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Confront Your Toxic Relationships

Are you afraid of confronting someone in your life who is critical, judgmental or just can't be happy for your success?

Your life may be full of people who are draining your energy and therefore not letting you live the life of your dreams. Life coach Cheryl Richardson helps you find out how to identify these people and take steps to heal or end these relationships.

Toxic Qualities in People

Some relationships constantly drain your energy, in both obvious and subtle ways. Several types of people will exhaust you or deter you from your path to living a fulfilled life. Life coach Cheryl Richardson describes six types of toxic qualities in people.

The Blamer

This person likes to hear his own voice. He constantly complains about what isn't working in his life and yet gets energy from complaining and dumping his frustrations on you.

The Drainer

This is the needy person who calls to ask for your guidance, support, information, advice or whatever she needs to feel better in the moment. Because of her neediness, the conversation often revolves around her, and you can almost feel the life being sucked out of you during the conversation.

The Shamer

This person can be hazardous to your health. The shamer may cut you off, put you down, reprimand you, or make fun of your or your ideas in front of others. He often ignores your boundaries and may try to convince you that his criticism is for your own good. The shamer is the kind of person who makes you question your own sanity before his.

The Discounter

This is the person who discounts or challenges everything you say. Often, she has a strong need to be right and can find fault with any position. It can be exhausting to have a conversation with the discounter, so eventually you end up giving in and deciding to just listen.

The Gossip

This person avoids intimacy by talking about other behind their backs. The gossip gets energy from relaying stories, opinions, and the latest "scoop." By gossiping about others, he creates a lack of safety in his relationships, whether he realizes it or not. After all, if he'll talk about someone else, he'll talk about you.

Test the Quality of Your Relationships

Since soulful connections require an investment of time and energy, you'll want to choose the people you spend time with wisely. To determine whether a relationship drains you or fuels you, ask yourself the following questions.

1. Write down the name of a person in your life.
 2. Am I able to be myself with this person? Do I feel accepted by him/her?
 3. Is this person critical or judgmental of me?
 4. Does the relationship provide an even give-and-take exchange of energy?
 5. Do I feel upbeat and energized when I'm around this person, or depleted and drained?
 6. Does this person share my values? My level of integrity?
 7. Is this person committed to our relationship?
 8. Can this person celebrate my success?
9. Do I feel good about myself when I'm with this person?

From Cheryl Richardson's book *Take Time for Your Life*.

Confronting Conflict With Grace

Wondering how to confront people who drain you mentally, physically and spiritually? Once you have identified that you have a toxic relationship in your life, there are specific words that you can use to confront this family member or friend in a graceful, loving way. Your goal is not necessary to sever all relationships,

it's to set boundaries with this person. If you feel the relationship can be healed, follow these steps.

Step One: Set the stage.

"In an effort to honor our relationship, I need to tell you the truth..."

Step Two: Follow up with how you feel.

"When you _____ it makes me feel _____..."

Step Three: Then ask your family member or friend.

"Are you willing to stop doing that?"

Examples

"In an effort to honor our relationship I need to tell you the truth. When you complain about your boss every week, it leaves me feeling drained of energy. If you're willing to do something about the situation, I'll support you 100%, but I can no longer listen to your complaints. Are you willing?" Then... "If you forget this conversation in the future, I promise to support you and our relationship by asking you to tell me how I can support you in taking action to fix the problem."

"In an effort to honor our relationship I need to tell you the truth. When you put me down I feel angry and hurt. In order for us to continue seeing each other, I need to ask you to stop. Are you willing?"

"In an effort to honor our relationship I need to tell you the truth. When you criticize me I feel drained and upset. I'd like to ask you to stop doing that so we can move closer instead of further apart. Are you willing?"

Reduce Workday Stress with Mindfulness

By: Autumn Gallegos, PhD.

Have you ever been driving and suddenly realized you stopped paying attention? It is not uncommon for us to go on autopilot throughout our day. As our attention frequently wanders to the past or future, paying attention to the present may feel strange, uncomfortable, or even impossible. Daily stress may contribute to this disconnection from the present, leaving us feeling overwhelmed, distant, easily distracted, irritable, or like we're "sleep-walking" through life. Over time, we become a stranger to the present, ourselves, and others. But mindfulness is an invitation to practice waking up – to be alert, alive, awake, attentive, or aware. You might call it the AAAAA recovery program! It is likely that we go on automatic pilot at work in the same way that we do at other times in our lives. A simple way to incorporate mindfulness, or waking up throughout the day, is to STOP:

S - Stop

T – Take a breath

O – Observe (thoughts, feelings, and emotions)

P - Proceed

The following are 10 WAYS TO REDUCE STRESS DURING THE WORKDAY:

1. Take 5-30 minutes in the morning to be quiet and meditate – sit or lie down and be with yourself. Gaze out of the window, listen to the sounds of nature, or take a slow quiet walk.
2. While your car is warming up, take a minute to quietly pay attention to your breathing.
3. While driving, become aware of body tension, e.g. hands wrapped tightly around the steering wheel, shoulders raised, stomach tight, etc. Consciously work at releasing and dissolving that tension. Does being tense help you drive better? What does it feel like to relax and drive?

