Relationship Manual

with Beth Martell

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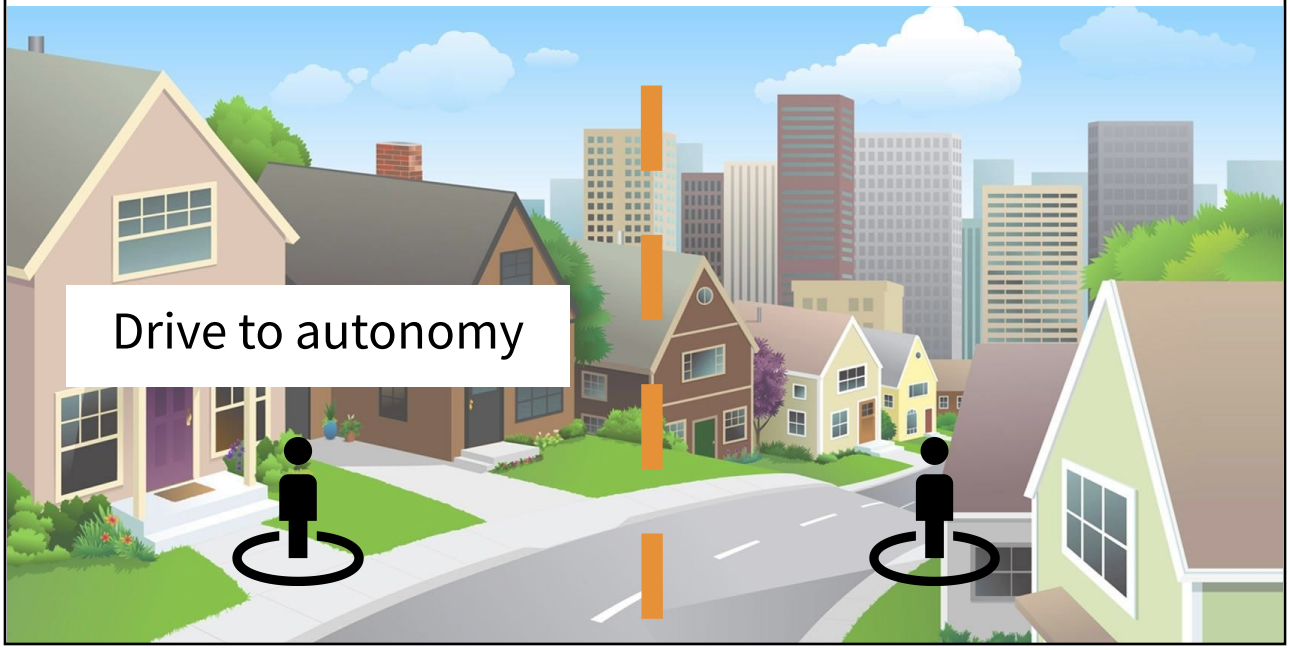
All healthy relationships work the same way, from brief interactions to marriage.

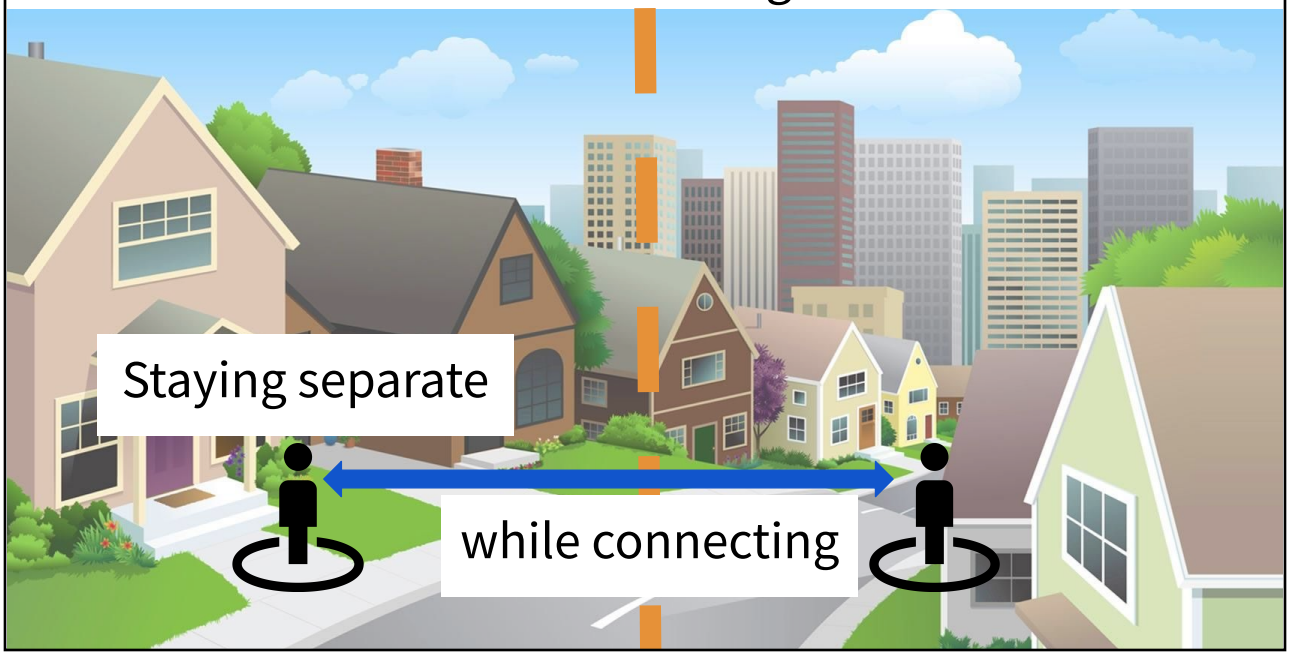
Relationships are our greatest human challenge.

