

CONTROL **THE BEAST**

7 WARNING SIGNS YOU'RE LETTING **THE BEAST** WIN

How to Recognize Emotional Triggers Before
They Damage Your Relationships, Leadership,
and Future

BY **ED SNYDER**

AUTHOR OF CONTROL THE BEAST



EMOTIONS ARE INDICATORS, NOT DICTATORS.

Own Your Reactions. Rewrite Your Story.

INTRODUCTION

The Battle Most People Never See

Emotions are indicators, not dictators.

Most people spend their lives fighting battles around them while ignoring the battle within them. They battle difficult circumstances, difficult people, difficult relationships, and difficult seasons. Yet the greatest victories and the greatest defeats often happen inside the human heart.

The truth is that many of the problems we face are not created by what happens to us. They are created by how we respond to what happens to us. Two people can experience the same event and walk away with completely different outcomes. One becomes bitter. The other becomes better. One explodes. The other grows. One damages relationships. The other strengthens them.

The difference is not always the event. The difference is emotional mastery.

For years I have taught a simple principle: Emotions are indicators, not dictators. Emotions are not evil. God created them. Emotions help us recognize what is happening inside us. They can reveal hurt, fear, disappointment, joy, concern, or frustration. But emotions were never intended to sit on the throne of your life.

Imagine driving a vehicle when every warning light on the dashboard suddenly comes on. The lights are not the problem. The lights are indicators that a problem exists. Anger is a warning light. Fear is a warning light. Frustration is a warning light. Anxiety is a warning light. The goal is not to break the dashboard. The goal is to understand what the dashboard is trying to tell you.

When emotions become dictators, they begin making decisions they were never qualified to make. They damage marriages, destroy friendships, weaken leadership, create regret, and rob us of peace.

In my book *Control The Beast*, I refer to these destructive emotional patterns as the beast. The beast is not a monster hiding under your bed. The beast is the uncontrolled emotional side of human nature that emerges when wisdom leaves the room.

The good news is this: you do not have to be controlled by the beast. You can learn to recognize it. You can learn to manage it. You can learn to lead it. This guide will help you identify seven warning signs that may indicate the beast is beginning to gain influence in your life. The earlier you recognize these signs, the easier they are to correct.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Do Not Just Read It - Work It

This guide is designed to be more than information. It is designed to become a mirror, a worksheet, and a starting point for change. Read it slowly. Do not rush through the warning signs. Pay attention to the one that makes you uncomfortable. That is often the place where growth needs to begin.

As you read, think about your home, your leadership, your church, your business, your friendships, and your private life. The beast rarely shows up in only one place. Patterns that appear at home often show up at work. Patterns that appear in leadership often show up in relationships.

Use the reflection questions honestly. Write your answers if possible. Growth becomes more real when you put words on paper. Awareness is the beginning, but action is what changes the future.

My challenge to you is simple: choose one warning sign to work on this week. Do not try to fix everything at once. Pick one area, practice one new response, and invite God to help you become stronger from the inside out.

Small consistent obedience creates lasting transformation.

WARNING SIGN #1

You React Before You Think

"So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." - James 1:19 NKJV

Have you ever walked away from a conversation and immediately wished you could rewind the last sixty seconds? You heard yourself say the words. You knew they were wrong the moment they left your mouth. Yet somehow they came out anyway. That is the power of an unmanaged emotional reaction.

One of the clearest signs that the beast is winning is when your mouth starts moving before your mind starts thinking. A comment is made. An email arrives. A disagreement begins. Someone pushes one of your emotional buttons. Before wisdom has a chance to enter the conversation, reaction takes over.

The problem with reactions is that they are usually designed for survival, not success. A reaction seeks immediate relief. A response seeks long-term results. When you react, you focus on the moment. When you respond, you focus on the outcome.

Why This Matters

This warning sign matters because emotional patterns never stay private. What begins inside eventually affects the people around you. If the pattern is ignored, it becomes normal. If it becomes normal, it becomes culture. If it becomes culture, it begins shaping your home, your team, your ministry, and your future.

