

Excerpt from [Nasty People](#)

From a Student

I first met Jay Carter through his "Communications Workshop" course at a local adult evening school. I signed up for the course to help in my never-ending search for better-spoken expression. The course helped my speaking, but it was really about something else. It was about people, and how they think and act. In other words, it was a course in practical psychology.

As part of this course, Jay taught us about invalidation. Invalidation is what I used to call "putting other people down to bring yourself up." But even though I had discovered the phenomenon of invalidation on my own, I didn't know where it came from, why it existed, how it really worked, or what to call it. Most of all, I had no idea how deadly it could be to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

What I learned in Jay Carter's class about invalidation has changed my life. Now, at the very least, when invalidation is used in my presence, I know it instantly-- whether it comes from someone else or from me (blush). I do my best to educate those involved about the "mechanics" of invalidation. To do this, I passed out copies of Jay's paper on invalidation.

After a while, though, copying and distributing those pages got to be a lot of work. Besides, at that rate, only about one person in ten million will ever learn what invalidation is all about. It's too important to keep it a secret.

So I've nagged, bullied, and generally pestered Jay into writing this little book on invalidation. I think you'll be glad I did.

L. David Leiter