

# *YOUR* **Invisible** *Lifestyle*

## Is It helping or hurting your marriage?

By Larry Bilotta

**LIFESTYLE:  
A way of life or  
style of living  
that reflects  
the values of a  
person or  
group.**

**T**hink of the word Lifestyle. The dictionary explains that Lifestyle is: A way of life or style of living that reflects the VALUES of a person or group. The definition of the word Lifestyle is about values. You value the things you do today because of what your parents or guardians VALUED most highly.

You might already know that scientists who study the brain have proven that your brain cells or neurons are linked by bridges called synaptic connections. Electric impulses repeatedly travel across these bridges to create your behavior. What you might not know is that these neuron connections literally grouped into "wired highways" during your first ten years on Earth.

It is the electric impulses over these "highways" that make it possible to duplicate your parents' behavior without any strenuous effort. This is your Invisible Lifestyle...the values you live by every day without even realizing why.

Because of the "brain wiring" of your original programmers (your parents), as an adult, you are duplicating the way they lived when you were young. For instance, if they yelled when you were young, you yell today as an adult. If they were late, you would feel that being late is simply normal. If they were violent, then being violent is your fist choice in dealing with problems.

Your parents built your brain network with their own value system. But before you begin to discredit this article because you feel you're nothing like your parents, you need read on to understand the 2 rules of the Invisible Lifestyle.

### **Rule # 1 - Invisible Lifestyle A: A Stands for "ALWAYS"**

*"What you didn't notice your parents doing as a child, you are faithfully reproducing today, and you don't have a clue you're doing it."*

An easy way to remember this rule is "A" stands for Always. You have *always* lived your life the way your parents did. The "A" Lifestyle is what is installed in the majority of children and therefore, they live out the normal, natural and expected ways to do things just like their parents did.

Over an entire lifetime, most people will not make the connection between their behavior as an adult and how their parents lived during their childhood. Most children will accept their parent's values without questioning anything.

As adults, they are faithfully reproducing the habits, values, interests and ways of their parents without even realizing it. This idea applies to your life as well. Your children are absorbing everything they see you do and hear you say, especially if your actions and words are consistent with one another.

This concept is demonstrated in society every day. Children, whose parents always lived on government welfare payments, accept that way of life in their adult lives and in the majority of cases, will depend on government aid as well. They were programmed to expect this kind of support to continue.

Wealthy parents show their children that having plenty of financial assets is a normal and expected way to live. As adults, it will be completely natural for children of these wealthy couples to live with sound financial assets because they will naturally understand how to maintain them. They couldn't comprehend living their life any other way.

After learning about the effects of Invisible Lifestyle A, one woman said:

*"You know, I have this thing about loving to be on the phone. I can't seem to stop answering calls, making calls and just staying on the phone, but I just don't know why. I never really noticed it but now I realize that my mother was on the phone all the time when I was little and my dad would complain about it. I never really noticed, but today I'm on the phone for hours a day just like my mother and sure enough, my husband is complaining about it just like my dad did. This Lifestyle thing is scary. I've become just like my mother with the phone!"*

Think about your values. Are you living your life the same way your parents did? Are you a mirror image of your mother or father?

This report contains many examples of how your Lifestyle can affect your marriage. In it, you'll see how to discover some of YOUR OWN Lifestyle value systems.

### **So Why is Your Lifestyle... 'Invisible'?**

The values your parents gave you are invisible to you because it is difficult to see things when they are too close to you. A famous military general once said, "I don't know who invented water, but I'm sure it wasn't a fish." You cannot see your parents' values because you're simply too close to them.

### **Your Invisible Lifestyle A in Action**

To better understand the effects of Lifestyle A, the following example is what happens to a child who is raised in a home where it was normal to be "fashionably late".