The purpose of this guide is not to make you feel guilty. The purpose is to help you see clearly. When you can name the pattern, you can begin to change the pattern.

What It Looks Like

- Interrupting others
- Raising your voice quickly
- Sending emotional texts or emails
- Posting on social media while angry
- Making decisions during emotional moments

Real-Life Example

A supervisor receives criticism during a meeting. Embarrassed and defensive, he immediately attacks the person who raised the concern. The room becomes tense. Trust is damaged. A productive conversation becomes a conflict. His problem was not criticism. His problem was reaction.

Reflection Question

What situations cause you to react most quickly?

Action Step

The next time you feel emotionally triggered, pause for ten seconds and ask: "What outcome do I want from this conversation?" That single question can save relationships, careers, and ministries.

A reaction reveals emotion. A response reveals maturity.

WARNING SIGN #2

You Justify Your Anger

"He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city." - Proverbs 16:32 NKJV

Anger itself is not always sinful. Even Jesus demonstrated righteous anger. The danger begins when we start defending our emotional behavior instead of examining it.

The beast loves justification. It whispers, "They deserved it." "You had every right." "Anybody would have reacted that way." But emotional maturity asks a different question: "Was my response helpful?"

Many people spend years defending behavior they should be correcting. Growth begins the moment we stop making excuses and start taking responsibility.

Why This Matters

This warning sign matters because emotional patterns never stay private. What begins inside eventually affects the people around you. If the pattern is ignored, it becomes normal. If it becomes normal, it becomes culture. If it becomes culture, it begins shaping your home, your team, your ministry, and your future.

The purpose of this guide is not to make you feel guilty. The purpose is to help you see clearly. When you can name the pattern, you can begin to change the pattern.

What It Looks Like

- Excusing harsh words
- Defending emotional outbursts
- Refusing accountability
- Believing everyone else is the problem

Real-Life Example

A husband speaks harshly during an argument and later defends his words instead of taking responsibility for them. He may have had a legitimate concern, but the damage came through the delivery. The issue was real, but the reaction still needed ownership.

Reflection Question

Have you ever defended a reaction that you later regretted?

Action Step

Separate what happened from how you responded. The event may not have been your fault. Your response is still your responsibility.

***The strongest person in the room is not the loudest person.
It is the person who can rule his own spirit.***

WARNING SIGN #3

You Replay Offenses Repeatedly

"Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice." - Ephesians 4:31 NKJV

One of the most dangerous things the beast can do is convince you to relive pain repeatedly. Many people suffer longer than necessary because they replay offenses over and over again.

They replay the conversation. They replay the betrayal. They replay the criticism. They replay the disappointment. Every replay strengthens the emotional hold the offense has on them.

Imagine recording a painful event and watching it repeatedly every day. Eventually, the memory becomes larger than the actual event itself. The offense begins occupying mental space that belongs to your future.

Forgiveness does not mean the offense was acceptable. Forgiveness means you refuse to allow the offense to continue controlling your life.

Why This Matters

This warning sign matters because emotional patterns never stay private. What begins inside eventually affects the people around you. If the pattern is ignored, it becomes normal. If it becomes normal, it becomes culture. If it becomes culture, it begins shaping your home, your team, your ministry, and your future.

The purpose of this guide is not to make you feel guilty. The purpose is to help you see clearly. When you can name the pattern, you can begin to change the pattern.

What It Looks Like

- Constantly replaying old arguments
- Revisiting past hurts
- Imagining future confrontations
- Feeling emotional about events that happened years ago

Real-Life Example

A church member becomes offended by a comment made during a ministry meeting. Months later, they are still discussing the incident with others. The event lasted five minutes. The offense lasted five months. The damage was caused not by the event, but by the replay.

Reflection Question

Who or what are you still carrying that God wants you to release?

Action Step

Write the offense on paper. Pray over it. Choose forgiveness. Then destroy the paper as a symbolic act of release.

