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The publisher's introduction to this book is about how important good relationships are to a successful life. In it I state that, if we are not sick, poverty-stricken, or suffering ravages of old age, our major human problems are the fight against violence, crime, child abuse, spousal abuse, alcohol and drug addiction, the spread of premature and loving sex and emotional distress-induced relationships of dissatisfaction. The whole book is also an explanation of why this is happening and what to do to get along better with each other. I'm focusing on four major relationships, all of which are in obvious need of improvement. These are husband-wife, parent-child, teacher-student and principal-worker. I make the claim that if we don't improve these relationships, we will have little success in reducing any of the problems in the previous paragraph. For me to make such a broad claim may be considered hypothetical but just before this book went to press, I was delighted to find recent research that strongly supports my thesis that teenagers, especially if they are to avoid self-actualization behavior, need good parent-child relationships and teacher and student. The September 10, 1997 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) includes an article titled Protecting Adolescents from Harm, describing the first findings from the National Adolescent Health Long Study. The most important finding was: the relationship between parents and family and the perceived relationship of the school was to protect any measure of health risk behavior except pregnancy history. Research still doesn't go into how these two relationships improve, but it clearly shows that this is the path that needs to go—and that's the subject of this book. I suggest that researchers also focus on how husbands and spouses can achieve more marital satisfaction, which I think is a vital factor in achieving child-parent communication. Years ago, a pastor I knew in Chicago, named Father John, said something I've never forgotten: The best thing parents can do for their children is to love each other. As you read this book, you will notice that I do not use the word connectedness. Although I use satisfactory relationships, I don't see any difference in circumstances. I encourage you to read JAMA article if you want to see for yourself how strongly it supports what I say in this book. Part I theory chapter 1 we need a new psychology suppose you can ask all the people in the world who are not hungry, sick, or poor, people who seem to have a lot to live for, give you an honest answer to the question, how are you? Millions of people say, I'm miserable. If asked why, almost all of them blame someone else for their misery -lovers, wives, husbands, exes, children, parents, teachers, students, or people who work with them. There is hardly a living person He didn't hear you say,

you're driving me crazy. Which really upsets me.... Don't you pay any attention to how I feel? ... You make me so angry, I can't see straight. It never crosses their minds that they choose the misery they complain about. Choice Theory explains that for all practical purposes, we choose everything we do, including the misery we feel. Other people can neither make us miserable nor make us happy. All we can take from them or give them is information, but in itself information can't relate us to doing or feeling something. It goes to our brains, where we process it and then decide what to do. As I explain in great detail in this book, we choose all our actions and thoughts, and indirectly almost all of our emotions and much of our physiology. As bad as you may feel, much of what's going on in your body when you're in pain or sick is the indirect result of actions and thoughts you choose or have chosen every day of your life. I also show how and why we find these painful, even crazy, choices and how we can get the better ones. Choice theory teaches that we are much more in control of our lives than we realize. Unfortunately, much of that control is not effective. For example, you choose to feel uncomfortable with your child, then you choose shouting and threatening and things get worse, not better. Getting more effective control means better choices as you relate to your children and everyone else. You can learn through choice theory how people actually act: how we combine what's written in our genes with what we learn while we live. The best way to learn the theory of choice is to focus on why we choose common misfortunes that we believe will only happen to us. When we become depressed, we believe we have no control over our own suffering, that we are victims of imbalances in our nervous chemistry and therefore need brain drugs like Prozac to restore our chemistry to balance. A little bit of this belief is true. We have a lot of control over our suffering . We are rarely victims of what happened to us in the past, and as will be explained in chapter four, our brain chemistry is normal for what we choose. Brain medications may make us feel better, but they don't solve the problems that made us choose to feel miserable. The seeds of almost all of our sorrows are planted early in our lives when we start encountering people who have discovered not only what is right for them - but unfortunately, what is right for us. Armed with this discovery and following a destructive tradition that has dominated our thinking for thousands of years, these people feel obliged to try to force us to do something they know is right. Our choice of how we resist that force is, by far, the greatest source of human misery. The theory of choosing this ancient tradition challenges. The whole book is... Trying to answer