

Resentment

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FORMAT:

Couple process

PURPOSE:

To clear resentments between a couple / two people so that they can be in the present together and so that love can happen.

SETUP:

Couple sits or stands facing each other in open body position as close as is comfortable, not touching. Coach sits or stands to the side between them. Coach is space holder for this potentially volatile process with the intention to clear away resentments so that love can happen.

INTRO / BACKGROUND:

Resentment is a form of being right. We can either be right or be in relationship. Resentment is a decision to hate that we are unwilling to change for fear of being hurt again (betrayed, abused, abandoned, etc.). Resentment is an obstacle in the present, because the decision – conscious or not – persists in the present. A resentment is an obstacle to love. Either resentment happens or love happens. If the obstacle of resentment is removed, love is there automatically, because love is the most abundant thing in the universe. Resentments produce complaining. Complaining is the act of finding new evidence to support the old story that is the core of resentment. A resentment is a persistently reconstituted dilemma. Resentments are familiar to the box. Loving and being loved is always new and takes us into new territory, so love feels dangerous to the box. (By love we do not mean schmaltzy emotionality. We mean two people gathered together in the name of the principle of love being moved by the love flowing through them. Love as a force of nature.) Either resentment is happening or love is happening. You cannot have love and resentment. Resentment replaces love, because resentment feels safe and love feels alive.

INSTRUCTIONS / PROCEDURE:

MAP OF HOW TO CLEAR RESENTMENT

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Almost none of us can rid ourselves of resentments. Either we don't know how, or we don't want to. The result is a life of loneliness, conflict and war.

1. Conflicts seem natural when you carry resentments.
2. Resentments are your stories about unfulfilled expectations.
3. Expectations are founded on false assumptions.
4. Assumptions are strategic intimacy killers to avoid being hurt.

Why remove expectations? Because you are starving for intimacy. Even one small resentment is enough to block intimacy. It seems that resentment cannot dissolve until the other person changes their behavior. But you measure their behavior against your expectations. Dismantling the assumption / expectation / resentment / conflict chain occurs when you take responsibility for its root cause: your fear of intimacy.

CLEARING RESENTMENT THROUGH CARING COMMUNICATION

1. As soon as you sense resentment ask the person you resent if they will meet with you for half an hour so you can take responsibility for blocking the relationship. Ask them to simply listen. Tell them that by the end, you will be fine. It may help to read these instructions together as you begin.
2. Do not worry about how to do this. It cannot be figured out. Start feeling and talking. **Use *I statements*, *I feel angry, sad, scared, glad*. Do not use *You statements*. *You always...*, *You never...*, *You did this to me...*, *You should...***
3. This is not about them. This is about *you* giving up your charade, *you* hitting bottom, *you* getting off it, *you* revealing your innermost feelings through admitting why you try to avoid intimacy. Tell your stories with radical honesty, even if you look unprofessional, immature, stupid, silly, weak or childish, even if it proves that you are a failure or an idiot.
4. While you tell your stories the other person listens to you and says nothing. Now and then they can deliver a completion loop to show that they compassionately understand how it is for you. The listener asks no questions, and gives no justifications, analysis, rescuing or suggestions. There is a space of acceptance, respect and pure listening.
5. Your task is to keep going deeper and to communicate just how it is for you, in full embarrassment, without explanation, without trying to make it make sense. Admit your defeat. Crumble into the liquid state and stay there without knowing how. Share your pain. Unmask your mechanicality and your helplessness. Let yourself be known.
6. When the listener lets in what you have revealed about yourself, the communication has been completed. Your message has been received, because it vanishes. There is no more charge between you.
7. In this moment the resentment mysteriously resolves itself without the conflict being addressed at all. Respect this moment. Notice the shift. Do not rush through it. The true cause of the conflict has been dissipated through re-establishing intimacy. Often the listener says nothing at all. Their *being with* and spacious listening are alone sufficient.
8. Out of the ashes a phoenix arises. This is a mystery. Let it be that way.

Removing the obstacle of resentment requires two steps. Begin by warning participants that it may get to truly reveal things that are not a pretty sight, but this is about taking out the garbage. It's a normal part of the process.

Step 1:

Partner A says "I resent that you..." (or "I hate you, because...") and then recounts an incident from the past specifically and in detail with feeling. If the incident is still occurring (for example: chewing with the mouth open) the coach guides them to recount the first time (exact date) it turned into resentment (for example at the first Christmas dinner at my parents' house).

Coach allows partner A to use words like "You always..." or "you never...". During the first few exchanges until both partners begin to see the mechanics of resentment. Form: "I resent you that..."

Partner B just listens.

After one resentment has been expressed, coach invites partner B to repeat back what they heard partner A say (as in the mirroring process). If partner B gets it right, partner A says "Thank you." If partner B does not get it right, partner A says "That is not what I said. What I said is..." and repeats what they said. When partner B has received a "Thank you." Then go to step two.

Step 2:

Coach asks "Is this resentment still influencing your life today?" The answer is "Yes." Coach asks "Would you like to make a new decision?"

Coach now asks partner A "What do you need to make a new decision to stop resenting? (To not resent? To let it go= To let your partner out of the prison of your resentment? To liberate your partner from the prison of your resentment? To let your partner live?)

What sign or indication would allow your heart to open?

The response from partner A could be anything. Partner B is to say nothing. Liquid state tears at this point are a good sign that a real new decision is authentically being made. Coach is to avoid head decisions.

Coach navigates towards heart decisions.

Partner A's response could be any number of things, for example:

- For partner B to promise to never do that again.
- For partner B to apologize.
- For partner B to take action now (get coaching, take lessons) to learn more about what their behavior causes in others.

"Nothing" is in general not an acceptable response from partner A at this point. There is always some condition that partner B can offer as a token of willingness to be forgiven.

Partner B repeats back.

Physical Part:

Reach out until you have the experience – hold hands, touch fingers with gentleness.

How is that?

Let experience lead.

How is that?

What's the reaction of your body?

- "Negative"
- "I assume that he is full of expectations of more. That I may excite him and that I might have to do more."

Then go to partner B's resentment (because "B's" resentment may produce lack of respect and therefore lack of attraction to the other to being close or near.)

"A" repeats back

"B" says "thank you."

Coach asks "B" what do you need to...

DEBRIEF:
