

FIGURE 1-1: The Sanity Cycle

FIGURE 2-1: How Personality Develops

World of Possibilities

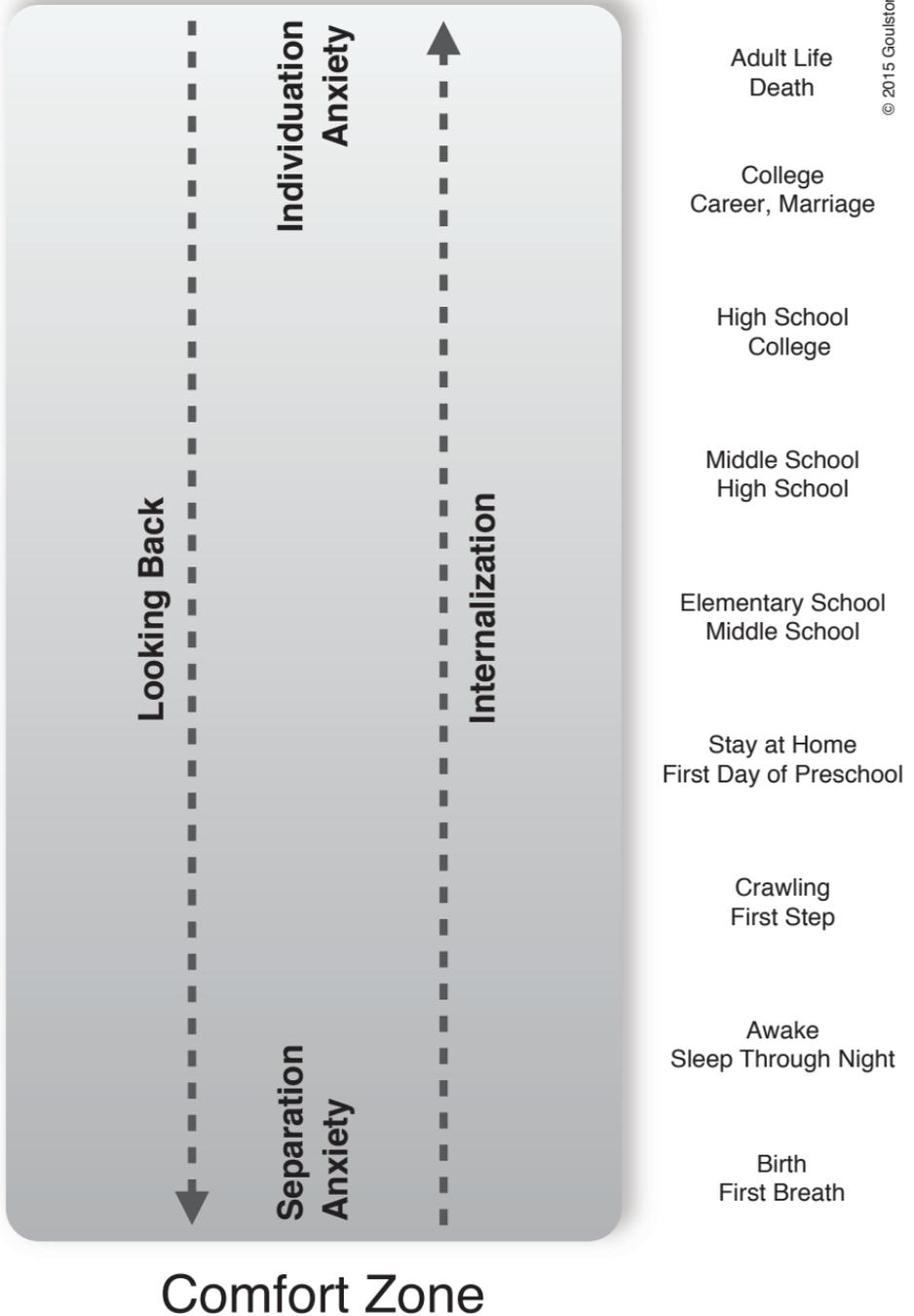


FIGURE 2-2: What Personality Becomes

Childhood Challenge	1st Step Forward 2nd Step Fall Looking Back						Your Life
	Parents' Reaction	Child's Response	Adolescent Attitude	Adolescent Thinking	Adult Obstacle	Adult Life	
Coddling	Tantrums	Spoiled	"Do it for me"	Compulsions	Lost	Self-Defeating Behavior	Fulfilled
Criticizing	Hurt/Anger	Hostile	"Leave me alone"	Blaming	Bitter		
Ignoring	Fear	Defeatist	"It'll never work"	Avoidance	Empty	Determination	
Supporting	Confidence	Motivated	"I can do it"	Determination	Satisfied		Can Be Changed
Can't Be Changed							Can Be Changed