this all-important question is that almost all of us constantly ask ourselves when we are unhappy: how do I figure out how free to live my life the way I want it to live and still come along with the people I need? From the perspective of 40 years of psychological practice, it has become apparent to me that all dissatisfied people have one problem: they are unable to cope well with people they want to get along with. I've had a lot of consulting success, but I keep hearing my mentor Dr. J.L. Harrington, the most skillful psychiatrist I've ever known, said, If all the professionals in our field suddenly disappear, the world would hardly pay attention to their absence. He wouldn't separate what we're doing, he said, if psychiatrists' goal is to reduce the misery in the world and help humans get together, their efforts have hardly scratched the surface. To start approaching that goal, we need a new psychology that can help us get closer together than most of us are already able to do. Psychology should be easy to understand, so it can be taught to anyone who wants to learn it. And it should be easy to use when we understand it. Our current psychology has failed. We don't know how to get along better than each other, in fact, the psychology we've embraced tends to separate us. In the field of marriage alone, it is clear that the use of this traditional psychology has failed. I name this global psychology that destroys relationships because the psychology of external control destroys personal freedom. Control can be as strong as a rejection look or as a threat to our lives. But whatever it is, it's an attempt to get us to do something we might not want to do. We ultimately believe that other people can actually make us feel like we feel or do the things we do. This belief destroys the freedom of the person we all need and want. The simple operational premise of the external control psychology that the world uses is this: punish people who are doing wrong, so they will do what we say is right, so reward them, so they continue to do what we want to do, this assumption dominates the thinking of most people on earth. What makes this psychology so prevalent is that those who have the power of government, parents, teachers, business managers and religious leaders - who also define what is right or wrong - fully support it. And the people who control, have little control over their lives, find some security in accepting control of these powerful people. It's a pity that almost no one is aware that this controlling, forced or forcing psychology is creating as much misery as we've tried, yet we haven't been able to alleviate it. This eddy misfortune continues not because we thought it over He decided that controlling others was the best. It goes on because when people don't do what we want, being forced and controlling is all we think about using. It's the psychology of our ancestors, our parents and grandparents, from our teachers and leaders, of almost all people we know or know of. Force, to try to get our way, has been so with us that it's common sense and we use it without thinking about it. We neither care where it came from nor question its credibility. If external control of the source is so miserable, why is the choice of almost all people, even the powerless people who suffer so much from it? The answer is simple: it works. It works for the powerful because it often gets them what they want. It works for the powerless because they experience working on them and living in the hope that they can eventually use it on someone else. The lowest people in the totem pole look up more than they look down. But even more so, the powerless accept it because they are as miserable as they may be, they believe they are not free to choose otherwise. They mostly believe, usually correctly, that it will be worse for resistance. So one way or the other, most people do a lot of things they don't want to do. For example, many women remain in abusive marriages because they think leaving would be worse. On their own, they fear they will not be able to support themselves, lose their children, may still be abusive and perhaps risk their lives. Many constantly entertain the hope that if they stick it, things will get better. But the book is about much more than why people remain and accept external control. It's about the fact that belief and the use of external control harms everyone, both controllers and controlled. For example the abusive husband also suffered (though not as much as his wife and family). He is also a victim of the psychology of external control. In choosing to do what he does, he loses every chance of happiness. This psychology is a terrible plague that attacks every part of our lives. Our happiness destroys our health, our marriages, our families, our ability to get education and our desire to do high-quality work. This is the cause of most violence, crime, drug abuse and loving sex that is pervasive in our society. This book is all about these human losses and how it can be reduced both by learning why external control is so harmful and how a new, pro-relationship theory can replace it. Choice Theory is an internal control psychology; it explains why and how we make choices that determine the course of our lives. The theory of choice is a complete change from what common sense has been to what hopefully turns, at times, a new common sense. This change is not an easy thing to do. It can only be through learning what to do with External control is wrong and the overwhelming reasons for replacement happen With choice theory as we deal with people in our lives. As we attempt to do that, we constantly ask ourselves: Is what I'm about to do bring me closer to these people or move us