Humans have two innate drives



Humans have two innate drives

The real challenge is:



A metaphor of a street:
two separate people who meet

Stay separate: I stay on my side of the street.
I think, feel, speak, and act for me.

I have a lot to care for on my side of the street,
in my separate life:

- ❑ my meaning of life
- ❑ my work
- ❑ my health
- ❑ my respect & love for myself
- ❑ my fun & joy
- ❑ my emotions & mood
- ❑ my beliefs & values
- ❑ my habits & behavior

I can also connect with others to create
enjoyable, effective relationships.

I help create healthy connection with these:

- ❑ asking, inviting, requesting, offering
- ❑ sharing my viewpoint, thoughts, feelings & preferences
- ❑ positive outlook with focus on cooperation & solutions
- ❑ empathy, appreciation, forgiveness, flexibility, compromise
- ❑ good mood & good manners
- ❑ friendly voice/ face/ gestures/proximity

I harm healthy connection with these:

- ❑ commands & demands (*Listen to me! You need to...have to...)*
- ❑ thinking & feeling for other person (*You think...You don't care.)*
- ❑ negative outlook with focus on fault and past problems
- ❑ criticism, sarcasm, nagging, mocking, rigidity, shut-down
- ❑ bad mood & bad manners
- ❑ unfriendly voice/ face/ gestures/proximity (*Yelling, pointing...)*

We know what helps and what harms connection.

So why do we...

nag instead of ask?

yell instead of talk?

lose our good mood and good manners?

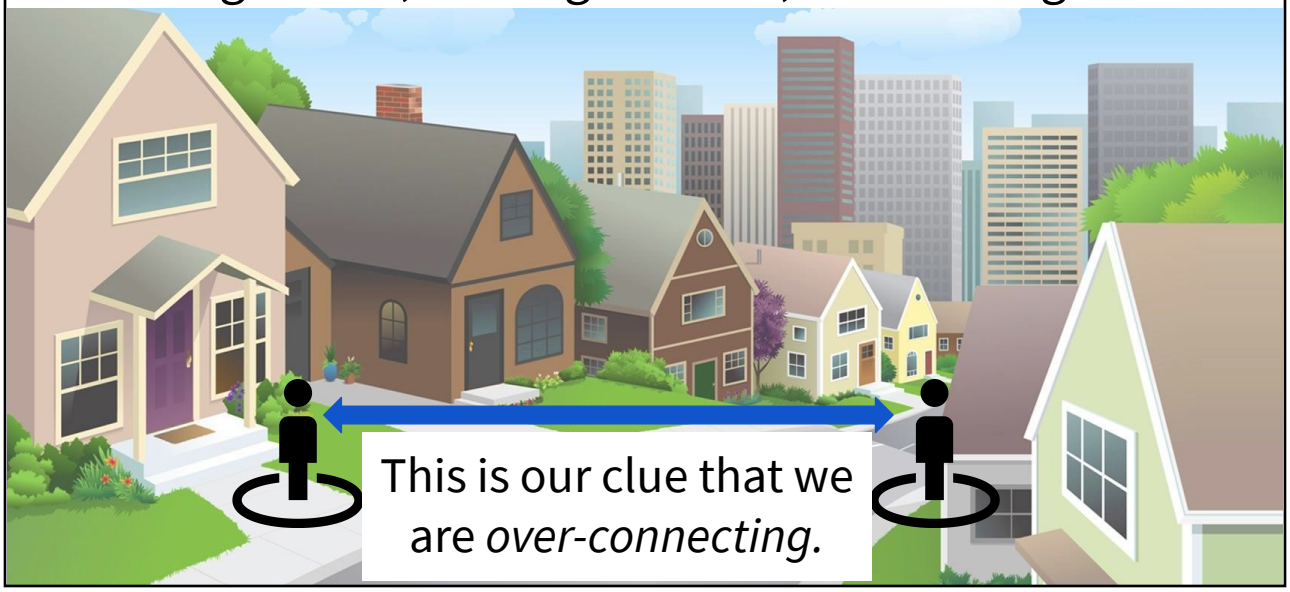
not show up as our best self?

