

MEN & WOMEN  
HAVE

CHALLENGES WITH  
**POWER**

---

this book deals with  
**MEN**



← rainbows  
aren't "girly"

*specifically*

**HOW not to be  
A DICK**

*by indefatigable*

#1 **POWER**

#2 **CONTROL**

#3 **OBJECTIFICATION**

#4 **PEACE OF MIND**

#5 **POISE**

**POWER**

IS CONSTANTLY  
IN PLAY

(loosely defined as  
the ability to make  
someone do something)

posture

tactics: aggression

violence, threats,

verbal abuse, sarcasm, negs

↓  
blackmail, "leverage"  
retribution, debt, "favor"

deception, priming,

manipulation, salesmanship

informing, daring, peer-pressure

\* this may seem like a  
desirable skillset, and yet,  
every use of power has a

**COST**



If I, as a man, am terrified to ask this man for some space to sit, how does everyone else feel? How much does he want someone to connect with him, even if it's in an argument?

# MALE USE OF POWER

in our world  
TODAY

## interpersonal

+

motivate  
convince  
support  
reward  
pay attention  
praise  
admire  
confide

-

bully  
coerce  
harrass  
bribe  
stalk  
insult  
ogle  
deceive



## systemic



+

structured family  
de-facto leadership  
precedent  
animalistic/primal  
?  
privilege  
self-esteem  
labels

-

patriarchy  
moral superiority  
disenfranchisement  
lack of body autonomy  
misogyny  
lack of justice  
impossible standards  
labels

+

use  
overcome  
produce  
enjoy  
sustain  
avoid

-

disenfranchise  
degrade  
ruin  
squander  
harm  
destroy

## environmental



# POWER

"JUST A HEY"



SOUNDWAVES  
EYE CONTACT

CULTURAL  
EXPECTATIONS  
THREAT POTENTIAL



Who is this?  
Is it important?  
What does he really want?  
If I ignore him, will he do something crazy?  
Do I have time to stop and engage?  
If I smile, will it encourage or appease him?  
Should I pretend I never saw him?

COST

- calories
- embarrassment
- time
- stress
- distraction
- social anxiety
- loss of confidence



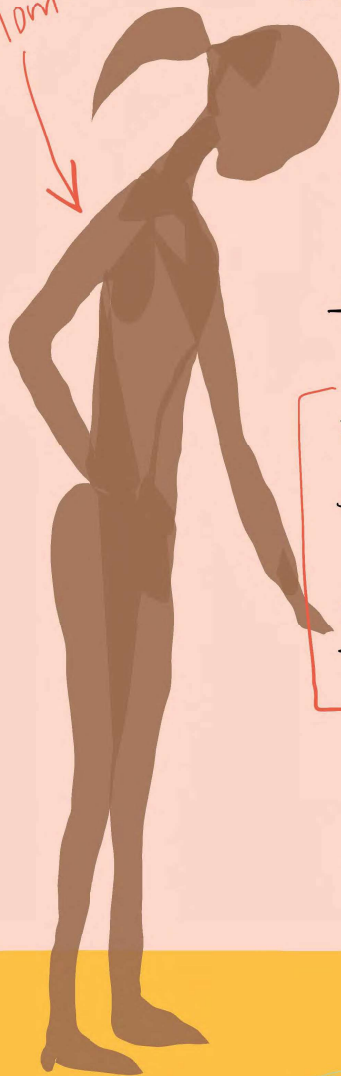
REALITY CHECK:  
"Aww come on"  
**REALLY MEANS**  
"your needs are  
unimportant to me"  
OR  
"I think I have to  
overcome your token  
resistance."  
OR  
"I haven't gotten what  
I want yet."



REALITY CHECK:  
**ASKING FOR  
PERSONAL INFO**  
IS ALSO  
ASKING SOMEONE TO  
OPEN THEMSELVES  
TO **STALKING,  
HARRASSMENT,  
IDENTITY THEFT,**  
and <sup>at least</sup> **annoyance.**



Mom → [she knew things]



"Buddy, I'm sorry to tell you this, I know you like her and you both had a good time today at Great Adventures, but she's pregnant. I don't want that for you... You can still be friends!"

For years I tried to be what I thought a friend should be.

