

PART I

*Understanding the Jekyll
and Hyde Syndrome*

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What Is the Jekyll and Hyde Syndrome?

When she was good
She was very, very good,
But when she was bad she was horrid.

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

We all experience mood shifts from time to time. We are all multifaceted people who show different sides of ourselves depending on the circumstances and whom we associate with. And we are all sometimes shocked by our own actions or by the words that come out of our mouths. Yet there are some people whose mood shifts are far from normal, people who experience radical changes in their moods or violent outbursts for no apparent reason—people who become enraged, abusive, violent, depressed, or sullen at the drop of a hat. Some not only show different sides of themselves depending on the situation, but they are capable of creating double lives or entirely different personalities—personalities that would be unrecognizable to people who know them in other contexts.

These people suffer from what I call the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome. Someone with the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome seems at

times to be two different people. Many people with this syndrome experience radical mood swings, often for no apparent reason. They can seem happy or normal one minute and the next become deeply depressed, angry, critical, or afraid. Often, this involves suddenly getting angry with those who are closest to them. They may fly into a rage and accuse their partners or children of doing something to hurt them when the other people are totally innocent. Or they may suddenly become critical, finding fault with their loved ones, their coworkers, or anyone who is in close proximity.

This is how my client Leslie described her husband's behavior: "You'll never meet a kinder man than my husband. He is so generous and loving. He has dozens of friends who adore him. And most of the time he is wonderful to me. But every once in a while something sets him off and he becomes this horrible man who says terribly cruel things to me. He'll berate me for the smallest things and insist that I don't love him, that I'm a terrible wife, that he deserves to be with someone who will treat him better. For years I took his complaints seriously and tried to change the things about myself that he didn't like. But no matter how much I changed, he just kept finding things to complain about. I'm beginning to think that I really have nothing to do with his moods."

Often, the people who experience these radical mood shifts don't seem to be aware that they have changed. Leslie continued: "The scary thing is that when he switches back to his normal self, he often can't even remember the cruel things he's said to me. When I tell him about how he has talked to me, he insists it can't be true. That's why I've come to realize that it really isn't me—it's him."

Instead of getting angry and lashing out at those closest to them, some Jekyll and Hydes suddenly become withdrawn, depressed, or sullen, as was the case with my client Andrew's wife. "You never know when Sheila's mood will change and she will become withdrawn," Andrew said. "Sometimes she wakes up that way; other times, she'll come home from work that way. I'll ask her what is wrong, and she insists that there is nothing going on. But you'd have to be blind not to see that something is bothering her. She barely talks to me or the kids, and she ends up going to bed and staying there for hours, even days sometimes. Then the mood just

seems to pass and she's her old self again. She refuses to talk about what happened and gets angry with me if I try to push her. I've learned to just try to ignore it, but it's hard on us. I just never know when I'm going to lose my wife and the kids will lose their mother for several hours or even days. And I feel bad for her—there's no telling what kind of emotional torture she's going through."

Two Faces

Sometimes a Jekyll and Hyde's duality shows up in the fact that the person acts radically different depending on whom he or she is around or often on whether he or she is in a public place or someplace private. Many of them show one face to their friends and the public while showing another to their partners or families. For example, Carl is a mild-mannered project manager for a multi-million dollar corporation. His boss is a tyrant who insists on Carl always completing his projects perfectly and on time—even when Carl hasn't been given adequate lead time. If Carl's boss finds one mistake or isn't completely impressed with Carl's performance, he humiliates Carl in front of his coworkers. Carl is too intimidated by his boss to confront him and too afraid he'll get a bad review and not be able to find another job if he were to quit. So Carl takes his frustrations out on his wife and children. At home with his family, Carl is an entirely different person. At home he is the tyrant.

The moment Carl walks in the door, his children are supposed to drop whatever they are doing to come to greet him and report to him whether they have completed their chores. He then follows each child around the house or the yard, inspecting the area to make sure the job was done right. If a chore is not completed to his satisfaction, he insists that the child go back and work on it until the job is done just right. After finishing their chores, the children must sit down with Carl and show him their completed homework. Carl is a stickler for perfection and often browbeats a child for getting something wrong. Dinner will be held up for the entire family until all of the children have completed their homework to their father's satisfaction.

