

Chapter 13

Egopathy in Academic Literature, Popular Press, and Newspapers

Can Egopathy turn into psychopathy in a moment?

On Oct 2, 2006 Charles Roberts walked into a one room schoolhouse and shot 10 of the children including one young teacher's assistant. Then he shot himself. Yet another horrible schoolyard massacre and the third in less than a week. Since Columbine, we have asked again and again, "What could have been the reason for going on this murderous rampage?" The shooter's answer in this case may have come closer to the truth than most of the reasons given in the past.

Charles Roberts had finished his overnight shift as a milk delivery driver and dropped off his children at their bus stop. He then drove to the Amish schoolyard much like the one he had attended 20 years earlier. After sending the boys and teachers out of the building he lined up the girls in a copy cat fashion from the killer in the news just days before, and shot the girls "in revenge for something that happened 20 years ago." How ironic that it is the Amish who have a strong code for forgiving their offenders and moving on and leaving wounds in the past.

The sad fact of the matter is that most people find it very difficult to forgive our offenders especially when we suffer toxic shame. There is no doubt that this horrendous act of revenge is not solely sequelae of a rude rejection or unkind word from a couple of "mean girls" from Roberts' childhood. This lapse of common decent behavior has to result from years and years of shame thrown at him from egopathic parents or others in his life. Unless he had a brain tumor growing in his head as was reported with Whitman at the University of Texas tower in 1967, his emotional-mental breakdown was due to years of emotional strain. He was struggling with the lowered sense of self that is talked about in Howard Gardener's book "Multiple Intelligences." On page 237, Gardner begins talking about how the self of self in developed.

<u>Book Title</u>	<u>Cruel Egocentric Personality Type</u>
Abusive Personality Disorder by Donald Dutton	Abusive Personality
Donald Dutton is a nationally known psychologist who has written extensively on violence in the home. He chooses to call this personality the "abusive personality." You can see plenty of egopathy in these abusers.	
Aggressive Personality Style by John M. Oldham	Aggressive Personality Style
<i>in The New Personality Self-Portrait.</i>	
The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness by Erich Fromm	The Exploitative Sadistic
Asserting Your Self by Sharon and Gordon Bower	The Hit-and-Run Downers
The Authoritarian Personality by Adorno, Frenke:-Brunswik. Levinson. & Sanford	The Authoritarian
Brutal Bosses by Harvey A. Hornstein, Ph.D.	Conquerors
Bullies by Jane Middelton-Moz and Mary Lee Zawadski	The Controller
This is an excellent little book that carried a big wallop of information about the younger egopath who chooses to be abusive to his or her fellow student.	
Coaching Through Effective Feedback by Paul J. Jerome	The Attacker, The Punisher
Coping With Difficult People by Robert M. Bramson, Ph.D.	Bulldozers, Sherman Tanks
Emotional Blackmail by Susan Forward, Ph.D.	The Blackmailer
Emotional Intelligence by Daniel Goleman, Ph.D.	The Unempathic Vice-president
The granddaddy of all books on the maldeveloped personality. See Chapter 2.	
Eupsychian Management by Abraham Maslow, Ph.D.	The Authoritarian Bastard
The master himself takes on interpersonal relationships in the workplace. He doesn't pinpoint so much what an abuser looks like as he focuses on what the opposite would look like, an "ego healthy" person. An amazing piece of work for the 1960's.	
How to Manage Your Boss by Christopher Heggarty	The "Drive" and "Default" Leader
This is an excellent book full of down to earth psychological wisdom. He describes very well the "primitive ego" on page 41 which is the core of egopathy. Leaders with "primitive egos" tend to over-control or distance themselves from their charges, both as a way of promoting or protecting their wounded egos.	
Letters From Jenny by Gordon Allport	Anal Personality
An extraordinary work explicating one case of egopathic personality. It has been speculated that Allport himself was the college student roommate of the unfortunate young man with the "anal" mother.	

[Man for Himself](#) by Erich Fromm..... Authoritarian Personality
[The Mask of Sanity](#) H. Cleckley.....The Sociopath
[Measuring Emotional Intelligence](#) by S. Simmons & J. Simmons.....Faultfinders

Simmons and Simmons do an excellent job of describing an egopath they call the Faultfinders.

[Men Who Hate And the Women Who Love Them](#) by Susan Forward, Ph.D.

[Nasty Men](#) by Jay Carter, Psy.D.The Evil One-Percenter, The 10 Percenter, The 20 Percenter

[Nasty People/Bosses](#) by Jay Carter, Psy.D.The Invalidator, The Me Me Boss, The Chucky Boss

Carter does a good job of describing the egopath. He mentions the double message and the double bind, both egopathic tactics.

