

METAMATING SERIES

How to Build a
Happier and Happier Relationship



Book Five
Troubleshooting Infatuation

Metamating Series: Book Five — *Troubleshooting Infatuation*

<http://www.HappierRelationships.com>

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(Nobody likes to read this kind of stuff. We wish we didn't have to do it.)

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You will notice a number of strange words throughout this book. I use these words to describe functions that occur in your mind. These functions have not been given names by science or other students of the mind, so, I created words to use, and often I used words that suggest the meaning. For example I use the names "Importancizer" (giving importance to something) and "Comparator" (comparing one thing with another).

Sometimes I used acronyms, such as "TWIPI" (The Way I Perceive It) and "TWISB" (The Way It Should Be" according to at least one part of my mind).

Until real scientists name these functions, I guess you and I will have to be stuck with this odd vocabulary. I'm sorry that you are put to the task of using and recalling this rather unusual set of words.

See also: www.Sagery.com

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Preface — How to use This Book

Note: There are four books on the subject of Troubleshooting, in the “Metamating” series of books:

- Book Three: Attraction
- Book Four: Courting
- Book Five: Infatuation (the book you are about to read)
- Book Six: Bonding

It’s important that you’ve already read Books One and Two in the “Metamating” series, before you read any of the Troubleshooting books.

Troubleshooting starts by identifying a problem, so that you can do something about it. Sometimes you can solve the problem by just identifying it. But, sometimes you might need to change something.

For example, you might have a strong reaction to something you read. Make a note of it. That reaction probably signals a strongly held belief that may be giving you problems. If you can get your problem solved without changing it, then don’t worry about it. If you find yourself stuck on either identifying your problem, or on solving it, then go back and examine each of those strong reactions you made a note of. It may be helpful to review the concepts in Book Two: “The Sage Model.”

When you’re ready, use the Table of Contents for this book, to check off the subjects that are of interest to you, or seem to be troublesome. Read the Introduction that follows, then read any of the troubleshooting chapters that you wish.



Introduction to Infatuation

Infatuation is a special time in your life. It is marked by intense attending to your partner, and an exclusive focus on your partner. People often experience hormonal rushes that make it possible to dance all night, work all day, and be ready to dance all night again. It's marked by a change in time perception, where time races when you are with your partner and slows to a halt when you are apart.

Bonds

Infatuation is marked by matching of common bonds between you and your partner. Everything your partner does, says, feels, or thinks is accepted positively during this period, and vice versa.

Little, ordinary things become marked as special because they are shared between you and your partner. It is a time of bonding and the bonds formed during infatuation have a special high level of intensity to them.

Love, Love, Love. You feel that you're in love. You love your partner, you love "your song" you love "your restaurant." You love anything and everything you share with your partner.

Also during infatuation there may be very strong reactions of jealousy, attachment to certain spaces or places, and rejection of any and every form of external authority.

It is a time of incredible intensity and risk taking.

What a wonderful time. What possibly could go wrong?



Chapter 1: You Get Infatuated Too Early

Ah, yes. Perhaps during the first few years of puberty the hormones may rage out of control and trigger infatuation, even without a partner.

When this happens you can have all the sensations of infatuation and have no one to share them with. Usually what happens is you find someone to focus them on. When that happens, we call it “puppy love” or a “crush.”

Didi

Didi was 12 when she became infatuated with her math teacher. As she described it, “I couldn’t sleep. I couldn’t think of anything but him. I would stare at him and listen to every word he said. When he called on me, I was the happiest person alive. When he didn’t, I was crushed.”

We grownups sometimes laugh at “puppy love,” and we tend to discount it. It is, however, as powerful a set of feelings as you can have later in life, in real life courting situations. Not only are the feelings and sensations as powerful but they also come at time of life when it is hard to understand the feelings and to handle them well.

In some people, infatuation is triggered too early in the cycle.

Sheila

“I finally realized I wasn’t like everyone else. I would get attracted to someone, and if they gave me any signs at all of being attracted in return, I would leap right into infatuation. It wasn’t until I was 20 that I finally had what you call a ‘normal’ experience with infatuation. When I was 20, I dated Todd for six months before I found myself infatuated.”