4. Pay attention your breathing and to the sky, trees, or quality of your mind when stopped at a red light or toll plaza.
5. Take a moment to orient yourself to your workday once you park your car at the work place. Use the walk across the parking lot to step into your life, know where you are, and where you are going.
6. Decide to "STOP" for 1-3 minutes every hour during the workday. Become aware of your breathing and bodily sensations, allowing the mind to settle in as a time to regroup and recoup.
7. Choose to eat one or two lunches per week in silence. Use this as a time to eat slowly and be with yourself.
8. Pay attention during the short walk to your car. Breath in the crisp or warm air, feel the cold or warmth of your body. What if you are open and accepting to these environmental conditions and bodily sensations rather than resistant to them? What may happen? Listen to the sounds outside your work place. Can you walk without feeling rushed? What happens when you slow down?
9. While driving, notice if you are rushing. What does this feel like? What can you do about it? Remember, you've got more control than you might imagine.
10. When you pull into the driveway or park on the street, take a minute to orient yourself to being with your family members or to entering your home.

When you discover that your true home is not the past or future, but in the here and now, you find that you can welcome whatever comes along because you are no longer a stranger to the present or to yourself. This is your "one wild and precious life," so why not really live it?

7 Benefits of Doodling You Might Not Know

By John D. Moore, PhD

Do you doodle? I sure do. Just the other day, I found myself drawing out hexagons on the edge of a notebook. It happened during a meeting that I had trouble tuning into.

Should I feel guilty? Not really. It turns out that doodling is more than a mental distraction. According to research conducted by psychologist Robert Burns, doodles are a form of art therapy (Jaret, 1991).

What are doodles?

At their core, doodles are non-verbal messages that surface from the unconscious mind. Typically, they symbolize feelings, thoughts, and perceptions in visual form.

Burns discovered that guys typically draw geometric shapes, like squares and circles – whereas women sketch out faces. I like to think of this activity as a window into a person's internal landscape.

While this activity often gets a bad rap, there are real benefits linked to creativity, better learning and performance.

Here's seven that might surprise you.

1. Outlet for creativity

You probably already knew this one but it needs to be mentioned. Doodling offers your mind an opportunity to express itself in a creative way.

Every line drawn or sketched should be thought of as an extension of your artistic side.

2. Great for concentration

In a [study](#) published in 2009, investigators discovered that doodling while listening to someone on the phone may have benefits. The research revealed that participants were able to recall 29% more material afterward compared to those who just took notes (Andrade, 2009).

3. Promotes catharsis

One of the major main benefits of art therapy as a wellness vehicle is its unique ability to promote catharsis.

When you doodle, you help your mind tap into deeply held emotions and bring them to the surface. Over time, this promotes psychological homeostasis, much in the same way that [dream therapy](#) does.

4. Encourages humor

We all need a good laugh from time to time. This is particularly true when we're feeling blue. That's where doodling comes into play.

When you draw (particularly faces), you allow your mind's humorous side to become activated. Have you ever noticed the exaggerated features you sketch out of a boss, family member or friend are kind of funny?

That's because you're tapping into your brain's right frontal lobe; the mind's "funny bone" (ABC News, 2016).

5. Useful for anxiety

One of the amazing benefits of doodling is its ability keep you focused on the here and now. When you draw out mental imagery from the unconscious, you are engaging in a useful activity for anxiety.

That's why it's OK to doodle just before a test or job interview. Ask yourself which is healthier: Stressing about the outcome or drawing something random?

6. Helps solve problems

For reasons that we still don't fully understand, doodling (an extension of art therapy) helps to generate fresh ideas.

Because this activity distracts folks from focusing on a given problem, it allows the unconscious mind to kick it around and inspire solutions.

If you are a doodler and have ever experienced a spontaneous "ah ha" moment, doodling may be part of the reason why it happened.

7. Encourages self-discovery

When you draw out random faces, lines, and shapes, you allow an opportunity for self-discovery. By assessing some of what you sketch through mindful reflection, you learn more about the inner you.

Rather than judge your doodles for quality, it's better to examine them for meaning. Often, you'll find they symbolize abandoned parts of the self.

Conclusion

Doodling is more than a pastime. It's a form of art therapy that helps to channel your essence.

Net News***

Here are some web sites you & your family may find helpful:

From Gloom To Gratitude: 8 Skills To Cultivate Joy

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/05/05/719780061/from-gloom-to-gratitude-8-skills-to-cultivate-joy>

Self-Soothing - Google soft belly

<https://vimeo.com/37976492>

Podcasts & Dharma Talks

<https://jackkornfield.com/podcasts-dharma-talks/>

Self-Help Corner:

Access 24/7: 780 424 2424

Kids Help Line: 1-800-668-6868