FIGURE 3–1: The Nine Most Common M.O.s of Irrational People

M.O.s of Irrational People

Irrational Person’s M.O.		Your Reaction
Emotional	Emotional people believe they need to vent or they’ll explode. Therefore they cry, scream, and slam doors. They tend to overpower you because they’re willing to escalate a situation to a point that’s unbearable for a sane person.	You may try to mollify these people by giving in to them so you can stop the unending emotional upheaval, or you may become so tired of it all that you just try to escape from them.
Logical/Practical	These people think they’re in control only when they stick to the facts. As a result, they become terse, cold, and condescending. They tune out anything that seems illogical and nearly always view displays of emotion as “acting crazy.”	You may start feeling and acting more emotional and angry in response to these people’s dry and logical statements and the way they cut you off with icy logic. They also have a way of causing you to feel ashamed of even having feelings.
Manipulative/ Needy	These people believe that to be in control, they need something from you that they can’t supply themselves. So they whine, wheedle, and make excuses. If you suggest ways they can help themselves, they say, “Yes, but . . .” If you don’t give them what they want, often they try to control you by making you feel guilty.	When these people are unrelenting, you may transition from feeling guilty and frustrated to feeling annoyed, put-upon, and ashamed of your deep desire to say something mean to them. You may give in to them just to get rid of them—even though you know they’ll just come back for more.

Irrational Person's M.O.	Your Reaction	
<p data-bbox="146 331 242 355">Fearful</p>	<p data-bbox="348 103 653 481">Fearful people feel like they're constantly surrounded by threats. When something triggers their fear, they lash out wildly like a frightened dog. They also are much more comfortable than you being perched between fear and panic (because they are there so often).</p>	<p data-bbox="689 103 971 588">These people evoke in you a nearly constant need to reassure them, which eventually gets exhausting and makes you resent them. If you go the extra mile to walk them through fearful situations, you're likely to find yourself becoming a regular crutch because they can't or won't move a step without you.</p>
<p data-bbox="122 797 265 850">Hopeless/ Withdrawn</p>	<p data-bbox="348 617 653 1030">Hopeless/withdrawn people feel that the world will only hurt them, so their M.O. is to hide from it. No matter how hard you try to convince these people that they can be happy in the future, they spend enormous amounts of energy trying to convince you that you're wrong and that nothing will work.</p>	<p data-bbox="689 617 974 962">These people's negativity may leave you feeling frustrated, sad, and a bit hopeless yourself. Trying to help them increases your chances of becoming part of their downer cycle as they suck the energy out of you.</p>
<p data-bbox="132 1202 254 1225">Martyred</p>	<p data-bbox="348 1061 653 1230">People who play the role of martyrs make a point of refusing to ask for help, even when they desperately need it.</p>	<p data-bbox="689 1061 957 1370">These people initially make you feel guilty for not helping, even though they won't give you a chance. Over time, however, their martyr act can make you feel annoyed and exasperated.</p>

(continued)

	Irrational Person's M.O.	Your Reaction
Bullying	<p>Bullies believe they're in control only if they're making you fearful and submissive. That's why they actively attack, threaten, or belittle you. The more afraid they make you feel, the more powerful they feel.</p>	<p>These people make you feel scared, intimidated, weak, and powerless—as well as angry. You may strike back, steam inside, or simply retreat and ruminate about what you could have done instead.</p>
Know-It-All	<p>Know-it-all's like being the only expert on any topic, even if they've never “been there” or “done that.” They will find cracks in any idea you offer, even if it's correct. They know that if they can make you feel stupid, you'll lose confidence and often back off and become submissive. Their M.O. is to belittle, mock, or condescend to you.</p>	<p>These people may make you feel small, insignificant, not good enough, and sometimes ashamed—as well as resentful.</p>
Sociopathic	<p>These people (who technically are sane, but often are irrational in a unique way you'll read about later) are hiding secrets. Their M.O. is to terrify you so you won't find out what those secrets are (or worse yet, expose them to the rest of the world).</p>	<p>These people will make you feel afraid and even “creeped out.”</p>

M.O. Detector

Note: There is no “official” score in this exercise. Instead, answer each question and see what your gut tells you.