Everyone has different levels of hormones. If you are infatuated too early in the cycle, then you’re simply a little out of phase. It’s no real problem, as long as you know what’s happening. There are people who never feel this thing called “infatuation,” and some of them would gladly trade places with you.

There is little you can do to change the process. You have little or no control over becoming infatuated, or *not* becoming infatuated.

What you can do is allow your Sage-part to monitor your decisions and actions during the periods of infatuation. These times can be difficult if you find yourself taking extra risks, rebelling against external authority, and feeling strong feelings of jealousy. Your Sage-part can coach you and help keep you safe. Your Sage-part can also alert you when you risk pushing away authority figures or hurting yourself or others with jealousy.

Normally, people who experience this also find that the problem gets better with age. It may be wise for you to protect yourself against too early commitment to the people with whom you become infatuated.

If you are older and have this difficulty — and your window is open — don't worry. Early infatuation will not stop you from having a pleasing and loving relationship. You need to be aware that you may be into infatuation and out of it before your partner is into it. All this means is that you and your partner will be out of sync and you will lose a little of the intense bonding that's shared by couples infatuated at the same time.



Chapter 2: You Get Infatuated Too Easily and Too Often

This difficulty is similar to the person who gets infatuated too early in the pairing process. The difference is that infatuation comes later in each relationship, but it comes with every relationship, and sometimes two at the same time.

Good and Bad Parts

This difficulty has its good and bad parts. The good part is that you get to feel the incredible, wonderful, experience of infatuation many times in your life. The bad part is that it loses the specialness that is nice to have when you finally settle down with your permanent partner.

Another not-so-great part of getting infatuated too easily and too often is that your dating years become heartbreak time. It frequently happens that our early pairing experiences don't end up in permanent relationships. If you find yourself getting fully infatuated with almost every person you date for a while, you can be in for rough time emotionally.

For the person who understands the process and knows what's happening, this is painful but nothing more than that. Some people have had this experience and not known what was happening. As a result they have drawn some wrong conclusions about themselves and their ability to have lasting relationships.

By understanding what's happening, it becomes possible to somewhat tone down the risks, the pain, and the behaviors.

Betty

Betty experienced this difficulty with getting infatuated too easily and too often. Between ages 14 and 19 Betty was "totally" in love with eleven different young men. In each case she experienced the full effects of infatuation. In nine out of these eleven cases she made a full and complete commitment to her partner and in each case felt it would end in marriage. Betty gave herself fully to each partner in turn.

By the age of 20, Betty had drawn three wrong conclusions about herself. She concluded that she somehow could not have "permanent" relationships. She thought that she was sexually loose, and finally, she decided that she was a bad risk for marriage. Having made these wrong conclusions, Betty became suicidal and sought counseling. After learning that her difficulty was simply a tendency to become infatuated too easily and too often, she was able to monitor her pairing process more wisely. With awareness and understanding, Betty was able to form a very satisfying and loving permanent relationship.



Chapter 3: You're Worried Because Infatuation Doesn't Last

The movies, the songs, and the poems that celebrate “love” (infatuation), all make it seem that it goes on forever. The love stories frequently end with “and they lived happily ever after.” This can leave people with the notion that infatuation should last. It isn't supposed to last.

Remember, during infatuation the Us-part is in charge. The Us-part dominates all the other parts. That means that the relationship has priority over yourself, your family, your work, your beliefs, your interests, and even your wisest self.

That simply isn't the way it works in life. During infatuation we lose our ability to do reality testing, and we end up with distorted notions about how it will be in the future.

Infatuation isn't supposed to last. The other parts have to get back into balance and your life has to become a balance of all of your parts. You still have a family and obligations, duties, and responsibilities. You may have work and job duties. You have beliefs that must be honored, you have interests that must be pursued, and you have wisdom to develop.

Infatuation is there to give great intensity to the shared experiences that bond you to your partner. Those positive bonds are the basis of real love, the kind of love that can last a lifetime.



