

Ed Kabak
Botein, Hays, Sklar & Herzberg
200 Park Ave.,
New York, N.Y. 10017

6/24/76

Ed,

This is not about the weekend. It is about my concern for you. You were hysterical last night, entirely unreasonable and under some compulsion that, after your first phone call, frightened me. Heed me. I write for you, not for me. At my age and in my condition and with the sheer amount of the work I've undertaken what others think of me is not a factor in what I say or do.

You need help. If you do not get it at the least your life will be inferior to what it might otherwise be. Most people who do need help have rationalizations that prevent it. Everyone else is wrong, not they. Your first need is to understand yourself. This will not be easy. Were it you'd never have behaved as you did, never have persisted in phoning last night, not have been so close to irrational.

You have a good marriage, a good job, a promising future. Don't lose them. If you are capable of the kind of behavior of which I complained and the kind of reaction of last evening and last night at some point all of this is in jeopardy or going to end.

There is nothing in this for me except the waste of more time. But I am older, I have seen and lived through more and whether or not I should I do have concern for younger people. I do take time for them when I should not, as this weekend with you. There was nothing in it for me. You wanted help, I was willing to help.

With your record I was wrong to let you come again, to believe your assurances about being careful and considerate with the records you wanted to go through. The mistake in letting you come was mine, as it was a mistake to believe you would keep your word about how you'd handle my files. But I do try to help others, you did outline what could be a worthwhile book and I did agree for you to come.

Believe me or not if Joanne had not been with you I'd have told you to leave Saturday morning. You did make it impossible for me to work in my own office and I do have very much work to do.

Even after I caught you putting the Schweiker file back with pages sticking past the ends of the file folder you persisted in this kind of serious misbehavior. What kind of man is it who after the total wreck you made of my files last time and after making promises as you did of being careful and after not taking the time to do it when I was with you and having to take the fraction of a minute more to straighten that file out does exactly the same thing when I was not there? You did and not only with the file of which I did write later. You did it with the behavior modification file. I had to place something in it yesterday. You couldn't even take the time to put those pages in order before you stapled them together again.

There is nothing unfactual in what I wrote you. You can do nothing to undo what you did to us or my files. You can hurt yourself and Joanne more if you do not confront yourself now, learn why you are driven to this kind of serious anti-social misbehavior and try to conquer it, as I am sure you can if you want to.

You never pay attention to the wishes of others. Last night is an example. You had no way of knowing it but when you first phoned I was naked and about to put the venous supports I must wear on. I now feel the heavy weather like yesterday's. I had just tried to refresh myself in the pool. I kept telling you I did not want to talk, from your end Joanne kept telling you the same thing, but you persisted. While I was even angrier with your first call I had some understanding of your emotional state and did not just want to hang up on you. Your blind persistence meant I had to forgo what was necessary for me, getting those supports back on.

Because I am concerned about your self-disclosures last night I'm taking the time to go into them. You upset me very much and not the way you might assume. I was worried for and about you. I never have trouble sleeping. Last night I did and I got up even earlier because I could not sleep.

You improvised one congenial fiction after another, some irrational and insulting. One is that I was dominating Lil. She did not want to talk to you and she was not really able to, as you should have observed on your third call, which she took because I was getting ready to try to do some work for Jim. She has a sore throat and laryngitis. You did hear me ask her if she wanted to talk to you. Nobody dominates Lil. If I wanted to I could not. She read those letters before I mailed them. Her only objection was to some of the vigorous expression, not to any of the factual content. She added to it afterward. Understand that she has resented your behavior on all your visits, not just this one and like me resents not being free in her own home. Neither of you has ever given a thought to or asked a question about her desires in her own office, which is our spare room. She was effectively evicted when Joanne came here to catch up on her sleep. Neither of you gave a damn about her plans or desires, as with a schedule of her own park or with meals. If you visit people and Joanne wants or needs the rest when others are involved or imposed upon you use a motel, not their home.

What you said about food is hysterical both ways. It is one of the points on which you might, if you are willing, more easily explore your own mind and emotions. The actuality is that Lil prepared for your coming before you phoned and said you wanted to take us to dinner Saturday night. I told you that was not necessary. It isn't. But more, I didn't want to go out to dinner, partly because it takes time I want to spend other way and partly because of the weight problem when I can't burn the calories up in physical exertion. We have a friend who had gone fishing the weekend before. He caught beautiful fresh fish in the Bay and Lil decided to save them for you and Joanne. She was delayed going to her family reunion, of which you knew and had no concern, because both of you delayed her making breakfast for you. After you told Lil that Joanne was ready, which was long after our normal breakfast time, Joanne decided to wash her hair, without telling Lil. After an hour Lil saw her wandering around outside. You said we didn't want to feed you - after your experiences here? Saturday morning Lil left oranges out for you and told Joanne where to find everything else. Lil is not your servant. Sunday, when she was delayed and anxious - and her family did not like my not being there because of your presence - she told me what to tell Joanne about food already prepared so you could have dinner before you left. I did tell Joanne. You made this all up out of nothing. Worse, you poor-mouthed me over the dinner to which you took us that cost me more than feeding you would have. When you can be driven to what you said you really should think and think hard about what it means.