While many Jekyll and Hydes tend to be abusive when they switch over into another personality, others act out dark urges that are completely uncharacteristic of them. For example, Reverend Thomas Henderson is a highly respected minister in a conservative church that counsels against drinking alcohol, sex outside of marriage, dancing, and gambling. Although he fervently believes in the church and its teachings, Reverend Henderson experiences intense fantasies and desires that he cannot seem to control. He is such a charismatic speaker and is so highly regarded that he is asked to be the guest minister at various churches around the United States. Unfortunately, traveling to a strange city affords Reverend Henderson an opportunity to act out his darker urges. As much as he tries to resist, he is too weak to fight them.

While he is away, Reverend Henderson takes on another persona—that of a loud, boisterous man who goes to bars, drinks, dances, and flirts with women. If people in his congregation were to run into him, they would barely recognize him. Other than his physical features being the same, everything else about Reverend Henderson is different. Gone is his respectful, quiet demeanor and in its place is a vociferous, crude attitude. He even dresses differently. In the place of his conservative suit is a tight T-shirt and jeans. At the end of each evening, Reverend Henderson takes a new woman back to his hotel room for sex.

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

The Jekyll and Hyde syndrome is named after the classic Robert Louis Stevenson story *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. The story is about a man not too different from Reverend Henderson—an upstanding, tee-totaling, philanthropic doctor who turns into a womanizing, drinking, murderous scoundrel, seemingly overnight. In addition to this being an engaging tale, it is also much more. It is a metaphor for a phenomenon that is all too common—the fact that so-called good people often have a dark side, a part of themselves they keep hidden from themselves and

others. In some cases, this dark side actually forms a distinct personality radically different from the public persona, as was the case with Reverend Henderson. Ironically, it is often people who stand out as the most moral, the most kind, and the most magnanimous who are most likely to fall. It is, in fact, a rule of nature that the higher up on a pedestal we put ourselves or allow others to put us, the farther we have to fall.

For those of you who haven't read this story (and for anyone who read it a long time ago), here is the basic plot: Dr. Jekyll worried a little too much about how others perceived him. He had an investment in being viewed by others as a pillar of the community, but secretly he had the desire to act out some of his darker urges. And so he concocted a brew that would allow him to venture into the dark side of human nature, experience its forbidden pleasures, and then return to his more acceptable self, seemingly unscathed. Most important, he didn't have to take responsibility for what his darker self did during his excursions.

While many people with the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome are like the original Dr. Jekyll who completed his transformation in the darkness of night, with no one else witnessing his change, other Jekyll and Hydes change their personalities or experience their mood shifts in front of others. For example, a normally pleasant, amiable man can suddenly turn into an insulting, abusive monster, devastating his wife with his sharp criticism of her, going on a rampage and destroying property, or even becoming physically violent toward his family. A typically doting mother can suddenly burst into a rage, calling her children horrible names, throwing objects across the room, and even driving off without them to teach them a lesson.

Jennifer devotes her life to her husband and children. She is a stay-at-home mom who is usually patient and loving with her children, four-year-old Erin and six-year-old Josh. Yet sometimes, for no apparent reason, Jennifer becomes impatient and critical of her kids and husband. Nothing they do will please her. It's as if she is looking at them through different eyes. The qualities she complimented them on days earlier seem to have completely slipped her mind, and all she can see are their faults. "It's all or nothing with my

wife,” her husband, Bill, told me when, out of desperation, he came to me for help. “You’re either the greatest person she ever met or the worst. When she puts you in the ‘bad’ box, there is nothing you can do to make her like you. I’ve learned to just lay low and wait for her to put me in the ‘good’ box soon. But I don’t want my kids to have to grow up this way.”

How the Jekyll and Hyde Syndrome Differs from Normal Mood Shifts

Those with the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome do not simply experience normal moods shifts and show different sides of themselves the way average people do. What sets people with a Jekyll and Hyde syndrome apart is:

- The fact that their mood shifts are far more frequent and severe than the average person’s.
- In many cases, not only do their moods shift but their entire personalities change.
- Often, their sudden mood shifts include an element of abusiveness toward others.
- They seldom own up to or admit to their severe mood shifts or their dual personalities. In fact, some are not aware that they have such extreme mood shifts or that they have two distinctive personalities. Most will deny any change in their behavior and may even try to make their partners or others doubt their own perceptions regarding these mood shifts.
- Many Jekyll and Hydes are excellent liars who are extremely convincing and are experts in denial, distorting the truth, and shifting the blame.
- Their personality changes often represent deep conflicts within themselves (for example, the minister who is vehemently against adultery but has strong sexual urges he cannot control).
- Their personality shifts or dual personalities are often symptomatic of a personality disorder or are due to previous abuse

experiences. (Many people who suffer from the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome were abused in childhood, and many suffer from personality disorders because of it).