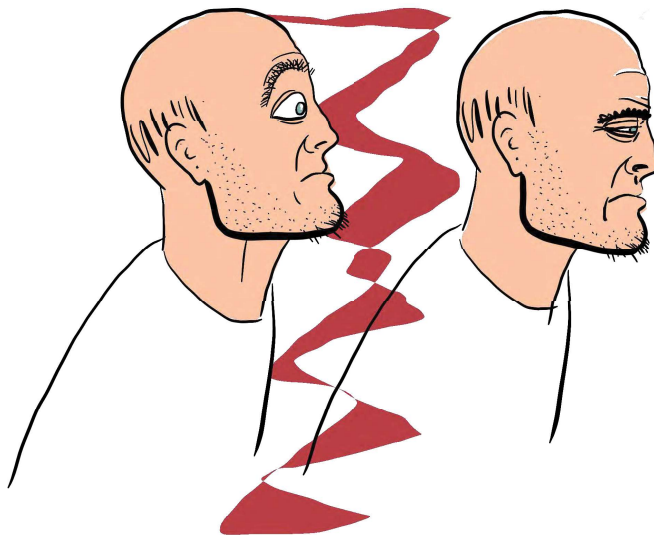
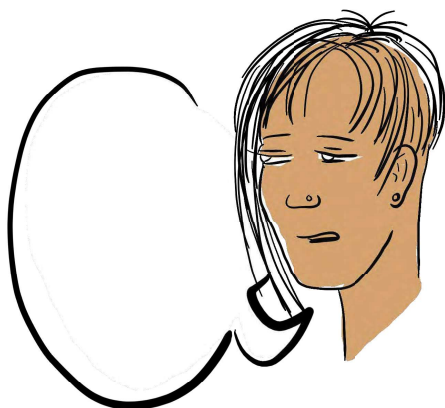
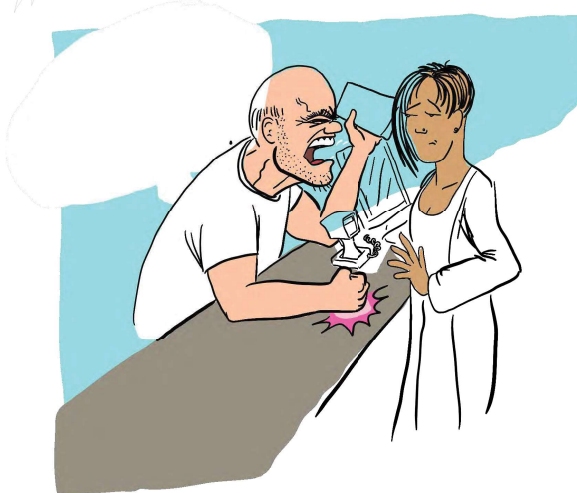
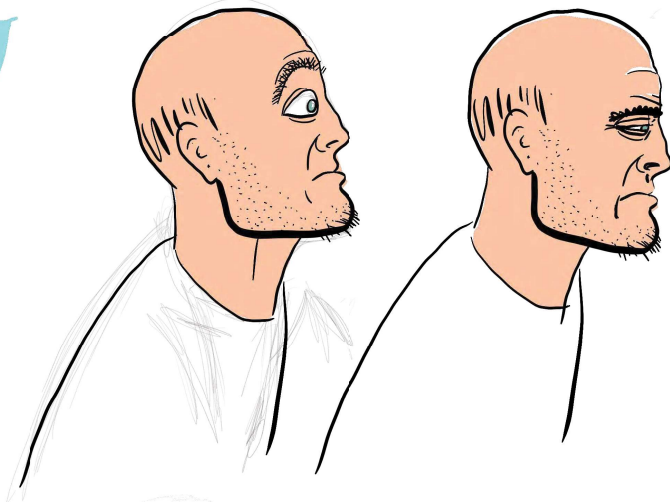
I didn't understand why she couldn't feel the same things I felt.

