

The Death of a Relationship

There once was a man who while walking in the woods found a poisonous snake frozen stiff as a board. He knew it was poisonous but took pity on the poor frozen thing and brought it home with him. He put the snake in front of the fireplace where it would thaw out. Realizing that when the snake woke it would be hungry, the man went to the kitchen and warmed up a bowl of milk so the snake would have something to eat. He then brought the milk back into the living room to feed the snake. As the man was putting the bowl of milk in front of the snake, it lashed out and bit him. The man could feel the venom rush up the veins in his arm and knew he would be dead within minutes. With his last strength the man looked at the snake and asked, "Snake, why did you bite me? I found you frozen in the woods. I brought you into my home and thawed you out. I gave you warm milk to drink, why did you bite me?" As the man was fading into death, he heard the snake hiss these words: "Stop your whining, you knew I was a poisonous snake when you picked me up. What did you expect me to do, kiss you?"

Women also experience the bites of snakes and the painful outcome of broken relationships.

What are some of the symptoms of a broken relationship?

Psychological Stress: Psychological stress may occur in the form of debilitating emotion, particularly negative ones such as fear, anger, and depression. The D.S.M. III defines and delineates the signals of depression. Some signals would be: inability to experience pleasure, change in appetite either overeating—resulting in obesity, or under eating—resulting in anorexia nervosa, sleep disturbance, loss of energy, agitation, retardation of speech thoughts, movement, decrease in sex interest and activity, feelings of worthlessness, guilt and

shame, diminished ability to think or concentrate, lowered self-esteem, feelings of helplessness, thoughts of death or suicide, and high level of anxiety and body complaints. The psychological stress affects every member of the family.

Dr. Kubler Ross delineated five stages of the death process:

1. Denial
2. Bargaining
3. Idealization
4. Anger
5. Acceptance

Each stage of the death process varies in intensity and duration. Each person will respond differently, however, the intensity of the grief depends upon the emotional investment that the individual had in the relationship.

The grieving person may become excessively irritable and demanding particularly with the members of the opposite sex. The phenomenon is referred to as "projection." At times a child with whom the griever has an emotionally incestuous relationship can be used as a scapegoat. The child will feel the parent's pain and anger. The child will also develop psychological and adjustment reactions. The griever may turn to drugs or alcohol as coping mechanisms to deal with the pain of rejection and abandonment. It is crucial to reach out to your support system, seek out professional help and find a healer within.

The Jungian approach to depression is the loss of psychic energy by consciousness. When we have psychic energy at our conscious disposal, we are happy. When we lose contact with this energy, we are depressed. All depressions have within them the seeds of new creative expression. The divine irony is that pain is the catalyst for change and growth; if we seek the healer from within we will find him/her. The mystery

of beyond-God is embedded in the fabric of the human soul. Our awareness of this finds inevitable expression in the consciousness that arises from such depth. *Divinity cannot be eradicated from the human condition, man was not faced with the choice of being spiritual or not.* Or given the choice of whether or not he would be approached by the Divine Light. "There can be no remedy from the wounds of love except from them who inflicted them. And so the wounded soul runs after the beloved crying to him for relief." (John of the Cross)