Chapter 4: You Confuse Infatuation with Love

It's a common misperception to confuse infatuation with love. During infatuation, you *feel* love. So, they get connected in your mind.

Infatuation is a period of life marked by hormonal rushes. Somehow, these hormones affect people in such a way that they “feel” love more easily and more deeply. So, it's easy to get confused about the two different experiences.

During infatuation you get connected to your feeling of love very easily. Some people, when infatuated, feel love towards almost anything and everything.

But, infatuation is infatuation. Love is love. That's really a good thing too, because infatuation fades away. Love stays on. Love can grow and grow over time. If you are fortunate and handle coping well, you can make it possible for love to grow and grow throughout a long relationship. Eventually, it can reach the same level of intensity and vigor that most people only achieve during infatuation.



Chapter 5: You're Not Infatuated with Your Partner

It is easy to be let down if you have the experience of not being infatuated with your partner. Maybe you had it, and it faded away. Maybe you will have it sometime in the future, or maybe you simply won't have it at all.

Some people experience infatuation so mildly that they scarcely notice it. Certainly, it is vastly different from this WOW! experience that some people have.

If you've found your partner, built your relationship with exclusivity, intimacy, and commitment, you've done all you can do. If you don't get infatuation, that's the luck of the draw.

Barbara

"I was attracted to him and still am. We have a lot in common, and things went very well for us. He asked me to marry him and I said 'yes' without a doubt. We have been engaged now for four months, and I keep waiting for the big Wow! I Just don't have it for him. I have experienced it with others, but not with him. I love him. At least I think I do, but I don't feel that "special feeling" with him. Am I wrong to worry? Should I marry him?"

What brought Barbara to counseling was her concern that maybe the WOW! was love, and she really didn't love him. After learning about the pairing process and learning how infatuation is different from love, she was very relieved. Her parting words were, "I'm sad because I didn't share infatuation with Roger (yet), but, I'm relieved to know that I can go forward with our marriage. I really love him very much, and want to spend the rest of my life with him."

Infatuation is a mystery. Sometimes it comes and sometimes it doesn't. No one can yet explain how to bring it on when it doesn't come or how to turn it off when it comes when you don't want it.



Chapter 6: You're Infatuated with Someone Other than Your Partner

Are you sure it's infatuation? You need to be clear whether it is infatuation (which is experienced by the Us-part), or sexual attraction, which is felt by the Me-part. The way to tell is to examine the fantasies you have about the new person. If they are sexual, or relate to such things as money, status, control, or power, then they come from the Me-part. If you have fantasies of settling down with this person to a long life together, and you find yourself thinking about home and hearth, then it is from the Us-part.

If what you feel for the new person comes from the Me-part, then you have a different problem than this section deals with. This section is for people who have a partner and now find they are infatuated with a new person — and their Us-part is thinking of home and hearth — not a fling or affair.

A Common Trauma

Welcome to the club. Infatuation, while bound to another, is human beings' most common trauma. It has been described as “the most exquisite torture.” So many lives have been tossed and torn by this situation. And now, you. If you're like the millions of millions who have gone before you, you can expect to feel a pain and agony unlike any other you will ever face.

The excitement, the soaring passions, the fantasies of infatuations, the torture, and the agony and pain of being bound to another. These factors have been the source of endless streams of novels, poems, paintings and song.

I suspect it won't help much to know that you are but another of those who have — before you — faced and resolved this dilemma. You have a unique situation, and a unique experience of feeling. You must face the situation, deal with it, resolve it, and get on with your life — just like all those who have gone before you. Yet, you may not have a path to follow, or a strategy that will enable you to handle this in the best way possible for you. If you are looking for a way to deal with it, then this section is for you.

Some Things to Know

Some things you ought to know before you decide anything. First, the experience of infatuation renders you less able to apply reason and wisdom in solving a problem. Infatuation is a very powerful emotional experience and it temporarily disables your ability to make rational choices.

Second, infatuation elevates your Us-part to the highest position within your multiple parts, and gives it a priority that it won't have when the infatuation fades.

