

Duped!

Describing Deception Detection:
basic essentials for many
applications.

Graeme Deeth

The Author

Graeme Deeth is an Australian whose professional life began following training as a Veterinarian, and practiced in that field for many years before retraining, registration and practice as a Psychologist.

The writing of this book was motivated by his observation that many of the presentations to his psychology practice were a result of painful experiences where a person had been duped. Most often this occurred in close relationships such as those occurring in families, workplaces and romantic relationships.

It became clear that clientele required training in the detection of deception, before a repertoire of defences could be developed to prevent future deceptions causing further psychological harm. In practice Graeme had noted that much of what was required came from disciplines outside psychology, and his experience observing animal behaviour prompted a more detailed view of the deception-detection interactions.

It is hoped that this eBook will form a basis for further exploration by the reader - a basis for the development of long term skill building. It is structured to be read more than once, with suggestions for practice until skills are mastered.

Acknowledgements:

This eBook is dedicated to my friend Warren O’Neill, no longer with us, but with me in spirit – the spirit of enquiry that we shared, in our respective and mutual search for the truth. Warren had encouraged me, many times over to put some of these thoughts into words so that others might share the benefit of our search for understanding of life’s complexities. It is people of Warren’s calibre that each of us needs to find, who will be honest with us even when it is most difficult, for they are willing to face reality, and have no need for deception.

Disclaimer:

If you are experiencing emotional overwhelm, or thoughts that might lead to actions that are a danger to yourself or others, you should seek professional help from an experienced, registered practitioner, with tertiary education qualifications.

Materials in this eBook are designed with a psycho-educational approach, not as a therapeutic intervention. If you experience emotions or thoughts that are overly distressing or would lead to harm, you should seek the abovementioned professional help before proceeding further.

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Duped: Describing Deception Detection: basic essentials for many applications.

I have often asked my clients the question “Why do humans have such big brains”? The common answers tend to be along the lines of: because we are complex social animals; because we build cities and skyscrapers, and other reasonable assumptions about why we evolved to have such a massive brain (compared to other animals of our body weight). These *seem* reasonable answers, until I point out that ants and termites also live in complex social arrangements, and build cities – and require only very small brains to do this. However, another possibility exists that most of us would not think about, because we wish to live honourably and in harmony with our society. Formally, it’s known as Machiavellian intelligence – after Machiavelli’s play *The Prince*, where the protagonist will do “whatever it takes”, where the ends justify the means.

If we follow this line of thinking, a Machiavellian character will do whatever it takes to achieve their goals, including lying to others, to gain an advantage and acquire resources. To get away with this deception undetected, the Machiavellian needs to develop a large brain to outwit his or her unsuspecting victims, or prey. This is akin to what we know as Predator-Prey dynamics, where predatory species need to be able to plan their strategies so as to out-think their prey; else they would starve and die out. Needless to say, prey species must also evolve an ability to detect deception in the predator, else they die much more quickly, and painfully. In a balanced ecology, prey species tend to outnumber predators, the former tending to herd together for safety. Some prey species hunt alone, whilst others live cooperatively. So one line of thinking is that our brain development over many generations has facilitated growth in complexity, as both predator and prey are engaged in what is sometimes called an evolutionary arms race!

We might consider then how we are to survive in such a world, where there is a constant state of flux between predators and prey, and where each has to

develop new tools to survive in a world where resources are limited. If a predator can deceive me, I become easy prey and am in dire peril - if I fail to detect its true nature. I might just hope and wish that predators didn't exist, or at least didn't come my way, but that would be naive. The fact that you are reading this says you are likely to have already been on the receiving end of a deception of some considerable importance in your life – and it has created some damage. We will either need to develop much better deception detection skills, and apply them in the right situations and against the correct targets, or develop the skills to counter-attack, or both. It is worth noting that even predators have predators, so they have vulnerabilities, but these tend not to be visible to those who are their victims. It's time we learned how to learn some basics, and skill up!

It is the deceptive actions of others that force us to develop these skills,....

....if you grew up with these dangerous souls, or if you formed a romantic attachment to one, or have the misfortune to work closely with one, then you will have likely already been harmed by their deceptions

Before we get into more detail, it's worth noting that some very basic skills may not have been learned earlier in your life – because there was no need to – if the people you were closest to were inherently trustworthy. *It is the deceptive actions of others that force us to develop these skills*, initially as a survival strategy, but eventually as a predictive tool to identify the dangerous ones, and keep them at safe distance. Safe distance can be physical, but also an emotional safety barrier. The chances are that *if you grew up with these dangerous souls, or if you formed a romantic attachment to one, or have the misfortune to work closely with one, then you will have likely already been*

*harm*ed by their deceptions. You need to learn everything you can, as soon as is practicable, and put it into practice until you can consider yourself a master.

The process is not an easy one, or you would have *already* mastered it, along with everyone else. If that were true there would be little work for psychologists and the world would live in peace and harmony. If only! To put this in some perspective, *it will probably take some weeks to consciously develop some new habits to replace old ones, some months to be sufficiently good at it to avoid further harm, and some years to truly master the skills required*. As you might have gathered from this introduction, I am asking you to seriously consider that some other humans are predatory by their very nature – and if you are not one of them, this will be difficult to comprehend, let alone accept that some of us are not wired up like the majority. As I have already indicated predators tend to be fewer in numbers than prey, hence predators usually make up a minority in many ecological niches – but they can be quite a significant minority – estimates vary, but could be from perhaps 10% to as much as 30% of the population. I am suggesting that for our own safety, we consider this to be the case within human societies too! At least until we can prove otherwise.

...it will probably take some weeks to consciously develop some new habits to replace old ones, some months to be sufficiently good at it to avoid further harm, and some years to truly master the skills required...

Let me pause for moment and ask you to think about different ecological niches in the animal world. What sort of predators can you think of? And what sort of prey? And what are the numbers of each that come to mind?
Stop and think for a while!

If you were thinking of the African savannah you might have considered lion, leopard, cheetah and hyena. You might also have thought of massive herds of wildebeest, antelopes of various kind, buffalo, giraffe, elephants, and rhinoceros and so on. You can easily picture the vast numbers of prey, how vulnerable they are to attack, the particular niche in the ecosystem that they evolved to occupy, and the defences they have had to develop over generations. A close observer would also note that the predators themselves are at risk from other predators, and occasionally from a well equipped prey species. On closer observation you will also note that not all predators will target all prey species: *each tends to target certain types that it is equipped to best handle. So too with human personalities within our species.* So this introduction is to prepare us for developing an increasing repertoire of deception detection skills, regardless of the type of predator-personality we next might meet.

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We will need to break this down into components that are simple enough to practice, whilst we recognise that the whole system is much more complex. Our African savannah analogy is familiar to anyone who has watched a wildlife documentary. But consider if you are in a different ecological niche, say an underwater environment. In this case there tends to be many layers of predators, hierarchically arranged feeding on the small fry at the bottom, all the way up to the large apex predators like sharks. This can also resemble a hierarchically organised workplace. Food of thought! So I'm hoping that we have set the scene for what is an incredibly complex relationship between liars and those who are duped, *but can be learned in incremental components that all of us can master.* This state of mastery will take clear conceptual understanding, regular self-disciplined practice, and support from those genuinely trustworthy people that have no history of doing intentional harm.

Some general considerations.

Our examples thus far are of different species that have coevolved over millennia. We want to develop skills over weeks, months, years. We need to start with some basic building blocks.

Let's pause again and consider some questions.

Make some notes to yourself at this stage: you will need to come back to them.

When you were deceived, did you see it coming?

Was it a conscious or an unconscious process that alerted you to the fact that something wasn't quite right?

Now that you're conscious of it, thinking back, was there something – a little voice, a gut feeling, a hunch or some other generally unconscious process – that you briefly allowed into consciousness, *and then dismissed*. “Oh s/he didn't mean that, I'll give them the benefit of the doubt” – as most decent people are want to do.

We need to bring into consciousness things which normally reside in our unconscious processing. In more technical terms we need your brain's frontal lobes managing your emotions in a way you may never before have had the need to learn and practice.

We also need to acknowledge some things that might be rather uncomfortable. *Everyone lies!* At least to some minor degree, and almost every day. But to do this we must also have the mental capacity to understand others' thinking processes at some level, perhaps yet to be developed. I have often asked my clients “have you ever met an honest human”? They usually pause and think, and I suspect would like to think of themselves that way. So I usually interrupt and say that I have never met one! Although I'm happy to acknowledge keeping as friends some that are far more honest than most (more of selecting good friends later).

Consider this: Aunt Maud your cabbage soup was delightful! Now it could be that statement was true, and it could be I was telling a little white lie - to spare her feelings being hurt.

Consider again: axe carrying murderer comes to my door asking where are my children? I answer that they are holidaying overseas currently – can I pass on a message?

Consider once more: the town's resident crooked politician convinces voters that s/he only possesses good intentions for donations for the trust fund they set up pre-election.

I'm wanting here to illustrate that the levels of deception serve different purposes and intentions, and that these matter. In the first example my socially acceptable "little white lie" is intended to spare hurt feelings, and would be accepted by many, maybe most, as not a real lie. Yet it has consequences: I'm likely to be fed more cabbage soup next visit, and, it's unlikely to be a new improved version as Aunt Maud didn't receive accurate feedback! In this form of deception, almost all of us play a part, and support the deception, fundamentally because we are kind hearted and would feel guilt if we were so insensitive as to be brutal with the truth. Yet I think we can see that we have already blurred the distinction between truth and lie.

