

Grieving a Relationship

The Art of Letting Go... and Accepting

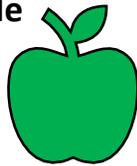
The metaphor of the apple



Here, the apple represents the **ex-partner**... or rather the various experiences with an ex.

boyfriend / girlfriend / husband / wife / friend = the “EX”

The Good (side of the) Apple



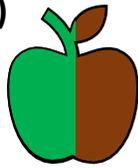
Some people, when they lose a close one, tend to focus almost exclusively on the qualities (the good side of the apple) of their loved one, or the fun activities, events and experiences that they used to do and have with them. Others focus almost exclusively on the beginning part of their relationship (when the brain is totally submerged with oxytocin, the “love drug”). Being focused only on this part of the relationship, albeit a series of true and real experiences, makes grieving a relationship extremely difficult, and actually almost impossible to grieve. 😞

The Bad (side of the) Apple



Other people, when they lose a close one, tend to focus almost exclusively on the faults (the bad side of the apple) of their former loved one, or the unpleasant activities, events and experiences that they used to do and have with them, or focus almost exclusively on the later and unpleasant parts of their relationship when the heart is often filled with anguish, pain, anxiety, loneliness, betrayal, anger, rejection, shame, guilt, rage or hatred (!). Being focused only on this part of the relationship, albeit a series of true and real experiences, makes grieving a relationship extremely difficult, and actually almost impossible to grieve. The danger here is that you may carry this *unresolved grief* into your next relationship... or in your daily life. 😞

The Apple (as it is in reality)



A healthier approach is to review and connect with both parts of the relationship, i.e. the good and the not-so-good parts of the relationship. In order to grieve properly, the mind needs to assess the relationship in its entirety. In other words, it needs to do a complete inventory of all the experiences, events, activities from the relationship. Therefore, it is important to keep a healthy balance when thinking back or reviewing the relationship experiences. 😊

If you have a tendency to remain stuck on the positive experiences (possibly the beginning parts of the relationship), it will be important and necessary for you to coach your mind into thinking ALSO on the less pleasant or downright negative experiences.

If you have a tendency to remain stuck on the negative experiences (possibly during arguments, after a hurtful incident such as unfaithfulness or other betrayal), it will be important and necessary for you to coach your mind into thinking ALSO about the more pleasant or downright positive experiences.

In short, the mind needs to have a complete picture of the relationship in order to grieve, and accept that it is over... and most likely a good thing that it is over if the relationship is not to resume. 😊 ***Writing down on paper the two "sides" of the relationship is often very useful!***

It is also important to keep in mind that separations are an integral part of relationships. A number of separations are temporary, lasting from hours, days, weeks, months... to decades! They provide the partners with a unique opportunity to take a break, put some healthy emotional distance, refresh, regroup and grow from the separation in order to get back together (or not!) and NOT repeat the same unhealthy patterns PRIOR to the separation.

If, on the other hand, the end of the relationship becomes permanent, it is normally for the BEST... and indicates that something BETTER will happen, for instance that a more suitable partner will come along. If that is the case, you will need to be patient until this occurs. 😊

Beware of REBOUND relationships as they very rarely last even though they may feel very reassuring and fun... at the beginning that is... until reality sets in... once again! Keep in mind that if you don't grieve and accept fully the end of your previous relationship, you will have to deal with a DOUBLE-WHAMMY! You will now have to grieve the previous relationship on top of this latest rebound relationship. And one knows how DIFFICULT and CHALLENGING grieving can be for human beings... possibly the hardest experience of them all! Bear in mind that **it normally takes anywhere between 6 months to two years to fully grieve** most relationships.

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