
Therapist's Thoughts E-Zine For June 2005

VULNERABILITY

This month's theme is vulnerability.

It takes vulnerability to find your pain below your anger and share that with your sweetie -- it can change your daily experience and improve the relationship.

It's such a simple thing, but not easy to do. I tell the client, "Take a deep breath when you are upset, close your eyes and dig down deep inside. Feel into the deepest place of pain and speak from there." The client can't seem to do it. I ask myself, "Why?" The answer comes slowly and from a very deep, feeling place in me. And the answer is: patterns.

We are trained to cover our pain with anger. And you know what? I'm angry about it (smile). Our culture does such a disservice to us by telling us it is not okay to be vulnerable and sensitive and in pain (I think, because we believe people can hurt us more when we show our underbelly to them (and we fear that,) but the rest of the animal kingdom does it...hmmm...). But your sweetie is there to love you and cherish you. Why would they attack even more if you showed your vulnerability?

If you knew you were 12 feet tall and bullet proof and could not feel emotional pain from another's actions, would you be in fear as much as you are? I don't think so. I know that isn't reasonable, but why not just try imagining it's true?

What would you do in your life if you knew you could not be hurt?

Feelings are just feelings. Meaning: you cannot really be damaged by them. They can be painful, but they do not kill you. They do not cause permanent damage. They're just feelings.

If you share your vulnerability and fear with your sweetie and he or she attacks, it just causes emotional pain. So what? It's just pain. They aren't holding a gun to your head... Just let the feeling come up and express even more pain and fear and vulnerability. If your sweetie loves you deeply, then guilt or remorse will kick in and an apology will come. Everything will work out okay. If not, then the relationship is not one of respect and you may need to move on...

If we could just learn to tolerate the discomfort of emotions, we would make very different choices...

Until next time, thanks to my clients that allow me to let this material bubble up while in their presence.

Sincerely,

Russell

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