

Poor Man's Polygraph

The Poor Man's Polygraph allows you to test the veracity of others.

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Poor Man's Polygraph - Part 1

The Well... Technique

Imagine you think your spouse is having an affair. Imagine your child comes home late and you suspect shenanigans. Imagine your clients or employees mislead you. If you're like most people, you ask yourself the question, "How do I know the person talking to me is telling the truth?" I ask myself that question every day when I speak with friends, colleagues, supervisors, and the clerk in the grocery store who tells me that spaghetti is in aisle 3. People rarely have the opportunity to conduct polygraph examinations on their friends, colleagues, or kids to find out if they are telling the truth or not.

The Poor Man's Polygraph consists of a series of techniques that increase the probability of detecting deception, The Poor Man's Polygraph provides deceptive indicators, not proof of deception. Detecting deception is difficult because truthful people sometimes emit verbal and nonverbal cues that indicate deception. Likewise, deceptive people sometimes emit verbal and nonverbal cues indicate truthfulness. Additionally, people are, in general, poor lie catchers. The Poor Man's Polygraph consists of the following techniques: Well..., Why should I believe you?, Parallel Lie, Forced Response, and Land of Is. The Poor Man's Polygraph will be presented in a five part series beginning with the Well... technique. The Poor Man's Polygraph can be found in its entirety in [Advanced Interviewing Techniques: Proven Strategies for Law Enforcement, Military, and Security Personnel](#).

Well...

When you ask someone a direct Yes or No question and they begin their answer with the word "Well," there is a high probability of deception. Beginning an answer to a direct Yes or No question with the word "Well" indicates that the person answering the question is about to give you an answer that they know you are not expecting. The following exchanges will clarify the Well... technique:

Dad: Did you finish your homework?

Daughter: Well...

Dad: Go to your room and finish your homework.

Daughter: How did you know I didn't do my homework?

Dad: I'm a dad. I know these things.

Dad need not wait for his daughter to finish her answer because he knew by her use of the word "Well" that she was about to give him an answer she knew he was not expecting. The daughter knew her dad was expecting a "Yes" answer to the question, "Did you do your homework?" She began her response with the word "Well," which meant she was about to give an answer other than "Yes."

In another example, I interviewed a person who I thought witnessed a murder. The person was in close proximity to the crime, but he denied seeing the shooting. After giving me some evasive answers, I decided to test his veracity by asking him a direct Yes or No question.

Me: Did you see what happened?

Witness: Well...from where I was it was hard to see much of anything. It was dark and it all happened so fast.

I asked the witness a direct Yes or No question to which he knew I expected a "Yes" answer. Since he began his response with the word "Well," I knew he was about to give me an answer other than yes. I let the witness finish his response so as not to alert him to the Well... technique. The Well... technique did not indicate deception, only the possibility deception. I used a combination of the other Poor Man's Polygraph techniques and subsequently learned that he was reluctant to cooperate with law enforcement because he feared retaliation from gang members.

The "Well..." technique only works with direct Yes or No questions. Beginning a response with the word "Well" in answer to an open-ended question such as, "Who will win the Super Bowl next year?" indicates the person is evaluating how to answer the question. You should allow others to finish their answers before responding so as not to alert them to this technique. Be advised that if the person you are talking to is aware of this technique, he/she will deliberately avoid using the word "Well."

The Well... technique is not 100% effective, but it does provide you with at least one indicator of deception. The Well... technique used in conjunction with other Poor Man's Polygraph techniques further increases the probability of detecting deception. The Well... technique allows you to test the veracity of others without them knowing that you are testing their veracity. Simply ask them a direct Yes or No question and let their words do the talking.

Poor Man's Polygraph Part 2

The Land of Is occupies the space between truth and deception.

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Poor Man's Polygraph Part 2

Land of Is

The Poor Man's Polygraph consists of a series of techniques that increase the probability of detecting deception using verbal cues. The Poor Man's Polygraph provides deceptive indicators, not proof of deception. No one verbal cue indicates deception, but the probability of deception increases when clusters of deceptive indicators are present. The Poor Man's Polygraph provides non-threatening, noninvasive techniques to test the veracity of others using the cluster method.

