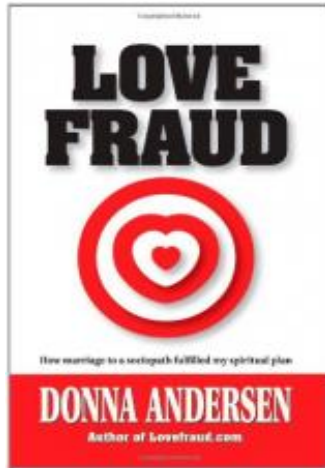

Love Fraud: How Marriage to a Sociopath Fulfilled My Spiritual Plan

by Donna Andersen



About the Book

What is it really like to be hooked by a sociopath? And if it happens, how do you recover and rebuild your life?

Donna Andersen thought she'd married the man of her dreams. James Montgomery promised her love, wealth and a happy family. But the promises were lies, which cost Donna almost everything she had --- her money, her self-confidence, her identity.

With the skill and lavish description of a fiction writer, Donna paints a picture of the sociopath spinning his web of deceit. But this story is completely true, and with unflinching honesty, Donna reveals how she fell for the scam, and her own deep vulnerabilities that made her susceptible to the sociopath's charms in the first place.

She takes the reader along as she fights on two fronts --- trying to hold her sociopathic husband accountable, and trying to reclaim her sense of self. The effort sends Donna on an unexpected, and somewhat unwelcome, spiritual journey. Slowly, she learns that there is a reason for the experience. It is part of a larger plan.

Love Fraud is more than the story of a woman betrayed --- although the depth and breadth of the betrayal is shocking. It is a highly personal account of dealing with, and ultimately overcoming, the betrayal. It is a story of triumph.

Millions of sociopaths live among us, yet most of us don't know they exist. Donna Andersen was once one of the uninformed. But after her disastrous marriage to a man who she now believes is a sociopath, she has written this book, **Love Fraud: How Marriage to a Sociopath Fulfilled My Spiritual Plan**, to tell the rest of us what they're really all about.

Discussion Guide

1. Andersen describes the man she married, James Montgomery, as a "sociopath." Before reading this book, what was your understanding of the term "sociopath"? Did the description of James Montgomery's behavior match what you expected? As a result of this book, did your understanding of a sociopath change?
2. Did you ever have an involvement with someone like James Montgomery? If so, what was your experience? How did he or she make you feel? Is the person still in your life?
3. The author missed many red flags that James Montgomery was not the man he claimed to be. Did the same thing ever happen to you? Did you ever believe someone, and then, after learning of lies, wonder why you believed him or her? Why do you think we fall for exaggerations and lies?
4. The author describes communicating with "Guidance" through meditation. Who do you think Guidance is? Do you think the messages Andersen received were real? Have you ever received similar messages? If so, have you relied on them in making decisions in your life?
5. The author described several times in which she raided Montgomery's bank accounts. What do you think of her actions? Could you see yourself doing the same thing if you were in her position?
6. Donna Andersen left James Montgomery, but later felt that she couldn't discuss what was going on in her divorce with her family. Did you ever have a family member or friend who was conned? Were you critical or supportive? Did this book give you a better idea of what the person may have experienced?
7. The author describes visions of several past lives. Do you believe in reincarnation? If yes, have you ever felt that you knew a person or place from a past life? If no, what do you think the author was describing?
8. Donna Andersen describes several therapy sessions with a woman who she calls an "energy worker" and "spiritual counselor." She relates the physical sensations that she experienced during these sessions, which led to a release of energy disturbances. Have you ever heard of this type of therapy? What did you think of it? Would you be willing to try it?
9. Another of James Montgomery's victims, Sylvia Banning, initially reported James Montgomery to the FBI. Then, she and Donna Andersen turned over evidence of his fraudulent activities. The FBI was slow to investigate, and when they did, the U.S. Attorney declined to prosecute. How do you think law enforcement views romance scams? Do you think people who engage in romance scams should be prosecuted? Do you think victims of romance scams should be protected or compensated?
10. James Montgomery met many of his victims over the Internet. Match.com says that one out of five marriages are between people who met online. What do you think of online dating? Do you know of anyone who met someone online who turned out to be lying about his or her identity or accomplishments? If you meet someone over the Internet, how do you know if he or she is telling you the truth?
11. James Montgomery convinced many people that he had served in the military. How did he do this? In 2006, the

Stolen Valor Act became law in the U.S., which made it illegal for anyone to wear or claim military medals that he or she did not earn. Do you think that this law is necessary and appropriate?

