

## DIARY OF TWO WEEKS WITH KASSANDRA

### DIARY for a typical Two Week Period September 2005

Aug 31, 2005 Wednesday late morning at Doctor's Office -- Blowup

Kassandra went to see Dr. Stewart, one of the gynecologists who had performed Kassandra's hysterectomy several months ago. The Appointment was botched. Kassandra threw a fit in Stewart's office. Dr. Karen Noble, Dr. Stewart's associate, called and said Dr. Stewart would no longer see Kassandra and instructed Kassandra to find another doctor. Noble said they would not tolerate such horrible behavior in a women's ward.

Sept 1 Thursday -- No problems

Sept 2 Friday Morning Labor Day weekend -- Blowup

We had a big meltdown in the morning when Kassandra realized I needed to leave for the Labor Day vacation with our son-in-law Tommy in the morning to help him set up the campsite in the mountains. Kassandra apparently felt abandoned, started screaming, throwing a fit, and wouldn't let me go with Tommy to the Mountains. She demanded I help her clean house instead. I got on my hands and knees and cleaned the house, even though we weren't going to be in the house for the weekend. When Tommy called in desperation at 12:30 pm needing my help, she felt guilty and saw that I had acted like her slave long enough. She let me go.

Sept 3 Saturday Morning -- Blowup

Kassandra arrived at the campsite with her daughter Lara late Friday night. Everything was fine. I told the campers I'd be back at 8:00 am to make breakfast. Kassandra & I left the camp at 11:30 pm to stay at a nearby motel. Everything was fine until the next morning. Kassandra started a big fight because I was going to the campsite to make breakfast. She was hypercritical and angry, saying I didn't care about her. I should get her a cup of coffee instead of helping the rest of the family at the campsite. Feeling totally manipulated, I went to the campsite anyway and made breakfast for everyone. They were all really beat from the travel and late arrival, and really needed the help. Kassandra showed up later that morning, and there was no further incident.

Sept 4-5 Sunday & Monday -- Great two days camping with the kids.

We all had a good time on holiday at the camp: boating, river rafting. Kassandra was just fine. Once, when the kids started fighting and I had to walk away, Kassandra came to comfort me. It was so nice to feel loved and have her tender touch, which seems like such a rare gem.

Sept 6 Tues Afternoon -- Blowup

Kassandra got angry because I started printing out the Peace Manual we had created for our Church missionaries. She told me she hated me, that I was a terrible person, and that she would file for divorce in the morning. She started screaming then grabbed her keys just as another Peace Task Force member rang the

doorbell. She was uptight because she had to fill out a Social Security form applying for disability. It was obviously an emotionally draining thing, so I tried to be very sympathetic. It was of no use. Later in the evening, I tried to fill out part of the form, and half way thru I got a little tired and wanted to rest for a few minutes and regenerate. She came in the bed room at least five times, angry at me because I needed a rest. I told her to give me a chance to rest a little, and I would get the job done. She was afraid I would use all the information in the form against her. After her fourth or fifth outburst at me, I got angry, threw down the paperwork and stomped out of the room. I came back a few minutes later and finished the job. She read it over and got upset because I mentioned that she got angry easily (which she does).

Sept 7 Wednesday Morning -- Anger

She was angry with me because I stated on the SS forms she angered easily. She stayed angry with me all day. When I tried to make her lunch, she got angry with me because we didn't have any cheese for a grilled cheese sandwich. I could do nothing right.

Sept 8 Thursday Morning -- Angry

She woke up at 9:30 am, looking angry. I greeted her warmly, trying to get a hug, but she started after me, finding fault with everything, without relief. I told her it

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wasn't normal to wake up angry, and she said she had good reason, because she went to bed angry. I asked her why she went to bed angry? She said it was because I was a bad husband and didn't care about her. She bitched and complained so I just decided it was easier to be her slave and do what ever she wanted. She complained that I didn't clean the dishes right, complained I didn't clean the bird cages right, and complained that I didn't have a fresh cup of coffee ready for her when she awoke. I asked her what made her so angry and out of sorts? She said I caused it all.

Sept 9-10 Friday & Saturday -- Wonderful

She's perfectly fine, appears normal, well adjusted, no blowups, I've avoided or smoothed over every minor trigger, putting the genie back in the bottle within 30 seconds with a smile, some love, and diverting the conversation. Went to movies, went to church, etc. Saturday morning, we went to the church presentation on how to handle the Hurricane Katrina situation. Cassandra signed up to relieve the church volunteers in Houston in a week.