Leaders who cannot release offenses eventually become prisoners of them.

WARNING SIGN #4

You Blame Others For Your Reactions

"Let us search out and examine our ways, and turn back to the Lord." - Lamentations 3:40 NKJV

The beast loves blame. Blame shifts responsibility, protects pride, and delays growth. Whenever we blame others for our reactions, we surrender our power to change.

You may not control what people say. You may not control what people do. You may not control circumstances. But you always retain responsibility for your response.

Years ago, I learned a leadership lesson that changed my perspective. Whenever something went wrong, it was easy to identify who made the mistake. But mature leaders eventually learn a different question. Instead of asking, "Who is responsible?" they begin asking, "What am I responsible for?" That shift changes everything.

Mature people ask, "What could I have handled better?" Immature people ask, "Whose fault is this?" One question produces growth. The other produces stagnation.

Why This Matters

This warning sign matters because emotional patterns never stay private. What begins inside eventually affects the people around you. If the pattern is ignored, it becomes normal. If it becomes normal, it becomes culture. If it becomes culture, it begins shaping your home, your team, your ministry, and your future.

The purpose of this guide is not to make you feel guilty. The purpose is to help you see clearly. When you can name the pattern, you can begin to change the pattern.

What It Looks Like

- They made me angry
- They pushed my buttons
- I only reacted because of what they did
- Constantly pointing to others as the source of every problem

Real-Life Example

A supervisor repeatedly loses his temper with employees. When confronted, he explains, "If they would just do their jobs, I would not get angry." Instead of correcting his leadership, he blames his team. The result is continued frustration and declining morale.

Reflection Question

What responsibility have you been avoiding?

Action Step

Write one situation where you have been blaming someone else. Now write three things you could do differently.

Ownership creates growth. Blame creates excuses.

WARNING SIGN #5

You Struggle To Apologize

"First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift." - Matthew 5:24 NKJV

One of the clearest indicators of emotional maturity is the ability to apologize. Unfortunately, the beast hates apologies because apologies require humility. The beast prefers pride.

Many people would rather defend their actions than repair their relationships. They offer explanations instead of apologies, excuses instead of ownership, and defensiveness instead of humility.

An apology does not make you weak. It demonstrates strength. Strong people can admit mistakes. Strong leaders can own failures. Strong Christians can seek reconciliation.

Why This Matters

This warning sign matters because emotional patterns never stay private. What begins inside eventually affects the people around you. If the pattern is ignored, it becomes normal. If it becomes normal, it becomes culture. If it becomes culture, it begins shaping your home, your team, your ministry, and your future.

The purpose of this guide is not to make you feel guilty. The purpose is to help you see clearly. When you can name the pattern, you can begin to change the pattern.

What It Looks Like

- Avoiding difficult conversations
- Defending obvious mistakes
- Refusing accountability
- Waiting for the other person to go first

Real-Life Example

Two ministry leaders stop speaking after a disagreement. Months pass. The relationship remains strained. Neither person is willing to initiate reconciliation. Both lose. The church loses. The mission loses.

Reflection Question

Who deserves an apology from you?

Action Step

Contact that person within the next 48 hours. Keep your apology simple. Take ownership. Seek restoration.

The strongest leaders are often the quickest to apologize.

WARNING SIGN #6

Your Words Leave Damage Behind

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit." - Proverbs 18:21 NKJV

Words are among the most powerful tools God has given us. Words can heal, inspire, strengthen, and guide. Words can also destroy.

Many people underestimate the impact of their speech. A single sentence can stay with someone for years. A careless comment can damage confidence. A harsh criticism can wound a relationship. A sarcastic remark can discourage a child.

Your words create environments. People either flourish or struggle under the language you consistently use. The question is not whether your words have power. The question is how you are using that power.

Why This Matters

This warning sign matters because emotional patterns never stay private. What begins inside eventually affects the people around you. If the pattern is ignored, it becomes normal. If it becomes normal, it becomes culture. If it becomes culture, it begins shaping your home, your team, your ministry, and your future.