1. *List three situations in which the person acted in a manner that seemed irrational to you.*

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2. *Describe the person’s behavior in each situation.*

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

3. *Describe how you felt during each of these encounters with the person.*

I felt _____

I felt _____

I felt _____

4. *Describe how you felt after each of these encounters with the person.*

I felt _____

I felt _____

I felt _____

5. *What did you do in each of these situations?*

I did this _____

I did this _____

I did this _____

6. *What were your results?*

This happened _____

This happened _____

This happened _____

7. *What do you think the person would have done in each situation if you'd refused to go along with her irrationality?*

The person would have _____

The person would have _____

The person would have _____

8. *What would have been the end result for you?*

The end result would have been _____

The end result would have been _____

The end result would have been _____

FIGURE 5–1: Identifying Your Worldview

How do you generally perceive the world and the people around you? Take a piece of paper, and write the numbers 1 through 40 down one side (or photocopy this exercise). For each trait, decide where your feelings about other people land on the line between left and right. You can score your experience by giving each item a grade from A to F.

You may want to do a separate exercise for your family, your work, and your friends.

	LOW	F	D	C	B	A	HIGH	
1. Talking at	-----						-----	Talking to
2. Lecturing	-----						-----	Listening
3. Reacting	-----						-----	Thinking

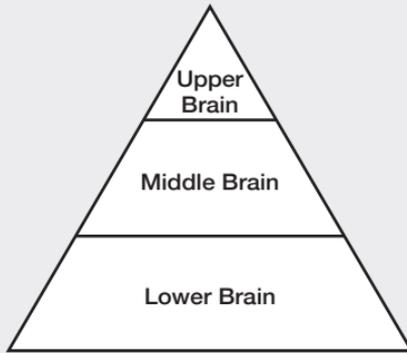
LOW F D C B A HIGH

28. <i>Artificial</i>	-----	-----	<i>Authentic</i>
29. <i>Unreliable</i>	-----	-----	<i>Reliable</i>
30. <i>Taking for granted</i>	-----	-----	<i>Cherishing</i>
31. <i>Negative</i>	-----	-----	<i>Positive</i>
32. <i>Pessimistic</i>	-----	-----	<i>Optimistic</i>
33. <i>Downbeat</i>	-----	-----	<i>Upbeat</i>
34. <i>Deflating</i>	-----	-----	<i>Uplifting</i>
35. <i>Apathetic</i>	-----	-----	<i>Passionate</i>
36. <i>Sluggish</i>	-----	-----	<i>Energetic</i>
37. <i>Passive</i>	-----	-----	<i>Active</i>
38. <i>Distrustful</i>	-----	-----	<i>Trustful</i>
39. <i>Untrustworthy</i>	-----	-----	<i>Trustworthy</i>
40. <i>Entitled</i>	-----	-----	<i>Deserving</i>

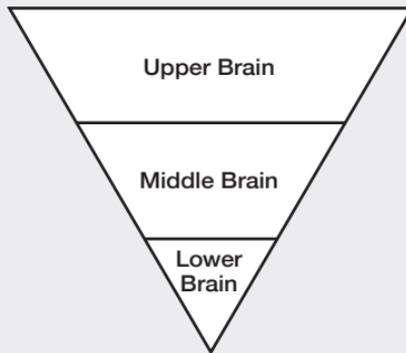
Triangle/Silo/Triangle

To get a good grasp on why another person's crazy makes you crazy, think about the three brains we've talked about.

The irrational person's three brains start out like this, with the reptile brain in charge. This pulls the person toward fight or flight and also causes the person to see a narrow view of the world.

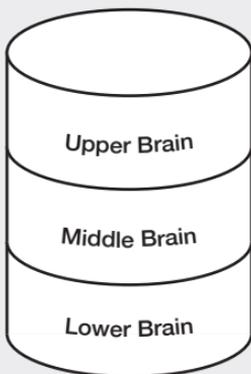


Your brain, on the other hand, starts out like this. Your upper brain is in charge, so you can think logically and see multiple viewpoints.

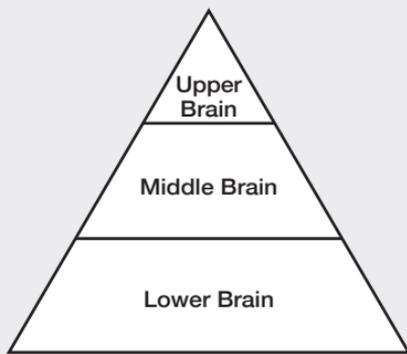


Even though you, too, may be a tiny bit crazy, your logical cortex is in control at this point.