- Some who suffer from the Jekyll and Hyde Syndrome actually live double lives. They may be highly respected elected officials, philanthropists, or even members of the clergy who hide a dark side to their personality that causes them to act in ways that would be shocking and hurtful to those who hold them in high regard, or they may create dual identities so they can participate in activities that are unacceptable in normal society.

The Seven Types of Jekyll and Hydes

From my many years of experience working as a psychotherapist specializing in abuse, I have determined that there are seven distinct types of Jekyll and Hydes:

1. *The super nice/abusive person.* For most of you reading this book, this is the type of Jekyll and Hyde you are probably concerned about. This person can be loving and charming one minute and abusive the next. Most often, the abuse takes the form of criticism, insults, and name calling, but at times it can include physical abuse. The person is often apologetic once some time has passed and goes back to his usual loving self. Yet no matter how apologetic he is or how many promises he makes to stop being critical, before long he has once again slipped back into his abusive behavior.
2. *The unpredictable person.* You never know when this person will become upset, blow up, go on a rampage, become withdrawn and sullen, or completely change her mind about something. Living with this person has been described as “walking on eggshells” because this type of person is exquisitely sensitive, and you never know whether something you say or do will upset her. Often, it is nothing you have done or said, but something that went on in this person’s own mind that created the upset.

3. *The classic Jekyll and Hyde who truly lives a double life.* This person may be one type of person around his family and an entirely different one while away from them. For example, a hard working married man may appear in public to be the pinnacle of virtue, yet may be seeing other women or be involved with illegal activities. He may hold the position of a minister or a priest, or he may have been elected a mayor of a city or a senator of a state. He may be a philanthropist or a highly respected celebrity, and yet he has another life in which he goes against everything he stands for. Some people with this type of Jekyll and Hyde syndrome have set up separate identities, which includes going by different names or being married to more than one person.
4. *Someone whose personality radically changes when he or she drinks alcohol, takes drugs, or engages in other addictive activities.* Like Dr. Jekyll, whose transformation occurred after he took an elixir he created in his laboratory, this type of radical shift usually takes place only when the person is altered due to alcohol, drugs, gambling, and so on.
5. *The imposter.* This person deliberately tries to fool people into thinking he is something he is not. This can include pretending to be more concerned with the welfare of others or more successful than he is. He regularly lies, manipulates, and deceives others.
6. *Someone whose opinion of others fluctuates drastically.* This person tends to view people as either “all good” or “all bad.” When she views someone as “all bad,” she is unable to see any redeeming qualities in the person and feels justified in treating him poorly or rejecting him completely—even if he is her own child.
7. *Someone who changes dramatically when you challenge him or her in any way.* This person can be considerate and agreeable as long as things go his way or as long as he is in control. But if you don’t do as he wants, if you challenge him in any way, or if you dare contradict him, you will see a completely different person. He will become defensive, insulting, and cruel.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Is Someone You Know a Jekyll and Hyde?

The following questions will help you decide whether someone you know is a Jekyll and Hyde:

1. Do certain situations tend to cause this person to change personality or have sudden mood shifts?
2. Does this person change radically depending on whom he is around?
3. Does she seem to have a public personality that is very different from how she behaves in the privacy of the home?
4. Does he frequently contradict himself? Does he state one point of view or belief one time and the opposite point of view another time?
5. Does this person appear to be hypocritical? Does she strongly disapprove of a certain behavior in others while often being guilty of the same behavior?
6. Does he have a radically different perception of himself from the one others have of him?
7. Is she often perplexed by how others view her behavior?
8. Does he often forget that certain events occurred?
9. Does she deny that she behaved in certain ways, even though you or others are certain she did? Does she accuse you of making it up or of being crazy?
10. Does he change personalities or become radically different once he has had a few drinks or has taken recreational drugs?
11. Does this person have an investment in being seen as the pillar of the community or as an extremely religious person yet sometimes exhibits behavior that is considered unacceptable, sinful, or even criminal?
12. Does she have an asymmetrical face—meaning that one side of the face is radically different from the other side of the face?