further apart? How do we use this fundamental question, and if we did, what would be possible in the heart and soul of this book? What I do in this book is I question the basic psychology of the world and I have no illusions that it will be easy. To begin to realize the existence of this psychology and how harmful it is to our lives, we need to take a look at some of the misfortunes we suffer because even when it becomes apparent that it doesn't work, we become dependent on our common sense. For example, using the only psychology you know, you punish your teenager son for not doing your schoolwork by knocking him down on weekends. But after you knock him down, he still doesn't do his homework and, to make matters worse, all weekend you have a teenager with a feeling hanging around the house. After a month you start thinking: Why do I do it over and over again? there must be a better way . It may take a while to come to this realization because punishing your son is so part of your common sense that he doesn't feel elected. It feels right . That's what a good parent is doing in this situation—that's probably what your parents have done to you—and you're supported by everyone you ask. It gives you the benefit of an almost universal common sense, they say, punish him. Why are you asking Nee this stupid question? You want him to grow up to be unemployed? The only problem with this advice is that it rarely succeeds. As you continue to punish your son, he and you stop talking and listening to each other. You're both miserable, blaming each other for how you feel and he's doing less schoolwork than before. For most people, however, the idea of going against common sense, especially in how they treat their children, is a new and troubling idea. But assuming you want less misery in your life, it may be so destructive for relationships to be happy to learn why you control and allow yourself control. Then you may wish to try the theory of choice in some situations where attempts to control have been ineffective. If it works better - and twenty years of experience I argue with choice theory that it will — you may want to start the difficult process of discarding external control and replacing it with choice theory. Psychology, even common sense, ancient psychology, should be abandoned in case of damage to relationships. To convince you that we need to give up the psychology of external control, I have included a simple graph that compares two types of progress: technical progress and human progress. Such a comparison is unusual because when we think about progress, the progress that comes to mind is technical because, as the graph shows, it's so progress. We rarely think about human progress getting along better than ever before, because we haven't seen or read enough people to get along so much better to start thinking that there's been a lot of progress in this area. Significant technical progress has been made in the past 100 years. We have moved from the first aircraft to the supersonic jet exploring Mars. Communications from the phone have gone to the internet. The list is endless. Not so much with human progress. Except for some improvements in civil rights in the 1960s and some recent moves toward better relationships between managers and workers since quality management appeared in the 1970s, we are more than ever able to get away with each other. Technical progress compared to human progress. Can anyone say that there has been a recovery in how husbands and wives accompany each other? Are families in better shape today than they were years ago? If they are, this is news for me. I work in schools and I haven't heard a teacher say things are better now than when she started teaching. In fact, I hear more of the picture—that kids teach harder than ever. And in these days of sacred bottom line and heartless downsizing to raise it, there's not much fuss about how much better the work environment is than it was years ago. In fact, even employers experience less job satisfaction. As far as we haven't been able to make any improvement in how we get together for graph nudity upwards, there are enough situations where we do that there's no doubt that if we learn more from us how we can do it. Here and there we find amazing schools where all teachers and students care about each other and everyone is learning and being happy. We all know married couples, sturdy families and people who are well satisfied with their jobs. But when asked to explain their happiness, many find out, they're not sure . Some say, we work hard to get along, but others deliriously say, maybe a chance to have a lot to do with it. What they never say is that we gave up trying to control each other, they don't realize they might follow another theory, which inadvertently discovered the theory of choice. When asked about technical progress, people talk to each other from time to time about getting better. Many see that in some cases there is a correlation between the two. But few people attributed major technical progress to luck. Technology has advanced in this area because we are willing to embrace either a new theory or a new way to use an old theory. In almost all efforts to improve human progress, for example, there has been no operational change in theory to improve marriages, families, schools, or work. Foreign It's so tight in the saddle that even when we're making a little progress, we're blind to the fact that psychology has lost external control and we're starting to use what is, at first, the theory of choice. What I was looking at requires us to be aware that there is another psychology. I do not claim that there are no other psychologists who resemble the theory of choice. Albert Ellis's logical