

The “Helping” Best Man



The Nice Guy

The Nice Guy



The Go-To Guy

The Go-To Guy



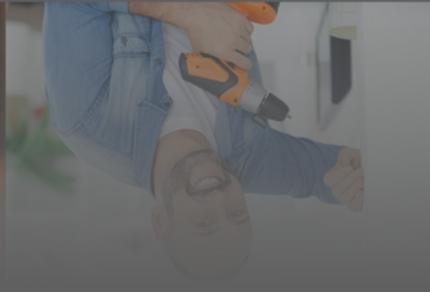
The Supporter

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The Mentor

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Disclaimer

THE MAN MATRIX is an attempt to create a different set of axes on which to evaluate and assess men’s behaviour. It accepts the validity of individual men’s neurological and psychological makeup as something that does not need to be changed. It aims to generate a set of distinctions between men based on personality styles, along with a broader understanding of men’s psychospiritual development process—both for men themselves, and for women seeking to understand men.

The language and pronoun use focuses on cis-heterosexual men and assumes the interest of cis-heterosexual women, for reasons explained elsewhere. It may equally be used by parents, friends or colleagues of those men, and by people of any gender who find it useful and relevant.

The information in this report is intended as a reference, or map, that offers a particular way of assessing the landscape. No statement purports to be the absolute truth. It should be viewed holistically and as a means for supporting individual growth, not as “evidence against” nor as a means to “alter him”. You are invited to treat it in that way and to use it with intelligence and compassion.

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PERCEPTION

How people see you

YOU’LL BE the heart and soul of any social event. You’ll probably arrive late, having stopped along the way to do somebody a favour, but once you’re there, you’ll be hard to miss. Your warm-hearted ebullience and gregariousness will spill over and affect everyone around you. You might even be a little loud. Certainly, your humour and laughter will attract attention and lift the atmosphere, though some, like the “Learned” and the “Strict” Right Men, might find it intrusive.

People will feel drawn to your warmth and generosity. They’ll feel that you’re straightforward—what they see is what they get—and that you have their best interests at heart. All true, of course. You’ll be eager to listen and will readily jump in with suggestions regarding any challenge they might be facing. You’ll commonly offer to connect them with someone in your extensive network who might be able to help, whether it’s a vet for their cat or a potential funder for their new business.

You’ll most likely dress in a neutral, non-competitive style. You might even be a little bunched and untidy, your accessories old and worn. You’ll use a branded pen from the last conference you attended and grab the first one you find when the ink runs out. Your car, too, will lean towards the average and nondescript, like you just went out and got the first one you could find. What may appear to be a kind of careless self-neglect, you’ll know is also semi-cultivated to not alienate people, but instead to engender as broad a sense of affinity as possible.



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In the workplace, your willingness to help might mean that you sometimes—er, let’s make that *often*—struggle to get your own tasks done and meet your own deadlines. In your performance review, you’ll say it’s because everybody comes to you with their problems. Or you’ll point to the many things that, in your mind at least, need your attention. Your manager might acknowledge that you’re often the first person that people turn to, then they’ll point out that you’re your own worst enemy because you never say no.

The truth is more that you’re subconsciously always on the lookout for what people need and you turn up for them even before they know it themselves. “Would you like some tea?” “Ah, yes, I didn’t even realise it was that time already.” Your colleagues and reports will get used to that, and, equally subconsciously, begin to rely on it. You’ll become their alarm clock, their catchall lookout guy. In this way, you’ll create a self-reinforcing spiral.

Your family might experience the same and develop the same kind of dependency on you. However, they might also find you regularly missing in action, as you’ve gone off to help some friends or serve the community. Said community will sooner or later nominate you to be on some committee, or board, from which you’ll progress to the town council, or even get called upon to be mayor. You’ll be humbled by the invitation, and suggest that they nominate somebody else instead.

BLIND SPOT

Why you drive people crazy

The “Helping” Best Man You’re out there so much, and for so many people, that your partner might feel that you’re never really “theirs”. They’ll have to be very comfortable sharing you if they’re going to cope. They might also complain that it was so different in the beginning.

The difference—and this is true for all men—is that once your partner is “locked in”, in the form of a long-term committed relationship, or marriage, they may inevitably lose their ranking in your order of priorities. Just as some men may shift their attention back to their work, so you might shift yours to the people who are not “locked in”, whose approval you still feel you need to earn by helping. That includes the broader family, whichever local community organisations you belong to, friends, and friends of friends, and work colleagues.

There’ll always be plenty of all of those, and there’ll always be a crisis at work that needs your attention. If there isn’t, you might create one. You’ll spot a problem, or someone who’s being mistreated, and you’ll go and offer your support, or propose a solution. This could be seen by some as interfering. In addition, your frequent attempts to solve other people’s problems could be seen as disempowering. For example, if they never get to try things on their own and fail, they might never learn what they need to or develop their own inner resources. Some people—your reports at work, even your children—might find that frustrating.



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Your busyness as a result of helping others might lead you to not complete your own tasks, or to miss your own deadlines. That can have a massive knock-on effect. Or you might end up having to work late to catch up, in which case your personal life and your own health suffers.

Your tendency to trust people indiscriminately can lead to you often being let down or taken advantage of. Your partner might end up being the one who bears the brunt of your anger and disappointment. Likewise, when you’ve done so much for people and then they haven’t acknowledged or appreciated you.

