

Aversive Strategies

Name: _____ Date: _____

In your family of origin, you observed how people solved problems, and you began to model your own behavior on what you saw. If members of your family dealt with conflict using anger, blame, or withdrawal, these are the strategies that you may have learned to use as well. Techniques for influencing others that utilize fear, shame, or manipulation are called *aversive strategies*. There are eight of them. On the list below, identify how many of them you have used in the past. Also identify if any of these were used on you by your family of origin. If you've used one of these strategies, check the box under 'Myself.' If your family used one of these strategies on you, check the box under 'My Family:'

Aversive Strategy	Myself	My family
<i>Discounting.</i> The message to the other person is that his or her needs or feelings are invalid and don't have legitimacy or importance. Example: "You've been watching tv all day, why do you expect me to come home and do the dishes?"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Withdrawing/abandoning:</i> The message is, "Do what I want or I'm leaving." The fear of abandonment is so powerful that many people will give up a great deal to avoid it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Threatening:</i> The message here is, "Do what I want or I'll hurt you." The most typical threats are to get angry or somehow make the other person's life miserable. Example: "I won't ask you to help me again. Maybe I'll ask someone else next time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Blaming:</i> The problem becomes the other person's fault. Since they caused it, they have to fix it. Example: "The reason we're running up our credit cards every month is that you never saw a store you didn't buy something from."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Belittling/denigrating:</i> The strategy here it to make the other person feel foolish and wrong to have a particular need, opinion, or feeling. Example: "Why do you want to go to the lake all the time? All you ever do is get allergy attacks every time."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Guilt-tripping:</i> This strategy conveys the message that the other person is a moral failure; that their needs are wrong and must be given up. Example: "If you don't trust me, then that tells me something is very wrong with our relationship."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Derailing:</i> This strategy switches attention away from the other person's feelings and needs. The idea is to stop talking about them and talk about yourself instead. Example: "I don't care what you want to do, right now I feel hurt."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Taking away:</i> Here the strategy is to withdraw some form of support, pleasure or reinforcement from the other person as punishment for something they said, did, or wanted. Example: "If we can't play the game by my rules, I'll take my football and go home."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>