

Relationship Sabotage: Unconscious Factors that Destroy Couples, Marriages, and Families (Sex, Love, and Psychology)

By William J. Matta

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Hidden forces? memories of past poor or hurtful relationships? drive repressed feelings and emotions that are often outside our awareness. Though we want to love and be loved, to nurture and be nurtured, those forces can wreak havoc and cause relationship sabotage, destroying couples and even whole families. The scenario is so common, explains therapist Matta, that often people get divorced without even fully understanding why, or what it was that came between them. In many cases, what it was were the lingering but unconscious memories of lessons learned as far back as childhood. These lessons may have no true bearing or justification in the current relationship, yet they can strongly affect it, fueling marital games, extra-marital affairs, addictions, poor parenting practices and a host of other harmful actions. Matta argues that we can learn to recognize these imprints and move past them to build or keep rewarding relationships. His book makes us aware, and gives us the tools to break the cycle.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Listed by Psychology Today as one of the US's best family and marriage therapists, Matta here attempts to redirect clients' (and therapists') attention to the importance of unconscious factors that impact couples and families. He draws on a potpourri of techniques and ideas from leading therapists in the field, past and present, illustrating each point from his own case files. Two chapter titles indicate the essence of the book: What People Bring to Counseling Is Often Not the Real Problem and Unconscious Forces Can Destroy Not Only Relationships, but Whole Families. Many chapters provide exercises that people in troubled relationships can use to improve their relationships. Chapter 8, Organizing Problem-Solving Conversations, is particularly strong in providing helpful suggestions. Each chapter has a brief list of references, and the final chapter gives suggestions for finding an appropriate therapist. Although mainly written as a self-help book, this title will also be useful to those in training, since it offers a realistic picture of the problems clients present and how therapists can approach these problems using standard therapy techniques. Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates, graduate students, professionals, general readers." - **Choice**

"This is a theoretically diverse book written for both providers and consumers of marital counseling. It is organized to demonstrate the power of unconscious motivation as a destructive force in marital relationships. The range of theoretical perspectives represented in the small volume is historically and conceptually wide....Matta's book offers a positive appreciation of the power of unconscious process in marital and family life. The reminder of these forces is important and useful in a world of increasing oversimplification." -

PsycCRITIQUES

"Practitioner Matta describes how memories, repressed or not, can drive deep-seated feelings and emotions of which we may not be entirely aware, or may not actually relate directly to the situation, but still cause behaviors and emotions that can sink an otherwise reasonable relationship. One of the most compelling reasons for seeking out these hidden elements of our lives and dealing with them is that they can carry on generation after generation, always unspoken but always destructive. He describes the unconscious mind, lethal forces and childhood wounds, the effects on family, games people play to put off hidden problems or use them to their advantage and, with contributors, the self-disclosure of extramarital affairs, addictions and emotional detachment." - **Reference & Research Book News**

About the Author

William J. Matta is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in private practice. He has served as an adjunct professor at several colleges over the past two decades. He is included on the list of America's Best Therapists published by *Psychology Today* magazine.

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