Our second example serves to help us understand that there are some *exceptional circumstances where lying serves a very functional purpose*. This one is a little more complex, I think. It could be seen that I'm doing something honourable – saving my children from harm. But if we think a little deeper, I'm also being self-centred because they are *my* children. It is in *my* interest, as well as theirs. I think most would likely argue that my lie in this case was justified, because it *also* served the interest of others. However it was *also* self-serving in the other sense. I often point to this blurred distinction for my clients: a lie that is intended to prevent harm or disadvantage is in some important ways qualitatively different from one that is self-serving – to gain advantage.

Our third example hopefully illustrates the more problematic end of the scale of deceptions. In this case I'm hoping the example makes clear that the lie was entirely for personal gain – *and* that is it was *at the expense of other/s*. I

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suspect that this type of lie is also the most difficult to detect by those untrained to look for the clues. Please note clues – plural. It disappoints me on a daily basis, when *people are encouraged to believe there is one magic way to detect deception – and this is simply not true*. Television and media coverage generally would have us believe the guilty can be exposed by the proverbial lie-detector machines. However the evidence for this is at best equivocal. Others would have you believe in simplistic notions (she covered her mouth when she lied, or he looked up and left when he did). *If it were this simple, people have big enough brains to have worked it out years before.*

...people are encouraged to believe there is one magic way to detect deception – and this is simply not true...

Although the number of circumstance when deception detection is required is large, I would like to bring attention to 3 common broad areas. All involved human relationships.

1. Growing up within a family where serious deception was commonplace.
2. Participating in a romantic relationship where deception of one partner occurs.
3. Workplace hierarchies and power struggles for money, status and resources.

I raise these because I have seen it so often, usually daily, in my private practice of psychology. And it saddens me that so much suffering occurs that could have been prevented, if only people were taught earlier in life. But mostly this relates to the need to be able to identify the so-called “difficult personalities” that I think need to be studied and understood in much greater detail – and from a practical standpoint, not just academically.

Some half-truths:

What I mean by half-truths are pieces of information that are true as far as they go, but incomplete. The relevance for our purposes is that these *half-truths tend to be over-simplified and give people a false sense of security*. I would include in this category some commonly held notions that are picked up by popular media sources, over-simplified into marketable chunks and presented *as if this were all* that people needed to know. Some examples follow:

Discrete body language components (covering mouth, or arms folded, or looking left etc)

Clusters of body language out of context (arms across chest when on closer examination, it's just that I'm cold)

Lie detector machines (usually TV Police and Court dramas)

Discrepancies between what is said and what is done (Incongruity)

Stories that change over time, or differ when told to different people (Gossip)

Mistaken or disputed meanings of words (so-called loaded words)

...half-truths tend to be over-simplified and give people a false sense of security...

...This is something a talented deceiver can use against you...

It might be evident that when someone lies, one or more of these half-truths are exposed. But we know from some basic aspects of human cognitive processing that we are generally lazy thinkers, and will leap to judgement on relatively little evidence. This is like trying to understand a movie from one snapshot used to advertise it. I want to encourage readers to keep looking,

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once one of these half-truths enters your awareness. It is when we see more pieces of the jigsaw, or bigger sections of the movie over time, that the patterns of deceptions become evident, and eventually recognisable as a predictable pattern. Another problem here is that over-focus on one component detected, often effectively blinds us to actively looking for other evidence. *This is something a talented deceiver can use against you*, in much the same way as a good magician will draw your attention with one thing, to keep your attention off something else.

Deception occurs in relationship/s.

When we began, I used the predator-prey dynamics as an analogy. I wanted to paint a picture that set the scene to seek a deeper understanding of the complexity of relationships generally, and in particular the complex, dynamic interplay between predator and prey. But I want to draw your attention further into this complexity. I am assuming here that there is no predator-prey relationship to begin, between just 2 people, and that the relationship is mutual, fair and reciprocal.

If there are just 2 people involved, there is only *one* relationship. Although there are 2 views and experiences of it.

If a 3rd person enters this space, how many relationships are present? **Think for a moment – if need be draw it out on paper.**

You should have come up with 4 relationships! 3 dyadic (2 person) relationships and one 3-person (triadic) relationship. Shall we do some more mathematics?

If a 4th person enters the same space, how many relationships are there now? **Again, think it through and draw it out if necessary.**

Answer: 11 relationships. 6 dyadic, 4 triadic, and 1 quadratic (4-person) relationship/s.

Imagine the complexity if 5 or more people relate to each other!

My point at this stage is to bring your attention to just how quickly these relationships become exceedingly complex – and that is assuming they are all reciprocal and pleasant. This changes very quickly when one or more people form alliances with others to keep one or more in the dark! Deception, and the people who master it for their own benefit, thrive in these complex environments, in part because they have been doing it for longer, often for most of their lives. Many of the most damaging deceptions I see in my psychology practice are involving not just a dyad (2-person relationship) but a threesome, foursome or more-some. In my experience it is damaging when one person successfully lies to you, but the damage is magnified when more than one assists the process of deception. This experience is usually personally experienced as crushing, and crazy-making. *People become unable to trust their own senses, and make sense of what has been happening to them, at least until part of the deception is detected and suspicions are magnified also.*

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*Part of the reason that people being deceived are **so** distressed is the aforementioned experience of not being able to trust their senses, when in reality it is someone else that cannot be trusted!*

*Part of the reason that people being deceived are **so** distressed is the aforementioned experience of not being able to trust their senses, when in reality it is someone else that cannot be trusted!* Another part is that they tend not to have other stable reference points (usually genuinely trustworthy others). Also at another level, they simply don't have the relevant information – the missing pieces of the jigsaw, or the whole movie. Now that we have touched on the complexity of the subject at hand, it might be time to attend to some other matters.

Lying as children:

Some questions again:

Take some time out to think and make notes for later reference.

Do you remember lying as a child?

Or if you have children, what did you notice, and at what age?

And how did you handle it?

What was the process?

Children's brains are not fully developed, but increase in complexity with time and education (assuming all is normally wired), and their thinking becomes much more complex leading up to, and after, puberty. Deceptions by children are often simple, in keeping with their stage of development, so are not difficult for parents to spot. It can be both amusing to watch this development as well as a disappointment that our babies have learned how to deceive. Yet all normally developing children will go through such a phase: some will not grow out of it, and some of those because of a genetic predisposition, inherited to at least some degree.

If a parent catches a child (often beginning at about 6-8 years of age) lying, the temptation is to immediately penalise them, given that our society appears to value honesty. But as a child develops greater capacity to think about how others think (what we call Theory of Mind) that child's capacity to lie in more complex ways increases with time and development. A too harsh penalty in this developing mind might well produce someone smart enough to anticipate punishment, and learn to cover one lie with another. Thus can begin the capacity for deception to become more complex, such that the detection becomes more difficult. The temptation to "jump on" the lie immediately, rather than wait and collect evidence over time, I suspect sets the scene for an arms race between the deceiver and those that deliver the punishment.

So as a matter of principle my temptation is to not acknowledge that I have detected even a hint of a lie, so that I can observe what else leaks out when the liar's guard is down...

So as a matter of principle my temptation is to not acknowledge that I have detected even a hint of a lie, so that I can observe what else leaks out when the liar's guard is down. In my experience this takes some considerable willpower and self-regulation of my emotions so as not to give the game away. If I have a suspicion, I need to initially keep it to myself, and if I'm to share it with anyone, I need to be close to 100% certain that the person I share my observations with is trustworthy, and themselves do the same. Who do you know well enough that fits that description? Such people are but a small percentage of the total, and we will come to learn to how to identify them as we learn how to identify those whose childhood lying grew into a lifetime habit – the habitual liar or pathological liar.

Developmental Timeframes:

Let's begin to link some concepts together. Recall we began examining predator-prey dynamics, and that these have developed over evolutionary timescales – many millions of years. We have also begun to look at the evolution of lying within a single lifetime, starting in childhood as the child develops (normal) Theory of Mind, and can begin to think about how others think. And about how to manipulate that thinking to meet their own needs. Clearly, each of us develops more or less along similar paths, but the variation can be considerable. This might be based in part on the parenting we receive, and later instructions by teachers, and in time, employers. Each of these people varies in how they view deception, hence how they might reward or punish it. And as we have begun to discuss, there is likely a genetic predisposition that underpins our learned behaviours.

If it's the case that you or I have been raised by functional parents and teachers, in an environment with adequate resources for the task, then it is also likely that we have absorbed our cultural expectation regarding lying. Thus far we would be likely to accept "little white lies" reasonably readily, and less so lies that blur the boundary between self-serving and in service of others. But if healthy, we would be less likely to accept lies told *at the expense of others*. However, not everyone has the good fortune of such an upbringing, nor can we predict the luck of the draw that is our genetics. Or the interplay between the two, known as epigenetics, a comparatively new field of study. We might then expect that the developmental trajectories of these variable starting points could lead to very different outcomes years later.

One thing I hear regularly is some version of "how could s/he do that?" in regard to damaging deceptions. Or a sense of bewilderment "why would s/he bother to lie: why not just tell the truth"? But this assumes the liar's brain is wired functionally, the same as the rest of us, and they have had the good fortune of a healthy upbringing. Now I'm not for a minute excusing their behaviour, but trying to help understand how it might come to be that way. It helps to paint a more complex picture of the reasons someone might be predisposed to lie to us, and to what extent. In turn, we can consider the level of development we ourselves have to undergo, to more than match our deceiver/s. If it is the case that they started earlier, and can deceive in more complex ways, then *we have some considerable catching up to do*. It is for these reasons that I prepare my clients for the reality of what lies (no pun intended) ahead of them.

