



The Interpersonal Problems Workbook: ACT to End Painful Relationship Patterns (A New Harbinger Self-Help Workbook)

By Matthew McKay PhD, Patrick Fanning, Avigail Lev PsyD, Michelle Skeen PsyD

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Do you often lash out at people? Do you let your emotions rule your interactions with others? Do you find it difficult to see things from others' point of view? You are not alone. Despite the fact that we all have to deal with other people our daily lives, many of us have difficulties with interpersonal relationships.

Written by psychologist and bestselling author Matthew McKay, *The Interpersonal Problems Workbook* combines research and evidence-based techniques for strengthening relationships in all areas in life—whether it's at home, at work, with a significant other, a parent, or a child. The skills in this workbook are based in both schema therapy and acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT), and are designed to help you connect and communicate effectively with those around them.

ACT has been proven effective in helping people improve their relationships with others. The ACT skills detailed in this book include present moment awareness, diffusion, and flexibility—all of which will help you to improve your relationships with others. In this book you will learn what your schema is, and how to act on your values to communicate and get along with others.

If you are ready to stop building walls and start connecting with those around you, this book presents powerful, effective tools for change.

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Editorial Review

Review

“The Interpersonal Problems Workbook is a brilliant resource for anyone struggling with a pattern of relationship problems. It is straightforward, thoroughly researched, and wonderfully compassionate. This book is a gentle but powerful guide to becoming the person you want to be, and creating the relationships you want to have.”

—**Shawn T. Smith, PsyD**, author of *The User’s Guide to the Human Mind*

“The Interpersonal Problems Workbook validates the emotional pain connected to interpersonal difficulties that we all experience throughout our lives. It provides worksheets and exercises to help readers gain insight into where this pain comes from, and teaches techniques to help people end these unhealthy patterns, subsequently having the effect of reducing emotional pain. This is a fabulous book that will help people get unstuck from ineffective relationship patterns, and that will provide clinicians with the much-needed, concrete tools to help clients with these issues.”

—**Sheri Van Dijk, MSW, RSW**, psychotherapist and author of several books, including *Don’t Let Your Emotions Run Your Life for Teens*, *Calming the Emotional Storm*, and *DBT Made Simple*

“The Interpersonal Problems Workbook is an excellent resource for any individual or therapist working with clients who have maladaptive relationship patterns. This workbook uses a treatment protocol that is grounded in the core principles of acceptance and commitment therapy. Not only do clients get to explore their schemas, but they get to learn about their core values and how to live a life of mindfulness. I highly recommend this book to anyone struggling with painful interpersonal problems. This workbook is an invaluable tool for any mental health practitioner or person wanting to improve his or her relationships.”

—**Raychelle Cassada Lohmann, MS, LPC**, professional counselor, author of *The Anger Workbook for Teens*, *Staying Cool...When You’re Steaming Mad*, and coauthor of *The Bullying Workbook for Teens*

“A well-conceived, research-based, step-by-step series of exercises guides individuals to identify and mindfully address the schemas that inhibit their ability to form happy, healthy relationships. It is not necessary to be especially well-versed in ACT to benefit from this practical approach. Everything you need to begin addressing the pain that accompanies poor interpersonal relating can be found in this highly worthwhile workbook.”

—**Stan Tatkin, PsyD, MFT**, clinician, researcher, teacher, and developer of a Psychobiological Approach to Couple Therapy® (PACT)

“If you’re tired of merely thinking and talking about your problems with family, loved ones, friends, colleagues, and coworkers, then this book is for you. It teaches you a host of new valuable skills that will actually not only help you with interpersonal problems but will also come in handy in many other areas of

your life. The book explains in simple, straight-forward, and accessible language how certain thought patterns and beliefs about yourself and your relationship with the world can keep you unhappy and stuck in patterns of behavior that clearly have not worked in the past. It then quickly moves on and provides you with a variety of extremely helpful exercises that you can put into practice right away. These exercises are simple but they are not simplistic. They have proven themselves many times over and are backed up by a stack of research studies attesting to their usefulness. This book is for you and will help you if you are serious about moving past your relationship pain (and what your mind tells you about that pain) and are willing to take the steps toward doing what matters—you have nothing to lose and much to win!”

—**Georg Eifert, PhD**, Chapman University Professor Emeritus of Psychology and coauthor of the *Mindfulness and Acceptance Workbook for Anxiety*

“At the heart of happiness is the ability to have strong and healthy relationships. Struggling with interpersonal problems can make you miserable. This book teaches you proven techniques for developing the skills to relate to other people in a much healthier and productive manner. *The Interpersonal Problems Workbook* will help you deal with the thoughts and emotions that create obstacles in your relationships while also guiding you towards building genuine connections with the people in your life.”

