

BEING WITH OUR LONELY, SCARED PARTS

By Marlene and Bob Neufeld

One of our teachers, Marcia Gleason, sent the following:

“In the beginning of an intimate relationship, ... the chemicals of deep attraction allow us, for a short period of time, to allow another person into our soul. ... Some young parts [of us], particularly ones that did not form secure attachments with parental figures, get a taste of secure bonding during these early periods of infatuation. ... The "young parts" which we mostly keep "exiled" come out of hiding, thrilled by the belief that they are safe and will never feel alone again. For this brief window of time, our unfulfilled parts bask in the energy of love. Giving and receiving flow in an endless loop.”

Marcia gives a personal example, “I remember when ... I met Brian.... It was a particularly rough time for me, and I felt as if my deep bond with him gave me the strength to make it through. Looking back, I realize it was not really what Brian gave me (affection, attention, etc.) that helped me, but the fact that I allowed a deeply scared and lonely part to energetically receive his love (and vice versa).”

She continues, “However, this expansive, free fall doesn't last. Life takes over, reality sets in. Contraction in relationship becomes the preferred state, not only because we don't want to continually feel the inevitable hurts and disappointments by and towards one another, but because we are hard wired as humans to close down in protection mode. When our bodies become contracted, we don't breathe deeply, our hearts get hard (muscles literally get tight) and we cease to feel the part whose true desire is to open. Sometimes we may be surrounded by love but, if we can't receive it, we feel like we are in an empty pit.”

“Receiving is the function of being able to feel and allow the incomplete parts of ourselves to be known and acknowledged. When we are not afraid of our needs and our yearning, we energetically forge a visceral connection to them, which allows them to breathe and open. It is the same in our relationships. It is important not to hide from our partners the parts that we are ashamed of--the lonely, scared parts yearning to feel contact with the caring, compassionate other. Being willing to know the unfulfilled parts beneath the protections, naming them and letting our partners know about them is different than wanting them fulfilled by them. Paradoxically, the more we can take responsibility for bringing compassion to our own "young" parts, the more we can experience a true partnership.”

We experienced this ourselves recently. We had had an incident and both of us got contracted. Marlene remembers thinking her heart had closed. Marlene remembered a suggestion that Marcia Gleason offered:

“Practice taking deep breaths when you feel really alone. Breathe 10 times into your heart to wake it up and bring energy into it. Do this with your partner while you put your hands on one another's hearts.

As we did this together, looking into each other's eyes, standing with our hands on each other's hearts and breathing 10 times deeply into our own hearts, we began to feel ourselves soften and connect. Try it!