**...he will Always  
be late just like  
his father.**

*John still remembers how his father used to rush around their apartment trying to get ready for work. Being consistently late was part of his normal routine. When John was 9 years old, he remembers his father dropping him off at a birthday party a half-hour late.*

*As young John anxiously peered at the fully attended backyard party, he heard his father say, "It's good to be late John. It allows you to make a grand entrance." It was those kinds of little phrases uttered at key moments along with his father's late behavior that gave John his Invisible Lifestyle value for being late.*

*John never noticed these promptness issues and thought that being late was the way things ought to be. As an adult today, John finds people annoyed with him for arriving late. In response to these complaints, all John can do is make feeble excuses and say that he will try to be prompt next time but no such change will ever take place. Invisible Lifestyle A has been installed in John at a very young age and because of this, he will always be late... just like his father.*

*On the other side of the spectrum is John's wife, Sherry who was programmed by her parents at an early age to be on time. Her parents lived by the clock. Breakfast was ALWAYS at 7am and lunch was ALWAYS at noon.*

*Dinner consistently took place at 6pm every day. Sherry never noticed this as a child and thought it was the way things ought to be. Today, you can set your watch by her arrival. This is simply because Sherry is living by Invisible Lifestyle A. No struggle, no alarms; she simply knows when to leave in order to arrive anywhere on time.*

*As adults, Sherry and John got married without any understanding of the Invisible Lifestyle that they carry. Throughout their first five years of marriage they began discovering clashes of Lifestyle values one by one.*

*Staying true to his Invisible Lifestyle A, John was consistently late while Sherry was constantly upset that John was never on time. John continually pushed for Sherry to understand his tardiness, while Sherry had the potential of turning into a "nag" about watching the clock.*

*This resulted in growing resentment between John and Sherry. They both tried to convince each other that their actions were justified and that their particular value system wasn't the problem.*

Think of all the other issues that married couples argue about simply because they have conflicting value systems. There are lifestyle values for home ownership, showing love and affection, investing money, work ethic, personal privacy, handling conflict and so on.

IMAGINE THIS: your parents and your spouses' parents were forced to live in the same house together for one year back when they were raising you. What would have happened?

If your answer is "They would have gotten along fine" then the two of you probably enjoy a good relationship today because both sets of parents have complimentary values. If your answer is, "Oh, that would have been a nightmare!", then you are probably facing marital challenges today.

**...he will Always  
be late just like  
his father.**

This is the point; neither of you are the "bad guy". You are both living your lives the way you were *SHOWN* to live. Like most people, you are just not aware of it.

**There is one exception to Lifestyle A, and that is Lifestyle B.**

**Rule # 2 - Invisible Lifestyle B: B stands for "BUCKING"**  
*"What you couldn't stand your parents doing when you grew up; you won't stand for in your relationships today."*

It's easy to remember Lifestyle "B" by thinking of a bucking bronco trying to throw its rider. Those who embrace the "B" Lifestyle, attempt to throw off many of their family's Lifestyle values. The B Lifestyle can create the "black sheep of the family" and that goes for highly troubled families or very successful ones.

Invisible Lifestyle B has taken place when an inner city boy or girl goes on to pursue a successful career as a lawyer while each of their siblings end up in jail and rehab houses. On the other hand, a child from a wealthy family could go against his parents' values by recklessly spending and eventually filing for bankruptcy as an adult.

You install Lifestyle B yourself at a very young age. It is the exception to Invisible Lifestyle A because you actually noticed and were upset by something your parents did when you were young.

For instance, you might have been troubled by your parents' messy eating habits. As a child, you made sure to install Invisible Lifestyle B and as an adult you eat with the best of table manners. If it distressed you when your mother cleaned the house obsessively before company arrived, then you went against your mother's values and applied Invisible Lifestyle B as an adult. Today, you buck her system and make sure that you never obsess over cleaning.

When a man and woman marry and bring two separate value systems from two separate homes, the results are almost always stress filled.

***When Invisible Lifestyles Combine in Marriage:***

*Ann & Mark got married when they were 20 years old after knowing each other for only 7 months. Ten years and a great deal of frustration later, they learned the source of their ongoing conflict. It revolved around the issue of repairing broken things around their home.*

*Ann's parents lived in a home where they could tolerate living with broken things. She remembered wire, string and duct tape holding together fans, chairs and appliances. Being true to Lifestyle A, Ann didn't notice this as a child and thought it was normal. Her mom and dad were never upset about it and neither was she. Ann's parents didn't see a need to spend their money fixing up the house. They put their money on other priorities and home repairs were low on their list.*

*Mark grew up in a home that could be described as a mirror image of Ann's home. Mark's parents also viewed fixing things around the house as a low financial priority. Mark also saw wire, string and duct tape holding fans, chairs and appliances together, but Mark's reaction to this was very different from Ann's. Mark never wanted his friends to come over because of the shame he felt about the way his parents kept up their home.*