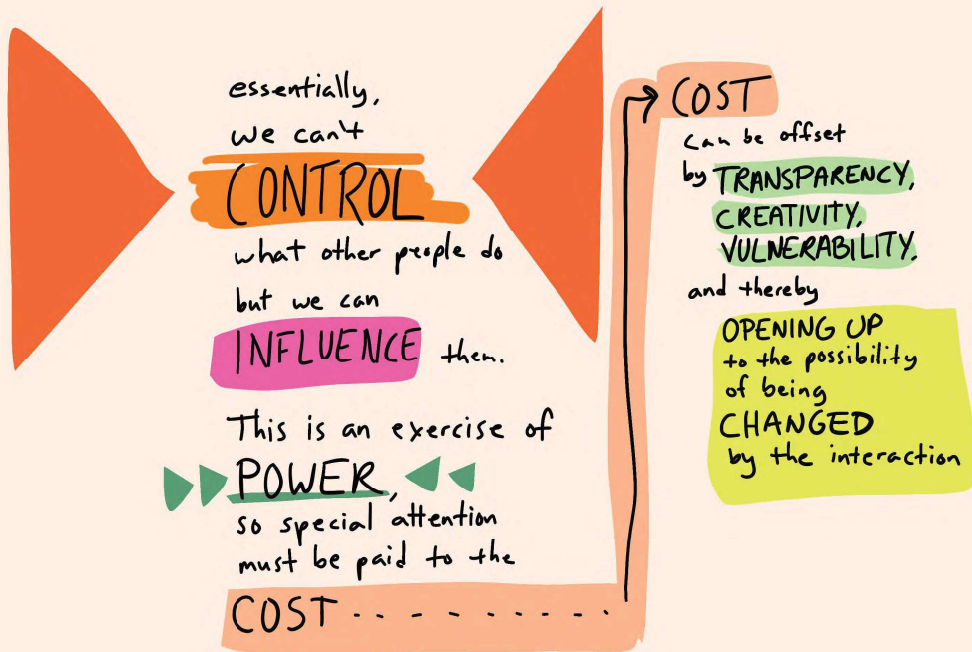
me

the pregnant girl









We can  
**CONTROL**  
ourselves  
when → AN EVENT  
happens

WE ADD

narrative,  
beliefs, values, doubts,  
memories, baggage, pain  
context, social pressure

REACT  
(heuristic)

**KNEE JERK**

RESPOND  
(question, explain,  
offer context, gain clarity)

**WISDOM**

7 abortions  
(in 8 years)



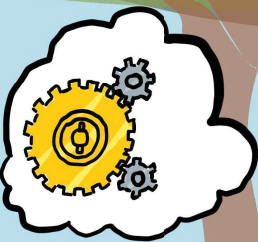
and Roe v. Wade wasn't the  
problem. My irresponsibility was.

EACH BROKE A PART OF  
MY HEART, THE PART THAT WAS  
TERRIFIED AND EXCITED  
ABOUT  
FATHERHOOD

It's easier to shut down  
**PLANNED PARENTHOOD**  
than to make sperm donators  
**ACCOUNTABLE.**

I'm pregnant.

...how do you feel about it?



... of course,  
I support you  
no matter what  
you decide...





has a  
**COST**

can become a  
**PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAP**  
where the world is seen from the perspective of my own preferences

OR  
**DEVIANT**

**OBJECTIFICATION**  
is a byproduct of how we  
**PROCESS INFO**  
and ascribe  
**VALUE**  
heuristically

↓ ↓ ↓  
"I WANT"  
and the rationale

Can make me  
**RUDE DISMISSIVE & SHALLOW**

contains a hidden  
**NARRATIVE**

obtaining this  
**THING**  
will give me some kind of  
**INTANGIBLE**  
reward  
"people will think I'm cool; I've always wanted this, so now getting it makes me a winner, lucky, a success; If I get this then I can get or achieve anything else, I want;

objectification's offspring is  
**FETISHIZATION a la**  
"I like your  
boobs... butt... toes...  
asian features...  
dark skin... straight hair...  
kinky hair... shortness...  
tallness... glasses...  
wheelchair... cleft lip...  
full lips... wide hips...  
muscles... six pack...  
accent... status... richness...  
poorness... androgyny...  
nonconformity..."

can manifest in  
**CURIOSITY**  
"I just want to know all about you."