If the liar has already received their "black belt" in deception, then it is you and I who needs to learn how to detect, defend and disable their thus far successful strategy of deception. *This martial arts analogy is useful to give us a realistic timeframe for learning to a level of mastery, and what we have to learn in the weeks, months, and years ahead.*

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I want to impress upon you, as I do with my face-to-face clients, that *what we are discussing takes work; effort over considerable timeframes*. Initially this book will act as a reference and a guide, but in time *you will need to develop self-disciplined practice in the way anyone must do to master anything. There are no shortcuts!* It is my experience that my clients take several weeks to develop new habits to replace old ones – and they need to be refocused often during this period to keep the newly learned material in conscious awareness.

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When a new habit begins to form, and requires less conscious effort, we move into a period of consolidation where it begins to feel more natural. This period of several months overlaps the early stages; however, we would not yet consider mastery existed. In this phase we can expect relapses, and hence need to recover from setbacks or old habits intruding. Relapse prediction and prevention become important during this stage.

If we ask our black-belt – the master who makes it all look so easy and natural – how long it took to arrive at this stage, s/he will tell you years! And they will

also note that they are still learning from others with wisdom, and still practising in self-disciplined ways. So let's emulate those who have gone before us, and learned from their own painful mistakes.

Early stages: learning again to trust the intuitive.

Much of what our brains do, happens unconsciously – one we have practised it to level of mastery – what psychologists call automaticity. When we first practice something new, it tends to be awkward, and even boring, and we tend to be in a hurry to get out of that clumsy stage and master the task at hand. But I urge you strongly, not to rush and take shortcuts. We can't build advanced skills on a defective base.

When I reflect back on mistakes in my life, of deception detection, I realise that mostly I already knew at some level that something was not right. It was usually a hunch, a gut feel, an intuition that I pushed aside – and gave someone the benefit of the doubt. We do this assuming that others would not do what we would not do ourselves. So there was a suspicion, usually, and because it was only a small voice inside, I ignored it, *at my expense*. I expect we have all done this, else we would live in a constant state of anxiety. How and where I feel this in my body may not be the same as for you, although there is probably considerable overlap between us.

An exercise:

Firstly, find yourself a quiet safe place where you can relax, and where you can calm yourself if you become distressed. If you feel unsafe, you should seek professional assistance *first!* Or be in the company of someone who has *earned* your trust and never broken it.

You might recall an important deception in your life: it is likely that you have already been over-thinking such an event (hence reading this book) and magnifying the experience to especially painful levels. This is exactly what I do NOT want to achieve. *Nor should you act on your feelings or thoughts.* Instead we are seeking subtle quiet experiences that we normally miss.

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I want you to take a pause from reading and make some notes for yourself about what it felt like and then, what you were thinking. Be as descriptive as you can be, safely. If you feel unsafe, refrain, and seek professional help! Our aim here is not to delve into your most painful experiences and repeat the suffering, but to learn to identify the earliest *subtle* cue – how you experience the feeling/s in your body – and momentarily bring it into consciousness where we can recognise it and, eventually, verbalise it. In time we can learn to sit with, and through, distressing feelings, rather than avoid them by pushing them away.

Perhaps at a later time, you might consider repeating the exercise with memory of other deceptions that have distressed you. Again make notes.

We want to be capable of experiencing the discomfort and becoming consciously aware of it in its earliest stages...without acting on it!

At this stage I want to focus your attention *on your own experience*, not yet on the various signals leaked by the deceiver. We want to develop an awareness of those feelings (initially feelings, then later on, thoughts) that normally reside in your unconscious, or are too easily pushed out of consciousness – often because they are painful and we would rather not re-experience such feelings (and thoughts). Take as much time as you need. Take a break if you need. Add to you notes from the previous practice of this exercise so you begin to build a conscious picture of the beginnings of the patterns of feeling and thinking you experience when deceived. Come back to this exercise and build on it as you require. *We want to be capable of experiencing the discomfort and becoming consciously aware of it in its earliest stages: without acting on it!*

An aside: common understanding of deception detection relies on detecting signs *in the liar*, however, we need to recognise that liars vary considerably in their ability to cover their deceptions, as well as in their specific “leaks”. Research thus far fails to find any *single* method to detect deception *in the liar*,

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although clusters of signals may alert us – a point to which we will return later. *My reason for directing your attention inwards is that such changes are always available to you, yet neglected because they usually remain unconscious.* So the practised awareness of these subtle changes will permit you to be alert to using all of your senses. The more consciously you focus and attend, over time, the more likely you will detect changes in the other – the liar.

Another reason for noticing your own (often negative) emotional response to deception is that *we want to detect it at the subtlest level – and keep it contained at that level – so that it does not “show” to the deceiver.* This requires that we “sit with” the negative feelings, and thoughts, so we habituate to them and prevent the feelings escalating. This is the process of emotional self-regulation – a *vital* skill to develop.

My reason for directing your attention inwards is that such changes are always available to you, yet neglected because they usually remain unconscious...

...we want to detect it at the subtlest level – and keep it contained at that level – so that it does not “show” to the deceiver...

When a person is fully conscious of being deceived they will often say they feel duped! But what did this feel like to you? There may be a number of secondary reactions to that initial awareness of being duped and *we often are tempted to act on those secondary feelings, such as anger. I would strongly advise not to act, else you alert your deceiver and they become better at covering other components that you have yet to detect. Remember we are playing a long game – as long as it takes.* Premature action or confrontation is likely to give the deceiver warning of the consequences, and when dealing with serious deceptions by disordered personalities can result in danger for both

parties. So put aside your desire to act, no matter how strong in the moment, and again focus your attention inward.

...we often are tempted to act on those secondary feelings, such as anger. I would strongly advise not to act, else you alert your deceiver and they become better at covering other components that you have yet to detect. Remember we are playing a long game – as long as it takes...

Each time you *repeat and practice this exercise*, you are aiming to improve on the last time – incrementally. Don't (yet) rely on your memory because memory can be clouded by stress, or can be confused by prior successful deceptions. Ideally do the following somewhere quiet and private, and safe: if you can, find somewhere private to write about this experience – a journal.

Where in your body did you feel it, or notice it?

If you are unsure, quieten your mind, and scan your body – top to tail.

How does the experience change over time? Notice over time.

What/who distracts you from staying focussed?

What are you tempted to do? Do you push it aside, or down?

Are you tempted to act on it? **DON'T!**

How noticeable is your experience to others?

How would they recognise it in you?

How would you recognise it in others?

What can you do to change the feeling or sensation? Breathe? Move? Stretch?

Describe this experience to yourself, in as rich detail as you can imagine?

Write this rich detailed experience somewhere safe: *you will need to come back to it!*

After many years of practice, I still revisit this exercise - regularly. Self-disciplined practice is required for mastery of such vitally important skills. *Short-cuts short-change only you.*

Some of the specific feelings and sensations can be predicted to some degree. Depending on the specifics of the deception and of the personality type of the deceiver, you may have felt some form of:

Fear: apprehension, anxiety, scared or even terror.

Anger: irritability, self-righteousness, moral indignation, rage or fury.

Sadness: morose, choked up, grief if losing something meaningful.

Disgust: a sense of being repelled by the liar.

Contempt: disdain or occasionally pity – *for* the liar, or *by* the liar.

Guilt: remorse that you even contemplating doubting the liar's story.

Shame: embarrassment through to mortified, or if public, humiliation.

Jealousy: a blend of emotions when a 3rd person is involved.

Some more on recognising emotion and why emotions occur: the “families” of emotions listed above are common and unpleasant, what psychologists call negatively valenced. I am often asked “Why do such unpleasant emotions exist”? If you imagine life many generations back, perhaps 100,000 years ago, when humans lived in what are often named hunter-gatherer tribes, life for our species' ancestors carried considerable risks. Although some of these risks have been diminished in our civilised societies, we were once in need of

emotions that gave us fair warning of risk. Emotions can be thought of as a more primitive form of brain functioning: emotion tends to be triggered in deep parts of your mid-brain, when your senses perceive a risk. Those emotions allow you to act, or not, without having to think about your actions.

As an example, if you lived on the African savannah and a noise was noticed, a rustle in the grass perhaps, then a *fear* response would be triggered, followed by a freeze response to momentarily stop you, so that you could orient yourself to the potential danger. If the rustle in the grass was your friend playing a joke, you might laugh and then relax. But if the noise was a predator, that fear response would trigger a fight or flight response. Clearly, if you escaped to safety, then that fear was functional: it allowed you to act without having to go to the effort of thinking and planning. Such a fear, at low level today, we might call anxiety: its purpose is to bring our consciousness to some future danger – perhaps being deceived!

If we think about *anger*, and consider its functions, we might recognise that anger often arises after being threatened or hurt, including being duped. Anger in turn, tends to induce fear in others, and effectively distances them from us. If they have harmed you, again perhaps by deceiving you, anger is a common and sometimes functional response. I would like you to note, that I am arguing that the *feeling or experience* of anger is functional in these circumstances, *not acting on it* which is often dysfunctional. Another form of anger is what we might call righteous indignation, and this tends to follow the perception that we have been wronged. So again, noticing, identifying and containing these feelings, permits you to bring your consciousness to *why* you are feeling such emotions.

When *sadness* is identified in you, consider that it represents a sense of loss, or impending loss. It may be that the deception is sufficient to risk an important relationship, if detected, or even if undetected does not permit the full depth of the relationship to be explored. It is not uncommon for a client to ask me to keep secret from others, something they have disclosed to me. Professionally I am obliged to hold private such information, unless it presents a risk to other/s. However, I usually point out that if the person is seeking secrecy, say from their partner, then the very act of keeping a secret that the partner would want disclosed, is likely to limit the intimacy of the relationship. It is not

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surprising then, that such deceptions (lying by omission) produce sadness – perhaps in both partners.

