

HELP, HE/SHE IS DRIVING ME CRAZY

Dr Bach coined the term “crazy making behavior” more than 40 years ago , however we know that people have been driving each other crazy since the beginning of time. Crazy making behaviors (which I will refer to as CMB from now on) are the things that one says or does that leaves the recipient feeling confused, misunderstood, self doubting, anxious, frustrated and powerless. A certain amount of crazy making in the best of relationships is inevitable. But when interactions are dominated by stuff that leaves one or the other or both feeling chronically bad then there is a strong possibility that there is a lot of crazy making going on.

Crazy makers give you compliments that feel like jabs, they deny having said things that you are certain were said and leave choices up to you but are always unhappy with them. They withdraw into silence but insist nothing is wrong. They send mixed messages, and they make you feel like you can never get it right. They do not take responsibility for their behaviors and don't tell you what they need but are angry that you didn't read their minds. There are too many CMB's to list but most fall into the categories of: martyrs, victims, blamers, guilt inducers, deniers and know it alls.

Underlying most chronic CMB is anger, fear of conflict, shame, anxieties and the INABILITY TO EXPRESS ONE'S FEELINGS DIRECTLY. Much of the time the crazy makers are not aware of their behaviors. It would be great if the crazy maker would be open to learning about the negative impact of their behaviors and be willing to do something about them. But we can never rely on other people changing nor can we fix them.

If you have crazy makers in your life you have to learn how to protect yourself from their toxic effects by listening to your inner voice and recognizing when CM is taking place. Draw some firm boundaries by not absorbing what doesn't belong to you and do not engage in CM interactions. And as always do an objective self assessment and make sure that you are not guilty of being a CRAZY MAKER yourself!