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Q&A Forum - Review

What is a Healthy Relationship, 2008-03

Fellow Q&Aers,

You may have already received an email from me re: our starting groups again in September. If you have not received it and are interested, please click on the following link and you will be able to read it on the News & Events section of our website

www.personalgrowthconcepts.com/content/publish/article_104.shtml If you do visit our website, please remember to come back and read the rest of the Q&A, or read it on the website under Q&A archives.

I have added a brief article on "Sleep Basics" on the website as well. From the main page, click on "Waiting Room."

I am pleased to announce that I will be supervising a social work student intern, Jeff Lawlor from September through May. Jeff has spent time with me this past summer getting acclimated, trained and learning about private practice. Jeff is in the 2nd year of his Social Work studies. His internship last year was at Platt Tech where he provided excellent services to adolescents and their families. Jeff's presence on my staff this year allows me to offer services to those who are able to pay on the very low end of our sliding scale, if at all. I will be personally supervising him and ask you to seriously consider referring anyone to us who may benefit from counseling but is presently unable to pay our fees. He will be here primarily on Tuesday evenings and Saturday afternoons. Jeff is married, with children and lives in Trumbull. His wife, who is also a social worker, was an intern with me several years ago. Please join me in welcoming Jeff.

Finally, a special thank you to Gwen, Tricia, Tom and Joanne who have all contributed material to this Q&A. Peace, John

Q: Dear John, I am teaching a workshop on love magic Monday night. From a healthy perspective, how would you define a healthy love relationship? I imagine people coming to the workshop will have issues. I wanted to give them solid advice in regards to what to look for. Thanks,

A: I have 2 definitions of healthy relationships. The first one I stole from somewhere - it is a 6 line poem and all lines have to be in place for it to be healthy. Here it is:

I can be me.
You can be you.
We can be an "us"
I can grow.

You can grow.

We can grow together.

The 2d definition is one that I have developed over the years of working with people and their relationships: A healthy relationship consists of two people, each of whom are healthy or getting healthier (emotionally), each of whom come together and each gives up certain things in order to get certain things and each of them think they have the better part of the bargain!

By short explanation, the first one, the first two lines eliminate the "control" factor which is one of the largest issues I encounter as a therapist. In the second one (I agree it is pretty utilitarian) it forces the parties to look at what am I putting into this vs. what am I getting out of this. Too many people, often women, overinvest in relationships that keep draining them. Many of them wouldn't do that with their financial or business lives.

I hope these ideas help. Peace, John

Quote: "There are really only two ways to approach life - as victim or as gallant fighter - and you must decide if you want to act or react, deal your own cards or play with a stacked deck. And if you don't decide which way to play with life, it always plays with you." --Merle Shain

Bonus #1 Bonus #1 Bonus #1 Bonus #1 Bonus #1 Bonus #1 Bonus #1 Bonus #1 Bonus #1:

A man was being tailgated by a stressed out woman on a busy boulevard. Suddenly, the light turned yellow, just in front of him. He did the right thing, stopping at the crosswalk, even though he could have beaten the red light by accelerating through the intersection. The tailgating woman was furious and honked her horn, screaming in frustration as she missed her chance to get through the intersection, dropping her cell phone and makeup. As she was still in mid-rant, she heard a tap on her window and looked up into the face of a very serious police officer. The officer ordered her to exit her car with her hands up.

He took her to the police station where she was searched, finger printed, photographed, and placed in a holding cell. After a couple of hours, a policeman approached the cell and opened the door. She was escorted back to the booking desk where the arresting officer was waiting with her personal effects.

He said, "I'm very sorry for this mistake. You see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn, flipping off the guy in front of you, and cussing a blue streak at him. I noticed the 'What Would Jesus Do' bumper sticker, the 'Choose Life' License plate holder, the 'Follow Me to Sunday-School' bumper Sticker, and the chrome-plated Christian fish emblem on the trunk, Naturally... I assumed you had stolen the car."

Priceless!