The purpose of this guide is not to make you feel guilty. The purpose is to help you see clearly. When you can name the pattern, you can begin to change the pattern.

What It Looks Like

- Sarcasm
- Gossip
- Harsh criticism
- Public embarrassment
- Constant negativity

Real-Life Example

A parent repeatedly calls a child lazy. Eventually the child begins believing the label. The words became a prophecy. In the same way, a leader who speaks life can help people see what God placed inside them before they can see it themselves.

Reflection Question

Do people feel stronger or weaker after spending time with you?

Action Step

Intentionally speak encouragement to three people today. Speak life on purpose.

Leaders shape culture through the words they repeatedly speak.

WARNING SIGN #7

Your Emotions Are Leading Your Decisions

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." - Galatians 5:22-23 NKJV

Perhaps the greatest danger occurs when emotions begin making decisions. Emotions are valuable indicators. They are terrible decision-makers.

Fear says run. Pride says fight. Anger says attack. Insecurity says hide. Wisdom says pause.

Many people regret decisions they made during emotional moments. They quit jobs, end relationships, leave churches, make purchases, and say things they cannot take back, all because they allowed temporary emotions to make permanent decisions.

Mature people learn to delay major decisions until emotions settle. They allow wisdom to speak before acting.

Why This Matters

This warning sign matters because emotional patterns never stay private. What begins inside eventually affects the people around you. If the pattern is ignored, it becomes normal. If it becomes normal, it becomes culture. If it becomes culture, it begins shaping your home, your team, your ministry, and your future.

The purpose of this guide is not to make you feel guilty. The purpose is to help you see clearly. When you can name the pattern, you can begin to change the pattern.

What It Looks Like

- Emotional purchases
- Emotional leadership
- Emotional relationship decisions
- Impulsive reactions
- Permanent decisions made in temporary emotional states

Real-Life Example

A leader resigns during a frustrating week. Two months later they regret the decision. The problem was not the job. The problem was making a permanent decision in a temporary emotional state.

Reflection Question

What decision are you currently making emotionally instead of wisely?

Action Step

Delay major decisions for 24 to 72 hours whenever possible. Allow emotions to settle. Seek counsel. Pray. Then decide.

***Wisdom often speaks quietly. Emotions usually shout.
Learn which voice to follow.***

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE SELF-ASSESSMENT

How Strong Is Your Emotional Intelligence?

Awareness is the first step toward growth. Many people know they have emotional challenges, but they have never stopped long enough to evaluate where they truly stand.

This assessment is not designed to condemn you. It is designed to help you gain clarity. Be honest with yourself. Nobody else has to see your answers.

Rate yourself using the following scale: 1 = Rarely, 2 = Occasionally, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Frequently, 5 = Almost Always.

Area	Statement	Score 1-5
Self-Awareness	I recognize when my emotions begin affecting my behavior.	_____
Self-Awareness	I can identify what triggers my emotional reactions.	_____
Self-Awareness	I usually know why I feel the way I feel.	_____
Self-Control	I can remain calm when challenged.	_____
Self-Control	I can disagree without becoming defensive.	_____
Relationship Management	I listen without interrupting.	_____
Relationship Management	I apologize when I am wrong.	_____
Leadership Under Pressure	I remain composed during difficult situations.	_____
Leadership Under Pressure	I make decisions based on wisdom rather than emotions.	_____
Leadership Under Pressure	I help calm others during stressful moments.	_____

Total Score: _____

16-32: You have a strong foundation, but there are areas where growth is possible.
 33-48: Several emotional habits may be limiting your effectiveness and relationships.
 49-64: The beast may be influencing more areas of your life than you realize. Significant growth opportunities exist.

This score does not define you. It simply reveals where growth can begin.

What To Do With Your Score

If your score is lower than expected, thank God for the growth that has already happened in your life. If your score is higher than you hoped, do not allow shame to take over. A high score simply means you have identified the right area for attention. The only bad score is the one you refuse to learn from.