We have a hard time staying separate

- ❑ my meaning of life
- ❑ my work
- ❑ my health
- ❑ my respect & love for myself
- ❑ my fun & joy
- ❑ my emotions & mood
- ❑ my beliefs & values
- ❑ my habits & behavior

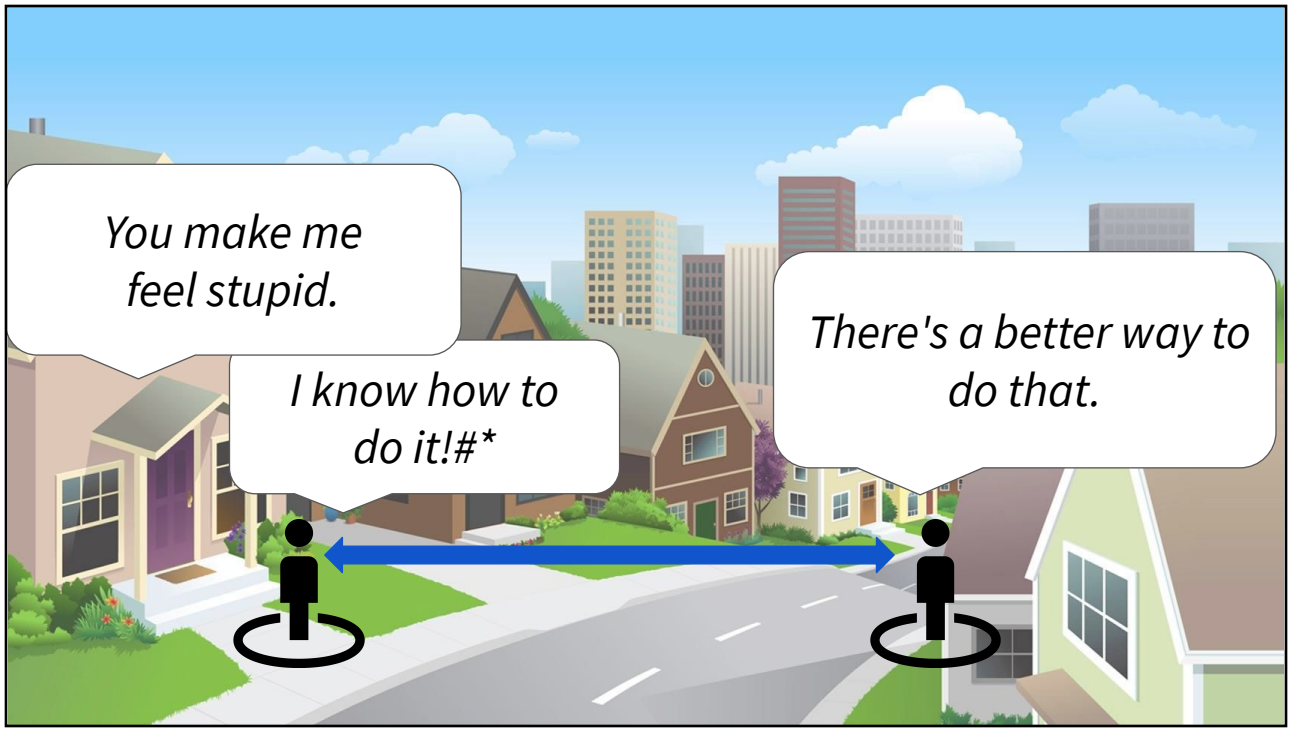
When we don't stay separate, we allow the other person too much influence on us.