Bonus #2 Bonus #2 Bonus #2 Bonus #2 Bonus #2 Bonus #2 Bonus #2 Bonus #2 Bonus #2
 Bonus #2:

JUST STAY

A nurse took the tired, anxious serviceman to the bedside.

"Your son is here," she said to the old man. She had to repeat the words several times before the patient's eyes opened.

Heavily sedated because of the pain of his heart attack, he dimly saw the young uniformed Marine standing outside the oxygen tent. He reached out his hand. The Marine wrapped his toughened fingers around the old man's limp ones, squeezing a message of love and encouragement.

The nurse brought a chair so that the Marine could sit beside the bed. All through the night the young Marine sat there in the poorly lighted ward, holding the old man's hand and offering him words of love and strength. Occasionally, the nurse suggested that the Marine move away and rest awhile.

He refused. Whenever the nurse came into the ward, the Marine was oblivious of her and of the night noises of the hospital - the clanking of the oxygen tank, the laughter of the night staff members exchanging greetings, the cries and moans of the other patients.

Now and then she heard him say a few gentle words. The dying man said nothing, only held tightly to his son all through the night.

Along towards dawn, the old man died. The Marine released the now lifeless hand he had been holding and went to tell the nurse. While she did what she had to do, he waited.

Finally, she returned. She started to offer words of sympathy, but the Marine interrupted her. "Who was that man?" he asked.

The nurse was startled, "He was your father," she answered.

"No, he wasn't," the Marine replied. "I never saw him before in my life."

"Then why didn't you say something when I took you to him?"

"I knew right away there had been a mistake, but I also knew he needed his son, and his son just wasn't here. When I realized that he was too sick to tell whether or not I was his son, knowing how much he needed me, I stayed."

The next time someone needs you ... just be there. Stay.

WE ARE NOT HUMAN BEINGS GOING THROUGH A TEMPORARY SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE.
 WE ARE SPIRITUAL BEINGS GOING THROUGH A TEMPORARY HUMAN EXPERIENCE.

Bonus #3 Bonus #3 Bonus #3 Bonus #3 Bonus #3 Bonus #3 Bonus #3 Bonus #3 Bonus #3:
 Bonus #3:

THE DUCK AND THE DEVIL

There was a little boy visiting his grandparents on their farm. He was given a slingshot to play with out in the woods. He practiced in the woods; but he could never hit the target. Getting a little discouraged, he headed back for dinner. As he was walking back he saw Grandma's pet duck. Just out of impulse, he let the slingshot fly, hit the duck square in the head and killed it. He was shocked and grieved!

In a panic, he hid the dead duck in the wood pile; only to see his sister watching! Sally had seen it all, but she said nothing.

After lunch the next day Grandma said, 'Sally, let's wash the dishes.' But Sally said, 'Grandma, Johnny told me he wanted to help in the kitchen.' Then she whispered to him, 'Remember the duck?' So Johnny did the dishes.

Later that day, Grandpa asked if the children wanted to go fishing and Grandma said, 'I'm sorry but I need Sally to help make supper.' Sally just smiled and said, 'Well that's all right because Johnny told me he wanted to help' She whispered again, 'Remember the duck?' So Sally went fishing and Johnny stayed to help.

After several days of Johnny doing both his chores and Sally's; he finally couldn't stand it any longer. He came to Grandma and confessed that he had killed the duck.

Grandma knelt down, gave him a hug and said, 'Sweetheart, I know. You see, I was standing at the window and I saw the whole thing, but because I love you, I forgave you. I was just wondering how long you would let Sally make a slave of you.'

Thought for the day and every day thereafter.....

Whatever is in your past, whatever you have done... and the devil keeps throwing it up in your face (lying, cheating, debt, fear, bad habits, hatred, anger, bitterness, etc.)...whatever it is. You need to know that God was standing at the window and He saw the whole thing. He has seen your whole life. He wants you to know that He loves you and that you are forgiven.

He's just wondering how long you will let the devil make a slave of you. The great thing about God is that when you ask for forgiveness; He not only forgives you, but He forgets. It is by God's grace and mercy that we are saved. Always remember: God is at the window!

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