

LESSON 1

Understanding What Happens Emotionally

When you've been hurt by someone, there is more to the pain than "just" the one event. Emotions are a mish-mash of what has happened in the past, your pain in the present, your fears of the future, and your interpretation of what the event means about you.

ACTIVATING THE PAST

When you've experienced betrayal by one you love, it hurts deeply. It hurts so much you wonder if you can make it past what happened. Sometimes that pain is about more than that one event.

IF SOMEONE BETRAYED YOU, THE PAIN FOR ALL THE TIMES YOU WERE BETRAYED IS AWAKENED:

- You may not remember the events of the emotions triggered but they are still adding to the hurt you experience now.
- When you were betrayed in past relationships, no matter how old you were, that pain is stored in your body.
- **Your emotions don't care about the actual event. But they recognize the pain.** The pain of the past is awakened and rises up adding to the hurt. It's like the pain joins together in one big scream.

It's difficult to release the past when it's like a tangled chain and the pain of every betrayal you ever felt is attached to it.

THE LOSS OF DREAMS

Every relationship, job, or activity you enter into has dreams attached to it. Some of these dreams are small, such as going to a party and having an enjoyable time. Relationship dreams are huge. Often, they involve plans for the rest of your life.

WHEN A RELATIONSHIP ENDS, EVERYTHING YOU THOUGHT WOULD HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE ENDS:

- Your dreams of loving this one special person and being loved by them is gone.
- Your dream, your expectation, that you would care and support each other through the difficult times has dissolved.
- Your dreams of security, caring, excitement, and your idea of family have disappeared.

Your hurt is increased by the repercussions in other parts of your life.

Your financial situation may change, and your career be negatively impacted. Additionally, you may lose friends and people you considered family if you've lost your partner.

Each additional consequence of the initial event complicates the feelings involved. These additional hurts make it more difficult to release the past and move on.

No wonder letting go can be so difficult.

LOSS OF YOUR SENSE OF SELF

It took time through the ups and downs of life to discover who you are. You may have felt comfortable with yourself and where life was doing and then "the big hurt" happened. Suddenly everything you thought you knew about yourself was shattered.

The ending of relationships is difficult. Ugly words are said, and accusations thrown about.

If you were in an emotionally abusive relationship, you have to sort through what your partner said about you and what you believe to be true.

If you entered the relationship with a healthy self-esteem, you may feel embarrassed and even ashamed of where you are now. You'll need to spend time getting to know who you are without your partner telling you lies about yourself.

Sorting through the negativity and finding the truth about you will be a challenge, but one which will have you discovering the wonderful and delightful you.

You may feel on unstable ground as you get to know yourself again. It takes strength and courage to uncover the self you think you lost. That strength and courage is within you waiting to be rediscovered.

When you discover that your relationship was based upon a lie, you need to redefine yourself and your relationship.

You'll feel the push to discover what is true and not true about your relationship. Part of moving on may be accepting you'll never know.

Before the big hurt, you may have defined yourself by your relationship. Suddenly that definition is no longer there.

Take time to discover the amazing person you are.
Who you truly are is not based upon someone else's definition of you. Discover your own gifts and talents which are waiting for you to notice and use them.

YOU MAY BEGIN TO DOUBT YOURSELF

When you believe you've found the perfect person as partner or friend, and then that person leaves or betrays you, you begin to doubt yourself.

You may doubt your judgment. You may have thought you had good judgment about people but now you wonder if that's true.

It's not unusual to believe the fault lies with you. Yes, soul searching may be needed, but know that rarely are relationships all one person's fault unless one person has a mental or emotional disorder.

Your feelings about the relationship and about you are often deep and complex. This combination can make it difficult to release the past.

We'll discuss strategies to resolve these feelings in detail in a later lesson, so hang in there.

SUMMARY

YOU'VE DISCOVERED THAT THE FOLLOWING MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO RELEASE THE PAST:

1. Feelings from similar events increase the intensity of your feelings.
2. The loss of the future you dreamed about complicates your feelings of loss.
3. You may no longer know who you are, making it difficult to sort through your feelings.
4. You begin to doubt yourself.

PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF BEING HURT

In the next lesson you'll learn how your brain, brain chemicals, and hormones complicate being able to release the past.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

To anchor in this lesson, please take the time to reflect on it and answer these reflection questions.

1. List at least 5 feelings you have about the pain you are feeling. List more if you can.
2. Write about how you've changed from before the painful event occurred to now.
3. How have your dreams for the future changed?

4. Do you have any doubts about yourself? If so, please list them.