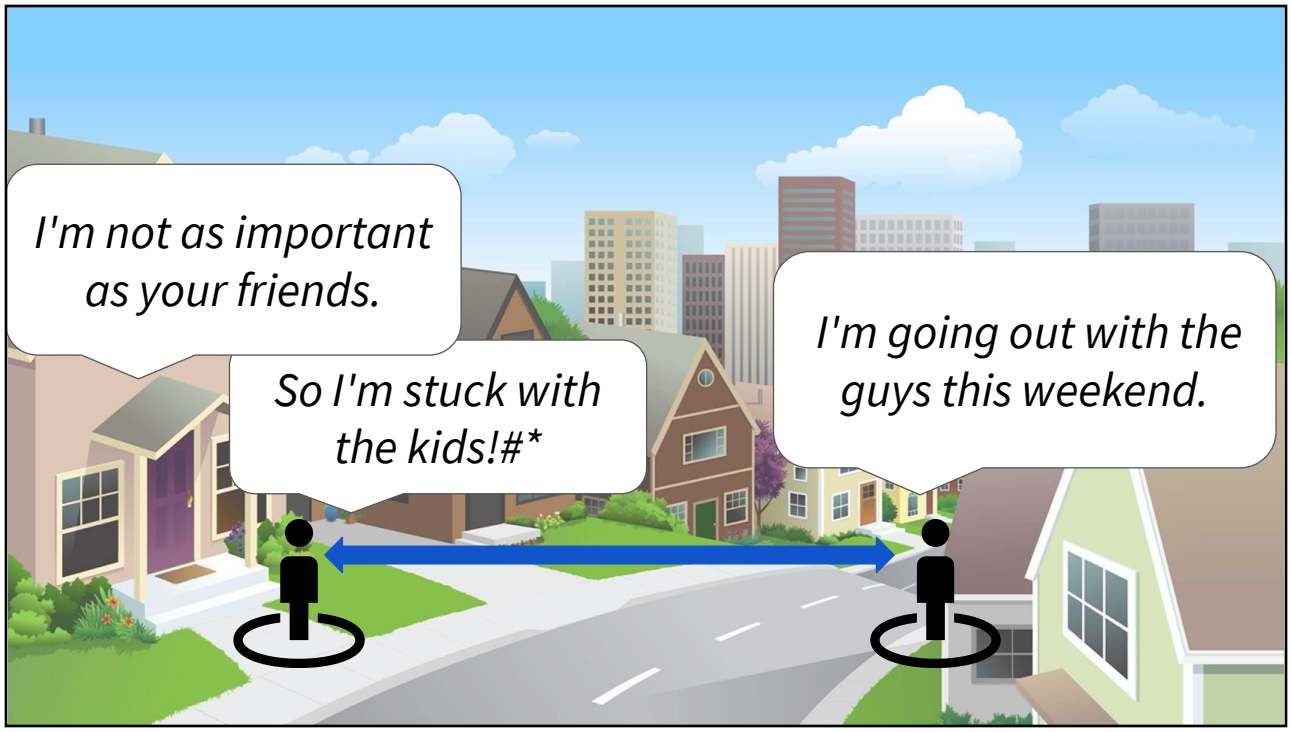
Then we experience that the other person is making us feel, making us think, and making us do.



He makes me feel incompetent.
He's stressing me out.
This project has to get done. You're over the deadline.

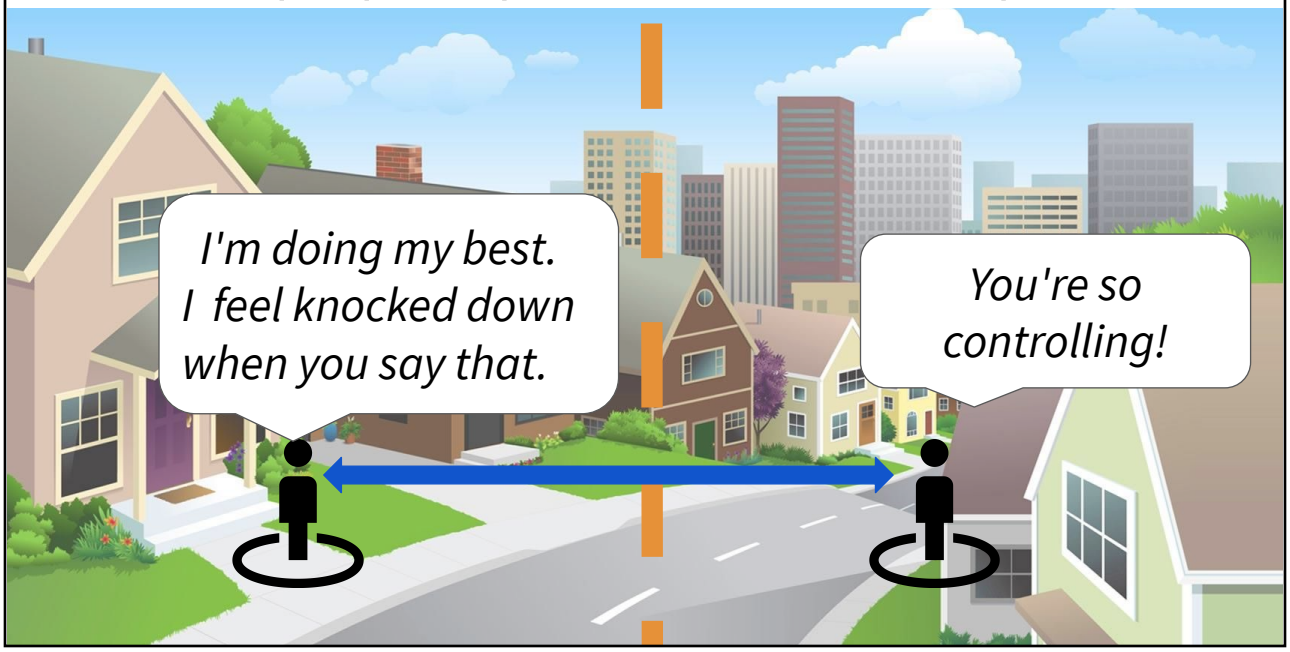
You me feel like the bad guy.
I'm the one doing all the packing!*#
You're so controlling! You're ruining the weekend.


