

Reminded To Live and Love

A dear friend of mine, Christina, died this week and as I went to her funeral yesterday with my partner several thoughts were foremost in my mind, aside from the loss of her from this mortal sphere. One was a deep reminder of the importance of living in the moment and making the most of what life has to offer, particularly my connection with others.

Avoidance happens all too often when we have conflict or have experienced hurt with others. While not addressed, there is wasted energy that goes towards maintaining the protections we erect against being hurt again, particularly by those we have cared about. Not only do we lose capacity to connect with the other person but we also deny or disown to some extent that part of us that actually cares about and loves that person. We deny that part of us because we don't want to open our heart and be hurt again. We may even condemn that part for being stupid enough to expose us to hurt. Have you ever loved someone deeply and had your heart broken?

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Abstract

When hurt occurs in relationship with another, unless we address that hurt and reopen to that person we lose part of ourself. Healing that aspect does not mean we have to connect with them, but it does benefit our ability to be fully ourselves.

Keywords

Friendship, healing, love, protective mechanisms

First Published

6 January 2013

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Rebuilding a connection with another person

I have learned there is amazing value in reclaiming that part of me that has loved another by healing through the hurt and opening my heart in love to them again. Then I can fully love and reclaim the part of me that loved them. This does not require that person to be in my life though that can help. There are a number of people who I love deeply that I don't expect to ever connect with again. However I am freer as a person as a result of the healing process. I have reclaimed those loving parts of me, and don't have to waste energy protecting myself in those areas.

I have had some fabulous experiences where I have enjoyed the fruits of engaging with my healing process

related to someone and then, out of the blue, having them reconnect with me. One such experience was reuniting with my father who I had not had contact with for 40 years, and for much of that time had not known or cared whether he was alive or dead. When I did meet him, having already healed the past as much as possible, I was better able to deal with whatever arose in real time. Healing relationships with those we have loved is more about reclaiming ourselves than any specific outcome with the other person. Whatever we do, they may not wish to reconnect. In doing our work we become freer and better able to live life fully.

For more information related to themes in this article, refer to chapter 8 (Befriending Pain) of:
Harrison, S. G. (2012). [*Appreciate the Fog: Embrace Change with Power and Purpose*](#). Auckland, New Zealand: Xlibris Corporation.

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