13. Does this person make reference to or joke about having “a bad side” to his personality, perhaps going as far as giving the bad side a name?
14. Does her wardrobe reflect extreme personality changes? For example, does she sometimes dress like a little girl and other times like a whore?
15. Does the person you care about tend to see you as either all good or all bad, with nothing in between?
16. Does he seem to start arguments soon after you have had some fun, intimate times?
17. Is this person’s behavior so inconsistent that you feel you are always waiting for the other shoe to drop?
18. Are you the focus of intense, violent, and irrational rages, alternating with periods when the other person acts perfectly normal and loving?
19. Do you suspect this person is leading a double life?
20. Do you feel confused about who this person really is?

If you answered yes to even one or two of these questions in regard to someone you know, you have reason to be concerned. If you answered more than half in the affirmative, the person in question is definitely a Jekyll and Hyde.

How Jekyll and Hydes Affect Those around Them

People who are close to someone with this syndrome suffer from incredible distress, fear, confusion, and chaos. Many of them take on a hypervigilant stance, anticipating the next tirade or upheaval in their lives. This is how my client Jack described his situation: “I can’t even tell you how terrible it is to live with my wife. We can be having a perfectly nice evening together, and suddenly she becomes upset about the smallest thing and everything changes. The atmosphere changes from friendly and light to this oppressive feeling. I find myself practically holding my breath, waiting to see if the

situation will escalate or if she will calm down. You just never know. I hate living like this—never knowing when she'll get upset or over what. I'm nervous all the time, and I'm developing an ulcer. I just don't know how long I can go on living like this."

The damage caused by someone with a Jekyll and Hyde personality can be profound. Partners come to question or even to doubt their own perceptions, often thinking that they are crazy or that something is terribly wrong with them. This feeling is exacerbated by the fact that most Jekyll and Hydes don't recognize how upsetting their mood shifts can be. Instead of validating the fact that their behavior could be upsetting to others, they accuse people who are close to them of being too sensitive, of making a big deal out of nothing, or even of making up the fact that they act like two different people. Jekyll and Hydes who acknowledge that they do exhibit erratic behavior often blame their partners or other loved ones for their drastic mood shifts, and, consequently, many partners and loved ones of Jekyll and Hydes come to blame themselves as well.

The Jekyll and Hyde syndrome can be a form of emotional abuse, causing partners and children to suffer from severe confusion and disorientation. Celeste started therapy because she was confused about whether she should leave her husband. Married for one year, Celeste explained that her husband was what she called a real Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. "Before we married, James was the most loving, considerate man you'd ever want to meet. But now he is impatient and critical. He complains about everything—the way I dress, the way I cook, the way I clean the house. He seems to look for things to criticize—the other day he got on me because he found something old in the back of the refrigerator! Before we were married, we used to have long conversations, but now when I offer my opinion about something, he treats me like I'm a child or like I'm stupid and just dismisses what I say."

Celeste explained that if her husband acted this way all the time, she would know for certain that she should divorce him. But he keeps her off balance by sometimes reverting back to the way he was before they got married. "It's so confusing. Sometimes he can still be so sweet to me. He tells me he loves me, and he says he's sorry for being so critical of me. His father was critical of him, and

he knows how much it hurts. He's been there for me with some problems I've had with my parents, and he's been really good to my daughter, who lives with us."

The harm done to children raised by a parent with the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome can be even more damaging. These children tend to develop chronic anxiety, suffer from a strong distrust in others, and take on a hypervigilant stance. Children with a Jekyll and Hyde for a parent often adjust to the chaos in their lives by learning to expect the unexpected. Craziness can begin to seem normal, and life without chaos may become boring. They can begin to associate love with fear and kindness with danger.

Consistency, continuity, and sameness of experience are essential to the development of trust and security for children. Since their parents' rules and expectations are so changeable, unreasonable, or unpredictably enforced, children with a Jekyll and Hyde for a parent seldom experience a sense of security and are often anxious and confused.