Sept 11 Sunday -- Wonderful then Blowup

We worked diligently together on the Peace Plan and getting ready for her trip to Houston in a week. There was a mandatory presentation/briefing at the church at 7:00 pm. At 6:00 I gave Cassandra a heads up about the briefing, with a time to leave in half an hour. While she was getting ready I mentioned some difficulties I had with software programming for the church website. She got very mad at me, started screaming at me, accusing me of being insensitive to people

and trying to aggrandize myself. I walked away, and she chased after me. I walked outside, and she came outside and threw a can of soda at me. I walked away again pleading with her to calm down. She came after me when I reentered the house, slugged me several times, kicked me in the shins twice, while I just covered up to keep the damage at a minimum. She told me to clear out of the house and go back to Carolina. She demanded I go to church with her, which I did reluctantly. Then, after she kept yelling at me in the car, I diverted her attention to inform her that her daughter wanted to speak to her. A cell phone call to her daughter sounded like nothing happened. By the time we got to church and she became absorbed in the Katrina Relief Effort, and all was fine after that, but no apology for the violence.

Sept 12 Monday -- Wonderful but almost a crisis

Kassandra was busy preparing for her trip: out of the house most of the day getting shots for disease control, and then attending a church group in the evening. When she returned at 10 pm we chatted about the Relief Effort plans. At 11:30 I was getting ready to go to bed and mentioned I had conquered some of the software programming problems for the church website. She blew up at me for confusing her and not giving her information in a form she could understand. I tried to simplify the matter, and she just got angrier. Finally, I just said I was going to bed. About ten minutes later, she came in the bedroom and apologized. I forgave her. This was very unusual. She almost never apologizes for being angry. 95% of the time, she just gets angrier and blames me.

She stayed up until 2:30 am working on her computer for the Relief Effort. The lack of sleep will stress her out -- probably a blowup will be forthcoming.

Sept 13 Tuesday -- Explosion in the evening

This was a busy day as Cassandra shuttled between doctors and getting ready for the Relief Trip on Sunday. She had a session with Dr. Bowen (her psychiatrist) scheduled for 1:00 pm but was late because she didn't get up until 10:00 am and had an appointment scheduled in St. George Beach to get her nails done. She was 10 minutes late to Dr. Bowen, which violated his contract with her. He was upset, and told her he should no longer be her psychiatrist because she violated the contract. Dr. Bowen also wanted Cassandra to see a Dr. Flowers who was a BPD therapist that Bowen thought could help her. Cassandra came home about 4:00 pm after visiting the Church, and was frantic, barking orders to me to get the Peace Plan ready, to find material on Micro Financing for Refugees, and when she realized her printer needed more ink, to race to the store to get ink. She was like a mad woman. She told me to fill out the forms for Dr. Flowers. She then left at 6:30 to go to a debriefing at Church. When she returned later that evening, she attacked me for not being sensitive to the forms for Dr. Flowers and by 11:30 pm was making me the bad guy because I didn't understand the problems about seeing this new doctor. After she screamed at me for about 10 minutes, I tried to go to bed, and

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she chased me into the bedroom, still screaming. I put my clothes back on and ran out of the house to the safety of the night. In the sky I saw the moon nearing its fullness and realized I was in for it. Later I slowly walked back into the house, hoping she had calmed down, but no such luck. She was in the pantry staring at her pills, crying and screaming. She was becoming suicidal. I told her if she didn't get her act together, I'd call 911 and have her spend the night in the hospital. After she screamed at me some more, once again I retreated to the solitude outside, and tried to sleep in the car. About an hour later, having been unable to sleep, I snuck back into the house and lay on the guest bed, always alert that she might come into the room and attack me, perhaps violently or destructively.

Sept 14 Wednesday -- Meltdown

I awoke early and started to work, having a busy day ahead. At 7:15 am, I heard an uncontrollable sobbing coming from the bedroom. Upon entering, Cassandra was in a fetal position, bawling her eyes out. I tried to comfort her, and she said I was insensitive and didn't understand that Dr. Bowen was abandoning her and dumping her into the hands of the devil. After unsuccessfully trying to console her, I realized she was suicidal, and called Dr. Bowen on his cell phone about 7:45 am. Dr. Bowen returned the call 5 minutes later, and tried to calm her. After several minutes of uncontrolled sobbing, he was able to learn from her that she thought the new Doctor, Flowers, was part of a plot to institutionalize Cassandra. He allayed her fears about that, explaining it was just a lot of

talk therapy, and that Dialectic Behavior Therapy was the right thing for her. Then Cassandra expressed her fears that Bowen would abandon her. Bowen said he was willing to renegotiate his contract with her, but she could not be late any more, and the sessions would have to be 45 minutes long, and that she must get in control of herself. He also told me if I thought she would be suicidal, I was responsible for her life and should call 911. Later that morning Cassandra asked that I accompany her to see Dr. Noble. Cassandra was worried that her latest surgery was not working right, and also wanted Dr. Noble's colleague, Dr. Stewart, to resume work rehabilitation work on Cassandra. After meeting with Dr. Noble, the doctor explained that Cassandra's public outburst two weeks ago was so damaging that Dr. Stewart did not feel comfortable with Cassandra as a patient. The rest of the day was rough, but we managed to get through. I am stressed out over money, the medical bills keep stacking up, Cassandra distracts me from my business, and her outbursts give me no consolation. Now, without the therapy Dr. Bowen wants via Dr. Flowers, I'm stuck with little hope of Cassandra's improvement, unless we can get Dr. Flowers back in the picture.

