



Chapter 10 – ‘Liking’ and ‘Getting Along’ are not Related

Growing up, my mentor is any television family that inadvertently helps me set my unreasonable social expectations, by showing me versions of life that no form of social engineering will ever be able to (or should be able to) accomplish.

On 1970’s television, most all of the conflicts I notice are civil, everyone who is asked to help has plenty of time and wants to help, there is nothing like PMS to deal with, the police always get their criminal, no one harms animals, there is no stress, low anxiety, superficial worry, nearly everyone is well-adjusted and a well-treated portion of the entire scheme – and I buy into this because there is no exception to the genre presented, and there is no reference point in my own life to give me any cause to evoke my suspicions.

My first sexual relationship comes out of being stationed as a human research volunteer at the Naval *BioDynamics* Laboratory (near New Orleans, Louisiana). During my trip through a second boot camp, the Biolab staff gives me my third recruiting presentation about how great my life will be if I volunteer yet again, and they say that they are looking for people of a certain height and weight to simulate what

pilots might experience on ejection...all I hear is, “shore duty, hazardous duty pay, and New Orleans,” and my hand goes up again.

I meet this gal in New Orleans...in a strip bar...working, she is about nine years older than me, and we pretty much hit it off with this being my first night in town and this also being her first night out of jail. It isn't long before we end up moving in with her ex and his girlfriend.

I would like to say that the good news is that with a starting point like that there is nowhere to go but up, or that this type of thing is normal in New Orleans, but neither is true.

It should bother me that I am already in a relationship with someone I lack the courage to break-it-off with, but it doesn't. Predictably, my future first-wife makes a three-hour flight to give me a surprise visit, and I come to realize much, much later that since signing the human research volunteer paperwork, too many of these one-off special events are going to start coming true in my life; that not every research volunteer at the lab is of a certain weight and height, but that we all have pronounced brows (supra-orbital ridges), apparently to a degree worth studying on a g-sled, if not more.

Liking or not liking people, and getting along with people, are not related concepts to me, and it takes me too long to figure this out. The first really important hint that I ignore, regarding that getting along with other people is more important, comes when one of my Biolab shipmates takes it upon himself to show my future wife my current ex-con girlfriend with me at the base's swimming pool; he also takes it upon himself to offer my third-wheel visitor some spite-sex, an invitation which my first-bride later tells me about after our wedding, and that she also claims to accept.

Jerry-Two seems to belong at the Biolab much more than me and seems to learn less than I do; claiming to be a registered preacher he is one of the past people I do a background check on when I turn bail bondsman later in my life. After his leaving the Navy, Jerry-two seems to get into the Georgia court records by appealing some child molestation charges soon after starting his seven-year prison sentence –

an award for being a convicted drunken slime who is apparently ambitious enough to violate the trust of a four-year-old girl – a girl who ends up being able to express herself well enough to her mom, to investigators, and to the courts, to prevent more damage to herself and others.

When a relationship turns criminal or psychologically unsafe, then it is probably time for me to get infinitely away from there, and maybe offer the other side a substitute relationship with some representatives of the justice system.

Relationships are like food to me, in that I don't need to know exactly why something smells to know that I am not going to like it, but relationships are also like medicine in that there are times when I may or will need to get along with these smelly 'its,' so I keep the relationship, keep it at a distance, and keep it to a minimum. I can stomach this by respecting only the relationship, instead of respecting whoever or whatever is on the other side of the relationship; my burden is only to 'not blatantly disrespect' whatever that happens to be.