The Poor Man's Polygraph is especially useful for parents. Kids, especially teenagers, tell their parents the truth when they know their parents will approve of their activities and become evasive or even outright lie when they know their parents will disapprove of their activities. Fortunately, most of the time children and teenagers tell the truth and parents need not worry. However, the time to worry is when kids become evasive or deceptive, because they know they have either done something that their parents would not approve of or are reluctant to discuss a sensitive topic. The Poor Man's Polygraph or more apply titled in this instance, The Parental Polygraph, allows parents to monitor their children's activities and intervene when necessary to prevent them from going too far down the wrong path. Since the Poor Man's Polygraph techniques are noninvasive, children will not know their veracity is being tested and the parent-child relationship remains intact. The Parental Polygraph and other verbal indicators of deception and cues to determine if children are reluctant to talk about sensitive topic are presented in [*Fibs to Facts: A Parental Guide to Effective Communication*](#).

The Poor Man's Polygraph consists of the following techniques: Well..., Land of Is, Forced Response, Why should I believe you?, and Parallel Lie. The Poor Man's Polygraph will be presented in a five part series. Part 1 presented the Well... technique. Part 2 will address the Land of Is technique. The Poor Man's Polygraph can be found in its entirety in [*Advanced Interviewing Techniques: Proven Strategies for Law Enforcement, Military, and Security Personnel*](#).

The Land of Is

Yes or No questions deserve "Yes" or "No" answers. When people choose not to answer "Yes" or "No," they go to the Land of Is. The Land of Is occupies the space between truth and deception. This murky area contains a labyrinth of half-truths, excuses, and suppositions. President Clinton's grand jury testimony in the Monica Lewinsky investigation inspired the concept of the Land of Is. The following is an excerpt from Clinton's grand jury testimony:

PROSECUTOR: Your statement is a completely false statement. Whether or not Mr. Bennett knew of your relationship with Ms. Lewinsky, the statement that there was no sex of any kind in any man-ner, shape or form with President Clinton was an utterly false statement. Is that correct?

CLINTON: It depends upon what the meaning of the word is means. If is means is, and never has been, that's one thing, if it means, there is none, that was a completely true statement.

Clinton took the prosecutor to the Land of Is. The prosecutor asked Clinton a Yes or No question. Clinton for obvious reasons chose not to answer "Yes" or "No." Notwithstanding, an analysis of Clinton's statement suggests that he was truthful. If "is" means never has been, then "is" equals nothing or "is" = 0. If "is" means there is none then 0 = "is." The proposition "is" = 0 and 0 = "is" is, indeed, a truthful statement. Clinton told the truth, but the truth about what?

The following exchange between a mother and daughter demonstrates The Land of Is technique.

Mom: Your teacher called this afternoon and told me that she suspected you of cheating on an exam. Do you cheat on your exams?

Daughter: I spend two hours a night studying. I study more than anybody I know. People who don't study are the people who have to cheat on exams. I study all the time. Don't accuse me of cheating!

Mom: I'm not accusing you of cheating.

Daughter: Yes, you are!

Mom asked her daughter a simple Yes or No question. Her daughter chose not to respond with a simple "Yes" or "No" answer but, instead, took her mother to the Land of Is by using Misdirection. The daughter changed the focus of the question from her cheating on exams to the amount of time she studies each day. The daughter ended her response with an accusation, which put Mom on the defensive. The topic was no longer about cheating but about Mom making unwarranted accusations. If the daughter cheated on her exams, she would rather talk about her mother making unwarranted accusations than the topic of her cheating on exams. Failure to answer Yes or No questions with "Yes" or "No" answers is a strong indicator of deception.

Mom could have prevented her daughter from going to the Land of Is by first recognizing that the technique was being used and then redirecting the conversation back to the initial topic of inquiry. For example:

Mom: Your teacher called this afternoon and told me that she suspected you of cheating on an exam. Do you cheat on your exams?