Christina Crawford, the daughter of the actress Joan Crawford, wrote in her autobiography, *Mommie Dearest*, about how her mother's moods fluctuated so dramatically that she was never certain of how she would be treated: "I never knew whether it would be a big hug of loving affection or a verbal slap in the face."

Often, children of Jekyll and Hydes learn to tune out by dissociating and disconnecting from their environment, their bodies, and their feelings. This is their way to protect themselves from feeling hurt, humiliated, and ridiculed. Children with such parents also have a tendency to blame themselves for their parents' mood shifts or blowups. And because their parents' rules or expectations are ever changing, they end up feeling like bad people.

When I was a child, I found it impossible to please my mother. I tried to be good and to stay out of her way. I knew she was tired from working and being a single mom, and I didn't want to make trouble for her. Of course, this was an impossible task for a small child. Even though I was expected to fend for myself at a very early age (about three years old), a child that young is incapable of taking care of all her own needs. I inevitably got myself into some kind of trouble, whether it was spilling milk as I tried to make myself

breakfast or walking home all alone when I thought my mother had forgotten to pick me up from the babysitter's house. My mother, very good at presenting herself to the public as a warm, charming woman, suddenly became an angry, bitter witch whenever I caused her any trouble at all. I, of course, blamed myself for her change. After all, everyone loved my mother, so it must have been my fault that she changed into such a terrible person.

Interactions with their parents, even after they have become adults themselves, often leave adult children of Jekyll and Hydes feeling guilty and confused. When as an adult I visited my mother, she always made me feel guilty that I didn't visit her more often or that I didn't call her. Yet when I did call her, she always sounded annoyed, answering the phone impatiently and sounding disinterested.

Even close friends, siblings, and other relatives can be negatively affected by someone with the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome. I have a very close friend I will call Melanie. Melanie can be one of the most loving friends anyone would want to have. She is thoughtful and kind, and she is genuinely interested in what is going on in my life. When I talk to her, I get the sense that she is really listening; she's not thinking of what she will say next or interrupting me to tell me one of her stories. She's really there with me. She is very intelligent and is one of the few people I know who is as committed to personal growth as I am. We have had some very wonderful, deep conversations in which both of us have shared facets of our personalities that we would never share with anyone else. She also has a great sense of humor, which I appreciate very much. She genuinely cares about my well-being, and I know I can count on her in an emergency, especially a medical one.

Melanie has another side to her, though. As much as she can be loving and giving, she requires a great deal of special handling in order to keep her happy. She likes people to make a fuss over her, to buy her things, and to pay her way to social events. She has special dietary needs, and if you don't go out of your way to meet them, she feels highly insulted. In other words, she likes to be treated somewhat like a princess. At the same time, she is likely to blow up if she feels you are the slightest bit condescending. This ends up

making you feel as if you can't win with her. If you go out of your way to meet her needs, you run the risk of crossing the line and treating her like a child, which enrages her.

The most difficult thing about Melanie is that you never know when she will shut down emotionally. She can be her loving, fun self for several hours and then shift into someone who is emotionally inaccessible. Her change comes completely without warning, and at first you may not even notice it. Suddenly, however, you feel an iciness coming from her. She still responds when you ask her something, but she is no longer forthcoming in the conversation, and there is usually a hint of impatience when she does speak. When you share something with her, you no longer get the feeling that she is really listening. Now you feel as if she is just putting up with you.

I mentioned earlier that Jekyll and Hydes can cause others to feel confused and disoriented. I can describe Melanie's Jekyll and Hyde behavior in detail now because I've observed her for many years. Early in our friendship, though, I didn't really know what was going on. I hadn't experienced this side of her when we first met—I saw only her charming side. This is the case with many people who befriend or become romantically involved with Jekyll and Hydes. As we became deeper friends, however, I began to notice that she became silent and withdrawn at times. When I asked her what was going on, she usually looked at me in surprise and said something like, "Why, nothing, why do you ask?" At first I just let it go, thinking that perhaps I was imagining a shift in her mood or that I was being too sensitive. Yet it became more and more clear that something indeed had occurred. She was different, whether she was willing to admit it or not. I felt very uncomfortable being with her when she was in her icy mood, and often I found a way to cut our visit short. The next time I saw her, she was usually her open, loving self, so I forgot all about her icy mood.