You make me feel stupid.
I know how to do it!#*
There's a better way to do that.

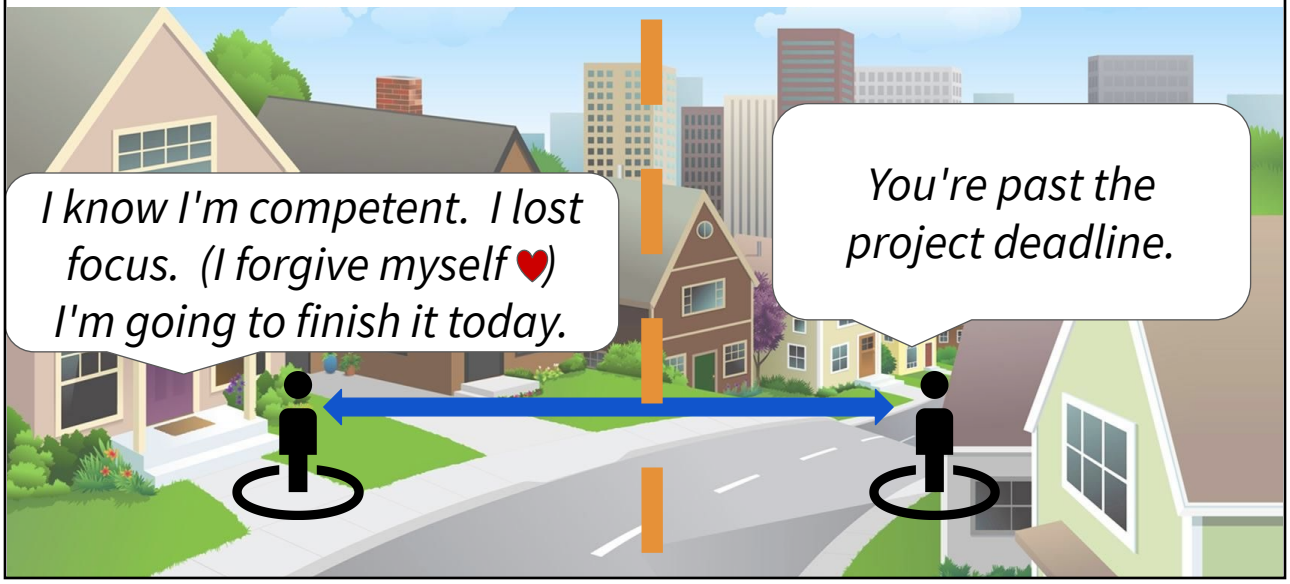

I'm not as important as your friends.
So I'm stuck with the kids!#*
I'm going out with the guys this weekend.

It's a lifelong challenge to steer our life
on our side of the street, especially our emotions.

Other people impact us. Still, we are separate.



It's a lifelong challenge to stay separate so we can act, not react.



How to stay separate while connecting

-Steady my emotions so I can act, not react.

-Refrain from harming connection (harm list).

- Pause before responding and ask myself, "What do <u>I</u> think and feel?"

- Remind myself: We impact each other, yet no one can make me think, feel or do anything.

-Value & encourage myself! From this positive place, I can best connect positively with others (help list).