Daughter: I spend two hours a night studying. I study more than anybody I know. People who don't study are the people who have to cheat on exams. I study all the time. Don't accuse me of cheating!

Mom: I know you study hard and get good grades. That's not what I asked you. I asked you whether or not you cheat on your exams. Do you cheat on your exams?

Redirecting the conversation back to the initial question forced her daughter to answer the question, "Do you cheat on your exams?" Her daughter must answer "Yes" or "No" or take her mother back to the Land of Is. Failure to answer a Yes or No question with a "Yes" or "No" answer is not conclusive proof of deception, but the probability of deception does increase significantly. If her daughter did not cheat on her exams, answering "No" would not be difficult. The truth is simple. The truth is direct. The truth is not complicated.

The following exchange demonstrates how her daughter would have answered the question if she did not cheat on her exams.

Mom: Your teacher called this afternoon and told me that she suspected you of cheating on an exam. Do you cheat on exams?

Daughter: No. I don't cheat on exams but I know a lot of other kids who do cheat to get good grades.

The daughter answered the Yes or No question with a simple "No" response. Additionally, the daughter was not afraid to talk about other people who do cheat. Truthful people are not afraid to talk about the topic in question; whereas, **liars usually want to distance themselves from topics that pose a threat.** The book *Psychological Narrative Analysis: A Professional Method to Detect Deception in Written and Oral Communications* contains a comprehensive list of verbal cues that signal deception.

In another example, Dad suspects his son is using drugs. The best way for parents to find out whether or not their kids are drinking or using drugs is to ask them a direct question.

Dad: Are you using drugs?

Son: Taking drugs is really stupid. Besides, I don't have time to do drugs. I'm either at school or football practice.

Dad: I know you spend a lot of time at school and at football practice. That's not the question I asked. I asked you if you use drugs. Do you use drugs?

Dad asked a Yes or No question but did not get a "Yes" or "No" answer. Instead, his son **took him to the Land of Is**. If the son did not use drugs, he **would have had little difficulty simply answering "No."** Dad recognized that his son took him to the Land of Is and redirected the conversation back to the initial question. Again, the failure to answer a Yes or No question with a "Yes" or "No" answer is **not conclusive proof of deception, but the probability of deception does increase significantly.**

The Land of Is technique compliments the Well... technique presented in Part 1 of this series. As you recall, beginning an answer to a direct Yes or No question with the word "Well" indicates the person asking the question will receive an answer contrary to the answer he/she was expecting. Consider the following exchange:

Dad: Did you do your homework?

Son: Well...I was waiting for Jimmy to come home from football practice so he could help me with some of the problems.

The son's response began with the word "Well," which means he was about to give his dad an answer he knew his dad was not expecting. The son then took his dad to the Land of Is by offering an excuse. The son did not want to answer "Yes" because he did not do his homework. He did not want to answer "No" because he knew he was suppose to have completed his assignment. Since the son could not answer "Yes" or "No," he had to take his dad to the Land of Is. The son's response contained a cluster of deception indicators, which further increased the probability of deception.

People who lie put pressure on themselves when they fail to answer Yes or No questions with "Yes" or "No" answers. **Struggling with a guilty conscience and the complexities of hiding the truth are stressful activities, but the stress is self-induced. If you want to know what people are thinking or doing, ask them direct Yes or No questions and let their words do the talking.**

Poor Man's Polygraph Part 3

Honest people seek alternate answers to Forced Response questions.

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Poor Man's Polygraph Part 3

Forced Response

The Poor Man's Polygraph consists of a series of techniques that increase the probability of detecting deception using verbal cues. The Poor Man's Polygraph provides deceptive indicators, not proof of deception. No one verbal cue indicates deception, but the probability of deception increases when clusters of deceptive indicators are present. The Poor Man's Polygraph provides non-threatening, techniques to test the veracity of others using the cluster method.