Sept 15 Thursday -- Eggshells, but Okay.

Cassandra is focused on getting ready for the trip to Houston. Everything is a little edgy, but she's staying focused, coordinated, and pretty much on target. The cleaning lady is coming at noon, and Cassandra is barking orders left and right, demanding that I clean the house before the cleaning lady gets here. I've got some business demands, but she is not at

all sympathetic. I must drop these to make her happy, which I do, reluctantly, and with some pouting, but we get through the day. In the afternoon she came home from a doctor's visit and demanded I stop all work on what I was doing and help her put a notebook together. She barked conflicting orders at me, but I tried to comply, and she then left in a rush to make a meeting at church with the notebook.

Sept 16 Friday -- Near Meltdown

Cassandra got up in the morning with an attitude. My smile and welcome was met with sarcasm and disdain. She complained all morning that I was a terrible husband, that I was insensitive to her needs, and that everything with me was wrong. I quietly dropped my work and left the house several times to avoid a fight, but to no avail. She doesn't seem to learn that yelling at me does no good, and just makes me feel attacked. Eventually, after a full morning of being ground down, I yelled back at her. She said "That's it! I'm calling my lawyer and demanding a divorce!" I tried to calm her down, and she took a swing at me, and missed. Then she started cussing at me, and tried to kick me. I tried to restrain her and took the phone from her hand, telling her not to get the lawyers or anyone else involved. She had too much to do to get ready for the trip to Houston on Sunday. I could see she was still getting violent, and self destructive. This is the type of circumstance when she can slice her arms, take a knife at me, or attempt suicide. I warned her if she didn't calm down, Dr. Bowen had put her safety in my

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hands, and if I thought I couldn't handle it, I should call 911. She kept flailing and screaming, so I called 911. About 10 minutes later the police arrived, assessed the situation. By that time Cassandra had gotten in control of herself and both of us told the police an arrest was not necessary. Cassandra was angry for the rest of the day, but, by-in-large in control of herself. By calling the police I probably kept her from becoming self destructive. Every time she watches the news of the refugees of the hurricane, she becomes despondent, angry, and depressed. I knew the full moon was a day away, and this was a difficult time.

Sept 17 Saturday -- No Problems

When Cassandra got up, I told her I would dedicate the entire day to her getting ready for the trip. I helped run errands, pack, put up bags of snacks, etc. We got through the day just fine. She was focused, intent, organized, and clear in her requests to me. We later went to evening church service.

Sept 18 Sunday -- No Problems – Leaving for Houston

We arose, went to church to meet the rest of the Refugee Relief Team, hugged, said prayers, and everything went like clock work. She boarded the bus feeling part of an important missionary effort. After the bus left, I called her several times to wish her well.

Sept 19-21 Monday-Wednesday -- Handled the problems well until..

Kassandra was in Houston tending to the refugees. When I talked to her she remarked how sensitive and caring she was to

people's needs. She was delighted with her work, and clear about her goals. It was a pleasure to talk to someone who was making a difference. However, Hurricane Rita was building in the Gulf of Mexico aiming right at Houston. She began making reservations for an escape from the oncoming storm.

Sept 22 Thursday -- The Breakdowns begin

Getting out of Houston proved to be a real difficult problem, but she and her team seemed to handle the problems. She was supposed to go to Detroit for her high school reunion, but couldn't make the flight. She got a seat on a plane to Los Angeles instead, and called me Thursday afternoon to let me know I needed to pick her up at the airport about 6:30 in the evening. She was hysterical and in tears. I tried to calm her down as did the rest of her church team. I knew when she arrived at the airport, she'd be a wreck, so I cleaned the house, finished some work, and then left for the airport. It was the middle of the rush hour, which made it worse. The normal 50 minute drive took 2 hours. I arrived about 40 minutes after she landed. She called me from the airport while I was stuck in rush hour traffic and began screaming at me, threatening to take a shuttle back to San Clemente, even though I was less than 10 miles from the airport. I met her, and instead of letting me give her a hug and letting her tell her story, she just yelled and screamed at me for the entire 55 mile trip back to San Clemente. It was horrible, non-stop berating. No explanation of the difficulties of the rush hour were of any matter. When we got home, she kept screaming at me, until her friend Peggy called, and then she was all nice and animated. In the mean time I drew a hot bath for her, and

she soaked for about 10 minutes after the call, then went to bed.