Your disposition means you may find it difficult to gain insight into your approach. A unique challenge for you is that, as soon as you subconsciously realise that your attention is turning to yourself—which is what’s required to have an insight—you’ll reflexively not want to be selfish in that way and turn it to something or someone outside of yourself. You’ll think of someone who needs your help, or some practical solution that you ought to be offering. For this reason, you can be the hardest man to coach!

Indeed, if you do have an insight, you’re likely to express it immediately as a practical solution, rather than taking it in and turning it over reflectively. The absence of a deep, reflective pause can make it difficult for anyone mentoring, coaching or counselling you to read whether you’ve really “got” the insight or whether you’re just saying it.

DEVELOPMENT

Your journey through the four stages of maturity

The “Helping” Best Man The journey to maturity for every man involves the establishment of the ego and its inevitable dark side, or shadow, followed—hopefully—by the integration of that shadow. As described in the Man Matrix introduction, a man’s shadow effectively contains the data belonging to that one element of life that he tries to avoid or escape from, and which he tries to deny in himself. The “Helping” Best Man tries to avoid the possibility of being seen to be selfish.

As a child, you were probably not asked by your parents or teachers whether you enjoyed your school subjects, or sports. You probably didn’t even need to do well at them. All that mattered was that you were helpful and friendly. You were possibly forced to care for an ill or narcissistic parent. Or you may have had parents who were strongly identified with being helpers. Perhaps they were religious, or extreme liberals, who insisted on putting others first, and you were expected to do the same.

As an adult, you try to avoid the possibility of being seen to be selfish by being sensitive to the needs of others and always jumping in to help them as much as you can. This will provide the theme of your rebellion during the red stage, and of your criticism of the world during your white stage. For example, you’ll criticise people who you believe act selfishly. Any selfish behaviour by yourself will be strictly disallowed or, if it ever



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occurs, denied. (In fact, the deeper driver of your behaviour is pride—you’re proud of your generosity and selflessness—and you’ll definitely deny that.)

As you mature, you’ll subconsciously gather evidence that proves you wrong—yes, wrong. In other words, you’ll accumulate data as a result of contradictory life experiences that the world is different from your childhood universe. At first, you won’t pay too much attention to this data, but eventually it will start to break through. You’ll have some undeniable feedback from life in the form of people or experiences—things that happen. Something in you will recognise that you no longer need to defend yourself in the way that you did back then. In other words, it’ll gradually dawn on you that you can turn down the volume on your levels of helpfulness and you’ll still be OK. If you accept and integrate this shadow data, you’ll progress to the point where you see that you can help people even more by letting them solve their own problems. You’ll also recognise that it’s pride—pride in being such a helpful guy—that drives the whole engine.

Therefore, the great arc of your journey is one of recognising that there is a real person inside, one who is allowed to have wants and needs of his own, and who deserves recognition in spite of, not only because of, what he does for others.

Invite people to support your growth by sharing this information.



“Will you be my unicorn?”



What “I’ll alter him” changes you can (and shouldn’t) expect from me

The “Helping” Best Man As my partner, colleague, parent or friend, you’ll probably recognise and hopefully appreciate my warmth and generosity, and my spontaneous, caring nature. Yet, you might sometimes wish that I would somehow miraculously transform into a more home-oriented, partner-focused, perhaps less naïve and more discerning, and maybe even more reflective and insightful version of myself. These “missing” elements may lead you to compare me negatively with the types of men that do demonstrate those patterns of behaviour.

For example, you might wish that I would be more discerning in saying no to people, which the Real Man has no problem with, instead of always saying yes and then ending up being overcommitted and not being able to fulfil on all my obligations. Or perhaps you might want me to be a little less quick to trust other people, and rather be more circumspect and perhaps even test them out a little, the way the “Cautious” Ideas Man would. Then you might need me to be better able to self-reflect, so that I could actually pick up on what you’re saying, and have some insight into myself. For that comparison, you would naturally look to the “Creative” Sensitive Man.

The bottom line is, I’m not going to “change” into any of those types of men. In fact, the more you try to “alter” me, or in other words try to get me to “change into” one of those types of men, the more likely I am to dig in my heels and resist.

That said, you might have a point, and so I might learn to take on one or two of those men’s behaviours from time to time. Yes, I might try being less certain that people can’t survive without my help. If I can’t



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quite say no, then I might wait before saying yes, or say yes on my own terms, then see if they can solve the problem by themselves first. I might even use that gap to reflect on my motives—my need to be seen as a good person—and test my tolerance for not relying on that, but instead seeing what it feels like to rely on my own assessment of my self-worth.

While there’s some of this I could start doing right now, it will happen naturally as a result of maturity. It’s what the process of integration is all about. After all, maturing and integrating is about becoming less one-sided. It’s about not treating every situation in the same way, based on my own fears, but instead treating each situation on its own merits. So, if you’re supporting me on that journey, you can drop a few hints along the way, and be patient. :)

Meanwhile, here are some things I’ll keep doing, as well as things I’ll consider doing more of, and doing less of:

Things I’ll keep doing:

Things I’ll do more of:

Things I’ll do less of:

Get the full report!

Get the full report to learn more about:

1. How you see the world (your dominant worldview);
2. Why people like you (your gifts / offerings);
3. Your core fear (the underlying driver of much of your behaviour);
4. A full 8-page report on your journey through the four stages of maturity;
5. Two more “handouts” containing information you can share with others:
 - a. What you look for in a partner / colleague / friend and what they can do to “win you over”;
 - b. What you can ask of others to support you on your journey to maturity;
6. Plus a set of self-coaching questions.

Yes, take me there!



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