

Estrangement from a spouse, parents, offspring, and other significant individuals in a hardcore modeler's life is an all-too-common obstacle to enjoying our hobby to the fullest. Frequently, those closest to us are unable to understand the hardcore modeler's investment of time and money in building garage kits and communicating with others who build them. "My spouse just doesn't understand me" is an often heard lament. And we frequently see this lack of understanding grow into disdain and resentment, even antipathy, from those closest to us.

This month's excerpt from *The Hardcore Modeler's Manual* gives guidance to modelers traversing the minefield of complications in inter-personal relationships. It also gives hobbyists the first glimpse of HMM's holistic approach to enjoying our hobby while avoiding many of the pitfalls experienced by hardcore modelers.

The Hardcore Modeler's Manual: Volume One™

Chapter Three (Lying to Your Spouse, Parents and Other Fiscally Important People) pp. 44-56



...and that is why GK artists find ourselves in these difficult situations. Marriage counseling is expensive but hobbies are expensive, too, and garage kits are no exception. Why waste money on counseling that could otherwise go to buying something really valuable, like a new airbrush or an original casting of one of your grail kits? If you want to avoid marital strife over the cost of your hobby, the techniques listed above are some of the more easily effected techniques that modelers may find useful.

However, Dr. N.C. Zalusky-Berg, a nationally known, radio-syndicated marriage counselor, a GK enthusiast and herself a survivor of three marriages, recommends "misinformation" as the technique she finds most successful. Dr. Zalusky-Berg suggests "asking your favorite kit company to put a lower-than-actual price on the invoice or receipt (to fool your spouse) is a proven method; most garage kit companies already do this for international customers to spare them higher duties and taxes. Trust me on this; if they'll lie to the government for you, they'll lie to your spouse."

"Just leave the deceptive receipt where it can be easily discovered," Dr. Zalusky-Berg says. "This stratagem takes advantage of a nosey spouse's curiosity about how much of the household money is going to modeling rather than mundane items like fixing the dishwasher, replacing a noisy muffler, braces for a buck-toothed daughter or buying a sump pump to keep your basement from flooding during a rainstorm. The beauty of this ploy is that the garage kit company becomes more responsible for the lie than you do. After all, one might argue, it was the company's deceptive receipt that *communicated* the lie, right?"

However, hardcore modelers must be careful, particularly if the purchase is made using funds from a joint account to which the intentionally mislead spouse has access. A spouse is also more likely to open statements from banks and credit card companies even if the statements are solely in your name. "The deceptive receipt still allows the modeler to feign ignorance of the amount spent on a model kit and to place the blame on the kit company for having 'overcharged' or otherwise 'misrepresented' the cost of the kit. At least that is what the modeler can tell his/her spouse. This is called *plausible deniability*," Dr. Zalusky-Berg says.



Dr. Zalusky-Berg

Others suggest that having all bills from, and payments to, GK companies done electronically (e.g., BillPay, PayPal) works best with elderly parents who have become more aggressive in urging that you to find some kind (**any kind!**) of employment before your 45th birthday; in these latter years of their lives they are **likely** to have no clue how to use



your laptop computer and will **likely** have no idea of how much of the weekly "**allowance**" they give you goes to garage kit producers. However, having all of your favorite GK companies provide misleading receipts for GK purchases **and** paying for such purchases on line will provide another layer of financial confidentiality. Further, no good will come from your parents (or other loved ones) discovering the high costs associated with your enthusiastic participation in this hobby.

Layered deception protects hardcore modelers from invasion of privacy by parents who have developed computer skills in order to investigate online hobby-related expenditures.

Dr. Zalusky-Berg also recommends another misinformation tactic which she has used successfully herself. "Have one of your hobby buddies engage you in a scripted conversation about the cost of that kit you just bought," she says. "This will buy you another few months of pilfering household funds or leeching off unsuspecting loved ones. The key here is to make sure your spouse, significant other, parents, or roommates actually hear the staged conversation. For example:



Scripted conversations and other misinformation can protect over-burdened loved ones from needless and unproductive stress over financial difficulties resulting from debt incurred with GK-related purchases.

Hobby Buddy: So, I see you got that new 1:1 scale Blob bust from ABC Company.

You: Yes, the UPS guy just delivered it today.

Hobby Buddy: Wow! That is really nice. I'd love to get one but it must have been expensive.

You: No way. This is one of the most affordable garage kits I've ever purchased. In fact, for the last several months, I've made a concerted effort to only buy kits under \$_____ (insert amount that will impress eavesdropping spouse/roommates/parents).

Hobby Buddy: Really??

You: Oh for sure!! In fact, my _____

- a) spouse;
- b) significant other;
- c) roommates;
- d) parents;

may not know it but I've been saving money in order to _____

- a) buy him some hunting or fishing gear;
- b) buy her an engagement ring;
- c) stop leeching off them each month for groceries or rent; or
- d) finally get my own place so they won't have to finance me living in their basement for another 43 years."

Be sure to check back with us soon for the next exclusive excerpt from ***The Hardcore Modeler's Manual: Volume One™***.