

DEVELOPMENTAL GAP WORK

Developmental Gap Work

You probably know your partner fairly well by now, so figuring out what fears and inadequacies they hide from the world is detective work you should do well at.



Here are some common areas that may cause raging inner doubt;

- Social phobia
- Financial stress
- Sexual dysfunction

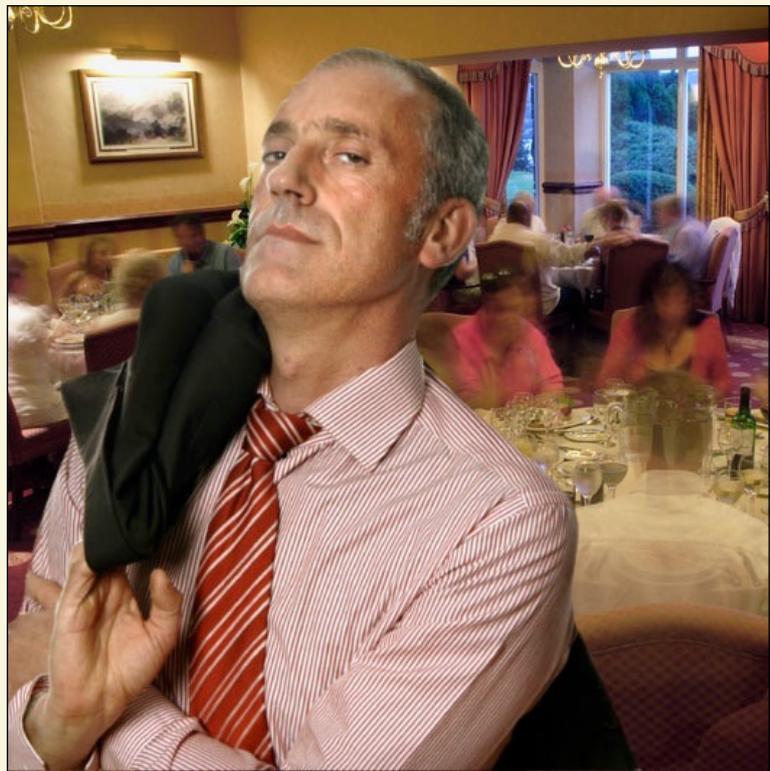
Even if the inadequacy can't be remedied, such as a man feeling inadequate due to his height, filling in as many other developmental gaps as possible will help ease this anxiety.

This work will help you love and support your partner—and yourself—in very real ways. The gap finder exercise will show you where each of you might benefit from some solid goal setting and personal development.

Learning to challenge your partner in these ways will also help keep your relationship interesting and vibrant and keep your partner from getting bored and lazy.

The exercises for Developmental Gap Work, in Part 2 of the exercise manual will help you build trust and self esteem, while helping

“We all love a personal challenge we feel we can accomplish. Learning to challenge your partner in a way that helps them feel supported and loved will make you an attractive and irresistible partner.”



Alan

Alan grew up in a wealthy family and never wanted for anything. His dad was consumed with his work for the company he ran and his mother her social engagements. Their expectations were often beyond Alan's abilities and never wanting to disappoint them, he would use his natural charm to make up for the deficit, often exaggerating his achievements in ways which first stretched the truth and then later became outright lies. His parents suspected this but rather than let Alan know his behavior was wrong, they increased their expectations and displayed their disappointment in him more clearly and more often. Alan was given a good job by a friend of his father which he was reasonably competent at but his exaggerations now extended to his wealth and he would over spend, in a continued attempt to impress others. Anxious about his rising debts and not sure where to start 'plugging the gap', Alan began a series of affairs while becoming increasingly abusive and impatient with his young family at home, often provoking his wife to anger so that he could blame his bad behavior on her. After studying the Gap Finder, his wife Judy booked Alan in with their accountant to help him with debt consolidation, budgeting and reassessing their financial situation and also challenged Alan to take a first aid training course to give him some solid life skills to be proud of. Judy and the family praised Alan's achievements with this and Alan is now doing other voluntary charity work on the weekends. This has helped him feel better about himself and has had the added benefit of reducing his spending. He feels so much better about himself that the exaggeration, lies and womanizing have now also stopped.

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Gap Work and EGO

“Humans use their ego to protect their self esteem when their sense of self worth and adequacy feels threatened. **A person with an over-inflated ego is really showing you their insecurity and feelings of inadequacy.**”

Steve Cooper

The exercises for Developmental Gap Work, in Part 2 of the exercise manual are for you and your partner to work on. You must each do the work yourselves, but you can encourage and support each other in ways that no one else has probably done before. ***Figuring out where each of your biggest feelings of inadequacy lie is where you can help each other most. Through this process, you can show your partner that you love and understand them.*** Even if the major source of their feelings of inadequacy cannot be remedied, such as a man feeling inadequate due to his small stature or you feeling inadequate because of your racial background or what sex you were born, filling as many other developmental gaps as possible will help ease this anxiety.

Jerry for instance, had always been acutely aware of his height and would exaggerate all of his other talents in an attempt to compensate. When his son was born with Down's Syndrome, Jerry very nearly abandoned his wife and son because he had no idea how to cope. Instead of begging him to return, his wife Linda challenged Jerry to start going along to a parent training course for parents of Down's Syndrome children. Jerry was scared but did not want to appear a coward and so he took the challenge. Four years later, Jerry now enjoys helping newcomers to their local group feel welcome. Learning how to relate to these children has helped him feel more important and put his own feelings of physical inadequacy into perspective. He would not dream of leaving his family now.