The Poor Man's Polygraph consists of the following techniques: Well..., Land of Is, Forced Response, Why should I believe you?, and Parallel Lie. The Poor Man's Polygraph will be presented in a five part series. Part 1 presented the Well... technique. Part 2 presented the Land of Is. Part 3 will address Forced Response. The Poor Man's Polygraph can be found in its entirety in *Advanced Interviewing Techniques: Proven Strategies for Law Enforcement, Military, and Security Personnel.*

Liars, when faced with two choices, tend to pick one of the choices presented rather than seeking a third alternative. This tendency is due to cognitive overload. Truthful people do not experience cognitive overload; they simply convey facts. Liars, on the other hand, are operating at near-full or full cognitive capacity depending on the complexity of the lies. Liars have to remember what they said and did not say. They also have to monitor and control their verbal

responses and nonverbal behaviors. Additionally, liars have to monitor their target's verbal responses and nonverbal behaviors to ensure that the target believes the lie. The mind of a liar is fully occupied, especially if detection has dire consequences.

The Forced Response is designed to increase cognitive load. A truthful person has little difficulty processing the new information because they have excess cognitive processing capacity. Conversely, liars are using all or most of their cognitive processing capacity to maintain their deception and have little excess capacity to process new information.

The Forced Response technique presents a question that appears to have only two answers but, in actuality, alternate responses are available. The most infamous Forced Response question is, "Did you stop beating your wife?" This question would be difficult to answer for a man who is lying about beating his wife. If the man answers, "Yes," then he admits that he previously beat his wife but no longer beats her. If the man answers "No," then he admits that he continues to beat his wife. Since the man is lying, his cognitive processing capacity is fully engaged and a fully engaged brain has a tendency to reflexively choose one of the two alternatives presented. If a man who does not beat his wife is presented with the same proposition, he would have sufficient cognitive capacity to seek an alternate response such as, "I don't beat my wife."

The following exchanges demonstrate how an investigator might use the Forced Response technique on a suspected thief.

Example 1

INVESTIGATOR: Did you steal the money?

SUSPECT: No.

INVESTIGATOR: Do you really expect to get away with this?

SUSPECT: No.

INVESTIGATOR: That's why I'm here to stop you from getting away with it.

Example 2

INVESTIGATOR: Did you steal the money?

SUSPECT: No.

INVESTIGATOR: Do you really expect to get away with this?

SUSPECT: Yes.

INVESTIGATOR: That's why I'm here to stop you from getting away with it.

Example Three

An honest person has the cognitive processing capacity to produce an alternate response. For example:

INVESTIGATOR: Did you steal the money?

SUSPECT: No.

INVESTIGATOR: Do you really expect to get away with this?

SUSPECT: Get away with what?

The truthful person has the cognitive capacity to quickly process the new information and produce an alternate answer to the Forced Response question. When liars are presented with thought provoking questions, they tend to hesitate before they answer to give themselves time to formulate an appropriate answer. At the point of hesitation, a follow-on statement such as, "I didn't think you were telling me the whole truth," "I knew you were stretching the truth a bit," or "I knew there was more to the story" should be presented. A mild accusatory statement or skepticism should evoke a response from both truthful people as well as liars. The person's response to a mild accusation or slight skepticism is often more revealing than the initial answer to the Forced Response question.

Truthful people typically provide some pushback because they have been wrongly accused of lying. Truthful people often accompany their protests with emphatic gestures such as hitting the table with their hand or fist, finger pointing, or leaning forward. People tend to lean toward people and things they perceive as nonthreatening. Leaning forward signals honesty because the person answering the question does not see the person asking the question as a threat. Liars tend to accept being called liars with little, if any, protest. If liars do protest, they have a difficult time displaying emphatic gestures because they know they are lying. Liars also have a tendency to lean backwards to distance themselves from their accuser.

Mild pushback is an indication of honesty. Too much pushback or too little or no pushback is an indicator of deception. Although truthful people, for various reasons, may hesitate when answering a Forced Response question, the behaviors they display after a mild accusation is made or when skepticism is introduced should serve to offset the initial indication of deception. Remember, no one indicator indicates deception. However, the probability of deception significantly increases when clusters of deceptive indicators are displayed.

