

## **The Saboteur's cunning behaviour in romantic relationships**

The Saboteur shows up in many relationships in the following ways:

**i) Discussions involving opinions or past events.**

Here the Saboteur will soon turn the conversation into a competition of who is right and who is wrong. It will also judge the other person according to perfectionistic ideals.

As a result, one or both people then feel unheard because the communication is only taking place at surface level.

With regards to discussing a past event, the specifics of the event start to be dissected. It becomes a 'it happened this way' versus 'no it happened this way'. This is a very slippery slope, and tends to lead to further arguments, avoidance and shut down.

Whilst these types of discussions can be useful and even interesting because we can get to know more about our partner and have stimulating conversations. However, when shadow is running the show, they often just make things worse.

In effect this is all smoke and mirrors. The Saboteur is very good at this. It does not like discomfort or to feel 'weak' and so it hides behind opinions. Essentially it is avoidant of being truly transparent and vulnerable. It is scared of having the deeper conversations. As a result, it is unable to create true intimacy with self. It is not surprising then that many people find it so difficult to create true intimacy (on all levels) with their partner.

**ii) Trying to fix and solve.**

This is not always a bad thing because sometimes we have what might be very useful advice our partner would benefit from. The trouble is the Saboteur's timing is out. It comes in too early because it doesn't like feeling its own discomfort or the fact that his/her partner seems to be experiencing discomfort.

**iii) Playing devil's advocate.**

Here one person might be expressing how they feel or see a particular topic/area of their life. The Saboteur can often respond to this by playing devil's advocate. It will come back with an alternate opinion that goes against the person who is expressing themselves. It likes to 'rain on their parade' and



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has the effect of making the other person feel like they are being shut down or that they are not heard.

One thing to bear in mind here is that the person speaking might be speaking with some shadow and the Saboteur can detect this. Maybe the person is not really saying how they feel and so their words are coming across with distorted energy. The Saboteur will experience this as 'weakness' and try to fix it rather than get curious and ask a question or offer some empathy e.g. 'it sounds like you have some sadness here around this topic, is that how you are feeling?'

**iv) Being overly 'rational' and responsible.**

The Saboteur is obsessed with doing everything according to society's ideals about what is seen as the 'right' thing to do. It gets caught up in all the should do's and shouldn't do's and doesn't stop to question whether a particular action is right/good (or the opposite) for the person.

The impact of the Saboteur's voice on our partner is often an energetic 'NO'...don't be who you are; don't have a dream; fall into line.' 'No don't do that/be that'; 'that's a silly idea'; 'that won't work' and so on.

**What is needed to try and halt the saboteur in its tracks.**

Ideally, one of you would call the saboteur out in the above situations (not in a pointy finger type of way, but perhaps by saying 'I think the Saboteur is speaking here right now). We must remember that the Saboteur is the conditioned, status quo voice in all of us. We cannot help but speak it at times, often without realising it. It carries with it an energetic distortion, which 9 out of 10 times will trigger the other person.

Of course, it is not easy to call the Saboteur out when we have been triggered.

Bearing this in mind, it is essential that a couple are prepared to have a more in-depth, transparent conversation once things have calmed down (taking a time out is fine). Both parties must be willing to have what I call a 'repair' conversation.

A repair involves both parties taking full responsibility for where they can see they were not helping the dynamic i.e. were they being defensive or critical; or did they shut the conversation down?

It is not enough to respond with comments such as 'you are not hearing me', or 'I am not responsible for your feelings'; these don't go deep enough. Holding your hand up and being prepared to eat some humble pie is the way forward. You will be doing something that is keeping the dynamic alive and it is time to own up and get curious.



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The type of conversations I am talking about lead to both parties learning something about themselves. From the conversation it could become clear as to what action we need to take or how we will attempt to show up differently next time.

There is always a mirror for us all to become aware of. For example, if we think our partner needs to be more committed, it is highly likely that we also need / want to be more committed. This may just be showing up for us in a different area of our life that we are not seeing.

### **Who is responsible for what?**

We are all responsible for what we do with our feelings, thoughts and therefore our triggers. Unfortunately, too many people hold their partner responsible for their feelings because they don't know what to do with them.

It can work the other way round too. Some people take too much responsibility and apologise too much or blame themselves over and over.

Essentially these are all forms of avoidance.

Another form of avoidance is hiding behind the 'you are responsible for your feelings' to the point that someone is not taking responsibility for the part they are playing in the dynamic.

If there is conflict or tension between a couple, both parties are playing a role. **Each person is doing something to in keeping the dysfunctional dynamic alive or on repeat. We must get curious and ask ourselves 'what am I doing that is keeping this cycle repeating itself?'**

### **The difference between the Saboteur and the Magician Power Archetype**

The Saboteur only sees things through a tunnel vision, black and white lens. It is extremely limited in its thinking and is always comparing everything according to societal ideals. The trouble is the Saboteur sees and speaks an element of truth and this is what hooks and triggers people. When our Saboteur speaks, we tend to hook our partner. This is for them to look more closely at and us to take responsibility for the limitation in our language (even if we had a point).

What the Saboteur is not seeing is that there is ALWAYS another perspective and because there is another perspective there are infinite possibilities to create transformation between ourselves and our partner.

The Saboteur is the dominant status quo voice. We all have it and its judgemental, narrow minded viewpoint and tone will just fall out of our mouths at times. We need to



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be willing to accept that sometimes our words do impact our partner negatively. We may not mean to hurt or upset them, but we do.

The Magician on the other hand KNOWS his/her power. He is always willing to go beyond the limited mind of the Saboteur and trust his body to navigate the way. He is willing to show up fully and get messy. He knows that 'mistakes' are crucial in order to master his energy and his relationship. He takes full responsibility for his power to create connection and intimacy. He understands that transparency and being vulnerable can lead to intimate and erotic moments.

**The bottom line**, whilst our partner is always responsible for what they do with their feelings and the thoughts/stories that are coming up, we are often responsible for the initial trigger. If we don't take responsible for this piece, we run the risk of just letting ourselves (& our Saboteur) get away with short sighted viewpoints.

In the cases of relationships that you do not really value then you don't have to make a repair attempt. You can look at any conflict and see where you contributed to the dynamic. You can choose to just leave the relationship to fizzle out or choose to end it. However, where you value the relationship, there is always another quality of conversation to be had.

Most people are only touching the surface of what is possible because they ultimately fear being rejected for showing up as their true self. This is why too many people jump ship from relationships that could have been turned around. The grass of course is never greener, and baggage will always follow us.

If any of the above is going on in your relationship there is deeper and more nuanced work to be done.