and anticipated by the bully and the victim.

"Watt and Hare believe in theories of childhood patterning. They maintain that how a person learned survival skills and developed their own coping mechanisms as a child, how they learned to deal with shame and abuse in their developmental years will influence how they will manage to stand up to an abusive situation at work, or,...become abusers themselves."^{ccvii} Algorithms emphasize the influence of learned behavior patterns, specifically as combined behaviors in the form of interactions. Once a victim encounters a bully, or a bully identifies a victim, their dysfunctional behavior patterns learned in childhood will resurface as adult survival skills and coping mechanisms. It is this natural reaction, rather than a response, which ensures the bully-victim destructive cycle's destiny. "We cannot control what comes into our lives. We can control whether we react or respond. Reaction is the emotional reflex. Response requires thought."^{ccviii}

From the Schoolyard to the Boardroom

The strongest evidence that supports the bully-victim destructive conflict cycle is the similarities we find when we compare a bullying incident at school to one at work.

Case One

School

My deformed spine makes me all bent over and doubled up. Some of the girls started calling me "Quasy" after the Hunchback, then they started saying my father buggers me standing up. I complained to the teacher but she thought I was lying cos one of the kids is the daughter of a friend of hers who's teaching in another school.^{ccix}

Work

Jim is a rather overweight 43-year old man working in a pig unit. He was supposed to be in charge of three men, all in their early twenties, but instead he became their victim. His weight was a constant source of fun with at least ten references each day to mistaking him for one of the biggest pigs. He was often tripped up so that he fell into the pig effluent and on three occasions when the young men were drunk they held him down and put pliers to the rolls of his body fat and pretended to squeeze. Although they didn't actually physically harm him he was terrified of this and deeply embarrassed. After three months of being bullied he went to the pig unit manager and reported the young men. The response was brief and cruel: the young men were right in that he was too fat and so he should expect to be made fun of; also the three young men in question were all hard

workers who got the job done and were available to work extra hours, unlike Jim, who had a family to spend time with. Jim was advised to find another job, which he did. He said that it was the best day's work he had ever done in his life to leave that company. He explained that he felt the bullies were rewarded, even approved of and that their behaviour

was passively encouraged by management.^{ccx}

Many similarities exist in these two stories. Although one victim was a 14-year-old boy and the other victim a 43-year-old man, both cases revealed that their multiple bullies selected their victim based on their perceived weakness - a disability. The boy's deformed spine and the man's weight problem caused them to visibly stand out to the bullies. As the boy describes his back as "all bent over and double up.", he portrays a weakness he sees in himself. His own feelings may have emitted a signal, "I am weaker than you" to the bullies. And in Jim's story his embarrassment of the pliers incidents also signified a sense of lower self-esteem, which again sent a signal to the bullies. The victims' disabilities and their own lowered self-esteem contributed to the bullies' perception that they could achieve their goals with these targets.

Another similarity is found in these victims' environments which blamed the victims and supported the bullies. In the boy's story he was immediately told he was "lying"; Jim was told that the bullies were right, "He was too fat and so he should expect to be made fun of...". Additionally, he was considered a bad employee because he couldn't work extra hours. In both stories the teacher (school) and the manager (work) supported the bullies. The teacher said it couldn't be true since one of the girls was the daughter of her friend. Jim's boss told him the bullies were hard workers who worked extra hours and advised him to find a new job.

These stories also revealed some myths about bullying. Both stories were examples of teasing. As demonstrated by these stories, the myth that teasing isn't harmful is untrue. The bullies in each of these stories teased their victim with hostility and vicious intent to cause harm. The second myth is that bullying is based on one bully and one victim but in both stories multiple bullies pursued a single victim. The third myth is that bullies are punished and victims are not blamed. In each story the victim sought support and was blamed. As Jim explained, he felt the bullies were rewarded, even approved of and that their behavior was passively encouraged by management. The final myth is that only bosses are bullies but, in Jim's case, his own employees were the bullies.

The same dysfunctional interactions in conflict were demonstrated in both these stories. Both were examples of opposing conflict styles, in which the victims chose to accommodate and the bullies chose to compete. The victim's fear was the fuel to their response in conflict and ensured their choice to accommodate rather than assert. They also chose to seek another's help rather than relying on their own assertion, which reflects an internalizing composite, another commonality.

This case reflects our first finding in the bully-victim destructive conflict cycle. When we compare the two different incidences, one at school and one at work, both possess strong similarities. Why? Because bullying behaviors are learned. Bullies learn to mistreat others who they identify as weaker or who they believe are deserving of their mistreatment. Bullies test these assumptions and, without intervention, they continue and grow with each human encounter. This is one of our human conflict maladaptations.

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