In selective circumstances, parents can use the Forced Response to test the veracity of their kids. For example:

DAD: Where were you last night?

SON: I went out with some friends and then we just hung out at Bryan's house.

DAD: Did you think I wouldn't find out?

SON: Find out about what? (Quizzical glance)

Although this is a contrived exchange, it does demonstrate how parents could use the Forced Response. The Forced Response question is "Did you think I wouldn't find out?" If the son answered, "Yes?" it would mean that he thought his father would find out what he did. If the son answered, "No," it would mean that he thought his father would not find out what he did. Both answers suggest the son was trying to hide his activities from his dad. The son answered, "Find out about what?" followed by a quizzical glance, which indicates that he had sufficient cognitive processing capacity to seek an alternate response and was probably telling the truth. This and other verbal indicators or deception are detailed in *Fibs to Facts: A Parental Guide to Effective Communication*.

Sales people capitalize of the Forced Response. They often pose the question: What color car do you like, red or blue? Many people would reflexively select either red or blue. If the customer answers, "Red," the sales person would respond something like this, "Good choice. We have lots of red cars. Let me show them to you." If the customer answers, "Blue," the sales person would respond something like this, "Good choice. We have lots of blue cars. Let me show them to you." If the customer answers, "Neither, I like black cars," the sales person would respond something like this, "Good choice. We have lots of black cars. Let me show them to you." The question a sales person never asks a customer is, "Do you want to buy a car?" Force Response questions are very effective in today's society because we are continually flooded with information, which severely taxes our cognitive processing capacity and consequently, our ability to think before we act.

Poor Man's Polygraph Part 4

The simple question, "Why should I believe you?" can detect deception.
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Poor Man's Polygraph Part 4

Why Should I Believe You?

The Poor Man's Polygraph consists of a series of techniques that increase the probability of detecting deception using verbal cues. The Poor Man's Polygraph provides deceptive indicators, not proof of deception. No one verbal cue indicates deception, but the probability of deception increases when clusters of deceptive indicators are present. The Poor Man's Polygraph provides non-threatening, techniques to test the veracity of others using the cluster method.

The Poor Man's Polygraph consists of the following techniques: Well..., Land of Is, Forced Response, Why should I believe you?, and Parallel Lie. The Poor Man's Polygraph will be presented in a five part series. Part 1 presented the Well... technique. Part 2 presented the Land of Is. Part 3 presented Forced Response. Part 4 will present Why Should I Believe You? The Poor Man's Polygraph can be found in its entirety in *Psychological Narrative Analysis: A Professional Guide to Detect Deception in Oral and Written Communications*.

When someone provides you with an answer to a question, simply ask them "Why should I believe you?" Honest people typically answer "Because I am telling the truth" or some derivation thereof. Truthful people simply convey information. They focus on accurately presenting facts. Conversely, liars try to convince people that what is being said is true. Their focus is not on accurately presenting facts, but rather, convincing listeners that the facts presented represent the truth. Since liars cannot rely on facts to establish their credibility, they tend to bolster their credibility to make their version of the facts appear believable.

When truthful people are asked the question, "Why should I believe you?" their natural response is "I'm telling the truth" or some derivation thereof, because to them there is no alternate response. The facts are the facts. The same question put to liars introduces a degree of doubt. When liars perceive their stories are not fully believed, they attempt to supply additional reasons why their story should be believed instead of letting the facts speak for themselves.

When people answer other than "Because I'm telling the truth" or some derivation thereof, tell them that their response did not answer the question and repeat the question, "Why should I believe you?". If they again do not respond with "Because I'm telling the truth or some derivation thereof," the probability of deception increases. The failure to correctly answer the question, "Why should I believe you?" is not conclusive proof of deception but, rather, one indicator of deception.

The nature of criminal interviews and interrogations allows investigators to apply the technique in a straight forward manner. For example,

INVESTIGATOR: Tim, did you steal the money?

TIM: No, I didn't steal the money.