**Men and women  
bring 2 separate  
value systems  
from 2 separate  
homes**

*Even though Mark grew up in a similar home environment to Ann, Mark's reaction to that environment was quite the opposite of Ann's. His response was to create his own Invisible Lifestyle B and keep things neat and tidy in his home.*

*In their marriage today, Mark constantly urges Ann to spend money on fixing up the house, while Anne continuously resists him about the home repairs. She wants the money to go to other things that she values (the same things her parents valued).*

*In a counseling session, they insisted their relationship problems revolved around finances, but they later learned that their fights had nothing to do with money, but had everything to do with their clashing A & B Invisible Lifestyles.*

To discover your own Invisible Lifestyle, visit:  
**[www.softheartedownman.com](http://www.softheartedownman.com)**.

There you will find the online tool that will help you gain a great deal of insight on why you value what you do today. You'll want to complete all 60 Lifestyle issues. Complete your own, then ask your spouse to do the same. You will be able to review all 60 Lifestyle values and discover which are "A" Lifestyles and which are "B" for each of you. You will be surprised to discover that when the two of you argue, you're really fighting over the differences in your separate childhood value systems. Simply knowing these values and how they clash with your spouse is the beginning of reducing the stress in your marriage.

### **Test Your Knowledge**

From the following memory, which Invisible Lifestyle does Sylvia live by today...A or B?

**Lifestyle A:** *"What you didn't notice your parents doing when you were a child, you are faithfully reproducing today, and you don't have a clue you're doing it."*

**Lifestyle B:** *"What you couldn't stand your parents doing when you grew up; you won't stand for in relationships today."*

*As a child, Sylvia's mother was plagued with migraine headaches and a high sensitivity to any kind of noise. Her mother constantly complained about the noise that her children made. At this young age, Sylvia was angry and frustrated because she was a very active child who wanted to express her feelings vocally. To this day, in Sylvia's home, there is always some type of noise going on in her house, whether it's the T.V., radio, or her own children's bouts of laughter. To Sylvia, any noise is music to her ears.*

If you said Sylvia is living by Invisible Lifestyle "B", congratulations! You're correct! Sylvia installed Invisible Lifestyle "B" for the value called "Noise At Home" because she hated the silence she had to endure when she was young. As a result, today she's bucking her mother's value system.

**Lifestyle A:  
What you didn't  
notice.**

**Lifestyle B:  
What you  
couldn't stand.**

You will find that your stress in life comes down to the fact that your values are very different and often in opposition of other people's values. Since we're all a product of the homes we were raised in, we're either duplicating our home life (A), or we're working hard to go against it. (B).

Don't allow other people's Invisible Lifestyle values to upset you. People in all kinds of relationships live with Lifestyle values they didn't create and it's perfectly normal. The first step is discovery and the second is understanding.

To speed up the process of altering the Lifestyle values you don't want, the following method works when you are ready to change the values that you find to be troubling. A great analogy for looking at your upbringing or childhood years is to think of your parents as programmers. Just like computer programmers, your parents installed sets of instructions for a range of different topics from money to manners.

The majority of people never notice most of their original programs, or Lifestyle or values. These values are like software programs that might have made you so uncomfortable at the time; that you decided as a child that you didn't like them then, and you wouldn't live by them when you grew up. It's as if you had an anti-virus software that eliminated certain programs that your parents tried to "install".

Changing values that you find to be inconvenient, troubling and even destructive is no small feat. One thing is certain; *willpower alone will never change them.* It will take something much more powerful than your will. *It will take your imagination.* The human imagination plays a major part in managing your entire body. Today's cognitive psychologists agree with Aristotle in that thought requires images. Consequently, when you think, you also see an image which immediately stimulates your nervous system. Using your imagination, you can change Lifestyle values, or original programs you don't want.

Note: The technique that follows may not work for everyone, but it has proven to be successful for those who would consider themselves to be creative. This technique is quite unconventional, so it is important to go into it with an open mind.