Third, infatuation makes you willing to take risks. You may well find yourself exposing yourself to risks that you wouldn't even think of taking if you weren't under the influence of infatuation.

As a result of these effects, people often find that they make decisions that make no sense to them later. They often find that they take risks that later seem to have been foolhardy. They often find that they make choices under the influence of infatuation, that give magnified priority to one domain of their lives, at the expense of other domains that are later seen to be more highly valued.

There is one more thing that is important here. The Me-part can have two, three, or four affairs going at the same time. The Us-part is only able to have one relationship going at a time. It is very common for a person to have one person for the Us-part, and one (or more) for the Me-part. This situation is common the world over, and it can be quite satisfactory if it is clear that the Me-part relationship doesn't threaten the Us-part relationship.

Because the Us-part can only really handle one relationship at a time, the solution to this situation is to handle each relationship in turn.

This means that the Us-part can't be ready to get into a relationship with a new person until the present relationship is resolved. Even though the Us-part may feel infatuation, the bonding and coping that must follow in order to have a satisfying and loving relationship can't and won't occur until the first relationship is resolved.

So, let's say you are firmly bonded with your present partner. But you find parts of you that tell you to also proceed with an affair with a new person at the same time, you are not hearing from your Us-part. It is likely that your Me-part is really the one most interested in the new person.

A Strategy

This is a book on pairing. The goal is for you to learn to build a loving and satisfying long term relationship. With that in mind, here is a strategy that will give you the best results for your Us-part.

- a. If you have a loving and satisfying long term relationship, then you have achieved what this book is all about. It's unwise to give up a loving and satisfying long-term relationship in hopes of finding another one that may or may not be.
- b. If you have a long-term relationship that is not loving or satisfying, then take the steps necessary to change yourself and the relationship until it becomes loving and satisfying. Those steps are clearly pointed out in this book.
- c. If you have done everything in your power to make yourself a good partner and have worked with your partner toward building a loving and satisfying

relationship — and it is still not loving and satisfying — then choose whether to end the relationship or stay with it.

- d. If you choose to end the relationship with your primary partner, then do so and get it all cleaned up before beginning your search for a new pairing relationship.
- e. If you choose to maintain your existing relationship, then take whatever actions you need to end any other outside relationships, or refrain from opening up to any other possible partner for an intimate relationship.

Since your reasoning powers are somewhat disabled when you're infatuated, it's important to get input on the key questions from all of your parts. A good way to do this is to hold a parts conference (Book One, Chapter 6). Bring all your parts together and ask for their input on these questions:

1. Is my relationship with my partner a warm and loving relationship? (Take care that it is not compared with the excitement of infatuation. Infatuation is always more exciting and appealing than the less intense warmth and love that marks bonding and coping.)
2. Have I done my best to become a good partner to my partner?
3. Knowing what I know about my partner and myself, is it possible (if we both worked at it), that we could become good partners for each other, and build a loving and satisfying relationship?
4. Have I done my best to invite my partner to participate in developing our relationship fully, to be as good as it can be?

Your Parts

Your parts will have something to say on each issue. You can expect lively debate. But, if you wait and are patient, they will be honest and open in answering each question. If there is harmony among them, and they can reach agreement on keeping the existing relationship, then decide to keep it and re-commit to make it as good as you are willing to.

If there is harmony among them, and they reach agreement on an end to the existing relationship, then decide to do that and take whatever steps are needed to do it.

If there is disagreement among them — and they will not resolve it and agree to fully support one position or the other — then you are in an internal state of disagreement, and the best action is to make no decision while in that state. By default then, if your parts will not agree to support an end to the existing relationship, you will re-commit to your present partner and work further to make the present relationship warm and loving.

The outcome of the situation will stay unresolved until the parts come into harmony on one side or another of the issue. Because the state of internal

dissonance is so uncomfortable, your parts will continue to work on the issue until some solution occurs.