INVESTIGATOR: Tim, I haven't known you for very long and you haven't known me for very long, so I don't know if you are telling me the truth or not. Believe it or not, people have lied to me in the past to get out of trouble so tell me, Why should I believe you?

TIM: Because I'm an honest person.

INVESTIGATOR: Tim, I didn't ask you if you were an honest person or not. I asked you, Why should I believe you? (pause) Why should I believe you?

TIM: I don't know.

INVESTIGATOR: Tim, if you can't give me one reason why I should believe you, then how do you expect me to believe you?

TIM: I don't really care if you believe me or not.

Tim failed twice to correctly answer the question, "Why should I believe you?" which increases the probability of deception. Additionally, Tim's response, "I don't really care if you believe me or not" is another deceptive indicator. Truthful people do care if they are believed or not and typically provide push back when their veracity is questioned.

Truthful people rarely show indifference when they are not believed, especially when the stakes are high. Tim displayed a cluster of two deceptive indicators, which further increases the probability of deception.

Parents should apply the technique with more tact to avoid a direct confrontation with their kids. This technique is a more direct approach and discretion is advised. Consider the following exchange between a dad and his son.

DAD: There was \$10 on my dresser this morning. It's no longer there. Did you take money from my dresser for any reason?

SON: No.

DAD: Son, I want to believe you. I do. But I'm having a hard time. Tell me. Why should I believe you?

SON: I'm not a thief.

DAD: I didn't ask you if you were a thief or not. I asked you why I should believe you. Why should I believe you?

SON: Because I didn't steal the money. I'm telling you the truth.

DAD: I know you are and I believe you.

In this exchange, Dad softened his presentation of the question, "Why should I believe you?" The son responded that he was not a thief. This response did not answer the question, "Why should I believe you?" Dad gave his son a second chance by telling him that the question was not whether he was a thief or not but, rather "Why should I believe you?" This time the son answered, "Because I didn't steal the money. I'm telling you the truth," which indicates the son was telling the truth. Dad acknowledged that his son told the truth. The fact that the son correctly answered the question, "Why should I believe you" does not mean he told the truth, but it does decrease the probability of deception.

Parents should not restate the question more than one time. Repeating the question, "Why should I believe you?" too many times may cause your kids to think that you are badgering them and could damage your relationship with them, especially if they are telling the truth. Additionally, using this technique too many times may alert your child to this technique, thus making it less effective in the future. This and other verbal indicators or deception are detailed in [*Fibs to Facts: A Parental Guide to Effective Communication*](#).

Poor Man's Polygraph Part 5

The Parallel Lie provides an additional indicator of veracity.

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Poor Man's Polygraph Part 5

Parallel Lie

People tend to tell the truth except **when the truth prevents them from achieving a desired outcome**. The next time you purchase a product or service use the Poor Man's Polygraph to give yourself a degree of confidence that you are not being cheated. Likewise, parents use the Poor Man's Polygraph, more aptly described as the Parental Polygraph, to test the veracity of your kids. Kids, especially teenagers, tell their parents the truth when they know their parents will approve of their activities and become evasive or even outright lie when they know their parents will disapprove of their activities. The time to worry is when kids become evasive or deceptive because they know they have either done something they know their parents would not approve of or they are reluctant to discuss a sensitive topic. These are the precise times when parents should uncover the truth and provide direction and guidance for their children.

The Poor Man's Polygraph provides indicators of deception, not proof of deception. **No one verbal cue indicates deception, but the probability of deception increases when clusters of deceptive indicators are present.** The Poor

Man's Polygraph gives you the necessary tools to protect yourself in a deceptive world. The Poor Man's Polygraph and other verbal techniques to detect deception can be found in a booklet titled Catch a liar.

The Parallel Lie technique is the last part in the five part series presenting the Poor Man's Polygraph. The Parallel Lie is a stand-alone technique or can be used as a follow-on technique to the question "Why should I believe you?" The "Why should I believe you technique?" was discussed in Part 4 of this series. The Parallel Lie does not repeat the initial question but, rather, asks the person about the veracity of their initial response. As review the "Why should I believe you?" technique is demonstrated below:

INVESTIGATOR: Did you rob the bank?

