

Those who cannot let go are vulnerable to blackmail

by Mariann Uehlinger Mondria, Switzerland

Translation by Mariann Uehlinger Mondria and Peter Schaerer, Switzerland

When I was a child my mother used to say to me: "You have been bathed too hot." She obviously had the idea that I had been exposed to too much sun and heat after my birth, because I was born in March of the hottest year of the 20th Century. This was her harmless way to criticise my major and minor escapades, and I accepted it with a smile. After all, she didn't know everything, also she could sometimes get quite rough. Therefore, it was clever to be quick. I am absolutely certain that she had always mourned the loss of my affection and childlike shyness, all of which had vanished either all at once or little by little.

When I was a little girl, I always played on my own, although I had a sister who was two years older. I was never bored. I had a lot of small dolls, and I used to sew fancy dresses for them out of bits and pieces of fabric – but I didn't play "mother-child" with them. I would have liked a train to play with but no one in our family showed any kind of understanding for this. I don't know why, but I was very much afraid of children I didn't know. Was I standing on the pavement and other children were coming down the road from the kindergarten, I quickly ran into the stairway of our house. A little girl – she was one year younger than me – who lived in the same house with us, used to put herself in front of me and spit at me. I was stunned, unable to react.

I don't know if you can imagine how it was for me when I had to go to kindergarten with five. My mother came with me. I was crying the whole way up to the kindergarten. All of this seemed so heart-rending that the kindergarten teacher – her name was Miss Spielmann – showed a lot of understanding and let me go home again. That was extremely nice but it lasted only for 6 months, then we had to go again. Do I have to mention that I cried again and held tightly to mother, but then something happened that completely changed my life. It was a so called salutary shock.

Miss Spielmann asked me nicely to go into the garden and get something for her. When I came back – my mother was not there anymore. If you think I was begging and crying for her, then you are wrong. Although I only was five years old, I suddenly realised that I had been taken for a fool and that my mother had plaid a major part in this mean game. And then I thought for myself: "If you cannot let go of her affection, then you can always be blackmailed, that means you have to do what they want you to do."

Kindergarten was a torture; every day the same games. But after 6 months, around Christmas time, I was put out of this misery, I got the scarlet fever and was allowed to stay at home. Every day the doctor gave me a injection of Penicillin into my bottom until I was healthy again – apparently, as it turned out. The moment I returned to Miss Spielmann, the scarlet fever was back again. This time I didn't get any injections, instead they gave me capsules of Penicillin which always came up again although I had to swallow them. (Since my sister who slept in the same bedroom did not get the scarlet fever, which shows that this illness was for me only.) Fortunately my father, who was a "Taurus", showed a lot of understanding and had enough courage to look for another kindergarten. If not, I

don't know how often I would have had to get the scarlet fever to get away from there.

Either it was due to an acute onslaught of evolution or it was due to the great quantities of Penicillin (called "the immunity system of the state" by Wolfgang Doebereiner, inventor of the "Münchener Rhythmenlehre"), but one part of my mentality was totally turned inside out. I realised that being too shy and reserved, I was only taken advantage of and spat at. That's why I decided to be good at arithmetics, fast and strong. I then was so serious about this that I really did turn out to be one of the best at arithmetics right until the end of my schooldays (you probably can't tell any more, it has been a long time since...), and occasionally I could pack quite a punch.

As the years went by I realised, that this ability to let go of things is not just related to affection but also to everything else. Many people are filled with numerous desires, be it praise, a good qualification that brings with it a nice incentive bonus, promotion, a lot of money that enables one to consume more; any kind of addiction (cigarettes, chocolate, alcohol, drugs, etc.). But those who cannot do without having these desires satisfied are exposed to the arbitrariness of others and can thus be blackmailed.

The inner freedom, the teaching of the spirit so often talks about, is something very personal, and can only be caught when we are brave and modest and able to renounce. Surely you need money for your life; without money you will not have a roof over your head and nothing to eat. It's also quite clear that we have to work for it. But how we do this and how we feel about it entirely depends on our attitude, i.e. our mentality. Do we want to achieve too much, get greedy, outsmart others to be great ourselves, "sell" the work of others as our own merit, suck up to the boss out of selfishness, or do a job because it promises substantial financial gains, all the while not worrying about what this does to our psyche, e.g. granting a consumer loan, fully knowing that the borrower will have no chance to pay back and get out of the vicious circle (there are plenty of identical examples). If we go for all of this, the causes practised by us will result in what is foreseen by the laws of the creation – for everything in the universe is based on the law of cause and effect. It's so simple – and yet so difficult to follow and to put into action.

On June 8, 2007, Billy and I were discussing this and that at a small table in front of the main building, among other things we were talking about the raise in burn-out syndrom and the high suicide rate of Japanese Managers. Billy said he could not understand why people were so burned out from their work, let alone why they committed suicide. If people liked their work and did everything necessary in the best feasible way, then it couldn't possibly manoeuvre them into such a condition. I then told him about the "yearly objectives" (Management by Objectives) that have to be achieved, whether they are reasonable for a specific function/job or not. If the goals are not only achieved but exceed all expectations, then an ample incentive bonus may be the award. So, often people don't do what really should be done for a specific work/job, but what will be measured at the end of the year. Depending on the degree of the function, the bar can be pretty high.

A lot of staff members who have received an incentive bonus over many years are now taking it for granted and include it automatically into their budgeting: to pay tax bills, debts or mortgage rates, to buy a new car, to go on fabulous holidays – or for whatever appears to be so desirable. If however in a particular year the bonus is not paid or is substantially smaller than usual it's a disaster. Companies who have this type of incentive bonus systems use this consciously to manipulate their staff because top managers know how to make their vassals greedy and dependent. Possible burn-outs or nervous breakdowns are taken into account, insurances will cover those incidents.

That's why:

Fellow human being, avoid all people and things,
that make you dependent, unfree and vulnerable to blackmail.
You should not succumb to all the lures,
for they will keep you from your inner freedom.