Sept 23 Friday -- Spiritual, then breakdown and bizarre

I knew she was stressed out from the Houston problems, and let her sleep late. When she woke she was actually spiritual and wanted to articulate a wonderful marriage. I served her a cup of coffee in bed and we talked for about half an hour. Then I mentioned that we had a lot to do to get ready for our trip to Detroit for her high school reunion the next morning. That broke the spiritual spell, and she became angry, upset and the rest of the day went totally down into the pits. By the afternoon she had decided we would not go to Detroit. She went into a total downward spiral, no matter what I tried to do. But every statement was wrong, every possibility became a pit of disaster. By the evening she called the airlines and cancelled her reservation. I waited until 1am Saturday morning to cancel mine just in case she changed her mind; that way she would still have my seat on the plane.

Sept 24 Saturday -- Edges of Insanity

At 9:00 am, Cassandra got a call from her brother who was expecting to pick her up in Detroit. After a five minute call, she realized she would not be part of the reunion and abruptly changed direction, declaring she would fly to Detroit. She called several airlines and found a flight leaving from LA at 10:30, an hour's drive away. She was still in her nightgown and had no breakfast. To make the flight she'd

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have to pack in a flash, put her make-up on in the car, and finish dressing in the car. If she did this we might make the plane if there was no traffic, because she'd have to check-in 20 minutes before flight time.

Instead, Cassandra chose to take a shower and do her hair. I explained that it would be impossible to make the plane. She said she needed the shower, to wash her hair, and carefully pack. When we got in the car, flight time was in 45 minutes, and it takes an hour to get to LAX.

She then started yelling at me, blaming me for everything, and on and on. We drove toward the airport, and it became clear that there was no way we could get to the airport on time (surprise!). She stopped yelling at me long enough to call the airline and find out there was one last direct flight to Detroit that left at noon. She then continued her anger.

By the time we were about 20 minutes from LAX, I finally had it with all her criticism and blasted her back verbally. This did not quell her anger, she just got angrier and told me she wanted a divorce. She called her attorney from the car and told him to serve me papers.

I called her psychiatrist and asked if I could talk with him about her condition. She told me to turn around and go back home. She was not going to go to Detroit. We had a very cold drive back home. When we got home, she got a call from one of her friends who was going to attend the reunion.

Kassandra suddenly realized she was going to miss out on everything, and the abandonment complex came to play. She then changed her mind again and called the airlines to see if she could get a flight to Detroit to have a late night rendezvous with her friends. She found a flight that left at 2:00 pm with an arrival in Detroit at 11:15 pm and made reservations to fly from a closer airport.

She repacked her clothes and we drove to the airport. All the while she continued her negative-blame-attack-argue-complain cycle at me. She reiterated she wanted a divorce, but I could not fathom what I did to get her so mad.

We arrived at the airport with an hour to spare, but she insisted I leave the car unattended in a no parking zone, contrary to all security rules, and bring her luggage to into the building to the ticket counter. I told her I couldn't go more than 100 feet from the car, but she continued to bark orders. I left a suitcase at the entrance door and retreated back to the car as the police were converging.

I then went home, found a copy of her social security application that had statements I had made about her mental condition, and copied them, and inadvertently left the last page in the copier. I wanted to protect myself from the divorce with a copy of the material she had written.

I then received another angry call: She had decided not to fly to Detroit. I went back to the airport to pick her up. It was a disaster. She yelled and screamed at me for hours after returning home. Then she found the last page

of the social security form in the copier. More screaming.

I have emotionally now given up on the marriage. It is hopeless unless she is willing to get help. I have nothing left in me.

I went to the Stop Walking on Eggshells book for guidance, but the only conclusion I could make was that divorce is probably inevitable. I wrote a note in the book about what would happen to me if I stayed married to Cassandra. The outcomes I predicted were:

- I would become a "nobody" (which I was becoming)
- I would become bankrupt (my business was being ruined by Cassandra)
- I would die (my spirit was dying, and I was worried deeply that Cassandra would kill me, especially after our marriage therapist warned me that suicidal people are often homicidal)
- I would go to jail (there were police officers in our house monthly to break up domestic disturbances)

When I realized it was highly likely that most of these options would probably happen, I realized my worst fears would probably materialize. I am spent. My energy is gone, my will to live is waning, my future seems to hold nothing but emptiness, despair, and conflict. I hate to admit my life may be nearing an end. But I must face my fate or change it.