

ACTIVITY 1

BEWARE OF ERROR-PRONE THINKING

1-1 EPT Intelligence Briefing

ADVANCE PREPARATION: *Prepare a copy of the Intelligence Briefing Scripts on pages 6-7. Assign four students to read specific parts and have them practice their parts in advance of class. Prepare overhead transparencies of pages 8 and 9 or use the EPT poster. Have readers 2 and 3 point to each character when reading about them. After the briefing refer to the HIF questions on page 5.*

Begin by telling the class:

You are members of an elite counterintelligence unit that has been created to detect and neutralize enemy agents from EPT. These agents are engaged in a massive disinformation plot designed to overthrow civilization. They have infiltrated our intelligence system and are causing great damage, both to individuals and to our society. You have been called to this emergency briefing to alert you to their activity, give you an overview of who they are and how they operate, and to begin a skill development process designed to help you identify and root out these menaces to our way of life.

This briefing will be under the direction of four crack members of your unit, (name script readers). Be sure to take notes on what you are told here. In the next few days, you will be tested on what you remember from today's briefing. This is for your own protection. I will now turn the briefing over to (name of Reader 1).

1-2 EPT Quiz

ADVANCE PREPARATION: *Prepare copies of pages 10 and 11 for each student.*

Have your students use the notes they made during the EPT intelligence briefing to complete the quiz. Discuss the HIF questions on page 5.

1-3 Observation Reports

Assign your students to select one or two EPT agents. Have them make notes on any instances they can observe of the influence of these agents in choices people make. The instances may be observed in movies, TV programs, music, news reports, or in real life situations (avoid mentioning names if the incident is close to home.) Then have them report to the rest of the class some of the instances they observed. Discuss the HIF questions on page 5.

Intelligence Briefing Scripts

Reader 1

As elite members of our counter-intelligence team, you have been called together this (morning/afternoon) to receive an emergency briefing on EPT. Its agents have infiltrated our intelligence operations and are causing immeasurable damage to our security system. I need not remind you these agents are well trained, highly effective, and very dangerous. The damage they cause runs into the billions of dollars every year and the destruction of thousands of lives. They are not to be taken lightly. If you encounter them, I should say, when you encounter them, for encounter them you will, it will require all your talents and skill to overcome them. They are clever. They are treacherous. And, they have no mercy. They will challenge your judgment. They will push you to the limits of your understanding. They will test your will and your determination to overcome their influence. The more of you they can recruit to their side, the greater their success. Unless you are fully prepared, mentally, physically, and emotionally, you will be in grave danger. I am going to turn the briefing over to (names of Reader 2 and Reader 3) from operations to give you a rundown on each of the EPT agents we are up against. After they are through, (Reader 4) will outline some of the training we will be providing to help you in dealing with these agents. You will need all the preparation you can get.

Reader 2

Here's what we have. I suggest you take notes. (Pause) Agents of EPT (Error-Prone Thinking) are engaged in an insidious plan to overthrow civilization. They intend to do this by contaminating the world with error-prone thinking. They have had great success in infiltrating our intelligence community of which you are an important part. I cannot overstate the risk you are facing. They will do anything they can to confuse your thinking. If they succeed, you will have great difficulty in making sound choices. Their goal is to ruin the lives of as many people as they can. So, who are we up against? The E's and P's of EPT are led by the diabolical twin sisters, Erroneous and Emotious.

Erroneous is a master psychologist. She and the agents who work with her are highly skilled in the art of illusion. They want you to focus on the appearance and not the substance of things. They have the ability to change the appearance of almost anything. They can make you believe up is down, forward is back, and in is out. It's all in the mind you see, and if they can manipulate your thinking, they can get you to believe anything they want. Erroneous is aided by two well placed, highly skilled agents who are solidly entrenched in our intelligence system. In fact, they are so well established we hardly recognize their existence. We only know them by their code names, Prevaricator and Perverter.

Prevaricator is a master of deceit. His specialty is lying. Blatant lies, subtle lies, big lies, little lies. He has succeeded in making lying a common practice in our culture. From high government officials, to business leaders, to superstars, to out right crooks, to small children on the play ground, Prevaricator has persuaded many that deceit is the best way to get what they want or feel they need.

Perverter is a genius at blowing things out of proportion so people lose perspective. He is what is known as a Befogger. He functions by blowing smoke in people's eyes so things look differently to them than they really are. For example, if he blows:

Puff Belarge, you are enveloped in a cloud of smoke that makes things appear to be of greater value or importance, more urgent or serious of than they really are. When under the spell of Puff Belarge, you must have it, get it, do it now; whatever the cost in time, money, energy, talent, relationships, health, future well-being or whatever medium of exchange nature requires.

Puff Belittle, blows Perverter, and you are encased in a cloud of smoke that minimizes and belittles the value or importance of things in your mind. When under the influence of this befogger, you no longer recognize the true value or importance of things. It causes you to undervalue such things as cleaning your rooms, doing your home work, obeying rules, being honest, treating others kindly, etc. It causes you to minimize the seriousness and ignore the consequences of choices you make.

Puff Benamed Puff Beblamed befoggs you into thinking that a word or a phrase is capable of describing a whole class of people or ideas. The belief is, if you know the label you understand the person or idea. Many people fall for this myth because its easy. It requires little thought and instantly makes one an expert. Besides, when people can be named, they can be blamed for whatever the people who named them want to blame them. That's the neat trick of this befogger.

Puff Prejudge is another befogger that severely cripples the thinking of many people. The Puff Prejudge befogger convinces people that they know the worth of a person or idea without ever really knowing the person or understanding the idea. Moreover, based on these judgments, they are entitled to discriminate against and even persecute those people they judge to be of lesser worth than themselves or who hold ideas contrary to their own. This befogger enables people to justify such acts as slavery and the holocaust of WWII.

Reader 3

Emotious is expert in manipulating your emotions. Encouraging feelings of hate, anger, revenge, jealousy, fear, hopelessness, despair, greed, lust, and pride are some of her more common tactics. Such feelings, when strong enough, can block out all ability to think clearly. She works in close harmony with Erroneous, and together they can completely eliminate a person's ability to think and act responsibly. Emotious has three able and highly dangerous agents who work closely with her, Possessit, Passionata, and Polarizer.

Possessit is perhaps the most dangerous of all the E's and P's. He usually the first to infiltrate a person. He infects people with a desire to possess things. The more the better. If it is more than others, even better. Possession becomes a symbol of status and superiority over others. The desire to possess something can become so great an obsession that people will do or say anything to get what they want, no matter how potentially dangerous it is to themselves or to others.

Passionata is also known as the inflamer. Passionata takes natural desires and turns them into burning passions. Anger becomes rage. Attraction becomes lust. Appetite becomes greed. Dislike becomes hate. Discouragement becomes despair. Fear becomes cowardice. Normal feelings become uncontrollable emotions under whose influence disastrous deeds are done.

Polarizer divides people into two opposite camps. Under his influence, ideas are divided into two opposite views and choices are limited to two polar options. Polarizer is extremely effective in stirring up conflict and contention between individuals, families, communities, ethnic groups, and nations.

Reader 4

I know you're tired of sitting here and you're ready for action, so listen up. Because of the serious nature of the EPT threat, you will be required to take some specialized training. It will consist of exercises designed to acquaint you with the techniques and practices of EPT. That will be followed by training in the Seven C's of Thinking Clearly. This training will provide you with additional skills and tools in resisting the EPT's. The next stage of training will have to do with specific situations in which you will likely engage the EPT's and will require you to use your thinking skills in overcoming them. You will receive regular notices informing you of these training sessions. Ok, that's it for now.