

## **Do You Really Get Me?: Finding Value in Yourself and Others through Empathy and Connection**

Joseph Shrand



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Through his *I-Maximum Approach*, Dr. Shrand helps readers learn how to set aside self-doubt, show others they are valued, and make more meaningful connections.

In a sense, we all try to be mind readers. We "theorize" about whether we are admired or envied, despised or loved. Psychologists use the term "Theory of Mind" to describe our natural tendency to make assumptions about what others think and how they feel about us based on the tone of their voice, facial expressions, and body language. These cues either signal us to open up further and make a connection or to put up a wall to protect ourselves from rejection. But it is also easy to misinterpret these cues and become unnecessarily guarded, such as when someone appears to be angry with us and we later learn they were just having a bad day and the negative signs we were picking up really had nothing to do with us.

The more emotional baggage we bring to our interactions, the more likely we are to negatively misinterpret other people's feelings and the more disconnected from them we become. In this groundbreaking book, Joseph Shrand, MD, instructor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, and Leigh Devine teach us that by setting aside self-doubt and assuming the best about ourselves and others, we can make more meaningful connections based on mutual respect and value. This is the heart of Dr. Shrand's *I-Maximum Approach*, which teaches us to assume that we all are doing the best we can at any given time. With the heightened empathy that we gain from this approach comes a deeper understanding of our own and others' mental and emotional states and how they influence our interactions, resulting in stronger connections and more rewarding relationships.

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