If you identify *disgust*, consider that this experience has the effect of having you repel the source of disgust. Along with a sense of dis-smell, such an experience helps keep us free of disease. I tend to think of this as a response, in me, to behaviour in others that I might find revolting, that is, I would not participate in such behaviour myself. Taste and smell are among our most primitive senses, so subtle version can be difficult to bring into conscious awareness. Some recent research indicates that human sense of smell retains primitive, but largely unconscious awareness of the health of others, and, that we may be quite specifically sensitive to the smell of the opposite sex. Given that among the most common serious deceptions to which we are subjected, spousal infidelity (surprisingly about equally among men and women) might be initially suspected based on subtle unconscious awareness of changes in smell, and potentially disgust responses that *initially* make little sense.

The experience of the feeling of *contempt*, or disdain, or similar can be confusing at first. It can be that I feel some version of this (perhaps pity that s/he needs to lie to me in the first place) *toward* the suspect. It could be that I am holding them in low regard if something hidden from me would be disgusting if detected. *But I particularly want to draw your attention to the experience in you, if your suspect holds you in contempt. I think their contempt for you, to devalue you by deceiving you on important matters, is the basis of the sense you have been duped.* It is the absence of respect for you, to be able to handle the truth, even if difficult, and the deliberate withholding of information needed for you to make future decisions about the relationship, that *creates doubt in your own mind – about yourself, because you believed the suspect rather than your own senses.*

Where there is contempt, or similar, on one side of a relationship, there is often shame on the other. If you are held in contempt, then shame is the most likely, and most painful, emotion you are likely to experience. In its subtlest form this experience is what I call the *Uncomfortable/Undifferentiated* feeling that you can't find the words for and can't quite put your finger on it. It notifies you that someone values you less (people often say they feel worthless – worth less than the other who deceives you) and that they may be withholding

information vital to your autonomy, your capacity to make your own informed decisions about your relationship future. In shame states, the temptation is to rid yourself of it quickly, bypassing the full force, and failing to notice the signs. Most people fail to make eye contact, withdraw bodily, shrink away from contact, and feel small. An astute observer would notice it as a form of submission.

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Where there is contempt, or similar, on one side of a relationship, there is often shame on the other...

Counter-intuitively, I believe the experience of the emotional state of shame (and its cognitive analogue, self-doubt) is the most important of all emotions to truly master. It is this emotion that I must *engage with, in increments I can tolerate*, to be able to think my way through an experience that would have once overwhelmed or crippled me. Because this task is so incredibly difficult (not impossible as many fear), most people push aside the emotion (what I call shame-shifting) and never master it. Each time a person begins to re-experience it, or even think about re-experiencing such emotional pain, they become anxious at the thought of it.

In my experience with clients, anxiety (low level fear and worry) usually indicate Unrecognised shame, and a similar lack of understanding of specifically whom it is inducing shame in them.

Guilt is an emotion that many people equate with shame. Some say guilt is just a lesser form of shame. To my way of thinking this is a half-truth. Yes a person feels guilt about something they *did*, whereas a person feels shame about who they *are at core*. In both cases the person identifies the feeling as being *within the person*. I think differently. I notice that in a relationship, if one person feels devalued (shamed), the other person feels guilt – *if they care and empathise, and had good intentions*. But consider that some people, some personality types, feel little if any real guilt: they show no remorse, they may say *the word* sorry but never make amends unless it is extracted from them. *Beware: such people can be truly dangerous!* The more worrying personality types can and will induce guilt in you, for daring to question their sincerity. Yet if you have done no wrong (asking for truthful information is *not* wrong) then experiencing guilt in such a situation ought to be a red flag to dig deeper, perhaps at a later time.

If I have to extract “I’m sorry” from someone, or given ample time I realise they never make amends, then I can safely assume they felt no guilt, only shame, for their actions, and often the shame is evident only when the trap has been sprung. It is often said that some of the most evil human types (the word psychopath is often used, often incorrectly) experience no shame at all. Yet I disagree! I think on closer observation, these people “show” no shame, but deep down the shame of being fundamentally defective is ever present. It can be observed in such people after being arrested for atrocious crimes, and also in a particular form of interaction: if I expose the underlying defect (the one they lie about to keep hidden), particularly if in a public setting, I can expect a rage response for daring to show them for their defect. *This level of fury is dangerous! It is for this reason that I do NOT advise confronting a person for their lying until you are sufficiently skilled to anticipate their response and prepare for it. It is also why acting on your own (sometimes well justified) anger is NOT advised.*

Jealousy is an emotion often confused with envy. Both are experiences that are likely to be rooted in shame. Envy can be thought of as involving you and one

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other person: one envies the other, and wants to bring them down – to the same shameful level. Jealousy like shame tends to be about bringing someone down, but involves a third person (or more). If jealousy is experienced, it usually involves a rival for a much valued partner, whether or not the rival is real or perceived. Jealousy is an experience that is frequently present when a relationship is threatened by a rival, and needless to say, such complex relationships often require deception to keep hidden what you probably would not approve if you knew. Jealousy might best be understood as a combination of other emotional experiences; shame, fear, sadness and anger in proportions that differ with each of us and with the situation. So when these emotional states come together in jealousy, there is an increased chance that deception is involved. Like the other emotions mentioned above, the containment of the emotion/s rather than the expression of emotion, is likely to bring better results long term.

This level of fury is dangerous! It is for this reason that I do NOT advise confronting a person for their lying until you are sufficiently skilled to anticipate their response and prepare for it. It is also why acting on your own (sometimes well justified) anger is NOT advised...

Most of us will recognise these feelings – when they are in full force. And we can be crippled by them when at an overwhelming level. But some research evidence (see the detailed work of Paul Ekman and colleagues) suggests that the average person fails to accurately identify these emotions when they are expressed briefly, or incompletely, on a face (so called micro-expressions and subtle expressions respectively). Ekman has shown that on average we are incorrect about half of the time when we try to correctly identify some of these emotions in pure form.

For our purposes, this means that an accomplished liar, who only briefly or incompletely “shows” such emotions on their face, is likely to escape undetected much of the time. However, emotions arise in your mid-brain for quite specific reasons, and are expressed bodily (in postures and gestures and movements) or verbally/vocally. *So if we are going to be able to detect such emotions in (deceptive) others, we must first be competent at detecting them in ourselves.* My emphasis is on early detection at the subtlest level *in yourself* (we might revisit some of the work of Ekman, and others, when it comes to detecting these emotional leaks in others). A second emphasis is that you focus attention on whole body experience (including internal), not just facial expressions or so called body language.

So if we are going to be able to detect such emotions in (deceptive) others, we must first be competent at detecting them in ourselves...

I would like suggest that you to revisit your rich description of the experience of being duped. Can you identify any of the feelings mentioned above, either individually or as a combination or blend of emotions? What were your bodily sensations with each feeling, or cluster of emotions? You might also notice what you were thinking in association with the feeling experience. Again make a written record and return to it as you require. You might expand on this description in sufficiently rich detail to be able to recognise such emotional experiences in future.

Veterinary thinking:

I want you to think like a veterinarian for a while, and then we will also think like a new mother, an investigative journalist, or a detective, and ultimately like a scientist. Our initial purpose is sensitivity training, firstly focusing on yourself then on others, and then on the collection and interpretation of

evidence, and eventually to piecing together the truth. The truth can be elusive, initially, but you will be able to search out more of the missing pieces of the puzzle as you master the skills required.

In the veterinary world, we are asked to diagnose a problem, often with a behavioural component, in a patient that cannot talk and describe its own experience. If we are lucky, we have the benefit of an observant guardian of the animal. But as we have discovered regarding facial expression of emotion, people are not particularly adept at accurate observation and description, and these are the first steps in scientific seeking of facts – for our purposes, the truth! So the veterinarian must become adept – highly skilled - at reading accurately a range of factors impacting the patient, including its emotional state/s from entirely non-verbal sources (though sometimes vocal).

If the veterinarian is to be safe in approaching the patient, s/he needs to increase the chances that the patient won't successfully bite! I ask you to think if you can describe, in words, whether a dog is likely to bite, and if so why? What emotional state is the would-be "biter" experiencing?

Take a few minutes to write down a description, sufficiently detailed that someone else could recognise the potential danger. If you come up with a blank, consider whether you could recognise such behaviour using video footage, or actually seek out such footage, and watch it several times over. What you are "looking" for is a moment in time (a snapshot) within a movie in real time. Or for the purposes of our detection of deception, several moments in time that demonstrate a predictable pattern.

Let me describe a few salient features of our potentially dangerous dog.

Dog 1: lowered stance on front legs, head down, eyes looking up from under eyelids, ears back, hackles up, tail down.

Dog 2: leaning forward on front legs, head up and alert, eyes straight ahead, ears up, hackles up, tail up.

Am I likely to get bitten?

I'm going to assume yes in both cases, but for different reasons.

Dog 1 is displaying (“showing” or leaking) emotional information that indicates fear. If approached suddenly it may well lash out. It may even strike first – if it senses it is cornered and has little other option. Many will wrongly assume this dog is aggressive: they have misread its emotional state, and hence its motivation for behaviour.

Dog 2 is displaying signs of aggression (much less common in dogs than most people think). I would be much more reluctant to approach this dog. Of interest is that some breeds are more predisposed to this more aggressive stance, suggesting a genetic component to their behaviour. It is worth remembering that some people (personality types) display similar levels of genetically predisposed aggression.

An ethological approach:

A component of veterinary training in behaviour is what is known as an ethological approach. Ethology is basically the observation of behaviour in its natural setting. I would like to encourage you to adopt such an approach. It helps to sit quietly, unobtrusively, so as not to disturb the behaviour you wish to observe – and record.