Over the years, though, I noticed that her radical mood shift occurred more often, particularly whenever we spent more time together. She had moved away to another city but occasionally came back to see me, often staying at my home. This is when her moods really began to bother me. We usually had a wonderful first day vis-

iting and catching up, but often, by the next morning, Melanie woke up acting distant and stayed that way for several hours. This was very uncomfortable, especially since she refused to acknowledge that anything was wrong. At one point, I tried talking to her about her mood shifts, and she became furious, telling me that I was too demanding, that I didn't give her enough space. She accused me of needing constant attention and of being super-sensitive.

I was deeply hurt; not only did it feel as if she was shutting me out, but she was now making accusations that were very hurtful. Since my mother has always accused me of being too sensitive, part of me thought that perhaps the problem did lie with me. I tried telling myself that it was okay if Melanie didn't feel like talking or if she needed some space. If possible, I tried to go about my business and leave her alone, but if we already had plans to go out to do something together, it was almost unbearable to me. I was supposed to act as if nothing was wrong when there clearly was. There would be no friendly conversation, just silence as we drove to the movie or to dinner or, God forbid, went for a drive to the country. This was like ignoring the elephant in the room, and it made me extremely uncomfortable.

Just as suddenly as Melanie became her icy self, she then switched back to her normal, loving self, and this, too, was difficult because I was supposed to move on and act as if nothing had occurred. I was supposed to get over my hurt feelings at being ignored for hours and suppress any anger I felt because she wouldn't admit she had switched personalities. And always there was a lingering doubt in my mind that perhaps I really was too sensitive or too demanding.

How This Book Will Help

You may be reading this book because someone you care about (your partner, a parent, a sibling, a friend) behaves in radically different ways or experiences extreme mood swings. Or perhaps you're reading it because you're worried about your own tendency to have severe mood shifts or to behave in ways that seem very

unlike you. Whichever your situation, this book will benefit you in many ways, starting with helping you to understand that you are not alone. Thousands of people suffer from the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome, and thousands more suffer because they are close to someone with this syndrome. This book will also help you gain a better understanding of yourself, whether you are close to someone who has this syndrome or you suffer from it yourself. Finally, the book will teach you strategies to help you cope with this syndrome, whether this means coping with someone you care about or coping with your own behavior.

For example, partners of people with the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome need to better understand what they are dealing with. If you are like Celeste, you need to understand that the person you are involved with may actually be emotionally abusing you and that often the longer you stay with such a person, the worse you will feel about yourself and the more confused and disoriented you will become. You need to understand how this kind of behavior damages your self-esteem and makes you question your perceptions and sometimes your very sanity. You may also need help to determine whether there is any hope for your relationship.

Joseph was in desperate need of help when he came to see me. Staying with his partner had caused him and his children serious emotional problems. Yet leaving a partner who can also be so caring is not an easy thing to do. What do you do when your partner acts like two entirely different people?

This is what Joseph told me about his situation: "My wife can be wonderful for two or three days, and then suddenly—poof! She turns into a monster. She's usually patient and caring, especially with the kids, but when she changes, she becomes cruel and heartless. She yells at them for no apparent reason, and she even tells them she hates them and wishes they had never been born! My kids are so wounded by this behavior that I am seriously considering leaving my wife and filing for sole custody. But she's such a loving mother most of the time that it breaks my heart to think of separating them from her. I really don't know what to do."

If you choose to stay in the relationship, you need strategies to help you confront this emotionally abusive behavior. On the other

hand, if you end the relationship, you need to know the warning signs to avoid getting involved with this type of personality again and to understand that some people are more vulnerable than others when it comes to attracting Jekyll and Hydes.

To heal from the damage caused by a Jekyll and Hyde, you need to fully understand the phenomenon and its effects on victims. You need to realize that you are not to blame for the person's behavior. And you need permission to express your anger and other emotions since it is usually too frightening to do so in the presence of someone with this syndrome.

In addition to helping wives, husbands, lovers, children, friends, and family members of people who suffer from the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome, the book will also help those who suffer from this disturbance. Mark is a loving, warm, dedicated family man who loves his wife and children and works hard to provide them with everything they need. Even though Mark is frequently away from home on business, his wife, Carrie, trusts him implicitly. She knows her husband has very high morals and believes strongly in fidelity in a marriage. Mark calls Carrie every night just to tell her he loves her and to talk to the kids.