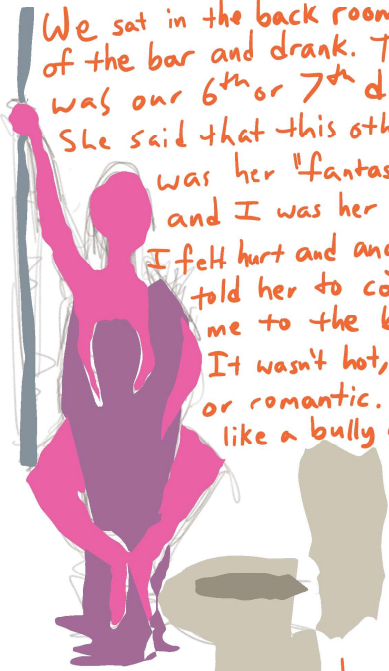
Doesn't always lead to  
**HARM**  
and can be the precursor to  
**INFATUATION**  
or even  
**LOVE**  
(its own complex issue)

We sat in the back room of the bar and drank. This was our 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> date.

She said that this other guy was her "fantasy" guy and I was her "dream" guy.

I felt hurt and angry and told her to come with me to the bathroom.

It wasn't hot, or sexy, or romantic. I felt like a bully and an ass.



We ended up engaged and miserable 5 years later. Her name is still tattooed on my arm.



She was homeless and hanging out with other kids in the east village. I "generously" offered to get a room at the hourly motel so she could shower. She didn't want to fuck, but she did it anyway. I had a crush on her mostly because of her goth-victorian/I might be a witch vibe.

2 years later, she had gotten an apartment in the Bronx. I was living closeby. We hung out, but she resoundingly did not want to fuck. I was entirely perplexed. What kind of game was she playing? I didn't come over here to listen to music and talk about magic. What an ass I was.

She was homeless, I was in a tough relationship. What started as a freaky impulse got turned into "seduction" that bordered on

**COERCION.**



This honed my ability to turn disgust into an admirable goal. I don't know what the rationale was other than a strange curiosity coupled with an idea of conquest. I wanted to see if I could do it.

4 months into my bail jump to Texas. I had just finished cleaning her yard and she invited me in for something cold to drink. I immediately thought I would be getting laid. Actually, I'd thought about it since I'd first knocked on her door and dropped off a flyer a week earlier. She had me sit so she could "read my aura," and I wasn't sure if it was some kind of strange seduction move or she was serious or both. I was terrified, though, to be alone in this house with this woman and I couldn't muster up enough trust in her to even flirt. I was sincere and non-committal, which in some obscure way made me feel like I had the upper hand. That's a fancy way of saying playing hard to get, but the fact was, I wasn't sure at all she was trying to get anything. I replayed that encounter hundreds of times even after I moved off of that Texas block. My confusion and fear made me want to be aggressive and take control of the situation.

She said I had a kind aura. I was angry she had so efficiently nullified the danger I represented.

A faint, stylized illustration of a person sitting on a couch, rendered in shades of purple, blue, and orange, serving as a background for the text.

I met him in a gay bar in Chelsea, and I told him my whole story of breaking up with my girlfriend and not having a place to live. He offered to rent me his spare bedroom.

I'm not sure of the line between coercion and capitulation.

I do know that nothing I did felt good or like it was my choice. I know I was drunk and I used to get drunk just to feel brave enough to walk into that apartment.

After I'd firmly told him no a few times, he kicked me out even though I'd been paying him rent promptly.

A few years later I saw him in a local midtown gym. The panic I felt was disproportionate to the encounter and I didn't understand why I had such a strong urge to run, duck, hide, to hurt him. He didn't see me.

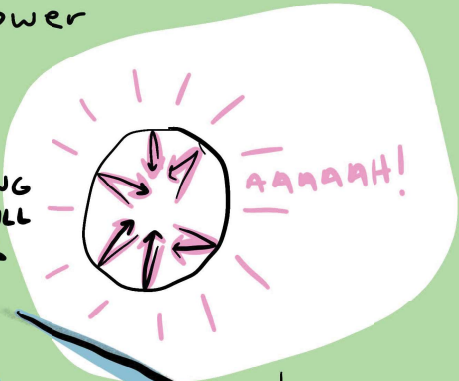


# POWER



to use power

IF  
I DO NOTHING  
MY MIND WILL  
ATTACK  
ITSELF



you  
"shouldn't"  
feel that way

why  
do they  
always win?