Let’s stay with the canine species for a while. Imagine you have the task to observe wild canines in *their* natural habitat. You unobtrusively find yourself a spot from which to observe and begin recording. You notice movements, postures, gestures, vocalisations and most importantly, interactions (relationships). But wild canines have an exquisite sense of smell, and they notice you, initially just one does, but then others. As a group they might approach you. You have yet to determine whether this pack is most Dog 1 or Dog 2 types. As they approach: what are you likely to be feeling? I’m not asking what you might be thinking yet, or what you might do (action). I’m guessing that unless you are particularly skilled in canine behaviour (differentiating predatory or aggression compared to social play) your primary first emotion will be fear. (And your action is likely to be the so called fight or flight response, long before you begin rational thinking).

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What I'd like you to notice is that your emotions are a response to the emotional state of the dog, and possible behavioural outcomes (being eaten), and that your emotions are likely to quickly overwhelm you. Said differently, *the behaviour and emotions of the **other**, produce and predict the emotions in **you**. As we progress in our skill building, we will notice that these emotions are interactive.* However there are many types of dog personalities (breeds for example) and they don't all present themselves as obviously as our Dog 1 and Dog 2. Much the same goes for people: there are some who deceive in relatively innocuous ways and some who are at the evil end of the scale. Yet in all cases the emotional state of the other, and their behaviour (including verbal/vocal) produces an emotional response in you! Noticing it, describing it, and mastering it remains the first step. If you fail to do so, you will act on impulse (emotion) when threatened (deceived) rather than self-regulating the (eventually mastered) emotion, and being able to think and plan your way ahead.

*...the behaviour and emotions of the **other**, produce and predict the emotions in **you**. As we progress in our skill building, we will notice that these emotions are interactive...*

Before we leave our dog analogy, consider that deceivers are behaving like predators at your expense (you're the prey). We need to at least equalise this, if not reverse it. Veterinarians are like paediatricians: the patient cannot talk. So too for new mothers.

A new mother's view of behaviour:

We are now returning to human behaviour. For experienced mothers (and fathers too) some of this will be familiar, but so well practised (mastery) that

you no longer need to think about it. For new mothers, mothering doesn't come naturally – at least not completely. New mothers do much better when supported by experienced mothers, usually female kin. This means that considerable components of mothering (and fathering) are learned, on the job, taking advantage of instruction by masters and close observation, and much, much practice, and some trial and error. Given that newborn babies cannot talk (verbalise) but can vocalise to communicate, skilled mothers learn to “read” the emotional state/s of their baby. Such sensitivity training based on close observation is what we are trying to mimic, and apply to our detection of deception. Ask an experienced parent how they knew their baby was stirring from sleep, when the parent was asleep. If you put them on the spot, they will say something like “I just know”. Something in the parent alerts them to the need to check: that something is emotional arousal. With something as vitally important as infant well being, the parent is motivated to check. With something as important as deception, it is also wise to check. Yet most of us push aside the hunch, the intuition, the feeling that something is not “right”.

Ask yourself: why is your own well being less important than a baby's? I'm tempted to say the baby is defenceless, and I've had more time on the planet. But I can't be of use to the young, if I'm not in good shape myself!

So:

- Pay attention to what you feel, and sense.
- Follow it over time.
- Keep a permanent record that you can return to
- Stay with it long enough and repeatedly enough to eventually master it (the emotion).
- And if in doubt: check!
- Then double-check.
- Then cross-check.
- And keep checking.

The usual suspects:

Now that you have begun practising the internal (intra-personal) skills such as detection, defining and self-regulating your own emotional reactions to being duped, we need to take a look at the inter-personal domain where detecting changes in the liar becomes more of a focus. Suspicion has been triggered by something or someone external to you, sufficiently to have you conscious of your own responses, the gut feel or intuition we wish to develop further.

Suspicion requires suspects!

The “usual suspects” are not only the offending people who will deceive you, but also the usual methods people employ based on common sense. One problem with this approach is that there is little evidence that any single “tell” that a liar may leak will identify the liar. We have all heard the common wisdom about liars:

- Can't look you in the eye.
- Fidgeting.
- Direction of visual gaze.
- Sweating.
- Folding of arms or closed body postures.
- Quavering of voice.
- And so on...

Those familiar with work on Body Language as popularised by Alan Pease might be aware that such posture and gesture observations need to be assessed in clusters, and that no single piece of information can be interpreted reliably. So in terms of body language alone, the usual suspects listed above are unlikely to be much help to identify *competent* liars. We will need more, although it is likely that leaks (movements, postures, gestures, vocal tones, and words) by liars may have triggered feelings or sensations in you, hence raising your suspicions.

Keep in mind that liars vary considerably in their competency at deceiving. Some of us leak very easily (we “show” our guilt readily) and these people probably are not much of a worry for our purposes. My experience is that guilt

prone individuals learn early in life that they cannot hide their expressions, and are likely the *more* honest among us. At the other end of the scale are some very defective human beings who lie easily, and leak very little. In particular, one of their defects is an inability to truly feel empathy, or care, and whose intentions are more sinister, so we are unlikely to pick up on much at all with these people. We are particularly unlikely to see leaks of guilt. This worst end of the spectrum is often labelled psychopath, even though the title is regularly misused. Suffice to say that true psychopaths represent the most dangerous end of the spectrum of deception, but other “lesser” forms of disordered personality can do almost as much damage to the unwary.

So if we consider capacity to mask deceptions varying along an axis from normal through to true psychopathy, we also need to consider that *at any point along the spectrum, different people will leak to roughly the same degree, but not necessarily leak the same information*. For example, two equally competent liars may leak by covering their lips with a finger in one case, and by fluttering their eyelids at a faster rate in another! Yet another of similar deceptive capacity may primarily leak by folding their arms, but this could also be an indication of feeling cold, whether or not the person was lying at the time. I’m hoping to build a complex picture, not to dishearten you, but for you to realise that it can be folly to over-rely on body language cues particularly if your aim is to detect competent liars in general rather than one particular person you might suspect. Even when you have identified leaks of a particular person, looking for the same in another different person may not be rewarding at all. Yet both will have produced a change within you, so you will need to continue to be alert to those just-noticeable differences in your own sensations – and use those to raise your antennae. It is bringing this to conscious attention, then focussing your attention once you have settled your own physiological arousal, that will permit the ongoing detective work (discussed later).

...at any point along the spectrum, different people will leak to roughly the same degree, but not necessarily leak the same information...

Some will have come to this document hoping to be able to detect deception by picking up on the “tells” or “leaks” – like on popular media programs. My intention isn’t to disappoint you, but to bring you to a place where picking up such leaks is duly noted, then in a more alert state of mind, you will search for *more* evidence before considering confronting the liar. Any single leak can be considered a “snapshot” without context or story to explain it. We are much more interested in discovering the entire story – the truth, the whole truth...

I would encourage you to purchase your own copy of some of the works on deception – both popularised and more importantly those works derived from scholarly articles and research reports. Some of these are listed in the bibliography at the end. Having your own copy allows you to read it more than once (you will need to each time you meet a new version of deception) and also allow you to highlight the points you find most important for any particular deceiver. I would also encourage you to continue searching out new research based material (some of which may be accessed via links on our website cpcpc.com.au), so you can be updated as it becomes available. It also brings your attention to outdated ideas about deception detection that have fallen out of favour due to lack of evidence.

Pattern recognition:

Now that you are beginning to notice and attend to your internal states, you will increasingly detect some change in the deceiver – the “leak” or “tell”. If your deceiver is not particularly competent, then you may see many recognisable leaks in a cluster, and their game is up! That’s the easy end of the spectrum and it’s unlikely to do you much harm, albeit will probably provoke

an emotional response in you (hopefully so well contained it is not noticed by others).

If on the other hand, your deceiver is a master, or there are multiple deceivers working together, then you have a much more formidable opponent. You will need to develop much higher skill levels. But we must begin with a single leak detected. And it's unlikely to be anything obvious; more likely it will be something relatively unconscious that is leaked because competent liars have either learned to shut down most of their own leaks, or they don't possess some emotions in the first place (for those without guilt or a conscience).

Let's say your own emotions have been triggered, perhaps a momentary heart rate flutter, sufficient to arouse your suspicions. I'll assume you are becoming increasingly practised at subduing those sensations so as not to be noticeable to others. Imagine that your suspicions are beginning to be directed at a particular person: perhaps you have yet to identify anything in particular, but you have a hunch that, rather than avert their gaze (as most would be tempted) they gaze just a margin too intently. But you only see it on a single occasion. At this point, your feelings might be what I call Uncomfortable and Undifferentiated. The experience tends to be "I know something is wrong, but I can't find the words to describe it, and I can't quite put my finger on it". In the past you may have given the benefit of the doubt, and ceased observing, only to feel duped at a later time. In such a circumstance, I tend to "go inside" myself for a while, and make a mental note – one that I will embellish and describe in richer details at a later time - as soon as practicable after the event. This snapshot is what I want to be alert to the *next* time I experience it. That next time might be sufficiently distant that I would forget this incident if I didn't take the time to consciously process it in rich detail – if need be, and *preferably, make a written record. As a rule of thumb, the more practised the liar, the longer between this episode and the next.* And for the sake of simplicity (it rarely is) we will assume that currently we are only trying to detect a single person lying, not a group.