Eventually, something will change, and the issue will resolve. In time the infatuation will lessen. That may resolve the issue. In time, your added efforts to make the present relationship work may come to fruition. You may find that the current relationship becomes more loving and satisfying because you are giving it your attention. You may find that even with your full attention the existing relationship continues to be unsatisfying. If you have done your best, and the results are not satisfying, that may be what allows the dissonance to be resolved.

While your parts are in disagreement on a decision, you may find that your efforts to improve your present relationship are being weakened by one or more of your parts that are seeking an end. If that occurs, then hold another parts meeting and ask the parts to stop their sabotage and do their best to come back into harmony again. If you have developed your Sage-part, then the Sage-part can find areas of agreement between the opposing parts, and ask each part to work toward the best long-term solution.



Chapter 7: You're Infatuated with Two People at the Same Time

How lucky can you get? Some people never achieve even one satisfying infatuation, and here you have two.

If you are fairly young (within three years of having reached puberty), then you are possibly under the influence of raging hormones. It is not unusual for people to experience all the feelings and sensations of full infatuation, even without a partner. What usually happens is that the person finds someone to direct the feelings toward, sometimes even two people (occasionally even more). That may be what's happening to you.

Another situation that sometimes occurs is that a person is attracted to a possible partner, the attraction is mutual, and courting takes place. The courting then leads to infatuation as it is supposed to do. Then the person — in the full bloom of infatuation — discovers another possible partner and “bingo,” virtually overnight there are two infatuations going on at the same time.

What seems to happen in those cases is almost similar to the case of the young person. The hormones stimulated by the first infatuation are spilling over and make the person susceptible to infatuation with yet another person. If that's happening to you, then it might be wise to continue to focus on the first person and allow the feelings for the latecomer to fade away. The reason is, that people who leave the first for the second frequently find that the second infatuation dissipates, they have little or nothing bonding them together with the second person, and everybody loses.

Yet a third case is somewhat similar. This happens when X is attracted to A and B and courts with both. Things go along smoothly until X becomes infatuated with A. It sometimes happens that the infatuation spreads to cover both A and B. This all can happen so quickly that it can be difficult to distinguish which person really triggered the infatuation. This can be quite a difficult situation. Fortunately it usually happens to people who are still quite young and still have their windows shut.

The way to handle the third case is to make no decisions until the situation clears itself up. It won't be long before the Us-part makes it very clear who really is the important partner. If you want to speed the process up, you can hold a parts conference and see which the Me-part prefers and which the Us-part prefers. That will usually help to clear up the situation. If not, then simply wait.



Chapter 8: You are Infatuated, but Your Partner Isn't

This situation can be very frustrating. It's normal to want all of your feelings with your partner to be mutual. Matching is one of the important parts of infatuation. You can feel frustrated when you are "out of sync." This happens for several reasons. Your partner isn't there yet. Or, your partner is already past infatuation. Or, your partner just doesn't experience it,

Some people allow this lack of being in sync to defeat the pairing process. One might think, "My partner doesn't love me." Another might conclude that the partner is just playing "hard to get." People do all sorts of distortions with their TWIPIs when they are infatuated. If you're serious about your partner and both your windows are open, don't let this timing difficulty bother you. Remember, you're playing for the long haul. You're in the game for keeps and you don't need mutual infatuation in order to get there. The fact that you have it means that you will benefit by the intense bonds that infatuation creates. You can help to share your infatuation with your partner by "marking" your positive bonds when they occur. (See Book One, Chapter 9)

It sometimes happens that a partner feels overtaken by the infatuation of the other. If that seems to be happening, then lighten up a bit. Understand that you're feeling incredibly strong emotional responses and your partner isn't. There is nothing really wrong with that, and it will all work out if you each don't get upset about the differences. It may happen that your partner will have the feelings of infatuation after you are all finished. If so, remember what it felt like, and support those feelings in your partner.



Chapter 9: You Both Were Infatuated, But One of you Stopped Early

You both have to stop eventually. It's normal that one person finds infatuation fading away before the other. If you don't understand the process, that can be very scary. "My partner doesn't love me any more," you might think. Or, worse yet, "I don't love my partner any more."