Look back over your answers and circle the three statements that scored highest. These are your emotional growth priorities for the next 30 days.

YOUR PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

Awareness Without Action Produces Little Change

Many people know what they should change. Far fewer people create a plan to change it. Transformation happens when awareness turns into action.

Take a few moments to complete the following exercises. This is where you move from information to application.

My Top Three Warning Signs

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What Is This Costing Me?

Relationships: _____

Leadership: _____

Spiritual Growth: _____

Personal Peace: _____

My Growth Commitments For The Next 30 Days

Commitment #1: _____

Commitment #2: _____

Commitment #3: _____

Accountability Partner

Name: _____

Phone: _____

My Commitment Statement

I refuse to allow my emotions to control my future. I will pursue self-awareness, self-control, and emotional maturity. I will take responsibility for my reactions. I will seek wisdom before responding. I will choose growth over excuses. I will learn to lead my emotions instead of being led by them.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ABOUT ED SNYDER

Pastor. Author. Speaker. Leadership Trainer.



Ed Snyder has spent more than three decades helping people navigate conflict, strengthen relationships, develop leadership skills, and grow in emotional maturity.

Called to ministry at the age of thirteen, Ed has dedicated his life to serving others through preaching, teaching, leadership development, and community outreach.

Today he serves as the Lead Pastor of Solid Rock Church in Irving, Texas, where he is passionate about helping people discover purpose, deepen their relationship with God, and become everything God created them to be.

Ed is also a law enforcement chaplain, business owner, leadership trainer, and co-author of the book *Control The Beast*. His unique combination of ministry experience, leadership development, crisis response, and real-world business leadership allows him to connect with people from every walk of life.

Whether speaking to church leaders, business professionals, first responders, families, or community organizations, Ed delivers practical principles that create lasting transformation.

You may not always control what happens around you, but you can learn to control what happens within you.

CONTINUE THE JOURNEY

This Is Only The Beginning

If this guide has helped you identify areas for growth, the next step is simple: keep growing. Growth is not an event. Growth is a process. Every day presents an opportunity to become stronger, wiser, and more emotionally mature. The goal is not perfection. The goal is progress. Review this guide again in 30 days. Compare your responses. Notice where you are calmer, stronger, and wiser. Emotional maturity grows through repetition, humility, prayer, and practice.

Read The Book

Control The Beast expands on the principles introduced in this guide and provides practical strategies for emotional mastery, communication, leadership, and personal growth.

Listen To The Podcast

Practical conversations about emotional intelligence, leadership, communication, relationships, faith, and personal growth.

Bring Ed Snyder To Your Event

Leadership. Emotional Intelligence. Communication. Biblical leadership principles. Building healthy teams.



[Learn More: ControlTheBeast.com](https://ControlTheBeast.com)

The strongest leaders are not those who control everyone around them. The strongest leaders are those who learn to control themselves. The journey begins with awareness. The journey continues with discipline. The reward is a life marked by wisdom, peace, and influence. The beast does not have to win. Starting today, you can.

A FINAL WORD FROM ED

Start Today. Keep Growing.

Do not despise the small beginnings of emotional growth. One calmer conversation matters. One sincere apology matters. One moment of self-control matters. One wise decision made after prayer instead of pressure matters. These moments build a new pattern, and new patterns create a new story.

You may not master every reaction overnight, but you can begin today. The goal is not to pretend emotions do not exist. The goal is to bring them under wisdom, prayer, discipline, and the leadership of the Spirit. Own your reactions. Rewrite your story. Your future, your family, your leadership, and your calling are too important to surrender to an unmanaged emotional moment.

A large, stylized, handwritten signature in a dark grey color that reads "Ed Snyder". The signature is centered on the page and has a fluid, cursive style.

Ed Snyder | Pastor - Author - Speaker - Leadership Trainer

Scripture quotations marked NKJV are from the New King James Version. Used by permission.