—**D. J. Moran**, founder of the MidAmerican Psychological Institute

“Inspired in part by the work of Jeffrey Young, founder of the schema therapy approach, *The Interpersonal Problems Workbook* offers valuable strategies for dealing with some of the most difficult challenges we face with some of the most important people in our lives. This comprehensive workbook provides the reader with meaningful ways to look beneath the trappings of early life themes that can prompt our self-defeating responses when triggered. We learn how to move beyond these embedded automatic patterns in order to achieve effective/adaptive interpersonal experiences and coping styles. Hats off to the authors for this creative and thoughtful guide.”

—**Wendy Behary**, author of *Disarming the Narcissist*

“For most of us, when our relationships are not working, life is not working. Despite their central link to human health and happiness, psychology has been appallingly lax in developing specific methods that will help with interpersonal problems. This book helps end that odd silence. It puts forward a creative, step-by-step approach that research suggests can make a real difference in the quality of your relationships, now. Its clear, sound guidance will help you create a better life for you and those you love. Highly recommended.”

—**Steven C. Hayes**, cofounder of acceptance and commitment therapy and author of *Get Out of Your Mind and Into Your Life*

“*The Interpersonal Problems Skills Workbook* is a highly needed self-help book for those struggling with chronic interpersonal problems. The authors did an outstanding job guiding readers through the process of identifying their schemas, triggers as well as old behaviors; furthermore, they make sure to walk readers step-by-step on how to develop new behaviors that are in alignment with their interpersonal values. This self-help book will help everyone struggling with ongoing relationship problems. I highly recommend it not only because of its rich content but also because of the research that supports its evidence.”

—**Patricia E. Zurita Ona, PsyD**, psychologist at the East Bay Behavior Therapy Center and coauthor of *Mind & Emotions*

“Our relationships with others that provide such enrichment and meaning to our lives, can, unfortunately, also serve as a source of deep pain and suffering. This scientifically-supported and easy-to-follow workbook provides a step-by-step way to break out of long-standing patterns of behavior that prevent our relationships from being more vital and fulfilling. Think of it as an operating manual for turning around troubled interpersonal relationships. I recommend this latest contribution by McKay and his colleagues not only as a self-help guidebook, but also as a useful adjunct to their related book for mental health professionals working with those who struggle with interpersonal relationship issues.”

—**Robert Zettle**, author of *ACT for Depression*

About the Author

Matthew McKay, PhD, is a professor at the Wright Institute in Berkeley, CA. He has authored and coauthored numerous books, including *The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook*, *Self-Esteem, Thoughts and Feelings*, *When Anger Hurts*, and *ACT on Life Not on Anger*. McKay received his PhD in clinical psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology, and specializes in the cognitive behavioral treatment of anxiety and depression. He lives and works in the Bay Area.

Patrick Fanning is a professional writer in the mental health field. He is author of *Visualization for Change* and *Lifetime Weight Control* and coauthor of several self-help books, including *Self-Esteem* and *50 Ways to Simplify Your Life*.

Avigail Lev, PsyD, maintains a private practice in Berkeley, CA. She specializes in couples' therapy and also treats individuals who struggle with interpersonal problems, anxiety, trauma, chronic pain, and mood disorders. She has provided supervision, trainings, and workshops utilizing cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and is the coauthor of *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Interpersonal Problems*.

Michelle Skeen, PsyD, is a therapist who lives and works in San Francisco, CA. She has provided brief and long-term therapy for individuals and couples utilizing schema, cognitive, and behavioral therapies to address interpersonal issues, weight management, anger, depression, anxiety, disabilities, and trauma. She is the author of *The Critical Partner* and coauthor of *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Interpersonal Problems*, and is currently working on her fourth book for New Harbinger Publications, *Love Me Don't Leave Me*, a self-help book that provides breakthrough, evidence-based solutions for women (and men) struggling with the fear of abandonment. Michelle hosts a weekly radio show called *Relationships 2.0 with Dr. Michelle Skeen* on KCAA-1050AM. To find out more about Michelle, visit her website at www.michelleskeen.com.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Paul Henson:

Book is to be different per grade. Book for children until adult are different content. As we know that book is very important normally. The book *The Interpersonal Problems Workbook: ACT to End Painful Relationship Patterns* (A New Harbinger Self-Help Workbook) seemed to be making you to know about other understanding and of course you can take more information. It is very advantages for you. The publication *The Interpersonal Problems Workbook: ACT to End Painful Relationship Patterns* (A New

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Warren Johnson:

A lot of people always spent their very own free time to vacation as well as go to the outside with them family or their friend. Do you realize? Many a lot of people spent these people free time just watching TV, or perhaps playing video games all day long. If you would like try to find a new activity honestly, that is look different you can read the book. It is really fun for you. If you enjoy the book you read you can spent all day long to reading a book. The book The Interpersonal Problems Workbook: ACT to End Painful Relationship Patterns (A New Harbinger Self-Help Workbook) it is extremely good to read. There are a lot of individuals who recommended this book. We were holding enjoying reading this book. If you did not have enough space to bring this book you can buy often the e-book. You can m0ore very easily to read this book from the smart phone. The price is not too costly but this book possesses high quality.

Charles Aranda:

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Michael Sweet:

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