Or Mary, who had always acted the big shot out with her friends and who, after marrying and having two children, felt that being a mother and housewife was beneath her and so still spent many nights out, leaving her husband Tim at home with the toddlers and to deal with her increasing anger and impatience. After looking at the Gap Finder, Tim guessed that Mary might be feeling inadequate about never having finished high school or college and that she did not find her own mother a very good role model for household duties. Mary's mother had worked as a corporate secretary in a time when educational qualifications were not as important to find work. This caused Mary's mum to not understand Mary's problems finding well paid work without an education. She was always stressing that Mary needed a career and to make more money while Tim on the other hand was always wanting her to be a better mother. After reconsidering things, Tim decided to support Mary in doing some adult education to fill in her resume. He started being more appreciative and understanding of Mary's fears, helping her better transition into motherhood by together setting a goal, after some discussion, to each work part-time and together consolidate their parenting and household skills. Mary now enjoys her time at home with Tim and her part-time job and training to get out and spend time with other people rather than going out at night socially.

If You Had Three Wishes What Would They Be?

Now, besides the gaps that you worry about (such as getting your taxes up to date) there are other gaps that will be good to work on, even if you don't know that they are there . . .

When you were a child do you remember wondering what you would wish for if you had three wishes?

If you were like me, you might have wished for a hundred more wishes!

But now stop and think now if you could really only have three?

If you have seen the movie *Bedazzled* you may realize that knowing what to wish for can really be a very tough challenge! For instance, what if you got a job that paid a million dollars a year but it meant you had to travel all the time without your

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family and so it led you to get divorced? Or you wished to have money and not to have to work but that only led you to become an alcoholic?

Many studies have been done of lottery winners that show having more money rarely improves people's success or happiness in life (across a broad range of indicators).

When I was a kid many people thought intelligence and IQ tests were going to be the holy grail of predicting success - but it only took a few years to find out they were wrong. Intelligent people were sometimes successful and happy but many times they ended up underachievers, social misfits and outcasts.

Now this difficulty is not due to us not knowing what success is. There are many indicators of success, including how nice your house is and whether your neighborhood is peaceful and safe, whether your marriage is stable, how much money you make and whether your children do well at school and whether they stay married or divorce.

There are more success indicators too—including the incidence of suicide in your family and your emotional stability and mental health.

There are very few things you can wish for that will statistically improve all of these indicators. However, research is starting to show there are a few . . .

These 'magic bullets' for success are going to get top priority in our Gap Finder exercise - because even if you have never heard of them before, working on these gaps—if you have them—will do more than anything to improve your life.

These skills come under the heading 'emotional competencies' and are the corner-stone of emotional intelligence. Even better news is that, unlike intelligence (which you cannot change), these skills include habits you can work to improve.

Like . . .

Learning to calm down quickly after an upset and get refocused again on your tasks.

- or -

Learning to delay immediate gratification while you work towards a goal.

- or -

Learning to read and regulate your emotions to set goal for yourself that will make you happy and improve your life.

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These are all skills that will create success in your life on many levels. Conversely, if these are habits you haven't learned, this will cause enormous difficulty and disappointment in your life. For this reason we have highlighted these skills in the gap finder and pointed to some extra exercises if you decide you need to work on these areas.

Go now to Part 2 of this workbook - and look for our famous Gap Finder exercise. Please fill it out to the best of your ability for yourself and for your partner. Be aware that your partner may be lying and/or covering up the gaps that cause them the most anxiety, so you must be ready to turn over every stone. For instance, we have had many people insist that their partner has no financial problems only later to discover that they have secretly mortgaged everything! If you are unsure, discreetly call and ask their accountant, boss and friends to clarify matters and get every perspective. Remember, you are doing this to support them, so express your genuine love and concern for your partner and most people will be happy to help.

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## Bringing it Together

Here at the end of Part 1 of the Workbook, you will now have a good understanding of how these four concepts - **Attachment, Limiting Abuse, Emotional Intelligence and Filling Developmental Gaps** - form **the four pillars of a stable and happy home**.

It is good to be aware that, as you start to apply these concepts, you will take some wrong turns! I have people write to me all the time and say, "I blew it Kim, I didn't do it like you would have, I lost my patience and temper and now he won't talk to me! And I think, "Yikes!, how many times have I blown it, myself?" Losing your temper is sometimes necessary anyway (as long as you don't start calling names, swinging punches, being hurtful or stewing on things for days!).

The thing is, I never had a guide like this to show me the way and we still made it. Our success was only by trial and error. It is okay to make mistakes and of course you will! Learning to love is about giving time for natural attachment and trust to grow while you help others feel safe, rather than pressing those you love to make *you* feel safe and rally against them if they do not oblige. Love is something that must be nurtured, not forced. If you are upset or disappointed with your partner's behavior and feel about to set the old habits of complaining and making demands back in force, stop and ask yourself instead, "How can I make this easier for them?" "Am I demanding too much from this situation right now?" "Are there ways I could take care of my own emotions better?" and "How can I let my partner know that they are safe and valued and loved?" We all behave badly at times and that is usually when we are afraid. Losing your negative judgements of your loved ones at these times and instead seeking to understand what is needed or what is missing will help you become someone who others will come to count on, appreciate, value and love.

Have fun with it and hang in there!

Kim Cooper

[www.TheLoveSafetyNet.com](http://www.TheLoveSafetyNet.com)