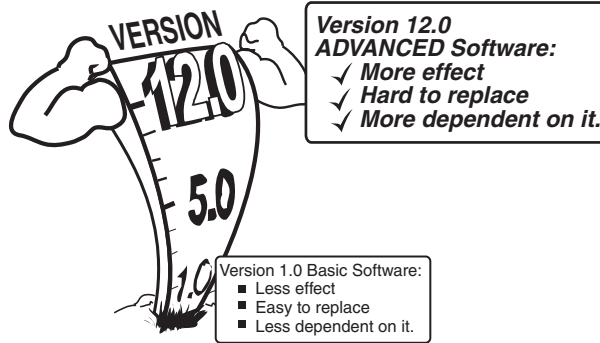
To make this software analogy more memorable, let's put names to these "original programs" you received from your parents, as if they were actual software products. For example, software programs your parents could have installed to help you have a better family life when you grew up might be called "Faithful Mother", "Sense of Humor", and "Take Responsibility". On the other hand, your parents might have installed bad software like "Fickle Parent", "Me First" or the very destructive "What's Wrong with You?!"

In addition to product names, software has version numbers. These version numbers help consumers understand which version of the program they are using. To help you understand the influence of higher version numbers, we'll refer to the following definitions....

**Version 1.0 Basic Software:** It has less effect on you, it's easy to find a replacement and you are less dependent upon it.

**Version 12.0 Advanced Software:** It has more effect on you, you become dependent upon it and it is difficult to replace.

**Just like  
programmers,  
your parents  
installed a set of  
instructions.**



If you want to change your programming, you should assign a low version number to your destructive values.

Let's say you find an old software program that makes dinner in public settings embarrassing for you. You will title your old software program "Bad Table Manners Makes Life Easy 1.0". With a low number like 1.0, you're telling your nervous system that it will be easy to overcome the table manners issue. You will be able to do this by using a much stronger software program such as "Good Table Manners Brings Me Respect 12.0".

By creating the image of a top of the line program, you have consciously exposed your nervous system (and thus, your brain's synaptic connections) to a stronger influence on the subject of table manners. This more influential program will eventually subdue the old program that was running across your brain cells without effort on your part.

Give your software program a positive name and high version number. You'll need to read your old and new software multiple times every day. This is the repetition that's required to alter those synaptic connections that make the old behavior happen without effort.

As an example, let's say a woman had an old software program that caused her to make bad financial decisions such as "Spending Money Makes Me Happy 3.0". She would then create a new software program that is a direct and stark contrast to the old program such as "I'm Smart With Money & Financially Secure 12.0", even though she doesn't have evidence of financial security yet. A person could replace "I Just Can't Remember Things 3.0" with "I Have Total Recall 12.0". It's these new software names and a high version number that take the strength out of the old software and begin giving your brain the freedom to build new structures to run the healthier software. Remember this: Your old software took ten years to fully install during a time when your brain was ready for programming. It takes time, so don't give up on this process. The act of comparing the old software name with the new will bring you relief if you constantly stay with the repetition.

If a man had an old program that caused him to eat when he was upset, he needs to forgive himself, lighten up and contrast his old "I Eat Away My Stress 5.0" with his new "I Eat When I'm Hungry 12.0". You will not rid yourself of troubling programs until you make this technique a regular part of your day.

To make the effect of "reprogramming your original software" stronger, it is beneficial for you to carry a picture of your old and new software with you. The boxes should look like commercial software packages.

**Low  
software  
version  
numbers have  
less effect  
on you.**

**High  
software  
version  
numbers have  
great effect  
on you.**

The bad software program should be small and weak in comparison to new and improved replacement software program. (use artwork at the end of this article) You should review both the old and new programs at least five times a day. You'll feel a tension inside. For the first time in your life, you are identifying the new and positive software to be in direct opposition to your old software. Your nervous system is "seeing" the contrast along with your attraction to the new program. After about three months of reviewing the software programs five times a day, the old program and the "old neuron wires" (that were built to repeat the old behavior) will be dismantled and a new set of neuron wiring will take their place.



This software analogy explains how parents installed some very good software along with some bad software that causes trouble for adults today. Putting a very high version number on the newly created software programs gives you the chance to overcome persistent problems. Now you know why those problems persist. When both you and your spouse complete your Invisible Lifestyle, you'll begin to understand your current software programs because you now understand their source.