As the irrational person pushes your buttons, however, your amygdala starts to send threat messages. As a result, your middle and lower brains begin to take more control. All three brains start vying for prominence, and your vision becomes increasingly constricted.



As you get more and more upset, your initial mature brain alignment flips, and your reptile brain takes total control, like so:



So at this point, both of you are coming from your reptile brains. For the irrational person, this is home turf, so he or she is just fine with it. In fact, the irrational person is totally comfortable going to extremes in order to push you into an amygdala hijack.

For you, however, being at the mercy of your reptile brain is terrifying. And that's why the other person wants to keep escalating, while you just want to escape.

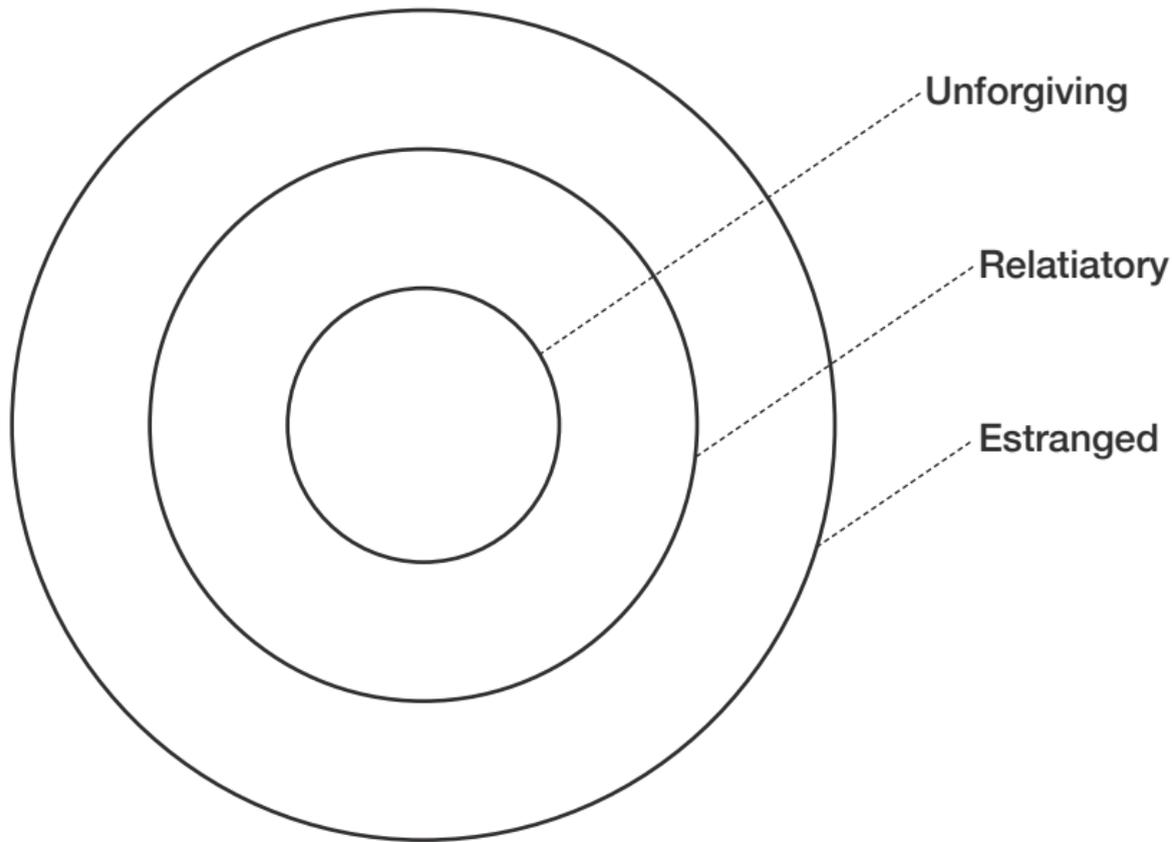


FIGURE 22–1: Negative Personality Traits in a Relationship

CHILD A	CHILD B
Focused	Scattered
Resilient	Fragile
Persistent	Quits when things get tough
Goal oriented	Lacking goals
Able to handle disappointments in a mature way	Easily upset
Doesn't take herself too seriously	Hypersensitive
Willing to listen to other people's advice and learn from it	Unable to take advice without going ballistic