nothing  
is ever  
easy for me

I suck.



these repeated  
**THOUGHT PATTERNS**  
become our personal  
narrative  
and influence our  
**CORE BELIEFS**  
and **VALUES**

It was a weird moment of vulnerability, our bond was complete and I was overwhelmed with gratitude and emotion. I couldn't help it, I cried and decided to show the tears (I was privately hoping she would find my vulnerability endearing). I doubled down and said, with genuine intensity, that I loved her. She looked at me with contempt and disgust, and through a sneer, with my limp extension laying spent inside her, and said, "you are such a bitch." I felt a kind, sweet, stupid part of me Snap.

# THE CURE FOR HARMFUL FEELINGS IS

Acceptance • Reevaluation • pro-action

↓  
"this is how I feel and that's okay"

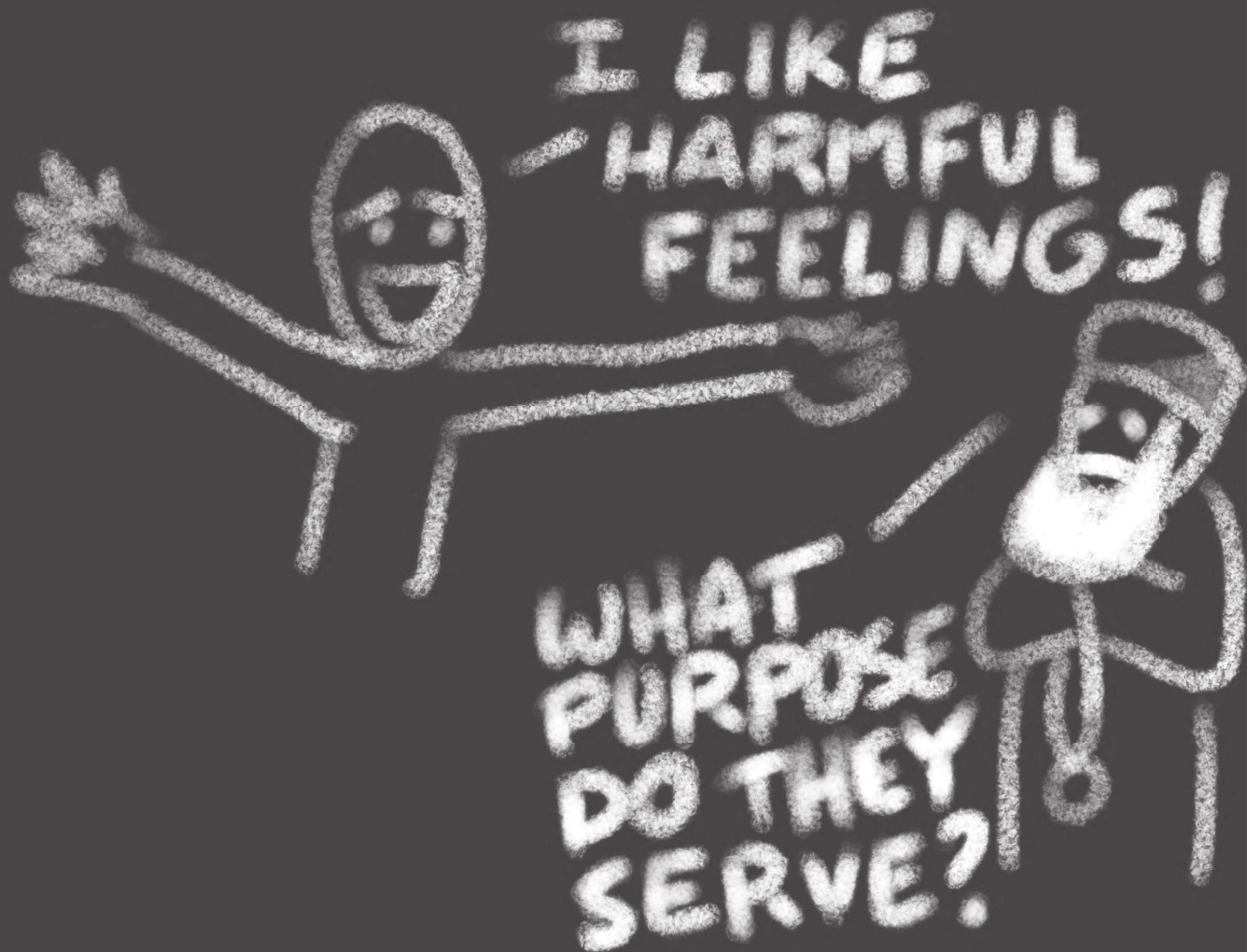
"there are things I can't control that fuck with me."