Yet as loyal and dedicated as Mark is, he also has another side to his personality—a side that he hides from everyone he knows. After his dutiful call every evening to his wife and kids, Mark became a different man. Instead of going to bed early, as he told his wife he was doing, he spent his evenings at strip clubs, where he squandered a great deal of money paying for lap dances—and often for sex. He justified his actions by saying that he worked hard and deserved to have some fun. Yet Mark knew he was just fooling himself. He had a serious problem—a problem he was absolutely helpless to overcome. As he shared with me on our first visit, "It's as if I am two people—the family man and the whoremonger. Each is an equally dominant force in my life."

After each incident, Mark suffered from horrible shame and guilt. Every time he vowed never to repeat this behavior again, but as much as he tried, he couldn't seem to control the side of himself that felt compelled to act out sexually when he was away from his wife and children. Mark was as baffled by his behavior as his wife

will be once she discovers that the man she loves and trusts has been lying to her and is being unfaithful.

There are many people like Mark—people who have good intentions and good hearts, ethical people who, much to their shock and dismay, either break their own moral codes of behavior, betray everything they stand for, disappoint people who have trusted them, or hurt other human beings in deeply significant ways. These people need help to understand why they behave as they do.

Once Mark's wife discovers what he has been doing when he is away from her (which is inevitable), she will feel betrayed, hurt, and angry. She will also feel utterly confused and mystified. How could someone as kind and considerate as Mark do something so hurtful and selfish? Had she ever known Mark—the real Mark—or was it all a lie? Why hadn't she seen any of the signs that he was leading a double life? This book will help people like Mark and Carrie to cope with their situations. It will help those, like Mark, who suffer from this syndrome to understand the motivations for their behavior, and it will help victims like Carrie to realize that it's easy to be fooled by Jekyll and Hydes. Most important, it will provide steps for those with this syndrome to take in order to integrate their personalities, as well as advice for victims to help them handle the overwhelming emotions they feel.

Do You Suffer from the Jekyll and Hyde Syndrome?

Many people worry about themselves and fear that they might be Jekyll and Hydes, especially if they have been accused of it by others. The truth is, we all have a little Jekyll and Hyde in us. We all experience mood swings, and often we don't understand why. All of us are capable of committing selfish or cruel acts—acts that are totally uncharacteristic of us. Although we tend to feel more comfortable with the idea that someone is either good or bad, the reality is that we all have a combination of both good and bad characteristics; we all share the capacity to do both good and evil. In this book, you will come to understand the internal conflicts that can cause this duality.

In order to facilitate a deeper understanding of the duality of human nature, later in the book I offer a continuum that ranges from mild versions of the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome to more severe forms. This continuum will help you determine the seriousness of your own personal duality. For now, the following questionnaire will help you decide whether you suffer from the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Are You a Jekyll and Hyde?

1. Do you often experience intense mood swings?
2. Are you often surprised and overwhelmed by your own behavior?
3. Do you often behave in ways that shock yourself and others—ways that seem uncharacteristic of you?
4. Do people tell you that your behavior seems radically different from time to time?
5. Does your behavior or mood undergo an extreme change whenever you've had a few drinks?
6. Do you often act in ways that you regret later?
7. Is there a significant discrepancy between what you say you believe and how you act?
8. Are you deeply conflicted regarding your values and beliefs and the way you lead your life?
9. Do you frequently feel like a hypocrite because you often end up doing things that you don't believe in?
10. Do you feel as if a battle is going on inside you between the part of you that wants to be good and the part of you that wants to be bad?
11. Do you often become upset or angry for no apparent reason?
12. Do you often have no memory of what you did the day or the night before?

13. Are you often surprised when people tell you what you did or said since you have no memory of it?
14. Are you often perplexed because people close to you report that you engaged in behavior—especially abusive behavior—that you not only have no memory of but can never imagine doing?
15. Is there often a significant discrepancy between how you perceived an event and the way others perceived it?
16. Do you often act very differently depending on whom you are around?
17. Do you frequently feel “triggered” by memories of previous painful experiences, and do these memories cause a severe mood shift in you?
18. Have you set up a separate life for yourself that people closest to you don’t know about? For example, do you associate with people you would be ashamed to introduce to your family?

There are no hard and fast rules here, but if you answered yes to more than two of these questions, you have reason to be concerned, and I would encourage you to read this book. If you answered yes to more than half of these questions, I can safely say that you suffer from the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome, and you definitely need the help this book will offer.