First you said you have little money and can't afford such things. Yet you had been talking to me about being able to afford a \$500 a month apartment, twice what you are now paying when Joanne is about to return to school. Scott can't afford to pay \$8 for a meal. His father is retired and Scott is in college. So you let me pay for his meal. It did cost me more than using the food we had. Fresh things Lil had delayed getting until the last minute and because she does not drive I had stopped my own work and taken her to do the shopping. Our refrigerator, as you had to notice, was full. So is the freezer. And on the being late at the restaurant you actually protested that nobody is ever on time and nobody is ever expected to be! Especially not in New York. Well, you were not in New York and I don't know any place where you reserve a table and expect business people with crowds on their hands to hold it all night for some self-important socially and emotionally immature person. However, I had reminded you at least three times that we did have a reservation and would be late and the result was I had to stand 20-30 minutes which is adverse to my health to your knowledge. It was not necessary that we be late. You merely insisted on it for no rational or necessary reason and then were driven to this kind of extreme to justify it to yourself.

This characterized everything you said and did last night so I take the time to try to get you to think about that, too. You actually called me a tyrant about my own files when I had asked of you only that you handle them carefully and copy one at a time not to intrude upon my life and work and to avoid any danger of them falling over and getting mixed up. Then you told me I was abusive of you in asking these normal, simple things of you. You went further and declared I adhere to some strange cultural past in wanting my files kept in good shape and handled with care.

Actually, most of my files are not for me. I have no need of them and never consult them. They are for others, for the future.

I did not shout at you when you put the paper in the copying machine backward. I did later when with me standing there and from no need you started to put the file from which you were copying out of order. I told you how to use the machine, know well how easy it is to switch the position of the paper (I'll and I still do it when we forget or get careless) and saw you putting it in backward. I felt it would be better if you made the mistake and learned from it so I let you make the mistake. You made it, however, because you can't take instruction. This in your own mind somehow makes you inferior and you have to be superior. You were embarrassed when there really was no need to be embarrassed, so you hollered at me, complaining that I was hovering over you. I was there because you asked it, gave up what I wanted to do to accommodate you and had no other place to stand because you consumed all the space in my office.

You do insist on being the center, on having your own way even when it is better for you not to and there is no reason why you could not have used the table just outside the door of my office, as you have in the past.

When you tried to tell me that you have done whatever you have done to help me legally I told you again and again that I want nothing more to do with you and if you have anything of this kind to give it to Jim. Yet on your third call you actually told me that you couldn't or for some reason didn't want to give it to Jim. He had to call me later about something else, I was afraid you'd have called him, too, and you had. If you had a legal matter why not discuss it with Jim and give it to him? Why insist on the third call to me ostensibly just for this and after my vehemence in asking you not to ever? In any event I'd have had to give it to Jim.

You put this in terms of helping me. If you had any intention of being of help to me over the years you have had ample opportunities. You could have done meaningful research for Jim, could have drafted complaints and other papers for him, have offered to do research in your firm's ample library when he has none of his own. However, there is nothing personal for me in any help Jim gets in that suit. Despite your contrary pretenses I give all of these things I get away. With the spectre as you know I gave copies away in New York and elsewhere. I did the same with the 1/22/64 transcript, the same with the King material and I've even put out money I can ill afford for space in the National Press Club, as I did last November with the new autopsy material. If I get the transcripts for which I'm suing I've already made arrangements for giving them away. There is no possibility of personal profit in my getting any papers and there is no personal favor to me possible from any help. However, I do believe that lawyers who have an income and security might well have done more to be helpful to Jim, for whom this also is profitless and for whom it represents a real sacrifice that to my knowledge no other lawyer makes or is willing to make.

I've taken more time on this than I can justify. Its sole purpose is to try to persuade you where your personal interest lies. For me it is past save for your honoring the requests I made and mean. It will do me no good if you seek the help I urge. For you it can be ruinous if you do not. You repeat professionally what you did here and what you said last night, and as you said it, you lose yourself that way professionally and you are done. I don't know if I'll, who is still asleep, is willing to read and correct this. If not you'll have to puzzle the errors out. I will not write you again, I will not take a call again, and do be prepared for me to hang up if you persist. I wish you no harm but I'm not going to relive any of this with you ever again. For your and Joanne's sakes I hope before it is too late you make an effort to get control over whatever drives you so compulsively and anti-socially and to such contempt for others and the rights of others, even in their own homes. Sincerely,