The next time: this may be the next time you re-experience this particular deceiver, or it could be that you re-experience something very similar with someone else, or it could be that someone else reports in sufficient detail their experience with your original deceiver, such that you recognise it a second

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time. Your antennae are up faster than last time; you have again settled your own internal state to a level where your brain's thinking centres are functioning. You have recognised that subtle leak – gaze not averted, but a margin too intense. What *else* are you hoping to detect? At this point I'm hoping your mind is open, not confined by what you hope to find, but aware of the array of leaks that *may* occur. This will permit you to build a bigger picture – more pieces of the puzzle when those pieces are often deliberately hidden. Let's say that this second time, you notice a subtle over-emphasis of a hand gesture (like some politicians do when driving home their point). You might now have the beginnings of a cluster of leaks – for this particular deceiver, or this type of deceiver. Don't yet assume that the leak will always occur in a cluster, but at least your attention is now able to focus on more than one thing at a time. With practice, this process will become less effortful and more habitual. After this second occurrence, you now have 2 points or snapshots of (presumed) behavioural leaks. However, 2 points do not form a pattern, but we do know there has been a repetition! If it has happened more than once, it should alert you to the likelihood it will happen again, so like any good detective we might need to remain undercover where *your* observations are not observed easily. The temptation after a second episode is to confront: if you do so, you will alert your suspect that they are being observed, and make your job much harder. Try not to go there, yet!

With much patience, you can expect to see a third and subsequent episode/s, but with highly competent liars these may be few and far between. A third episode is the beginnings of a pattern! Pattern recognition is complex, but we can start with some simple measures. A pattern in time should show some repeated shape, where we can see how often it happens (frequency), how long each episode is (duration) and how intense the episode is (amplitude) and these can be drawn on a graph to visualise the pattern.

An exercise:

For those with a capacity for recording televised interviews, seek out an interview by a reputable, investigative journalist (not a popular commentator or entertainment level current affairs, but the serious stuff) where the person interviewed is a politician on the far right, or far left, of the political spectrum (not a middle ground moderate). Our reasoning for this choice is the

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probability that the extremists will need to deceive the viewers of the middle ground, whilst the middle ground politicians have much less need to do so (yes, there are decent honest politicians – you just have to learn how to pick them from the scoundrels). It is the moderate “swinging” voters who shift ground and will change their vote, however politicians of the extremes need to appeal to this middle ground in order to gain power. So it is likely that these “extremists” will need to present themselves as moderates, which by our definition is untrue. Said differently they need to be competent liars and remain undetected by the middle ground majority. And they are likely masters of such deceptions. The reasons for identifying an experienced investigative journalist is that they tend to have a passion for searching out the truth, are likely to hold accountable those people of either extreme, and often are *prepared to play the long game*, laying the groundwork for later exposures of deceit.

Record your chosen interview (and this exercise needs to be repeated with alternative interviewers and extremists). At a time where you can play it back without interruption, and make notes separately for later reference about what you observe. Remember this will vary from one deceiver to another. You are initially “looking” for an initial “leak” or “tell” but will build a picture of clusters, including movements, postures, gestures, facial expressions, vocal tones, and words. Begin by writing down what you observe whilst playing back your chosen example at normal speed. This brings you to the exercise consciously focusing on the “body language” described above. *Pause and think* about what *extra* you have noticed. The next step is to play back your example at frame-by-frame speed. Although this can be tedious, it permits you to compare one frame with those before and after, and increases your chances of correctly identifying micro-expressions or subtle expressions, in the context of the whole episode. *Again, write down what you observe: pause and ponder. Take your time and repeat your observations.*

Others (Paul Ekman and colleagues) have developed tools to teach how to detect specific, basic “pure” emotions with greater accuracy: these tools are worth purchasing for yourself so you can maintain your competency at high “expert” level (correct about 80% of the time: so even experts miss some

cues). If you cease practice, you will likely return to old habits and be duped again, and again.

After our frame-by-frame examination, repeat the exercise, but at slow speed without stopping on each frame (you can always go back and repeat the frame-by-frame stage as required). Try to notice the moment of the leak on slow motion. Again pause and record what you have observed (including your own responses). Each succeeding step requires that you replay at faster speed until you are able to notice the leaks at normal playback speed. When you feel competent to identify the leak/s at normal speed, try playback without using your vision, so as to identify the audio components (vocal tone etc). This is more difficult but will move you toward picking faltering voice when you can't rely on vision (on the telephone, or in poor light conditions).

It is likely you will need to go back and repeat this exercise many times for a single recording if your selected example is a particularly competent liar. You will also need to repeat the exercise, again perhaps many times, using different targets of observation. Although there is likely overlap between clusters of leaks among liars, each one may be uniquely different. Our aim is to be competent to identify *any* liar, not just the current one you suspect.

An extension of this exercise is to make your observations surreptitiously in more natural settings. It is less likely that you will have the opportunity to make notes in such settings (as an applied ethologist might do) but you can make mental notes then transfer to a written record as soon as practical afterwards. Another extension is to compare notes with a trustworthy other, sharing your newfound passion for deception detection: they may observe what you miss, and vice versa. Although we have yet to discuss sex differences in deception and detection, a more advanced extension of the exercise could involve sharing your observations with a member of the other sex. Beware however, that some of most serious deceptions occur where one sex deceives the other (by both sexes about equally, though asymmetrically across domains), so the motive for the sexes to share this information may itself be suspect! More on sex differences can be found elsewhere on our website!

Investigative work:

Recall we needed to develop some investigative skills, like a journalist (genuine investigative journalists, not the entertainers or "personalities") or a detective, or a scientist. This component requires us to expand skills that you have already begun (observation, following hunches, recording) and develop other skills such as separating fact from fiction, formulating theory, and testing it to see if it fits the facts as they are collected over time. An important component of this work is to keep written records in some systematic fashion, so as not to rely on memory biases. This is particularly the case where emotions overwhelm.

If you keep written records, they will need to be somewhere safe, so you can afford not to censor yourself. Bear in mind that *when the time comes for confronting a liar, there is a high likelihood your facts will be disputed, hence a strong tendency to doubt your own senses and memory.* Under these conditions you are more likely to revert to old habits and give the benefit of the doubt to the suspect. You will need to back your initial hunch with unassailable facts, and if necessary reliable witnesses. If your written records may be discovered, by your suspect or an ally of the suspect, you may be reluctant to put some things on paper: these are likely vital pieces of information, so committing them to memory in such a manner that you can recall the facts accurately, is vital.

...when the time comes for confronting a liar, there is a high likelihood your facts will be disputed, hence a strong tendency to doubt your own senses and memory...

Given that you are examining a pattern of deception, each incident occurs spaced over time. You will need to keep in mind, and record the order in which incidents occurred. When confronted, many deceivers will claim no memory

of the incident, or at least a different memory of the incident to you. Again, if your records are poor, it will leave you doubting your own observations. If this is beginning to sound like a forensic examination, hence much effort on your part, it is worth remembering that serious deceptions may conclude in court, where s/he who keeps records that point to the facts (and can produce reliable witnesses) is in the best shape to survive such an ordeal.

By this stage I'm hoping you have repeated earlier sections of this book, and are beginning to master your own emotional states: if not, I would strongly encourage you to do so. If you are able to remain "undercover" in your observations, it will be substantially due to your ability not to leak your own emotional states as easily as before. Although serious deceptions are likely to be harmful to you psychologically, hence liars can be dangerous people when much is at stake, it is less difficult to observe if you can be in closer proximity than is comfortable. I think of this as being within social distance of my target, but not within intimate distance where I can be seriously harmed. When I'm within the social sphere of my target, I can also observe, and note, their effects on others. In doing so, I can come to realise that I am not alone in being deceived by the serial offenders.

In principle, you are trying to build a case (if we think in legal terms), or a story (if we think in journalist terms), but ultimately we want to establish what are the facts to be discovered (where we think in scientific terms).

If we begin thinking like a journalist (investigative), we will need to develop some interviewing skills (which you will have observed in an earlier exercise), then record the results – initially notes to self, then into a story format that would make sense to others viewing the event, or trying to imagine it. Interviewing skills include a capacity to build rapport and questioning in an open fashion initially, then gradually "funneling" your questions toward uncovering specific facts. It is likely that your deceiver will be evasive in answering (remember our extremist politician), particularly so if your questioning is too clumsy, or too fast in trying to arrive at a conclusion. Said differently, if you approach with a spirit of enquiry, open minded but sceptical, it is likely to feel more natural. If you give in to temptation to dig out the facts too quickly, it will feel like an inquisition. The latter is likely to close down future attempts to observe your suspect, and I would suggest needs to be

reserved for a more forensic examination at a later stage of the process. Usually this will be when wrongdoing has been acknowledged, *after* confrontation and the trap has been sprung.

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You will need to remind yourself regularly that you are playing a long game – rushing the process will bring inferior results. Your capacity for patience will grow with your capacity to self-regulate your emotional responses, so I'll again remind you to revisit and practice again, earlier sections of this book.

If we are thinking like a scientist, we must remain open minded (even to the possibility that we are mistaken in our suspicions) but sceptical. There is often a misunderstanding of scepticism by people untrained in scientific method (perhaps most obviously among some journalists). We need to distinguish between cynicism and scepticism! If cynical thinking we have already closed our minds to possibilities outside our belief systems. This is no use at all for our deception detection purposes. A sceptical perspective allows us to remain open minded – about our hypothesis that someone is lying - and about multiple other possible explanations for our observations. Like our journalist colleagues, scientists require good observational powers to be developed, but scientists records tend to be fastidious, structured, and systematic. Scientists also are noted for building on prior knowledge, and a willingness to discard prior beliefs when new facts become available.

In this sense we are seeking observations of facts, and we will test those facts against more than one possible explanation (s/he is lying, or I'm wrong, or there are not yet enough observations to draw conclusions, or something else yet to be considered). In testing our observations against factual reality, we

need to check the probability that we are correct in our interpretation, and that our facts are both reliable and valid. In simple terms, reliability tells us about consistency over time: validity tells us if we are looking at the wrong things in the first place.