behavior therapy is definitely one of them. In the field of work, I has shown that high-quality work depends on driving out fears that prevent people from going away well with each other. He resembles the director in the workplace to the conductor of a symphony orchestra in which everyone willingly follows the conductor and contributes to the performance. No one is forced to take part; Even if he's probably not aware of it, Herb Kelleher, the highly successful CEO of Southwest Airlines, is practicing choice theory on how he runs his company. In a recent book, Nuts! Southwest Airlines' Crazy Business Recipe for Both Business and Personal Success,Kelleher said this about leadership: It really signifies getting people, through both example and persuasion, to happily join together in pursuit of a worthwhile common cause. In downsizing, which he called a corporate blunder, he stated, we had no furloughs in the Southwest, although obviously during the Recession we could have made more money if we did. The unpleasantness he gives him, the uncomfortable. When you do this [workers] don't forget about it for a long time. People, not the bottom line, are sacred in the southwest. But the Southwest is an exception. If Claire sells or retires, she is almost certain that the people who take over will shrink and be forced to try to improve profits. And in the short term they may be successful. But without Claire, new owners are likely to remain open to external control and fail in the long run. We also don't see how widespread the misery really is because it's still driven by common sense, many of us think that misery is largely caused by poverty, laziness or how the powerful treat the powerless. But in the prosperous western world, there is no shortage of miserable people who are well off, hardworking and powerful. I have noticed that there are high rates of divorce among successful academics, with successful professionals and business leaders close behind. The failure of children and parents to be put together may well be more extreme among the poor and the powerless, but it is hardly unique to that group. Although more students in poverty zones refuse to try to learn than students in affluent areas, this failure has much more to do with how teachers and students accompany each other than the wealth of those who participate. Students from Families where education is the main reason for the boom are usually more motivated to learn than students from families who have not been helped by education. Teachers appreciate this motivation and tend to make more effort to accompany former students, which is another reason they learn more. But if teachers were offered choice theory and found out how useful it is in marriages and their families, they could start using it to get along better with students who seem to be still. This effort could have formed a long way to go for the lack of support for home education, and previously unsymed students learned much more than they do now. In Chapter 10, on education, I explain how the theory of choice was used in a minority school where my wife and I worked for a year. This is an area where I know something about common sense that poor or minority students can't or won't learn is completely wrong. When they get along well with their teachers, they may learn more slowly because they start to go back, but, in the end, they learn as well as any other student. Productive, high-quality work is assured in any organization where workers and managers get along well. The name of what we usually do when dealing with each other is called the system. In an external control world, the system is naturally. When it fails, as it fails in marriages, families, schools and workplaces, we use more force and focus on repairing people. Many therapists emphasize systems' approach to counseling, in which they do not attempt to fix people as much as helping them find a way to make the family system work better for all involved. What I'm proposing is that we try to switch to a choice theory system, which gives everyone a learning, not just unhappy people, how to get along better with each other. What makes external control twice as harmful is that not only does our belief in it create the problems we're trying to solve, it's also used to deal with problems. When the punishment doesn't work, we always punish harder. No wonder little progress has been made. So far only a small part of the money spent to reduce misery has been spent on prevention, in teaching people how to get along better with each other before they get to hard-core, torpede relationships that result in too many attempts to control or manipulate. If we want to raise the flat line of human progress, prevention, which means switching from an external control to a selection theory system, is the way we can do it. When any human problem occurs, for example, when marriage begins to fail, couples rarely come back together. No matter how skilled the counselor is, it is often impossible to save a marriage or a failed student. The answer lies in preventing these failures, not looking for better ways to People who are failing to prove my claim that a large number of human problems are seemingly insurmountable relationship problems, take a look at your life and the lives of people you know. I am sure many of you will be able to accompany your spouses, parents, or children as well as you would like. You may also admit that the more you're with them, the harder they seem to get together. think about it . you were happy when you got married . Are you miserable or divorced now? Is there anyone in your family that you don't talk to anymore? Are your children in middle school as happy as they were in early grades? Do you still