

Personal Growth Concepts™

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Q&A Forum - Review

Difficulties Letting Go

Greetings fellow Q&Aers,

Here it is almost July and I haven't done a Q&A since December of last year. That's mostly because of busy-ness but also because of a lack of questions. Please, send in your questions. The ones that have been asked in the past, have been really great. A question recently came in and I will address that shortly.

But first, to update you on developments here at Personal Growth Concepts, Inc. In January and February we upgraded our computer systems and now have a functioning network with computers in each office. In early March both my mom and my mother-in-law died, a blessing for each of them and losses for our families. Our families are moving through the grieving process and I appreciate all of your support and prayers. Our feelings of loss have also been sharpened as both Michael Abramowitz and Roseann Moore, counselors on our staff, have left to pursue other positions. We wish each of them the very best in their future endeavors and thank them for the excellent contributions they have made to our clients, to our staff and to our agency during their tenure here.

Pat Baker, our office helper, recently celebrated her one year anniversary with us last month. We are grateful to her for all her help, particularly in getting new cases opened in a timely manner and for all the telephone follow up she is doing.

Our HIPAA privacy officer is changing, effective July 1, 2004. Our new privacy officer is Janice Mahieu, LCSW and she can be reached at 203-375-5782 vmail 7 or by email at jmahieu@personalgrowthconcepts.com.

Recently, our website has been upgraded and now some of the routine maintenance is able to be done by our staff. Two new sections have been added and we are figuring out how best to use them. "News & Views" and "Waiting Room" are both accessible from the main menu. If you have ideas re: how each should be used, please get them to me via return email asap. I will be discussing their usage with our staff and making decisions by the end of this week. A special thank you to Jamie Rude and the staff at Humanitects for their work and training on our behalf..

Now on to the Q&A:

Q: When you have done all that you can do (i.e. not talking, not seeing, not picking up the phone). When you are doing your best at trying to move on, how do you stop loving someone? When you care about something so much, how do you let it go? I have been broken up with my girlfriend of three years, for almost two years now. I have tried everything in my power, have left it up to God, and still there is not a day that goes by that the pain is not in my head. I have continued on with my life pretty well actually. For some reasons though I can not let go of our past relationship. My mind becomes gridlock when I think about it because I analyze everything. It's gone past the point of a normal breakup. I don't know if it is abandonment issues, because that has happened plenty in my life, or what other deep issues are in my heart. I just know that this time thing is not working. I haven't talked to her in a while and I haven't seen her in really long time. There was nothing I wouldn't do for this girl. When time doesn't do its job, what do you do?

A: I don't believe you ever stop loving someone. After loss (death of a person or the breakup of a relationship), the relationship continues but in a different realm. Time is usually only a part of the

process of letting go. I don't believe "time heals all wounds." Some wounds may become infected or otherwise need outside assistance in order to heal properly. The wounds of which you write are obviously deep, so I would expect scarring as a frequent reminder of the loss. When time does not appear to be helping, then I would look elsewhere for clues as to what else may be going on. As you appropriately observed, perhaps there is a tie-in with the abandonment issues from your life. Sometimes loss can not be healed because of previous losses that were never grieved properly. A therapist or mental health professional might be able to help you explore previous losses with which you may have "unfinished business." Being stuck in one grief process may preclude you from getting past the same stage in a subsequent grieving. I also noted several indications in your question that your thought process seems pretty intense – comments like "my mind becomes gridlock" and the reference to pain in your head, presumably from racing thoughts or "overthinking" the issues. I am also aware that your email was sent in the wee hours of the morning. Unless you are a shift worker, this may be an indication of sleep disturbance due to obsessive thinking and/or depression. There are indications that you may have a condition called obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) which could be treated with medication and therapy. I would strongly encourage you to consult a mental health clinician to have your situation evaluated in more detail. Please contact me to let me know how things work out for you. I wish you peace in who you are and in all that you do. John

* * *

Quote: "What kills a skunk is the publicity it gives itself." - Abraham Lincoln

bonus #1

THE INVITATION

By Oriah, Mountain Dreamer (a Native American Elder)

It doesn't interest me what you do for a living.
 I want to know what you ache for, and if you dare to dream
 of meeting your heart's longing
 It doesn't interest me how old you are.
 I want to know if you will risk looking like a fool for love,
 for your dreams, for the adventure of being alive.
 It doesn't interest me what planets are squaring your moon.
 I want to know if you have touched the center of your own sorrow,
 if you have been opened by life's betrayals
 or have become shriveled and closed from fear of further pain.
 I want to know if you can sit with pain, mine or your own,
 without moving to hide it, fade it, or fix it.
 I want to know if you can be with joy, mine or your own,
 if you can dance with wildness and let the ecstasy fill you
 to the tips of your fingers and toes without cautioning us to be careful,
 be realistic, or to remember the limitations of being human.
 It doesn't interest me if the story you're telling me is true.
 I want to know if you can disappoint another to be true to yourself;
 if you can bear the accusation of betrayal and not betray your own soul.
 It does not interest me what you have done in your past.
 I want to know if you can be faithful today, and therefore be trustworthy.
 I want to know if you can see beauty even when it is not pretty everyday,
 and if you can source your life from God's presence.
 I want to know if you can live with failure, yours and mine,
 and still stand on the edge of a lake and shout to the silver of the full moon, "Yes!"
 It doesn't interest me to know where you live or how much money you have.
 I want to know if you can get up after a night of grief and despair, weary
 and bruised to the bone, and do what needs to be done.

