SPIDER SPOTTER

"There are Spiders and then there are those who get caught in webs."

Spidery people can be in our midst any day, at any time. Manipulators are easy to spot by how they make you feel. When you tune into your emotional energy, you may notice that tight gut feeling that tells you to pay attention to the words and actions of that manipulative person. Here are some classic signs that you're dealing with a manipulator:

- Manipulators can thrive on drama and high emotions (dysfunctional)
- Manipulators put their needs before yours (selfish)
- Manipulators put their feelings before yours (self-centered)
- Manipulators tell you what you need to do (overbearing)
- Manipulators want you to feel bad about yourself (malevolent)

ACTIVITY 1: TRUST YOUR SPIDER SENSES (TIME: 5-10 MINUTES)

Let's take this concept for a spin, so to speak. List the top 5 to 15+ people in your life and in your direct orbit. Trust your first instinct while posing a straightforward yes or no question: Spider or non-Spider? There's no in between. You're either someone who has it within them to consciously manipulate others. Think of it as a gene someone does or does not have Even if they behave this way one percent of the time, they're a Spider. This includes your observing their behavior toward anyone other than you.

ACTIVITY 2: APPLY YOUR SPIDER SENSES (TIME: 5-10 MINUTES)

Now that you've listed the who's who, re-evaluate and rate each individual as follows:

1: Virtuous (not a mean bone in their body)
2: Good Natured (typical non-Spider)
3: Passive (dysfunction-related rather than conscious intent)
4: Devious (deceitful)
5: Vicious Spider (takes pleasure)

ACTIVITY 3: SPIDER SELF-REFLECTION (TIME: 5-10 MINUTES)

The obvious question still looms. Are you or are you not a Spider? If so, would you rate yourself a 3, 4 or 5? What does it mean to you to become a better person? Are you willing to be your better self and choose not to manipulate others? How might doing so bolster your self-esteem and improve your life, such as by deepening relationships? Are you willing to make amends and apologize to those you've wronged? If so, how might that make you feel and what outcomes would you desire?

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