

BASED ON 20 YEARS OF PROFESSIONAL COACHING EXPERIENCE

A Practical Guide for Passive-Aggressives to Change Towards the Higher Self



PRESTON NI
COMMUNICATION COACHING

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For the purpose of conveying immediacy, the pages in this book are written as if they're reaching out directly to a passive-aggressive, even if the present reader may not be one.

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Introduction

The NYU Medical Center defines a passive-aggressive individual as someone who "may appear to comply or act appropriately, but actually behaves negatively and passively resists." In our highly competitive, pressure-filled and stressful society, passive-aggression is a prevalent and disempowering phenomenon, both for the passive-aggressor and the intended target.

Many chronic passive-aggressives struggle, and suffer personal and/or professional setbacks during the course of their lives.

However, to the few who are self-aware, there is the unique opportunity to evolve towards the Higher Self, signified by astute proactiveness, effective communication, and the capacity to engage in healthy and constructive relationships.

Presidential speech writer James Humes wrote: "The art of communication is the language of leadership." To step out from the veils of passive-aggressiveness and practice excellent people and relational skills is truly a sign of mature success. The information contained in this book may show you how.

The Four Categories of Passive-Aggressiveness

Psychiatrist Daniel Hall-Flavin describes passive-aggressive behavior as “a pattern of indirectly expressing negative feelings instead of openly addressing them. There's a disconnect between what a passive-aggressive person says and what he or she does.” Passive-aggression can range from the relatively mild, such as making excuses for not responding to someone's communication, to the more serious, such as deliberately undermining another individual's happiness and success. Passive-aggression may be directed towards a person or a group.

Below are four major categories of passive aggression. While some people may act in the following manners from time to time, a chronic passive-aggressive tends to behave in one or more of the following manners habitually, often towards specific individuals in her or his life.

Category One: Disguised Verbal Hostility

Example: Negative gossip. Sarcasm. Veiled hostile joking — often followed by "just kidding." Repetitive teasing. Negative orientation. Habitual criticism of ideas, solutions, conditions, and expectations.

Category Two: Disguised Relational Hostility

Examples: The silent treatment. The invisible treatment. Social exclusion. Neglect. Backstabbing. Two faced. Mixed messages. Deliberate button pushing. Negative or discomforting surprises. Overspending. Sullen resentment. Indirectly hurting something or someone of importance to the targeted person.

Category Three: Disguised Task Hostility

Examples: Procrastination. Stalling. Forgetting. Stonewalling. Withholding resources or information. Professional exclusion. Denying personal responsibility. Excuse making. Blaming. Broken agreements. Lack of follow through. Resistance. Stubbornness. Rigidity. Avoidance. Inefficiency, complication, incompleteness or ruination of task.

Category Four: Hostility Towards Others Through Self-Punishment ("I'll show YOU")

Examples: Quitting. Deliberate failure. Exaggerated or imagined health issues. Victimhood. Dependency. Addiction. Self-harm. Deliberate weakness to elicit sympathy and favor.

Becoming Aware of Passive-Aggressive Tendencies

Here is a self-assessment survey to evaluate whether you might have passive-aggressive tendencies, and if so, in which particular ways and to what extent. While many people will show a number of the following traits from time to time, which might not be a major issue, a chronically passive-aggressive individual will enable one or more of these characteristics habitually.

Please be honest with yourself as you take the survey. This exercise is not about good or bad, right or wrong. It is simply a tool to help increase self-awareness, from which you can then take measures to become a more astute, effective and successful communicator.

Below are the four categories of passive-aggression identified in the last chapter. Check and see whether you find yourself employing any of the following traits with people in your life, such as a significant other, family, colleagues, or friends.

Category One: Disguised Verbal Hostility

Trait	Often Use	Sometimes Use	Occasional Use	Rarely/Never Use
Negative gossip	_____	_____	_____	_____
Sarcasm	_____	_____	_____	_____
Veiled hostile joking	_____	_____	_____	_____
Repetitive teasing	_____	_____	_____	_____
Negative orientation	_____	_____	_____	_____
Habitual criticism	_____	_____	_____	_____

Category Two: Disguised Relational Hostility

Trait	Often Use	Sometimes Use	Occasional Use	Rarely/Never Use
The silent treatment	_____	_____	_____	_____

There's more to this excerpt!

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