SUSPECT: No.

INVESTIGATOR: Believe it or not people have lied to me in the past to get out of trouble. I don't know you very well and you don't know me very well, so why should I believe you?

SUSPECT: Because there was no way I could have been at the bank that day because I was at a friend's house.

INVESTIGATOR: I didn't ask you if you if you could have been at the bank that day. I asked you Why should I believe you. Tell me, Why should I believe you?

SUSPECT: You don't have to believe me. I don't care.

INVESTIGATOR: Well, I don't believe you.

The failure to respond "Because I'm telling the truth or some derivation thereof increases the probability of deception. Failing to provide the correct response to the question "Why should I believe you?" is only one indicator of deception, not proof of deception. No one verbal cue indicates deception, but the probability of deception increases when clusters of deceptive indicators are present.

The Parallel Lie provides an additional indicator of veracity. **After some passage of time** from asking the question "Why should I believe you?," the investigator introduces the Parallel Lie technique. The investigator does not ask the suspect the question, "Did you rob the bank" a second time but, rather, asks him about his response to that question. The Parallel Lie can either address the truthfulness of the person's response or the deceptiveness of the person's response. For example:

INVESTIGATOR: Sir, **remember when I asked you if you robbed the bank and you said, 'No.' Were you lying to me?**

SUSPECT: **Ah... (hesitation)...no.**

INVESTIGATOR: I knew you were lying to me.

SUSPECT: I don't care what you think.

Responding to the Parallel Lie requires additional cognitive processing. Truthful people do not experience cognitive overload; they simply convey facts. Liars, on the other hand, are operating at near-full or full cognitive capacity depending on the complexity of the lies. **Liars have to remember what they said and did not say.** They also have to monitor and control their verbal responses and nonverbal behaviors. Additionally, liars have to monitor their target's verbal responses and nonverbal behaviors to ensure that the target believes the lie. The mind of a liar is fully occupied. When people lie, especially in high stakes lies, they use all or most of their cognitive capacity to maintain the lie.

The Parallel Lie causes a person to think because rarely are people asked about the veracity of their response to a question. Truthful people have little difficulty processing new information because they have excess cognitive processing capacity. Conversely, liars use all or most of their cognitive processing capacity to maintain their deception and have little excess capacity to process new information. **Since liars are operating at or near full**

cognitive capacity, they have trouble processing these types of questions and will often hesitate for a moment before answering.

When the suspected liar hesitates, a presumptive should be introduced. Presumptives challenge veracity. Presumptives such as "I knew you were lying" or "Don't lie to me" directly challenge veracity. Presumptives can also be more benign. For example, "I didn't think you were being truthful." or "I thought there was more to the story." Indirectly, suspected liars are put on notice that their stories are not wholly believed. Honest people tend to protest to some degree after being called liars and in many cases display emphatic gestures. Dishonest people tend not to protest after being called liars or become defensive. Even if truthful people hesitate when answering the question, they will usually provide push back after being called a liar. Observing the interviewee's verbal and nonverbal reaction to the question is more important than the answer itself.

Additionally, the suspect's response, "I don't care what you think." is another deceptive indicator. Truthful people do care if they are believed or not and typically provide pushback. Truthful people rarely show indifference when they are not believed, especially when the stakes are high. The suspect displayed a cluster of three deceptive indicators, which further increases the probability of deception. Again, the Parallel Lie technique does not, in and of itself, indicate deception but it does add support to the hypothesis that a person is being deceptive, especially in conjunction with other deceptive indicators.

Parents can use these techniques on their children to test their veracity.

Example 1:

DAD: When you told me you weren't drinking at the party last night, were you telling me the truth?

Example 2:

MOM: When you told me you didn't hit Mary at school today, did you lie to me?

The Parental Polygraph and other techniques to detect deception and to identify sensitive topics kids, for various reasons, do not want to discuss can found in *Fibs to Facts: A Parental Guide to Effective Communication.*

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