

**Step 1:** Copy-paste the following prompts into your post and write your answer below each one. Feel free to add any final observations below your answers.

**Prompt #1:** Describe your ability to be "Spit Out the Hook" (or the difficulty you had "Unhooking").

I've always had difficulty "unhooking". I just never realized, until now, there was a more technical term for being so reactive. I tend to be defensive and very emotional. I consider being so sensitive as one of my biggest weaknesses. It's hard to control myself because I lead with my emotions. This course is already helping me so much become more centered in work and even personal situations I've had with very aggressive people. I will continue to do my best not to get hooked and react to their reaction. I'll let that be their reaction, not mine.

**Prompt #2:** Describe the difference between being "Hooked" and not being "Hooked."

Being hooked is reacting to someone's reaction. Explaining yourself based on their anger or aggression is being hooked. To be unhooked is to stay centered, welcome it and to blend. You have to try not to react. Listen to the aggressor. Don't make it about you. It's about them. Easier said than done, that's for sure. It will indeed take some time and practice to get to the point where I don't react to someone being rude or aggressive towards me. I will absolutely practice it though for the sake of my own emotions and those around me that would be affected by my emotions.

**Prompt #3:** Were you able to identify the **EVENT**? Were you able to identify the other person's **REACTION**? Describe the **EVENT** and the **REACTION**.

The last incident that affected me the most was an awful email I received in response to what I thought was a harmless email in regards to my children's PTA board. During a Zoom meeting with the Principal, I asked if another financial board member could help with a grant application. My connection started going out and no one could hear what I was saying. I followed up with an email to this person I suggested help me on this very simple project. She didn't respond to me after a few days. She eventually responded to tell me what her schedule looked like and why she wouldn't be able to help me. I responded telling her what my schedule looked like in response to hers. Unfortunately, we've never met in person. She completely misread my email and responded with a vicious email with insult after insult. I wanted to react and respond with equally mean words. I wrote a few rough drafts almost as if I was writing in a journal. I was putting my thoughts in writing. I never sent any of the emails and never responded. I'm not sure if it was the right thing to do. I just knew I couldn't reply because the outcome would be

negative. I'm a part of the PTA because I want to be a positive force for my children's school. I didn't take her hook. I decided to keep swimming.

**Prompt #4:** Describe how successful your partner "Spit Out the Hook." Or describe how difficult it was.

My husband has the same reactions as I do. Being together so much has created some misunderstandings. I love to share the lessons we are learning from this course. He can either learn from the lessons or set it aside. He always takes the hook. It's hard for him to look the other way. The situation from prompt #3 made him livid. He wanted me to react. I told him I wasn't going to because I didn't want to give her the satisfaction. She was looking for an argument. She just wasn't going to get it. Again, that may be avoidance, but I didn't know how to react in an email and when we can't really talk about it face to face as I would normally want to do. It's extremely difficult to spit out the hook when you feel threatened. It will definitely be something we both have to work on in both our professional and personal lives.

### **Review "Spitting Out the Hook"**

Key Points to Remember About Unhooking Yourself.

- When confronted with a conflict, remember the Six Second Rule and allow the Neocortex to activate
- Remember to remain Centered; Welcome the Gift of Energy; and (because you've Spit Out the Hook you can now Blend with the other person and see it from their point of view; once you've done all that you can Lead to an appropriate conclusion.
- The REACTION belongs to the person having the REACTION. Take responsibility for your REACTION; let them take responsibility for their REACTION.
- What do you want to understand? What is the EVENT (what happened?) and what is the REACTION (feeling or emotion). Before you proceed, seek to discover the EVENT AND REACTION.
- Be Genuine. If you're phony, it comes through.
- Attitude, eye contact, and body language all communicate your level of sincerity and interest.
- Try using the phrase: "You seem to be feeling \_\_\_\_\_ because of \_\_\_\_\_?" Although it may feel awkward at first, it is a good way to develop the habit of searching for both the EVENT and the REACTION to the EVENT.

## The practice

First, have your partner Hook you:

1. Ideally you're standing in front of each other. Explain to your partner that you want them to "hook" you which means insult or blame or verbally attack you in some way. Your first response will be to react from a hooked place. You can be angry, blame, justify, explain, attack back of whatever response might feel appropriate to the conflict. (Choose something that actually gets (or could normally get) an emotional reaction; I realize this exercise can be "walked through" as opposed to practiced with intention. The deeper you go, the more you learn.
2. Then have your partner throw out the same hook, but this time "Spit Out the Hook." This time remain Centered and Welcome the Gift of Energy. Ask questions to find out what the EVENT is and what their REACTION is.
3. After you've completed both responding from being hooked and responding from spitting out the hook, take a few moments and discuss what you noticed. What's the difference?
4. You may want to repeat all the steps in this process a second time with a different HOOK.
5. Now let your partner have a turn at experiencing being HOOKED. Also, your job is to do a little teaching. Explain the four steps in an Aikido move (if it's the same partner you had before, he/she may know the Aikido moves and something about Centering. Explain what you've learned about the Six Second Rule, EVENT and REACTION, and "you" messages.
6. Also, explain that you're intentionally saying something to "hook" them and you don't mean it. Have them notice how they feel when hooked. Then repeat the process and let them practice "Spitting Out the Hook."
7. Pay attention to how they react. Are they having difficulty spitting out the hook? Some people (perhaps you) will find it difficult to throw out the hook intentionally. However, for you to learn, it's important to practice this skill.
8. Thank your "assistant" for their cooperation and share any insights either of you have with each other.