↓  
"Is there a perspective where this doesn't suck that bad?"

"How many others have gotten through this same problem?"

↓  
"I want to punch him in the face, but I'm really afraid that if I tell him how I feel I won't be able to control the outcome."

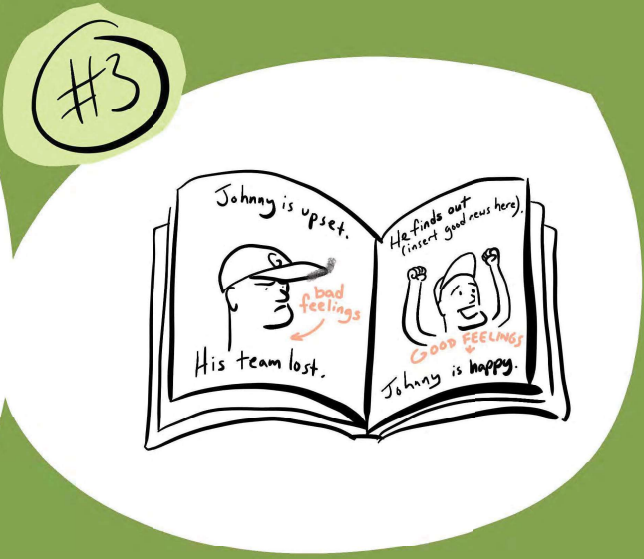
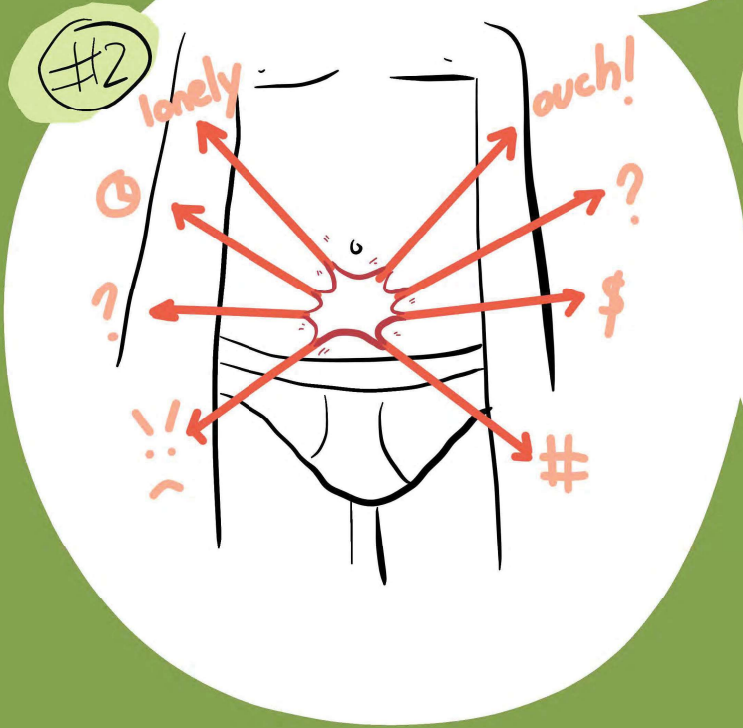
"I'm not sure what I can do, but I can talk about how I feel."  
(that's still action)



#1 Things outside of me are constantly influencing me.

#2 I cannot directly control how those things make me feel, nor can I identify all the things.

#3 I can accept that the way I feel is temporary and relative. In other words, feelings change.