The Causes of the Jekyll and Hyde Syndrome

Once you have determined that either you yourself suffer from the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome or that someone you are involved with has this syndrome, the next question that normally comes up is, What causes this syndrome? As you will discover in the next chapter, certain specific psychological conditions can cause this syndrome, but there are also some commonalities, no matter what the official psychological diagnosis.

People who suffer from this syndrome are often deeply conflicted human beings. The conflict may have to do with being raised by highly religious or controlling parents who punished them severely for misbehaving. A Jekyll and Hyde tends to develop a huge dark side or Shadow that holds all of his or her repressed emotions and desires. This dark side can literally take over an individual, causing the person to create a separate entity who is free to act out hidden desires.

A less extreme version is the person who cares too much what other people think and thus needs to be “all good.” This person has an investment in being seen by others in an extremely positive way. Unfortunately, the more devout, respectable, and altruistic we seem to be in the eyes of others, the more likely it is that we have a dark side just waiting to get out.

In many cases, it’s as if people with the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome suddenly have an “attack” that causes them to temporarily change their personalities. Those who were emotionally, physically, or sexually abused in childhood often suffer from radical mood shifts brought on by the fact that someone or something triggered memories of the abuse.

This sudden attack can also be brought on by alcohol or drugs, or it can be the result of an emotional disturbance, such as borderline personality disorder or narcissistic personality disorder. For example, borderline personality disorder is characterized by extreme shifts in mood and was, in the past, confused with schizophrenia. People who have borderline personality disorder tend to be intense, unpredictable, and sometimes volatile. Narcissistic individuals often experience radical shifts in their personalities whenever anyone doubts, challenges, or confronts them.

The Human Shadow

At the center of this book is the concept of the dark side, or what Carl Jung called the Shadow. As humans, we all contain within ourselves a whole spectrum of urges and potential behaviors, but society, religion, and our parents reinforce certain types of behavior

and discourage others. These rejected qualities do not cease to exist simply because they have been denied direct expression. Instead, they live on within us and form the secondary personality that psychologists call the Shadow.

There is a beast within us all—a part of ourselves we hide away, not only from others but from ourselves. This dark side is made up of forbidden thoughts and feelings, undesirable and thus rejected personality traits, and all the violent and sexual tendencies we consider evil, dangerous, or forbidden. Each of us contains both a Dr. Jekyll and a Mr. Hyde—a more pleasant persona for everyday wear and a hiding, nighttime self that remains hushed up most of the time. Negative emotions and behaviors—rage, jealousy, shame, resentment, lust, greed, and suicidal and murderous tendencies—lie concealed just beneath the surface, masked by our more proper selves.

Sometimes we are aware of our dark sides, and, out of fear of being propelled into acting in ways that we will regret, we consciously work on pushing down and controlling our more prurient or unacceptable urges. More often, though, we are entirely unaware of our dark sides.

Later in the book, I will introduce you to what is commonly called “shadow-work.” The goal of shadow-work is to integrate our dark sides. This is not accomplished with a simple method but by a deepening and widening of our consciousness. As Connie Zweig and Jeremiah Abrams so eloquently wrote in their classic book *Meeting the Shadow: The Hidden Power of the Dark Side of Human Nature*, “shadow-work forces us again and again to take another point of view, to respond to life with our undeveloped traits and our instinctual sides, and to live what Jung called the tension of the opposites—holding both good and evil, right and wrong, light and dark, in our own hearts.”

No matter what particular version of the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome someone has, shadow-work can be a great benefit in helping the person overcome it. For example, those who suffer severe mood shifts due to borderline personality disorder can get help with their tendency to split things into black-and-white, all-or-nothing categories and to view others as all bad or all good. People

with narcissistic personality disorder can get help with the repressed shame that often motivates their behavior.

Anyone who is involved with a Jekyll and Hyde can also benefit from learning more about the Shadow and from doing shadow-work. The first step of shadow-work—acknowledging that darkness lies inside every human heart—is often forced upon us. Sometimes it occurs when we come face-to-face with this darkness in the most unlikely place—in the actions and the words of a partner or a parent. Other times, it occurs because of the betrayal of a loved one. In either case, meeting the Shadow robs us of our innocence.