

Knot Quite Crazy

*The Subtle Ways
We Drive Ourselves
and Others Mad*

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What are knots? They are tangled words of tangled experiences of tangled lives lived in the real world. First created by Scottish Psychiatrist R. D. Laing, Knots are sketches of human interaction structured in poetic form. Knots take no part in clinical language and do not deal with the categories of mental disorders. Knots, while being extracted from the existential context of the whole, attempt to keep intact pattern, form, and relationship. These intricate twists of phrases, while humorous at times, contain elements for human disaster.



Check out Knots (1970) by R. D. Laing

Violence



If I give in
He has beaten me again.

If I fight
He may fight and win.

I can't fight,
I can't give in.

I'm scared of him,
But I am more scared
To let him know I am scared.

I am scared he will know I am scared
And am trying to keep it from him.

If I fight
I give in.

If I don't fight
I give in.

He has beaten me.
He will beat me.
I can't let him beat me again.
He never let the bruises show.
So I can't let them show.
If I show him the bruises he wins.
If I don't show the bruises he wins.
He beat me.
I can't let him beat me again.
I have to fight back,
Without fighting back.

If I fight back and
He knows I am fighting he wins.

I can't fight,
And I can't give in.
I am bruised where you can't see again.

Momma's Straitjacket

Sweetie, I love you like no one else.

No one can keep you safe like me.

I am scared that you are scared and have not felt

How dangerous daddy can be.

Don't you see?

He is in the closet.

The more harmless he appears

The more outrageous should be your fears.

He is the monster in my closet.

I worry that you're not worried.

But you shouldn't worry about that monster.

I will keep you safe if you are scared.

Now go see daddy.

He is in my closet.

Don't be scared, he won't hurt you

At least I don't think he will

It's daddy's turn to take you.

Why cry? Are you upset? How do you feel?

I only want what's best you see.

I only want you always with me.

Now daddy's here to get you.

Be good!



If you tell me the truth
 I won't get upset.
I'm upset because
 You don't tell me.
Tell me what upsets me.
 I won't get upset,
 If it is the truth.
I know when you tell me the truth.
 It would upset me,
 Though it won't upset me.
Tell me the truth.
 I won't get upset.
It is not the truth
 Unless it upsets me.
I know the truth.
 Just tell me.
I won't get upset,
 If the truth is upsetting.
I will get upset
 If it doesn't upset me,
 Because it's not the truth.
Just tell me the truth.



The Truth Never Lies

Growing UP Is Hard

To be independent,

You must do what I say.

To be unconditionally loved,

You must be what I want

Unconditionally.



A Child's Choice

Who's to say
 Where I should stay?
I should, I must,
 But who to choose?
Dad: I care for you most, don't you see.
Mom: I love you sweet, come with me.
If I choose the one,
 The other will hate me.
If I choose the other,
 the one will hate me.
If I decide, I will hurt you.
 If I don't decide, I hurt you more.
How can I decide
 Without deciding?
Will you hate me
 If I decide?
You will hate me
 If I do not decide.
If I choose Mom,
 Dad will hate me.
If I choose Dad,
 Mom will hate me?
They hate me
 To make be decide.
I must decide.
If I do not decide who will decide?
 What if they choose wrong?
I must decide
 Without deciding.



To help untangle someone from such difficult interpersonal knot requires both creativity and compassion. It is necessary to move cautiously, because therapists (myself included) so often become caught themselves. It requires a sense of knowing when to move and with what strains of communication to proceed. Some of the lines of communication are useful and freeing, while others maintain or worsen the situation. Find the strains of experience that are resourceful and that bring life to the session. Work to weave these lines back and forth through the conversation.



You're covering it up again

What?

The marks, you covered them

I'll never cover them

He still beats you?

He can't touch me!

He is beating you now.

No he is not.

You're covering it up still.

I'll never cover it up for him.

You are now.

I won't anymore

What will you do?

I'll tell him how it is.

I don't know if you can.

Why not?

He might beat you.

He won't touch me.

He might beat you

Without touching you.

Like he is now.

Not any more.

You're covering it up.

What am I covering up?

Beautiful Bruises

The bruises, inside and out

Not any more.

You are not afraid?

Yes, I am afraid,

but I won't let him know.

That's covering it up.

I can't let him know I am scared.

Then he wins, You covered up the abuse.

I won't cover it up any more.

How can you be afraid,

not let him beat you,

and not cover it up?

I will find a way.

It sounds dangerous.

It isn't, I will tell him I am afraid,

But I am not going to take it.

Look at those bruises, they are badges.

You've never seen them?

Not until now.

They will slowly go away.

Completely?

No never completely.

They are beautiful.

“If you want to identify me, ask me not where I live, or what I like to eat, or how I comb my hair, but ask me what I think I am living for, in detail, and ask me what I think is keeping me from living fully for the thing I want to live for.” **Thomas Merton**



About **Matt**

A contributing member of the website www.mindfortherapy.com, Matt helped to found and initiate the website. *Mind for Therapy* is devoted to exploring the creative and innovative practices of psychotherapy that produce transformation in both the client and the therapist.

Matt is the director of the clinical services division at the Center for Children and Families. CFCF is a non-profit organization that operates with the commitment of being “dedicated to the promotion of safe, healthy environments for children and families through advocacy, counseling, education, and prevention”.

Matt is also a developer of the website www.therapyroad.com, which provides a platform for therapists and clients to have healing interactions online.

As a national and international presenter and trainer, Matt is available to provide consultation and training.