find happiness in what you do? If you experience any of the misfortune in the previous paragraph, you are involved in one or more of the four variations basically the same as trying to control someone else's situation. You wanted someone Dili to do what he refused to do, usually, in different ways, some obvious, some pervert, you were trying to force him to do what you wanted to do. Someone Was trying to make you do something you didn't want to do, both you and the other one was trying to do something that you didn't want to do, you were trying to make yourself do something that you found so painful or even impossible the first three variations are obviously different aspects of the same situation. Although the fourth is somewhat different, it is in the same genre. In this example, you may be trying to force yourself to stop smoking, stay in a job you hate, lose weight when you didn't want to diet, or love someone you no longer even loved. In the first three changes, you may be a wife who complains to your husband that you need more help with children or a husband who nags at his wife, who left her job for you at no time. Or they both complain and nag at each other. You may be a parent or teacher trying to motivate the child to do better at school. Either the boss who forces a worker to do something he doesn't think is worth doing until we continue to believe that we can control others or vice versa that others can control us, the misery associated with common situations like these will continue unbelievably. These changes are as old as history, and resisting this is the reason for very little progress in our relationships. One of the most confusing exceptions to this widespread use of external control psychology is that we rarely use it with our best friends, people who have been with us through thick and thin for years. With them, even though few of us are aware of it, we use choice theory. But whether or not we know this theory, most of us are well aware that we often treat our good friends differently from our mates, children, students and employees. We recognize that good friends are our most reliable long-term source We seem to know that we can lose them and the joy that goes with them if we tried to force them to do something they didn't want to do. I believe this reluctance to try to force a friend, when we have a few qualms about trying to force almost every other, may be a good way to define close friendships. If we practiced choice theory with everyone, we would make and keep more friends, and our happiness would increase substantially. What may also be involved here is ownership. Most of us believe that we should either own our husbands, spouses, children, students and employees. I have the right to control my wife and children because they belong to me, this is my classroom and my students would have better do what I say. I own this company and I own you, so do what you are told or look for another place to work—all examples of ownership thinking are. As long as we believe that we own people, when they don't do what we want, we don't stop forcing them. we feel differently with our friends , we accept that we do not own them and that they do not own us . Taking care of Emma never trying to have may be another way to define friendship. Without really thinking about ownership, most of us divide the world into two groups. The first group, those we own or try to own, is made up of lovers, wives, husbands, children, students and employees. The second group, those we don't own or try to own, usually a large group, is made up of good friends, acquaintances, people who have power over us, like bosses, and of course strangers. A good way to learn the theory of choice is to take a close look at how you treat your best friend, boss and most strangers compared to how you treat the rest of your life. You know why you don't try to force your boss or your friend, you rarely force acquaintances, and if you feel anything, you never force strangers because you may have been hurt or even killed. Why don't we live and let us live? Why don't we practice the golden rule when most of us lip service? Why are we constantly trying to do what other people don't want to do when most of the time we have so little success in this effort? Earlier this season I began answering these questions. In the next chapter where I introduce basic needs, I add some new choice theory ideas to this explanation. But first I want to describe three beliefs in the psychology of external control in detail, so you can figure out what most people actually believe. You will easily see that it is the second and third beliefs that are very harmful to human relationships. The easiest way to understand this traditional psychology is to think about how almost all of us use it in our lives. Believe first: I answer the ringing phone, open the door to the door bell, stop at the red light, or do countless other things because I'm responding to the simple Signal. Second belief. I can get other people to do what I want them to do even if they don't want to do it. And other people can control what I think, act and feel. Belief third: true, even my moral obligation, to ridicule, threaten or punish those who do not do what I tell them to do or even reward them if I get them to do what I want to do. These three common sense beliefs are the foundation of the psychology of external control that essentially ruled the world. In the first belief, the phone ring or any other mechanical signal is external control that most people think makes them respond. In the second, extrapolation from the beginning, control is always someone outside the person who behaves, for example, the parents telling a child, the lawn; Giving to children