[The Neurotic Personality of Our Time](#). Karen HorneyThose who need Power and Prestige

It is no wonder these older writers are disregarded. It is not for lack of accuracy in description, just lack of accuracy in nomenclature. It becomes clear as you read the description she is describing an egopath. She then mistakenly calls the person “neurotic.” Neurosis is an Axis I symptom, not Axis II.

[The OK Boss](#) by Muriel JamesThe “Superiority Boss” (I’m OK, You’re Not OK)

A wonderful little book on being a good boss. Especially descriptive and useful is her description of the egopath’s “destructive script” on page 122. Also very useful is the description of an egopath’s developmental personology on pages 124 through 126 (paperback.)

[The Peter Pan Syndrome](#) by Dan KileyThe Immature Chauvinistic Narcissist

Although he doesn’t call his “Peter Pan” an “immature chauvinistic narcissist,” that is a good description of this maldeveloped, egocentric little twerp.

[Powerful Personalities](#) by Tim Kimmel.....The Aggressive Controller

[The Psychology of Character Development](#) by Havighurst and Peck.....The Amoral Character Type

There are so many gems in this book. Look for their constant description of how the families of the children create the character of the children (page 109). Also read the outstanding description of the need for a high school class to teach about relationships on pages 195 to 196.

[The Psychopath of Everyday Life](#) by Martin Kantor, M.D.The Everyday Psychopath

[Sadistic Personality Disorder](#) by Theodore Millon, Ph.D.Sadistic Personality

[Shadow Syndromes](#) by John Ratey and Catherine JohnsonThe Rageful Type

This is a wonderful book that introduces the idea of “subclinical” syndromes and suggests that these are serious psychological maladies regardless of being under the DSM radar of symptomatology.

[Soul Murder: Persecution in the Family](#). by M. Schatzman

[Soul Murder](#) by Leonard Shengold, M.D.

[Theories of Personality and Psychopathology](#) by T. Millon, Ph.D.Explosive Personality

Theodore Millon is the grand patriarch of personality disorders. He has given more thought to people behaving badly than anyone alive. If Dr. Millon thinks there is an “explosive” or a “sadistic” personality, then there is one I don’t care what the psychiatrists at APA say.

[Ten Stupid Things Men Do To Mess Up Their Lives](#).....

In this book the author gives a list of interesting contrasts between “males” and “man” meaning if you’re a “man” you’ll show yourself to be ego healthy and not egopathic. Here’s the list

Males

1. Led by instincts (lust, anger, etc.)
2. Concerned about self
3. Flees responsibility (blame-shifts and denial are a way of life.)
4. Constantly proves himself macho
5. Loves conditionally (what’s in it for *me*?)
6. Independent, isolated (loner)
7. Seeks control -- power
8. Empty talker -- boastful
9. Primarily a taker
10. Inconsistent in morals and ethics

Man (what I call Altrucharacteristic)

1. Develops self-control
2. Concerned about others
3. Accepts responsibility
4. Secure enough to be gentle
5. Loves unconditionally
6. Team player
7. Leads fairly and justly
8. Man of action
9. Giver
10. Holds to a standard of conviction

[Too Good to Leave, Too Bad To Stay](#)

[Toxic Coworkers](#) by Alan Cavaioia, Ph.D. & Neil Lavender, Ph.D. The Conquering Narcissist

[Toxic Parents](#) by Susan Forward, Ph.D. The Toxic Interpersonal Style

[Toxic People](#) by Lillian Glass, Ph.D.The Angry Pugilist, The Silent but Deadly Volcano, The Control Freak, The Bitchy, Bossy Bully

[Understanding the Borderline Mother](#) by LawsonThe Borderline Mother

[Work Dysfunctions](#) by Rodney L. Lowman.....The Bright and Shining Flop

Dr. Lowman has described the plight of the manager who presents very well but who has so few people skills that he eventually crashes and burns.

[Not to People Like Us: Hidden Abuse in Upscale Marriages](#) by Susan Weitzman, Ph.D.

[The Psychopath of Everyday Life](#) by Martin Kantor, M.D.The Everyday Psychopath

In Kantor's book [The Psychopathy of Everyday Life](#), he is making a basic faux pas. On the one hand he is saying the hurtful, immoral behaviors are in "everyday life" and it's true they are. But on the other hand he is calling it "Psychopathic Personality Disorder" which is a serious mental illness which is not seen very much in "everyday life." Statistics put the number at 1% of the population.