One of the biggest battles married couples are faced with today is trying to protect themselves from being "changed" by the other person. The Invisible Lifestyle is not about changing who you are. It's about taking the values you no longer desire in adult life and making them fit your own adult value system today. Now you can be who you really are at heart. There is no need to become somebody else. You can just be yourself and change those values that no longer benefit you today.

The Invisible Lifestyle proves that you were "programmed" with the habits and beliefs that you follow today (or refuse to follow). Once you understand and apply this, the destructive power of clashing value systems that ultimately results in divorce no longer needs to be part of your future. The emotional pressure will begin to subside.

The more the two of you talk about these old values, the weaker they become and the more you accept each other as you are. Uncovering your Lifestyle values is an important step in solving the problems that are typically behind stressful relationships. It is necessary to first discover and then understand your opposing childhood values if you want to restore peace and harmony in your relationship.



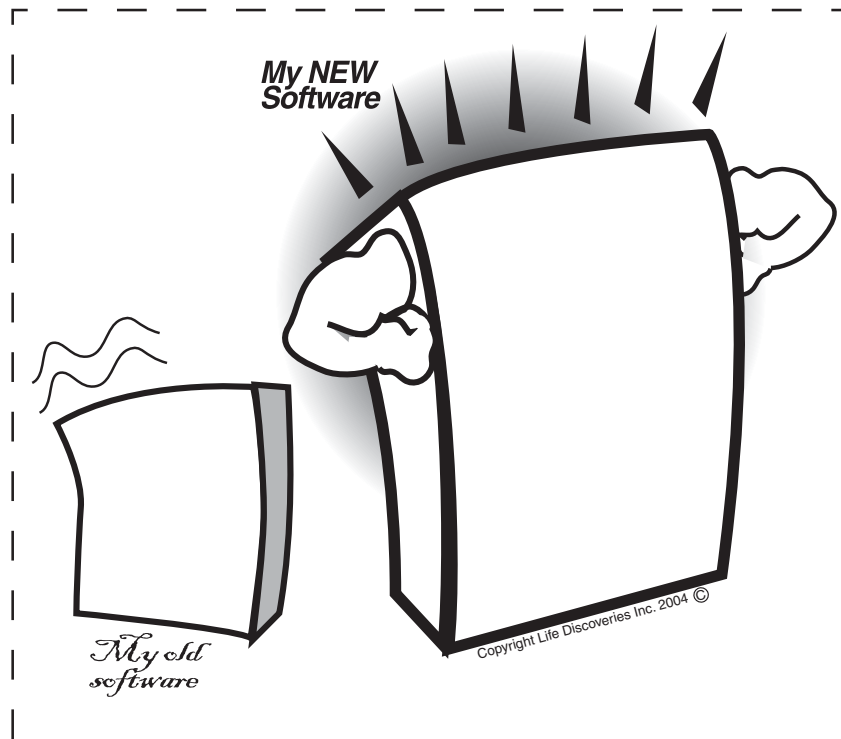
**Low  
software  
version  
numbers have  
less effect  
on you.**

**High  
software  
version  
numbers have  
great effect  
on you.**

Just knowing your Lifestyle values are created by the way your parents acted and spoke around you as a child, takes the edge off the guilt and blame you often fight about. If you want to restore the love in your marriage as quickly as possible, it's critical that you get to the source of your conflict by discovering your Invisible Lifestyle.

-Larry Bilotta-

If you want to actually discover what your Invisible Lifestyle value systems are made of, you can complete the exercise in about 40 minutes at [www.softheartedwoman.com](http://www.softheartedwoman.com)



*Once you print your old software and new software on these graphic boxes, you are telling your brain with each reading that the old original program is weak and undesirable, but the new program is strong, positive and your brain responds to these weak vs. strong pictures.*

Understanding your Invisible Lifestyle is just one of the 3 skills necessary for a happy marriage. Only one "piece of the puzzle" will not get you the marriage you've hoped for. That's why I created the Marriage Lifeline Program. In this program, you'll go on line to get customized results that will give you insight into who you are, where you came from and how to shut off that "little voice inside your head" that causes you to start arguments in your marriage. You'll find much more on the program at [www.stopyourdivorcein4weeks.com](http://www.stopyourdivorcein4weeks.com)

To learn more about how to stay married and happy, go to Larry Bilotta's site [www.marriage-success-secrets.com](http://www.marriage-success-secrets.com)