

Self-sabotage

By Marlene and Bob Neufeld

Self-sabotage is when a person acts in a way that undermines their own success, integrity, self esteem, self worth, self-confidence, happiness, relationships, health, wealth, etc. Self-sabotage is more common than we realize. It is unconscious, in that we don't know when we are doing it, don't intend to do it and, often, don't even believe we did it.

In previous articles we have written about Upper Limit Patterns (ULP). These are unconscious patterns that limit our love and positive energy. We reach our Upper limit when we go above our familiar level of love and positive energy. Then we unconsciously do something to bring ourselves back down to a more familiar level; in other words – we sabotage our own happiness. For more about Upper Limit Patterns please see our articles at www.marleneandbob.com/articles.htm.

In this article we want to explore a specific pattern of self-sabotage. It is the pattern which stops us from even experiencing any of the love and positive energy we crave. We call it a “Pre-emptive Upper Limit” or PULP.

Over 20 years ago, we were shocked one day to realize that we had had an argument every Friday night for the previous 6 months. Why would we argue every Friday night? During the week we managed to live together quite collaboratively. What was different about Friday night? Why would Friday night bring up a fight?

We can no longer remember what any of the arguments were about; but we can both remember clearly the apprehension that we approached Friday nights with. Friday nights at that point in our lives were set aside for us to connect and to be together. We had teenaged children who were relatively self-sufficient. We led busy lives so we didn't have a lot of chances for leisure. Friday nights were the night we had scheduled just for us.

So how was it that we so often found ourselves doing the opposite of what we thought we wanted?

One thing we have realized was that the sense of vulnerability, fear and hyper vigilance with which we approached our Friday nights actually helped us to create what we most wanted to avoid.

When a person or couple's fear of intimacy is greater than their desire for intimacy, they will unconsciously do something so that intimacy doesn't happen. We didn't wake up on Friday mornings saying “hmmmm, I have a possibility to have some fun; I think I'll spoil it today.” Instead, we crossed a critical line that caused anxiety, or fear, or unease to build.

We are happy to tell you that we were able to stop the pattern of Friday night fights. We learned to recognize the rising of anxiety, fear and unease. We learned to acknowledge what was happening and act in ways that were more conducive to getting what we wanted. We learned to increase our capacity for love, joy and positive energy with each other. **YOU CAN TOO!**