

February 2024

Dear Friends,

Hope January went well and your goals are being achieved – remember Rome wasn't built in a day, greatness is made one step at a time and this compounds ... there is the generic improvement message, now for something completely different.

I recently attended a webinar with perhaps the most bizarre topic a presentation of a Systematic Literature Review of Online Romance Scam Research. Basically scumbags over the internet give unsuspecting victims a double hit by taking their money (£50 to £800,000!) and the second hit is that the victim then mourns the loss of a relationship.

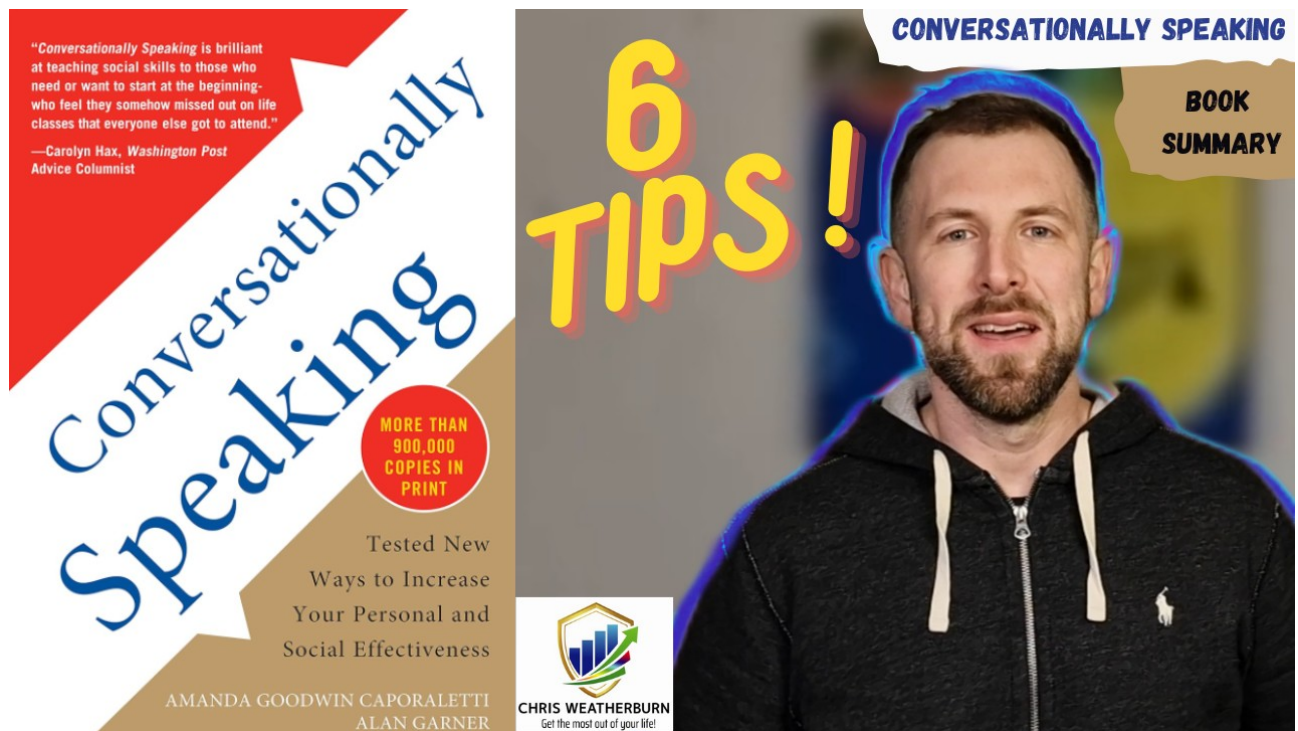
How does this work? The initial stage, is establishing a relationship online starting of with the scammer providing pseudo-self-disclosures. This evokes trust, empathy and sympathy often displaying the scammer as a successful, educated, affluent and elite individual. The second stage aims at strengthening the online relationship. During this stage, scammers seek to change to an alternative communication channel, such as email or a third-party messaging platform. The final phase is when money is requested. Random fact; in China this is called the Pig-Butchering Scam (杀猪盘), victims are fattened up then slaughtered financially.

I believe this scam is similar to a well thought out marketing system. There is a funnel process in place, minimal costs to start and do it with as many numbers as you can. Thought has been given about the definite target audience – preferred ideal customer, what they want and a desired end result. Tactics are continuously evolving, when Deep Fakes become more prevalent unfortunately this scam will get worse.

I frequently get messages from people posing as Asian women in their 20s on Instagram; asking a few questions and trying to get my WhatsApp number. If I have time, I respond by requesting that they review my YouTube channel and they can obtain all the information they want, if they have any questions to get back to me. It is clear that the potential scammers never bother to do this. Next time I might just send them a link to the [systematic review](#).

So perhaps you would like to differentiate yourself as not a scammer my taking a watch of my Video of the Month.

YouTube Video of the Month



<https://youtu.be/HhYiLbockK-8?si=vQAWa2RXrm6Vsk08>

When interacting with people give sincere compliments that are unique to the individual, these encourage others. Compliments are like social currency. If you are ever interesting in starting a conversation, the safest option is to ask a question about the situation! Communicate hack SOFTEN This stands for: Smile, Open posture, Forward lean, Touch, Eye contact and Nod. Remember your beliefs are key to how you interpret a situation.

X of the Month



You are unlikely to build a community if you are hammering out the Nigerian Prince Scam. Instead enjoy contributing to your community and seek advice from others.

If you are enjoying this newsletter it is *very important* you forward this to your friends, *on an urgent basis* this will allow them to sign up by clicking here. *No advanced payment for flights or passports required at this stage*, and you would be bound to *receive an abundance of wealth* in the form of invisible positive vibes and good karma.

Website of the Month

<https://scamspotter.org/>

There are many types of Scammers out there. This website has a bit of information to look out for. The next newsletter won't focus on scams, although I have a month to decide a topic!

Have a great month,

Chris

PS I cut this out of the initial newsletter but thought would include this at the end if you are interested. Female profiles targeting heterosexual male victims in their later years typically portray themselves as aged no older than 30 years and working in low-paying or non-professional jobs. Profiles targeting heterosexual females, usually claim to be up to 50 years old usually younger than the victim with occupations such as professional jobs, entrepreneurial activities or army ranks. A sense of urgency is used to obtain money, sextortion may occur and is more likely to male victims. Unsurprisingly, it is a difficult topic to study as victims aren't always forthcoming.



CHRIS WEATHERBURN

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