

The Origin of Compliant Adaptive Behaviors in Relationships

Dr. Scott Sparrow
EPSY 6365

Family and Cultural Programming values certain types of behaviors and discourages the expression of other types of behaviors. For example, "Women should take care of their husbands, and not put themselves first."

giving rise to...

A child's imitation of family and cultural ideals through "compliant" behavior, and the suppression of legitimate ways of being that do not fit into the family and cultural programming.

Example: A little girl observes her mother waiting on her father, and receiving love, so she imitates her mother and waits on her father, too.

giving rise to...

The accurate belief that if I do what I'm told to do, then I will receive approval and love. If I do the opposite, I will be criticized and rejected.

Example: "Daddy praises me when I take care of him, and tells me that I will make a good wife. I must keep taking care of him, or he won't think so highly of me."

giving rise to...

The suppression of other ways of expressing oneself, and the creation of a rejected or shadow self, which becomes unconscious over time.

Example: "I am a good wife, always taking care of my man. It's the only way I know, and it makes me feel good, too."

giving rise to...

The continuation of a pleasing or compliant chronic behavior that expresses itself in relationship with others, and a tendency to reject others who behave more like the repressed or shadow self.

This repetitious behavior results in the suppression of one's full range of expression, and the inability to meet one's own needs in the long run.

Summary: Compliant adaptive behavior is designed to win love and prevent something *that has never happened* from occurring.