

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Moment 117 - The Unexpected Power Of Seduction: Robert Greene

Why did you write a book about the topic of seduction?

Seduction is a high form of power because you make people feel pleasure.

You make them feel excited or interested in you and then their resistance to your ideas slowly lowers and you have the ability to influence them and to move them in the direction that you want.

If you yell at them, like how we were talking about your child and you tell them, do this, do that, they resent it and for good reason.

But if you're subtler, if you're more seductive in your approach, if you're more indirect, people will do what you want or go in your direction without ever even realizing it.

So it was a sub theme in the 48 Laws of Power and so I was sort of interested in the psychology of that and why some people are good at it and some people are awkward about it.

So when I finished the 48 Laws of Power, I thought this would be a natural segue the next book.

What are the qualities of a great seducer?

Well I like to distinguish between cold seducers and warm seducers.

A cold seducer is something you don't want to be.

That's the typical image that we might have of a male seducer but even of a female seducer like the great courtesans that set up whether it's just after money or the men are just after sex, that's not my ideal.

My ideal is kind of a back and forth quality where it's not domination.

It's sort of like a game that you're playing.

It's like a mating game.

It's like a courtship ritual where both part people are kind of seducing each other and so what makes for a great seducer is very simple.

I can summarize it very simply.

You are outer directed.

So when you meet somebody for the first time or you're on the date or whatever it is, you're not having that internal monologue going, does she like me or does he like me?

Am I dressed well?

Am I saying stupid things?

What can I do to impress them?

No.

You turn it off and you're outer directed and you're listening to them and you're entering their spirit and you're hearing them say things that give you idea of what they're missing in life, of what they want, of what their needs are, of what makes them an individual.

You're absorbing it.

You're entering into their spirit and then you can reflect it back to them.

You can give them gifts.

You can take them to places that show that you're attentive to them because if you look at how we are in our day-to-day life, normally people never pay us attention.

They're always so self-absorbed, they're never thinking about us.

I mean the times where you get the sense that people are actually interested in who you are as an individual is pretty rare.

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If you give that feeling to someone, it's incredibly powerful because we all want to be validated.

We all want to be recognized.

The seducer is not someone who's all worried about himself or herself and thinking.

They're involved in the other person.

They're absorbed like a sponge inside their psychology, inside their world.

A lot of this is very applicable to romance and dating, et cetera, et cetera.

It feels for whatever reason, not necessarily something I've read much about in your work, but it feels like dating and romance and relationships have become much more complicated in the modern world, but it's become much more difficult to seduce somebody.

What are the attributes of someone then that is not good at seducing?

Anti-seducer has many qualities.

I have a whole chapter on the anti-seducer, I try and define it.

There are several of them.

I don't have them all memorized, but one quality that's very anti-seductive is preaching and moralizing.

It's like telling people, oh, that's wrong what you just said or your politics are ugly or you're not really good at this or something or other.

Having a moral superiority, a sense of sanctimony in a realm which should be about pleasure or should be that kind of equality, that kind of back and forth dynamic where you're asserting your moral superiority is deeply, deeply anti-seductive, the element of preaching to people.

Not being generous, and I mean not just with money, money is important, but not just being generous with your spirit, right?

You want to be open, you want to give as much as you can to the other person of yourself, of your time, of your money, of your energy, etc.

So being all kind of crimped and I don't want to give, I don't want to spend money,

I want to take you to the cheap place to eat, I don't want to give you much time is very, very anti-seductive.

When you were talking a second ago about the person who goes on the date and they're thinking about themselves and what their hair looks like or whatever else, that spoke to an insecure person, is insecurity a seductive quality or is it a anti-seductive quality?

It is anti-seductive, now there is a part of weakness that is seductive.

So I would say vulnerability is seductive, but insecurity is anti-seductive and there's a big difference.

Why does vulnerability draw people to you?

Because the sense, so if I can define seduction in simple terms, most of the time we are closed to the influence of other people, particularly now we have these walls up because life is harsh, people are coming at us with their advertisements, with their pleas, with their wanting money, with this and the other and we've all learned to be very defensive.

And seduction is an openness, is the opposite of that and you felt it when you were child towards your parents, you felt very vulnerable and open and there was an element of your parents and how they treated you that was very much like a seduction.

So seduction is about being open to the other person to the extent where you can even fall

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in love, you can fall under their spell.

And the sense of letting go of your ego, letting go of your defensiveness and letting another person enter your world is being seduced.

It requires vulnerability.

If you meet, the typical scenario is of a man who's not vulnerable at all, he's so powerful and in control and everything has no vulnerabilities, it's frightening for a woman, it could be very frightening like this, he's so strong, he's so invulnerable that there's something wrong about it.

You know, maybe he's a serial killer, maybe he's got skeletons in his closet.

Something isn't right about that.

What, what seduces you about a puppy, about a child, about an animal?

Is there vulnerability?

It makes you want to hug them, it makes you want to help them, right?

The sense which you came upon a tiger that's there and they don't need that.

Well, that's not seductive, I mean, on your screen it is, but if they're there in your living room, that's not seductive, but that puppy is, right?

Vulnerability, the sense that somebody needs protection or help brings out qualities in us that we don't normally have that I think allow for a seduction.

So that is being vulnerable.

That is, I can be influenced by that other person.

I am open to the, to their spirit, right?

That's being vulnerable.

The word vulnerable, I hate to sound like a professor here, so excuse me, it's seduction, comes from the root, the root of it means a wound, bonus.

So you have a wound inside of you and you need healing.

And the other person naturally wants to help you, right?

But being insecure is the, it means I'm so self-absorbed, I'm so worried about myself that I can't get out of it.

And we've all had that experience.

When you meet somebody and they, and you can sense, you can smell their insecurity in them, I'm not judging them because we all have insecurities.

It makes you feel insecure.

It makes you feel a little bit awkward.

Whereas if you meet someone who's not like that, who's confident, et cetera, it brings out that quality in you.

So if you're on a date and there's someone who's, you smell that kind of insecurity, it makes you awkward and insecure, it creates a kind of a problem.

So that would be the difference between the two.