Good scientists also have an approach of checking their facts, double-checking, cross-checking, and continuing to check as the data accumulates. The cross-checking refers to putting my observations in front of reliable others (we call it peer review) to see if my processes are reliable and valid, and in particular to be challenged on my interpretation of the observations. Said differently, I'm held accountable if my observations can be interpreted in better ways. A final stage of this process is publication, where peers can critique the work, and suggest ways it can be improved. Before you go to this stage of sharing your observations, we need to be confident that the person/s with whom you might cross-check are themselves reliable and honest. Publication of course means the observations are out in the open. For our purposes, we need to be able to think forensically once we have collected enough information to be prepared to confront!

Forensic thinking, like scientific thinking needs to be methodical. We are not talking television style forensic programs, with much drama and excitement and entertainment. We are thinking detailed re-examination of the observations we have recorded. *Perhaps the most important question I ask of myself during this phase is "what don't I know?". I am well aware that with a formidable liar, I may never get access to all of the facts.* But if I have put enough pieces of the jigsaw puzzle together, I should be able to see the overall theme/s of deception/s. And like scientific thinking, I need to be aware of alternative explanations to the one my suspicions lead me towards.

Perhaps the most important question I ask of myself during this phase is "what don't I know?". I am well aware that with a formidable liar, I may never get access to all of the facts.

A purpose of this style of thought is to move towards a final stage where we can “put the case” to the suspect, offering evidence to be tested – at the level that might be accepted in a court of law. In such a court, the suspect would be represented by a lawyer acting as their advocate. The job of that advocate is to counter the facts as you might present them, creating doubt in the minds of the judiciary or jurors, and dismantle your case. So your case best be strong, evidence-based by this stage, coming to the conclusion that the suspect is guilty – beyond reasonable doubt. Bear in mind, it is you, not others, that needs to make the judgement, so it is *in you* that the suspect will try to create doubt. Recall this self-doubt is the cognitive component of shame, perhaps the primary emotion generated by someone deceiving you on important matters. By this stage, although you may not yet have mastered the experience of shame, I’m hoping my earlier encouragement for extensive self-disciplined practice at emotional regulation, leaves you capable of managing emotions sufficiently well to be able to think clearly when challenged on your evidence. It is for this reason that I encourage people to delay their natural desire to confront.

Your alternative explanations need time and attention so that you can rule them out. What are the likely alternatives that your suspect will give in response to confrontation? For this you need to know the specific content of the lie. You also need to know for such a lie, what other people lying about the same topic might use to evade detection. At this point you need to know “what is the probability of someone lying on the topic of deception”. Generally, the more serious the social sanctions for the liars actions, the greater the motive to deceive will be. Keep in mind, you may have been alerted to deception on a particular topic, but your suspect may (or not) be deceptive about other topics too. For example, lying about being home late would be less likely if I was caught in traffic, but more likely if I had been gambling the household budget or having an extra-marital affair. If I explain my absence as “caught in traffic” this could be true, or covering one, or other, or both of the alternative misdemeanours! It could also be something you hadn’t thought about, for example if I had lost my job and was deceiving you, I might arrive late as a cover for “working late”. There is likely to be

explanations that you have yet to consider, and these may be used to evade your questioning at the time of confrontation.

Investigative work needs to proceed *for as long as it takes* – to have acquired enough pieces of the jigsaw puzzle for you to be able to understand clear themes in your target's patterns of behaviour. Like a jigsaw puzzle, as more of the *central* pieces of the puzzle come into place, the easier (actually less difficult) it will become for you to actively search for the missing pieces. You will begin to be capable of thinking like a liar – this doesn't mean you need to become one! You might consider what sort of evidence a liar might wish to hide most of all; the pieces they are least likely to acknowledge to you, or even to themselves. These are likely the components of their behaviour of which *they would be most ashamed if exposed, so it is likely that they will shame-shift – from them to you, aiming to create doubt in your mind, and bad feeling in you, sufficient to dissuade you from further investigation.* Persist! Your investigation needs to become ordered: a strategy needs to be developed.

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Strategy:

Strategies permit you to organise your investigation across time, place and situation. Your aim is to build upon knowledge that was initially only a hunch, gut feeling, or suspicion, and in all probability started as an unconscious process where your senses were alerted to incongruent information or feeling/s. Strategy needs to be designed to keep you conscious and alert and to focus your attention on relevant information. You will need to know and master, not only the general components we have discussed thus far, but also

consider the specific details likely to be hidden from you. These are likely to be determined by the specific deceptive behaviours you suspect.

An example:

If someone is stealing from me, they will need to hide from me their actual income, and their expenditure, so I cannot deduce they have more to spend than they earn. I will therefore, need to attend to their patterns of consumption generally, and more particularly I need to look for evidence of “conspicuous consumption”, overt spending for the purposes of impressing others. I would also need to look for “apparent generosity” where their willingness to give, exceeds their “earned” income.

Alternatively, if someone is bullying my friend, they will need to hide from me their cruelty, perhaps by overtly showing kindness to others in my presence to distract my attention from their real nature. In this case, I will need to observe careless slips where their treatment of others is harsh. More difficult still, will be to search for bad intention – their conscious decision to cause harm. This might only show as a momentary smirk indicating their enjoyment of another’s pain.

In both of the cases exemplified, you will have hopefully become conscious of missing information which is incongruent with the feeling it generates in you. However, you will need to know considerably more about patterns of behaviour of thieves, and of bullies: what is different about them, and what is similar. Your developing strategy will need to include updating your knowledge on the specific forms of behaviour that their deception is hoping to cover. Each one probably deserves an entire book, and some have already been written, so your homework includes wider reading on behaviour considered shameful by the community at large.

In this strategic spirit, you might wish to listen in on conversations by others who have been duped along similar lines to what you suspect. Interviewing them gently (because it may bring them very painful memories) and openly, may yield specific details you have yet to consider. Imagine that you overhear a conversation where someone discloses that they found evidence of a deception on phone or computer records – commonplace given today’s technological advances. Yet if you are fundamentally an honest person

yourself, it may not have occurred to you to check such records – because you would have nothing to hide yourself. Once such a concept enters your consciousness, based on another’s disclosure, you will be tempted to use such a strategy too. Beware though, that if your suspect is in fact innocent, you will break trust by enacting such a strategy. This being the case, checking of such records might be best left until enough other evidence accumulates to justify such a risky strategy. Recall also our previous caution about confronting too early, as prematurely alerting your suspect to the fact that you might in future check their records, would encourage the suspect to erase such records, perhaps removing some of the strongest evidence (“hard evidence”) available to you.

An exercise:

Take some time aside to think about the sorts of behaviours you cannot imagine doing yourself, because you would have difficulty living with the guilt, or shame, or the fear of sanctions. I am assuming these behaviours go against your core values: values that apply to many or even most in the wider community. To keep this in context, many or most of those who need to deceive to keep from being exposed, also might once have struggled to believe they would engage in such behaviours. A smaller subsample, of course, has little difficulty in living deceptive lives. Imagine what you might have to do to keep from being “found out” and write some of these thoughts in a safe place. Add to this homework over time so that you build a rich picture, previously unimaginable to you. As you build this picture, *ask yourself, what is the missing information: what do you need to learn more about and search for in more detail?* Remember that this is a work in progress: although you feel some urgency to resolve matters, take the time to come back to this exercise and review the “missing information” picture you are building.

...ask yourself, what is the missing information: what do you need to learn more about and search for in more detail?

Some questions to ponder:

How, specifically, will you find the evidence?

What information is available to you just using your own senses more consciously?

What do others notice, or react to, in the behaviour of the suspect?

Is the “gossip channel” reliable as a source of information, or at least to what degree can gossip shed light on your dilemma, and to what extent does it (gossip) distract you?

Can you, by now, keep your own emotional reactions sufficiently contained to hold a general conversation about the behaviour of interest, without showing your deeper interest?

Can you inquisitively interview your suspect without your questions becoming an inquisition?

What “hard evidence” is available and where might you find it?

To what extent does your evidence-hunt require you to compromise your own principles (including deceiving the suspect)?

You might notice that the earlier stage questions require simple strategies, but as the questions begin to challenge your own values, the strategies required may increase your dilemma. Can you live with your own conscience if you are wrong about your suspect, and you break trust with an innocent person? Perhaps it is best to consider all strategies available, but be prepared to make your decision to confront with some information still missing, if it damages your own integrity. Only you will know where this limit lies, and it might be different with different suspects, and with behaviours that are more or less serious in the consequences for you if duped. Conceptually, most of us would draw the line before torture, but many will find they proceed with the discomfort of withholding information about the suspect, whilst continuing to gather evidence.

I am often asked by my clients if it is 'ok' to check electronic records of their suspect. Then, as now, I cannot give a single answer, only that they must weigh up the severity of the outcome if you are duped, or remain duped, with their own values and conscience, and with the potential future relationship with their suspect/s. Your specific strategies will need to reflect these considerations. Strategy only needs to be sufficient to obtain sufficient factual information to make future decisions about the relationship with the suspect. For some the aim will be all relevant information, for others your strategy only needs to uncover enough of a pattern of deception to confirm the covert behaviour/s.

Counter-strategies by the suspect:

Given that the stakes can be high with deception and detection, you might expect that the suspect might develop counter-strategies to avoid detection. My observations are that chief among the counter-strategies is the creation of doubt (and the attendant emotion of shame) within the duped person. I'd like to draw your attention to a number of these counter-strategies as they are commonly seen in my clients. *I often point out to my clientele that if I wanted to make them "feel crazy" the most effective way I can do so is to deceive them successfully.*

I often point out to my clientele that if I wanted to make them "feel crazy" the most effective way I can do so is to deceive them successfully.