12. At one point in the story, Andersen knew that her husband was cheating on her, but chose to do nothing. Later, when the evidence of infidelity was overwhelming, she left him. Do you think that infidelity is always the end of a marriage, or can it be overcome?

13. Andersen writes that her soul had a plan for her life, and it included marrying James Montgomery. The experience was intended to be part of her spiritual evolution. Do you think our souls evolve? If so, towards what are we evolving?

14. In her divorce, the judge determined that James Montgomery had defrauded Donna Andersen and was responsible for her credit card debt. The credit card companies, however, said that Andersen was still responsible. Do you think laws should be passed or changed so that people have more protection from the irresponsible or fraudulent spending of their spouses? If so, how do you think credit regulations should change?

15. Throughout the book, Donna Andersen sought solace from her pets --- a dog, hedgehog, chinchilla and sugar gliders. Where do you think pets fit in the web of life? How can our pets help us, and what can we learn from them?

16. The following discussion, which appears in Chapter 23, took place during one of Andersen's sessions with her spiritual counselor.

?My expectations, Guidance said, were causing many of my problems. I was supposed to take on a new way of being, one without expectations. ?By giving up your expectations, you are free to be who you are, regardless of the events in your life,? Elaine explained. ?You can stay calm and connected. You are you, your soul. You are not the things that happen to you.??

Do you have expectations that are causing pain in your life? What would happen if you released the expectation, and just lived life as it was presented to you every day?

17. In the epilogue, Andersen refers to the Law of Attraction --- the idea that we create our experiences with our thoughts. She states that the process is not limited to conscious thoughts, but also reflects our energy fields. What do you think about the Law of Attraction? Have you ever seen it work in your life? Do you think the Law of Attraction may be influenced by the lessons we came into life to learn?

18. Psychics kept telling Andersen that she would recover her money, but it didn't happen. In the epilogue, Andersen writes:

?The psychics were conveying messages of hope just so I could keep going through the trials. Perhaps, if I were better able to focus on the positive, I could have created one of the experiences that were predicted. Or maybe not --- my soul had its own agenda.?

What do you think of Andersen's explanation for why the predictions didn't come true?

19. In the epilogue, Andersen writes, ?The purpose of everything that happens on Earth is individual growth.? Have you

had difficult or traumatic experiences in your life that turned out to be valuable opportunities for growth? If so, how did they change you?

20. According to Andersen, the spiritual solution to her battle with her ex-husband was giving up the struggle. Shortly after she did this, she met the man who became the love she always wanted. Are there times when the best answer to our problems is letting them go? Have you ever had a situation in your life in which your only option was to turn it over to a higher power? If you did this, what happened? How did you feel?

Author Bio

Donna Andersen is author **Love Fraud: How Marriage to a Sociopath Fulfilled My Spiritual Plan**. She is also author of Lovefraud.com, a website and blog that teaches people how to recognize and recover from sociopaths.

Lovefraud.com launched in 2005 and now receives almost 4,000 visits every day. It is considered the best source on the Internet about sociopaths. Donna has collected more than 2,000 cases of people targeted by sociopaths, and the Lovefraud blog has evolved into a healing community of survivors. Donna receives many e-mails thanking Lovefraud for saving their lives.

After graduating summa cum laude from Syracuse University with a degree in magazine journalism, Donna started her career as the first editor of *Atlantic City Magazine*. She then founded Donna Andersen Copywriting Inc., a boutique advertising company that produced newsletters, brochures, websites and other marketing materials. Visit her website, <http://lovefraud.com>.

Critical Praise

"It may seem like one of the worst relationships ever. **Love Fraud: How Marriage to a Sociopath Fulfilled my Spiritual Plan** tells of author Donna Andersen's unique journey with marriage with who she deems a sociopath lead her to a better and more fulfilling life. Strange in concept, Andersen explains her journey well and reminds readers that even when dealing with horrible people, you can emerge successful. **Love Fraud** is a fine read with intriguing ideas, highly recommended."

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