More good relationships are ruined because people don't know that infatuation must fade away, and they confuse infatuation with love.

If it stops early for you, simply share that with your partner and assure your partner that the bonds developed during infatuation are strong and you now feel a powerful feeling of love. After all, that's what every partner needs to hear. Almost everyone gets to be infatuated, some many times over, but real love is rare and should be much more highly valued



Chapter 10: You're Infatuated with Someone and You Don't Want to be

Sometimes it happens that you find yourself infatuated with someone and you don't want to be. Your parts are in conflict and your better judgment tells you that it's wrong, or it won't work, or something like that.

The part that is infatuated, and the parts that support it are telling you to express it and share it with the person. The rest of you says, "don't." In this situation it isn't wise or to express your feelings. However, it doesn't work to try to shut them out, or repress them.

One good solution to this is to allow your feelings and keep that person as a "secret love." Sometimes you make a person a secret love because they are out of reach, such as a movie star or a rock singer. Sometimes you make a person a secret love because that person is already attached and not available, or too old for you, or too young for you, or is the kind of person that you wouldn't consider being with.

Kathy

"He had already been married and divorced three times. He used drugs, and he had been in jail once for robbing a gas station. Every time I saw him I melted inside. I hardly ever spoke to him. I knew that if I went out with him, even once, I wouldn't be able to say 'no' to him. I went crazy for a while. It got so I couldn't think about anyone else. Every time I wasn't busy, he would come into my mind, and my fantasies made me blush. Part of me wanted to tell him how I felt. Yet I somehow knew that I couldn't, or he would use me and I would be hurt. So, I finally decided to make him my 'secret love.' I treated him the same way in my mind that I had thought of Orlando Bloom when I had a crush on him. In my mind I could do anything with him, and yet by keeping him only in my mind, I was safe."

Ted

"She worked for me. I had to meet her every day in the office. She was married, had a baby, and I knew it would be stupid to tell her about my feelings. Yet, I couldn't talk straight when I was around her. I couldn't think of anything but to sweep her away from her job, her husband and everything, and live the rest of my life with her in a little ivy-covered cottage by a lake. I asked a friend what to do, and he suggested that I make her my 'secret love.' When I began to think of her that way I found that I no longer worried about giving my feelings away. I could keep her in my mind, and didn't have to do anything about it in the outside world."

As you experience an infatuation about someone that you can't or won't have, you may discover that the feelings spill over and make it easy for you to be attracted to someone who is available and that you want to be attracted to.



Chapter 11: Your Partner is Infatuated with Someone Else

This can be crushing, if you and your partner don't understand what's happening. You might first discover this situation when your partner announces, "I've fallen in love with someone else."

Your partner's first reaction might be that the feelings of infatuation must be honored, and partner must leave you for the new person. The important things to communicate to your partner are these:

- a. Becoming infatuated is natural and normal. It happens to many people.
- b. You understand perfectly how it can happen, and you understand that it doesn't reflect on your partner's feelings for you, or on the quality of your relationship. (If your partner belittles the quality of your relationship, he or she may be comparing your comfortable, loving relationship to the excitement of the temporary infatuation.)
- c. Your relationship with your partner is large enough to include events like this, where one of you or the other finds him or herself infatuated.
- d. Luckily, infatuation does not require action. A person already in a good relationship, and already committed to another, is best advised to keep focused on the primary relationship, rather than start up a new one under the influence of infatuation.
- e. You will work with your partner on coping with this, and you're willing to work together to help your partner get through the strong emotions that infatuation creates.
- f. You understand the strong impulse to action, and you further are aware that fast decisions made while under the effects of infatuation can be hurtful to all parties.
- g. You will stand by and support your partner as he or she struggles with the urge to respond to the emotions of infatuation, until the infatuation goes away and your partner is once more able to make reasoned choices. At that time, you will support whatever choice your partner makes.

If your partner has not read this book, then share it. If you both have read it, then suggest that your partner read through the section on infatuation again. Be understanding that infatuation reduces your partner's ability to make prudent choices and be rational and reasonable.