MINDS

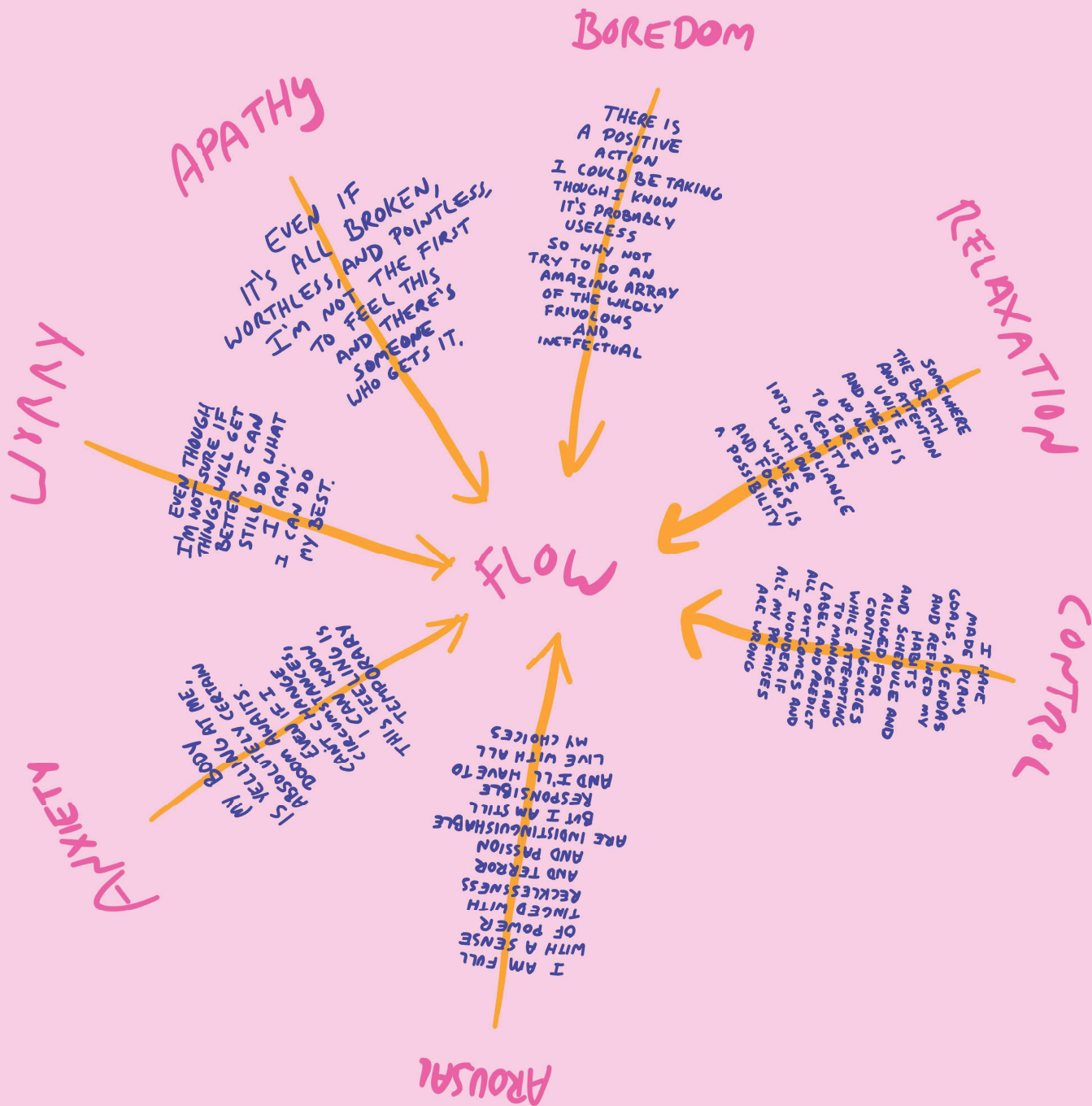
Why didn't she respond?

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What assumptions does my  
**PROJECTION**  
reveal?

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# WHEREVER YOU ARE YOU CAN FIND **FLOW**



What else can be  
SAID?

o Not being a dick is about  
taking

**RADICAL  
PERSONAL  
RESPONSIBILITY**

for your own shit

o you will fuck it up...  
over and over again

**AND**

Sometimes you won't  
be able to fix it