

Wounds of the Past

We've all been wounded. Somewhere along this road of life someone or something stabbed a figurative knife in our back or heart and the pain was overwhelming.

We shed tears. Got angry. Built protective walls around us. And sometimes let the bitterness grow until we felt that burning urge to get even. Yet other times we just stayed sad, letting that wound grow bigger and bigger until it robbed us of our self esteem and ate away at our happiness.

I recently published a book. It's titled *Death...and the Lessons I Learned*, and was written with the sole purpose of helping others find peace, love, acceptance and personal growth in the difficult moments of life. The stories are all personal, and were written with love and healing intentions.

Reviews have been favorable. Then this week I received a handwritten note that called my writing arrogant and smug because I chose to write about my own 'privileged' life as he called it, and not about something more important and more tragic, like the holocaust or genocide.

At first I was confused. Bewildered even. The diatribe came from a person I have always held in highest esteem and love dearly. I look up to him. It made absolutely no sense that he would attack me, let alone in this manner.

I am sensitive and I was hurt. He had drastically missed the point. Then I got angry. I felt the urge to lash out at him, defend myself, and defend my position, my integrity and the healing, loving purpose of the book.

But this would have served no purpose. To get angry and react so defensively would only have cast a dark shadow over me, the book and its intentions.

Wounds can be inflicted from almost anything.

A friend of mine went through a divorce five years ago, which stemmed from her husband having an affair. She was crushed beyond belief and stayed in the angry, resentful, bitter place for a very long time.

Sometimes a wound can be self-inflicted. I remember a number of years ago a good friend of mine lost his wife in a tragic accident. After a year he confided he was ready to date again and asked for my help. So I set him up with another friend of mine and lo and behold, they fell madly in love.

I took great pride in that. In the happiness he found again. Then one day, a few years into their relationship, she was diagnosed with incurable cancer. She died a year later.

I blamed myself for causing my friend to lose another love. It was a deep, self-inflicted wound and took me some time to let go and heal from.

This is the lesson for today. We must let go of the wounds from yesterday so that we can open our hearts and minds to the joys of today. Nothing positive comes from holding on to the wounds that have been inflicted upon us, they just stop us from seeing the wonderful moments in today.

To clear yourself and heal the wounds of the past, follow these simple steps:

1. Start by taking note of the things you resent, blame or hold anger towards. List them out. Attach names if need be. Some of you will have lists that are pages long; others will struggle to write more than one or two entries.
2. The next step is to acknowledge the lesson(s) that was placed before you when the wound was inflicted. There will be at least one. Think in terms of what you gained from having to go through that experience. What was good? What did you learn about yourself? About others? What will you never let happen again?
3. Next, forgive. This is the hard part. You must forgive all those that were involved in the process of wounding you. That might be a person, a place, yourself, or even God.
You don't need to physically contact the person and forgive them; you merely need to recognize that you are no longer going to hold anger, blame, resentment, fear or any other negative emotion against them.
If the pain is too recent and you are not yet certain you can forgive, then fake it. Even pretending to forgive is a liberating experience and frees you from the heavy, dark weight that is holding you down.
The act of forgiving doesn't mean you accept or excuse what they did to you. It just means you will no longer allow yourself to be held back by it.
4. The final step is a visualization process to clear you once and for all. Start by visualizing a cord or rope attaching you to the person(s) or incident that created the wound. Then simply cut it. Visualize using a knife, a saw, or magical powers (whatever works for you) that disintegrate the connection. Then visualize the wound healing and your body/heart/back being perfect once more.

To live a happy and content life, we must let go of the wounds from yesterday. They are done, in the past and no longer serve a purpose. So, let them go. Learn the lesson. Complete the cycle and move on in the journey of your life.

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