It doesn't interest me who you are, or how you came to be there.
I want to know if you will stand in the center of the fire with me and not shrink back.
It doesn't interest me where or what or with whom you have studied.
I want to know what sustains you from the inside when all else falls away.
I want to know if you can be alone with your self, and if you truly like
the company you keep in the empty moments.

bonus #2 A True Story

My daughter, Kathleen, was 15... too young to seriously date but she had a boyfriend. One evening, when I was leaving to pick up my son, Paul, from baseball practice, she asked if she could just go with her boyfriend to pick up his little brother at a friend's house. She said they would come right back. I said, "All right, just make sure you wear your seat belt, and come right home." It was my father's birthday and my youngest daughter, Therese, was already at my father's house waiting for us to come over with the cake I had yet to pick up at the store. I left to pick Paul up at school, but decided to take the highway, rather than the shortcut along the back roads.

After leaving the school, Paul and I ran in the store for the cake and some last minute goodies. As we were getting into the car, we heard and saw paramedics, fire trucks, three ambulances and of course a multitude of police cars. I got a sick feeling in my stomach and said to Paul, "Somebody needs our prayers, quick." I wondered if there was a fire or a bad car accident. At one of the intersections I had to stop to let more emergency vehicles through, and prayed, "Lord, those people need you right now, go to them and place your protective hand over them." We stopped at my parents to drop off the food, before going home to pick up Kathleen, but my father met me at the car and told us to postpone the party because Therese had fallen asleep. "Which way did you go to the school?" he asked, "Because there was a bad accident on the back road, I heard someone was killed. It happened just about the time you had to pick up Paul at the school and I know you always go that way. I was so happy to see you pull in, I had a gut feeling it was you."

As Paul and I drove the short distance home, I could see our house was dark and when Kathleen is home alone, she always burned every light. As I turned off the ignition, tears fell, "It was Kathleen," I told Paul, "I know it." I ran in the house and checked our answering machine, no one had called. I breathed a sigh of relief, thinking that someone would have called by now. "Paranoid," that's what Kathleen always called me, and that's what I was telling myself, "You're just paranoid!" Then, the phone rang. It was her friend's mother, who worked in the emergency room of our local hospital. She only told me that the three of them were in an accident and were being transported to the hospital. I didn't call my husband at work, nor my parents. Paul and I just left for the hospital.

As I pulled into the parking lot, one of the paramedics, someone we have known for years, met us at our car. "I'm sorry, I'm so sorry," he said with tears streaming down his face. The next thing I remember after was talking to the doctor in the hallway of the ER. He asked me if I believed in God, and with that my knees gave way. "No," he said, "you don't understand, do you believe in divine intervention?"

I stammered, a weak, "Yes." Not having a clue what he was talking about.

He smiled at me and asked, "Do you know what shirt your daughter is wearing, tonight?" Nodding no, he told me to go down the hall and look. "Your daughter is blessed with angels and so are you. From what the emergency personnel told me, there is no way that your daughter should be alive, let alone only have a few scratches."

Kathleen was laying on a cart, waiting for more x-rays. When I got to her, we both sobbed. As I was hugging her I had the urge to check her shirt, unzipping her jacket. I read the words, "Jesus Saves." I knew then, what the doctor had meant. All three were treated and released. On the way home that night, Kathleen told this story:

"It was really weird, about a quarter of a mile before the accident, I said, 'Wait, we forgot to put our seat belts on, my mother will kill me.' Then a car was coming towards us in our lane, he swerved, and I knew we got hit on the passenger side of the car, where I was sitting. We got hit a total of three

times because the car kept spinning in a circle. I felt his little brother's hand on my shoulder, holding me tightly in place. "But Mom, after it was all over, I could still feel the hand on my shoulder. I looked and his little brother had flown out the back window of the car, as we later found out, on the first spin. "It was an angel, Mom, I know it!"

I knew it too, especially when we went the next day to look at the car, it had been split in half, right underneath my daughter's seat. The driver of the other car, witnesses said, was traveling 90-95 miles per hour and the point of impact at that speed was directly at Kathleen's door. The police report stated that the car door was found fifty feet away from the accident scene, with the seat belt attached. So when the door broke loose, "the hand" was the only thing that saved my daughter's life.

The Lord, knew, long before I did that my child was in trouble, and I will always praise Him for saving her life and restoring mine. I have been meaning to write this story for the past couple years. Kathleen just turned 21. While I was writing this I smiled and cried, but it's all true. -- Barbara

bonus #3 - 2 cute stories to end with today

Naval Operations

The following is an actual radio conversation released by the Chief of Naval Operations:

#1: Please divert your course 15 degrees to the north to avoid a collision.

#2: Recommend you divert your course 15 degrees to south to avoid a collision.

#1: This is the captain of a U. S. navy ship. I say again, divert YOUR course.

#2: No. I say again, you divert YOUR course.

#1. THIS IS THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER ENTERPRISE. WE ARE A LARGE WARSHIP OF THE U. S. NAVY. DIVERT YOUR COURSE NOW!

#2. This is a lighthouse. Your call.

Fire Truck

A fire started on some grasslands near a farm. The county fire department was called to put out the fire. The fire was more than the county fire department could handle. Someone suggested that a nearby volunteer bunch be called. Despite some doubt that the volunteer outfit would be of any assistance, the call was made.

The volunteers arrived in a dilapidated old fire truck. They rumbled straight towards the fire, drove right into the middle of the flames and stopped! The firemen jumped off the truck and frantically started spraying water in all directions. Soon they had snuffed out the center of the fire, breaking the blaze into two easily-controlled parts.

Watching all this, the farmer was so impressed with the volunteer fire department's work and was so grateful that his farm had been spared, that right there on the spot he presented the volunteers with a check for \$1,000. A local news reporter asked the volunteer fire captain what the department planned to do with the funds.

"That ought to be obvious, " he responded, wiping ashes off his coat. "The first thing we're gonna do is get the brakes fixed on our fire truck!"

end of bonuses

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