What is it about deception that has us feeling crazy? Even if only momentarily, deception 'gets' us by having us doubt our own senses. Sometimes this is a failure to trust any of our senses (and feelings) and other times it is that our senses give us incongruent information, where we are unsure just what to believe. Magicians do this with our permission and active participation. Yet

we enjoy this element of being duped because we knowingly suspend belief to be entertained. Often we find ourselves laughing subsequently. It is my observation that laughter relieves shame – providing we laugh *with* others, *not at* them. Magicians work in part by diverting your attention to more salient matters, whilst they deceive your senses, usually your visual sense.

I would like to argue that these techniques can be very useful as a counter-strategy by your suspect, if they are alerted to your inquiry about their behaviour. Some combination of switching of attention, and humour to disarm you of the uncomfortable feelings that motivated your enquiry, are likely to be used. Humour “laughs off” the uncomfortable feelings in both people (“yeah sure, I’m *such* a hottie that *all* the wo/men flirt with me, I never get a break”).

If we add the induction of guilt (for daring to question the veracity of the suspect’s statements) to this repertoire, then the suspect has a powerful armoury to defend against your evidence gathering (“how could you even think I’d do such a thing, you know me better than that”). A common form of guilt induction is martyring or adopting “sick role” (“how could you ask me such a question when I’m suffering so badly: don’t you realise I nearly died?”) or (“how could you even think that of me after all I’ve done and sacrificed for you?”).

Another piece of the armour is the telling of what I call half-truth: Half-truth is where a part (the bit that is least damaging to both parties) of the truth is told directly on the assumption that there is no further questioning required (“s/he kissed me, not the other way around”) or (“yes s/he fondled me but we were both drunk, so nothing more happened”).

Switching your attention can be easily achieved in numerous ways, commonly by turning the tables on lines of questioning, with you becoming the one being “interviewed” (“what would *you* do under those conditions: I’ll bet the same as me or anyone else, so tell me again how would *you* have responded if s/he was flirting with you?”).

Directing your attention to alternative explanation for suspect behaviour also serves the purpose (“I only borrowed the money and was returning it when you found me”) or (“yes I borrowed the money, but it was to spend on the kids, not gambling”).

Guilt induction (in you) aims to make you feel sufficiently bad for doubting the suspect: if successful you will likely feel duty bound to make amends for being intrusive in their “privacy” (“how could you go snooping in my emails, I’d never do that to you because I trust you completely”: the emails showed s/he had sought legal advice about separation!).

Note that privacy and secrecy is not the same thing. With privacy, I need the time to think through matters with sufficient clarity that I can then articulate the facts to you honestly. With secrecy, I have no intention of revealing the concealed. Of course proving intention can be incredibly difficult. And intention is often one of the factors that will decide the future of the relationship: intentional harm is a form of cruelty in my experience!

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Hopefully some of the examples above bring your attention to the fact that your strategy/s may need to evolve with time, or evolve with the counter-strategies employed by your suspect. Some of my examples touch on some of the common and more serious deception categories such as theft, bullying/cruelty, addiction/s, and infidelities. These are among the more common problems we psychologists see in practice, and require entire books on each topic. I would encourage you to build on what you now know by seeking more information about the specific topics where you might have been deceived. More on some of these can be found in the bibliography, and on our website www.cpsccpc.com.au .

Bringing it all together:

This book has been laid out in an order in the hope that early knowledge will be built upon, and practiced in self-disciplined ways, over significant time periods, in order that you truly master the skills of deception detection. It has come about because in my own search I had noted that nobody has THE answer and this is not surprising given the complexity of the topic. Further, most material on deception and its detection focuses on a limited signal in the suspect, with insufficient attention paid to the person being duped, or the complex interactions between them. So our aim is to use this book as a work in progress (which itself will be updated as new information comes to hand) and that you may *choose to re-read it and build your own knowledge from other sources as you seek mastery.*

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Recall that we began by examining the relationships between predators and prey (or parasite and host). It pays to recognise that those predators will always exist, at least as a substantial minority, and it is incumbent upon us to learn how to defend, or on rare occasions to counter-attack – the latter only when we are skilled at the mastery level. Also recall that our predators come in many forms – for our purposes, different personality types – and we need to be able to *recognise these variations of liar, and develop a repertoire of skills* to counter their deceptive tactics. We also noted that *the timeframes for skill building move through stages of several weeks to develop new habits, through several months where competencies develop, to several years before we can consider ourselves masters.* This shift over time corresponds to bringing to consciousness our old unconscious reactions, practising with conscious focussed attention the long term self-discipline required to bring our new repertoire of skills to mastery – a place where we can now make it look easy to observers.

Remember there is no single simple answer, no simple formula to detect deception, but rather a set of skills built upon a foundation to which you can return when faced with new suspicions. In my own journey, I had noted many half-truths, themselves deceptive and offering a false sense of security. Examples are many but included popularised notions about single traits in the deceiver, such as whether s/he can look you in the eye. Perhaps one of the most useful pieces of advice is to keep looking! Each piece of the jigsaw, or snapshot in the video, will only make sense when you can see a pattern over time, and, for the cleverest liars the time periods can be considerable.

The context for deception is *always* relationships! This means that there are changes to be detected in *both or all* parties to such relationships. Recall that relationships become exponentially more complex as the number of participants goes up, from dyad, to threesomes, foursomes and more-somes! However, *the emotional responses generated in yourself is always available to you*, even when your deceiver/s are adept at concealing their own emotional leaks. To the extent that your old unconscious responses relapse, you will be susceptible to being duped, again! It is the new responses that require conscious effort and practice – for as long as it takes!

We noted that capacity for deception starts early in life, and increases as thinking capacity becomes more complex. *So it is likely your deceiver is more practiced at deceiving than you are at detecting*, at least at the time you picked up this book. It need not continue to be the case, but it is in your hands to determine how important it is to you to put in the effort required.

...the emotional responses generated in yourself is always available to you...

... it is likely your deceiver is more practiced at deceiving than you are at detecting...

Developmental timeframes include your own lifespan, but also the history of our species. Machiavellian intelligence is one component of human heritage, and is well developed in certain clusters of personality types. Although it is beyond the scope of this book, the details of such personality types can be found in other studies, and as psychologists, we spend a large amount of energy trying to gain clarity of understanding about such personalities – because of the damage they cause to so many people.

Because these types of personalities have a head start on you, there tends to be a time lag on deceptions (deception may have a black belt at the time detection is a beginner), so it is very much a long-game you will play. Each person will need to learn until your levels of detection skills exceed the level of deception skills in your opponent/s. Each time you meet a new liar, you may need to reconsider if your current skills are a match. If not, return to basics and rebuild your skills.

Those emotional-intelligence skills are based in your capacity to trust the intuitive and use it to focus your attention. No matter how skilled you become, you will require a pause to focus your conscious attention on subtle experience, and how that emotional experience is expressed, or not, if you need to mask or constrain it so as not to “show” the effect their deception has upon you. Recall that the families of emotions evolved for specific reasons, so a failure to detect and understand your emotional responses will likely see you duped again. *Feelings are facts: pushing feelings aside is akin to fighting with your eyes closed and your hands tied. When our emotional responses have been noticed, identified, and constrained, you are in a position to think more clearly.*

Feelings are facts: pushing feelings aside is akin to fighting with your eyes closed and your hands tied. When our emotional responses have been noticed, identified, and constrained, you are in a position to think more clearly.

Thinking styles can now be utilised to gather together pieces of the puzzle. Observation, using all of your senses, can be used as a base to build a rich description of the events leading to your suspicions. Combined with emotional intelligence skills, certain thinking styles can enhance your sensitivity training. Recall we were using the thinking styles of a veterinarian, ethologist or a new mother to closely observe unspoken behaviours in their natural settings. As we develop a picture of the deception process, we add the skills of an investigative journalist, a detective or a scientist. These require you to keep records of your observations, and compare your interpretation of events to peers, in this case others who are seeking the truth, and themselves have sufficient mastery of the requisite skills.

Our culture may put you off the scent. One reason is that all cultures teach children to constrain emotional expression. A more insidious problem is what I call “the usual suspects” – those behaviours that our media dramatise as if typical of deception – where you can easily relapse back into the trap of only observing simple cues in the suspect.

Pulling some of your observations together requires you pay attention to pattern recognition. Remember a single observation is not necessarily reliable, but a second observation hints at the possibility of a pattern, a third allows you to begin to see the shape of a pattern, and so on. Your puzzle is coming together, or you snapshots forming a story. That pattern – likely to be complex if the liar is clever – should be able to be mapped onto a graph where the frequency, duration and amplitude of the pattern can be noted – and stored safely for future reference!

Putting your record in safe storage is imperative! Be warned: do not rely only on memory alone. The gaps in your knowledge will be filled over time, and as some previously hidden information becomes available, you will have further hints as to where to look for the missing information. You are building a case, a story at a forensic level, and it is likely that the most important components will be the last revealed. Remain as all good scientists are, sceptical but open minded. Consider the alternative explanations and rule them in or out,

because it is those alternatives that a liar will likely use to create doubt in your mind when finally you confront them.

If the pattern unfolding is complex, your strategies will need to develop. Some forward thinking is in order, to find and then order your search for the missing information. The specific nature of the deception is important in this domain. You may need to do some research into what is typical of people lying about particular topics: what are the likely counter-strategies employed by the suspect/liar?

Counter-strategies are likely to evolve over time, particularly if your suspect notes a change in your strategies (if for example your interviewing skills were clumsy) or if the stakes are high. Some of the counter-strategies are specific to the type of deception: hiding bank statements if embezzling your money, or deleting email records of cyber-bullying in a workplace, or unexplained spending on bank statements if gambling or entertaining a secret lover. Some of these counter-strategies are generalised and more subtle, and I will remind you of a few common ones. Switching of your attention and humour can put you off guard. A favourite is the induction of guilt – one of the “bad” feelings that gave you the hunch that, in the first place, started you on your initial quest to *go out and detect deception!*

...go out and detect deception!

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