I am more in concert with Dr. Kantor than I sound, though. The only mistake he is making is not giving these horrible behaviors a new name which differentiates them from the killers and the titans of torture and abuse who are the true psychopaths. Although the descriptions in Chapter 4 are incredible in their amorality, they are not the stuff of true psychopaths. That is why I am introducing the new concept of egopathy. It will be difficult enough for these people to accept that there is a label for their behavior without trying to pin "psychopathy" on them.

His anecdotes truly are the stuff of everyday life. There needs to be a categorization of these hurtful, destructive behaviors. To begin we must examine the behaviors to discover how egopaths differ from each other. The real estate shyster in his Chapter 4 is an excellent place to begin. This man was clearly intelligent and articulate. It is no mean feat to acquire land, obtain a bank loan, and supervise the building of hundreds of homes. But an egopath can maintain this high functioning and yet still sink into the mental illness of a depraved self-serving ego which led to his lying and disparaging which is the stuff of a million sociopathic legends. This story would come under the heading of "greedy."

All egopaths, and psychopaths for that matter, have one thing in common. They have an insatiable drive to get what they want. They see the world as their oyster and feel they are justified in doing or saying whatever it takes to obtain the things and exact the revenges that they feel they are due. This is egocentrism in a nutshell. Egopaths are interminably egocentric. The idea of altruism or other-mindedness just doesn't compute.

On the other hand, one of the confusing things about egopaths is their ability to compartmentalize their lives. And the most twisted is their ability to see themselves and think of themselves as good people because, in actuality, they are good people in certain circumstances. The first time I was introduced to this concept was in the opening pages of [How to Win Friends and Influence People](#) by Dale Carnegie. John Dillinger thought of himself as a nice guy who was just trying to help people out. I was reading online and stumbled across this explanation of the beginnings of "A Course in Miracles."

Helen Schuman and Bill Thetford were an unlikely team in scribing *A Course in Miracles*. As career-oriented psychologists working closely together at the Columbia- Presbyterian Medical Center, they were attempting to develop and strengthen the Center's Psychology Department. While their professional interests and goals for the department were compatible with each other, their personalities certainly were not. *Helen's overtly critical and judgmental stance* was juxtaposed with Bill's quiet and more passively aggressive personality, and they clashed constantly.

It was therefore a rather startling event when, in the spring of 1965, Bill delivered an impassioned speech to Helen in which he said that he was fed up with the competition, aggression, and anger which permeated their professional lives, extended into their attitudes and relationships, and pervaded the department. He concluded and told her that "there must be another way" of living—in harmony rather than discord—and that he was determined to find it. Equally startling, and to their mutual surprise, Helen agreed with Bill and enthusiastically volunteered to join him in a collaborative search to find this other and better way.

It was as if Helen had waited all her life for this particular moment, which triggered a series of internal experiences for her that carried through the summer. These included heightened dream imagery, psychic episodes, visions, and an experience of an inner voice. The experiences also became increasingly religious, with the figure of Jesus appearing more and more frequently to her in both visual and auditory expressions.

This period of preparation culminated on the evening of October 21, 1965, when the now familiar

voice of Jesus said to Helen: "**This is a course in miracles, please take notes.**" Troubled, she called Bill immediately, and he reassured her that she was not going mad. He suggested she write down what was being dictated to her, and that he would look at it with her early the following morning at the office. Helen did just that, which is how the scribing of *A Course in Miracles* began.

This is clearly an example of an egopathic acting out. Helen's overtly critical and judgmental stance. Look at how it affected Bill Thetford and notice what it made him do. I wish every angry remonstrance would trigger/inspire a beautiful, spiritual book. But, alas, it almost never does. What it usually triggers is heartache that never heals and wounds that never get repaired.

In my father's case, this kind of caustic interaction actually killed him. He was the CEO of an international Christian organization. He loved his work and was so excited about future possibilities. But the President must have been jealous and spiteful. He spread rumors and constantly found fault with my father. The disharmony caused a rift in the organization. Something had to be done. An independent consulting firm was hired to interview the employees. I was one of those non-paid "employees" who was interviewed. The consulting firm reported their results to the board of directors. The decision was reluctantly made. The President had to step down. But the President was a preacher who had many devout followers within the organization. The devotees felt slighted. They made noises about the unfairness. "Why should only he have to step down? The CEO should have to step down as well," they insisted, not wanting to be

So the board of directors gave in and my father was asked to step down as well. This loss of this dear endeavor was a devastating blow to his heart. He had given of his time freely, in both senses of the word, and had cherished his ability to share his talent and time with the Christian organization he loved. The shock, the loss, the hurt all took its toll on him in a physical way. His enzymes shot up. He tried to work off his frustration on a hot day in south Texas. It was all too much. That night his broken heart couldn't take it anymore. My father passed away at the age of 51, his dreams of continued service dashed by an egopath.