Chapter 12: Your Partner is Jealous or Possessive

Jealousy is sometimes one of the unfortunate byproducts of infatuation. Infatuation triggers a release of hormones. That is one of the sources of the intensity and high feelings that infatuation brings. Another effect of those same hormones (sometimes) is to trigger feelings of extreme jealousy or being possessive. That flatters some people. Others are put off by it. It helps to have a joint and mutual understanding of this effect.

If your partner is jealous or possessive, read through this section together and talk it over. Tell your partner how it feels to you. Tell your partner that you understand the feelings that your partner experiences. Share with your partner that you will be supportive as he or she struggles with the feelings. Even though your partner learns that the feelings are stimulated as a side effect of infatuation, he or she may still struggle with the feelings. When your feelings tell you to be jealous, and your rational mind tell you that the feelings aren't real (but only stimulated by chemicals), you may understand, but you still have to deal with the feelings.

Once infatuation has lessened, the feelings of jealousy will probably diminish as well. If they do not, then your partner will have a problem to work through and you will have some coping to do. Jealousy and possessiveness are destructive on a long term. Jealousy reduces trust, which is necessary for intimacy. Possessiveness is a feeling that comes from the Me-part, and one person's Me-part doesn't form bonds with another's Us-part. Possessiveness is also a way of thinking and a way of being that converts the other person from a full-fledged partner to a thing, a possession.



Chapter 13: Your Partner is Taking Too Many Risks

Infatuation has many wonderful effects, and some troublesome side effects. One of the more troubling side effects is the increased willingness to take risks. This has the greatest effect on men, but is also a factor for women as well. If a man becomes infatuated while still young (under 21), then the effects can be compounded by the effects of adolescence, which also make risk taking seem desirable, or at least acceptable.

If your partner is caught up in infatuation and seems willing to take more risks than you feel are appropriate, then you can help by sharing this information with your partner. Share how you feel about the risk-taking behaviors, and pledge your support to help partner through this sometimes dangerous period.

If your partner had too much to drink, you would show a concern for your partner's safety by arranging for him or her not to drive. That's being a good partner and shows caring.

In the same way, if your partner is taking too many risks, you can be a good partner by supporting your partner in lessening the risks your partner takes.

As you talk through this issue, discuss the kinds of risks that you see, and get agreement on useful steps that you can take to help him or her through this unfortunate side effect of infatuation.

Some examples of excessive risk taking are:

- a. Driving too aggressively and too fast. Racing with others and responding to other aggressive drivers.
- b. Missing school or missing work. Risking your partner's commitments to other important facets of life.
- c. Breaking family agreements. Being late, not coming at all, etc.
- d. Flouting authority. Disregarding the needs and desires of authority figures such as parents, teachers, bosses, policemen, etc.



Chapter 14: You've Lost Your Mind and Can't Think; Nothing Makes Sense

Congratulations. You've achieved full-blown infatuation. It's both joyous and miserable at the same time. This phase of it — if felt at all — only has a short duration. So, it will be over very soon, and you will be able to think, concentrate, and focus once again on something other than partner.

During this brief but colorful phase, protect yourself from hazard by avoiding any serious decisions. You probably have reduced ability for making reasoned and sound decisions.

Do your best to maintain your outside agreements and commitments during this phase. It sometimes happens that people make huge changes in their life during this period, and then they quickly regret them. It is not uncommon for people to leave home, or quit their jobs, or drop out of school, or break relations with their parents or drop friends, and do many other things that they deeply regret a few weeks later.

Also, be aware that a lot of people don't know what you're learning here, and they may not be so understanding of your wild swings. So, it's best to do as much as you can to protect current relationships and commitments during this period. If you truly intend to quit your job, or leave home, or any of these things, you can wait a few weeks more until your senses return and you can be certain that the decision is one that all your parts support.

If you have already done some of these things and now regret it, it might help to share this section with those involved. Perhaps when they understand what was happening to you when you made a hasty decision, they will be understanding enough to allow you to reverse it.



Note: there are three more troubleshooting books in the “Metamating” series. They cover

Attraction
Courting and
Bonding.