or adults who choose to defy them because doing what they are told is in the best interests of these children or adults. The foundation of these beliefs, that we have external motives, is wrong. Just as the world was flat until someone started questioning this belief and answered a phone because it rings, it looks right until we start to question it. When any foreign control belief is questioned, it is determined that what was right is actually wrong. For example, we don't answer the phone because it rings; were gonna answer it because we want to . Moment as our answer may be, every time we answer a phone, we have decided that this is the best choice. If we didn't think so, we would not have responded. You might argue, if I don't answer the phone because it rings, then what's the purpose of the ring? I certainly don't turn around phones that don't call. The ring has a purpose, but it's not to answer you. Is to give you information to tell you that someone out there wants to talk to someone here, phone rings, and everything else we understand from the outside world, including what we understand from our own bodies, is information. But information is not controlled. Choice theory explains that stimuli do not exist in the sense that they can constantly control a human being to make a specific choice. Because information doesn't make us do anything, we can choose to ignore it or act in any way we see fit. were not cars . We, as machines, are not designed to respond in a particular way to external control. When we do what we're told, it's because we choose to do it based on the information we have. In the case of the phone, if we don't want to respond, we can let it ring, let a car respond to it, pull the clip out of the wall to Or yell at someone delier to answer it, every behavior we choose is produced inside our brains. Choice theory explains that we have internal motivation just as all beings are living. You might ask, what difference does it make to why I answer the phone or do something else? I did it, so what? It makes no difference to simple mechanical information such as ringing a phone or red traffic light. This is as long as we believe from the first onwards, much more complicated the second belief - trying to do someone he won't do or believing someone else can control our behavior that you can start to appreciate the massive difference between external control and choice theory. For example, if I know the theory of choice, you can't make me feel guilty by telling me that you wish you had a house as good as I did. If I had done anything to deprive you of a good home, I should probably choose to feel guilty, but if I didn't, why would I choose to feel guilty? Freedom from the decent sin that floods the world of external control in which we live is a huge benefit from learning to use the theory of choice in your life. Many mothers rely on the psychology of external control so that their children feel guilty. But choosing to feel guilty because you don't do what your mother expects you to do is a choice. Once you learn this lesson and if you are a sinful mother of skilled tripping it is not an easy one to learn—you will see that it frees both you and your mother to make better choices. A remarkable example of freedom of choice is best represented by the behavior of one of my good friends, the criminologist, who didn't think this theoretical difference between the psychology of external control and choice theory was important. He may owe his life to the fact that when he made what many of us consider poor choices, the psychology of external control was threatened but not used. My friend went to Las Vegas with some college work and was placed in an imaginative hotel, even though friends warned him to be careful every time he walked into his room and quickly locked, twisted and chained the door, but he didn't heed that information. On one occasion, he even forgot to close the door safely, much less screw it up. A moment later, a man who was subversive of a gun walked through the locked door. If you were there, you'd see a very unusual sight: a criminal and a criminal face-to-face criminologist. The perpetrator, a seemingly firm believer in this traditional psychology, said the game is his wallet. My friend, very surprised by him (he was surprised because he was practicing choice theory), told the thief: 'You can't have my wallet.' I'll pay you, but not the criminal's wallet, he took the multi-dollar that my friend put on the floor and left. If the perpetrator was a dedicated doctor of external control My friend might not have lived to tell the story, a gun in the hands of the man who will use it as much as there is a strong external control. At a crucial moment, right after my friend made the choice not to give the wallet to the perpetrator, the offender changed to the theory of choice and chose to shoot him. Choices, even what may seem unusual choices, are what this book is all about. If even a dedicated offender can give up external control when it seems better to do so, it shouldn't be that hard for most of us. But many times in life, when we're miserable, it's because we continue to blame others for our misery or try to control others when it's against our best interest. To explain, I continue the example of the father and son I started earlier. You knocked down your son who didn't do his school job, and now he's stopped working a lot, he's hanging around with the wrong kids and admitting to smoking marijuana, and you caught him sneaking out of the house on weekends. You've spent a lot of time punishing and arguing, but your son is worse than he was before you started, you've already taken his pitch step along.

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