

The TLC Communicator

Hello and welcome to the April 2011 TLC newsletter. I look forward to receiving your feedback about the subject matter.

People Pleasers

I had a client recently who I would definitely call a people pleaser. He was a very good-looking man, intelligent, articulate and a hard work. His problem was that he would continually ring his partner, wanting to know what she was doing. His partner was at the end of her tether and had had enough, so he came in for counselling. He also had no idea of how he felt or what he wanted in life. He knew he wanted to be happy but had no idea how to get there.

One of my first questions to him was did he trusted his partner, his answer was yes, implicitly. So why was he obsessed with her movements & who she was with?

It all comes down to trust. He had learnt at an early age that love was fleeting and didn't last. His father was in the armed forces, so the family moved around a lot & his father spent a lot of time away from home. His mother was a caring woman, however when his father came home the two boys were no longer their mothers only priority and so they felt abandoned. My client carried that into his adult relationships. He was very needy, he had a compulsive need to constantly check that he was still loved. He would always have the house clean and tidy when his partner came home from work and dinner would be cooking away in the kitchen. One particular night he even cooked 3 meals for her because I was n't sure what she would like.

I asked him what were the consequences for him if the house wasn't cleaned & dinner was n't ready when she got home. His answer was she probably wouldn't love him as much any more. And that was the basis for all his behaviours. Fear of abandonment and not being loved any more.

In our conversations I asked about him saying "No" to people. This was a very difficult thing for him to do in an intimate relationship, there was a lot of guilt associated with saying no. So homework for that week as saying no, in a respectful way.

He had to learn that he had just as much right to do what he wanted to do as anyone else. We all have a right to get our needs met, however we have to learn to do this for ourselves and not expect others to always do it for us.

I believe he had no idea what he really wanted and how to get it. He was so out of touch with himself that he externally referenced everything. What I mean by that is if his partner was ok, then he was ok, if his partner wasn't ok, then what had he done wrong. This is very typical of children between the age of 3-8, who are ego-centric, ie, everything is about them, if their parents are fighting they believe they have caused it. Adults who felt abandoned at this age can stay stuck in this life stage because they were never taught to take responsibility for their own feelings.

Once this client started to connect with his own feelings and not have to check in with his partner to find out how he should be feeling he would start to see himself as an individual and start to heal the hurt he felt from his childhood.

When we've been isolated from ourselves for so long it can be painful to reconnect. One of the biggest pains is of shame and guilt, why they didn't realise sooner that they held the key to their problems all along. They start seeing the patterns in all their previous relationships, it all starts to become clear. Once we start to reconnect with ourselves we can start to love ourselves and that is where the true healing begins. We have to be able to fulfil our own needs without having to ask someone else to do it for us. We have to start treating ourselves how we want the world to treat us. It's like the old adage, "Treat others how you would like to be treated." People learn how to treat us by the way we treat ourselves. We all know people who have little or no respect for themselves, so at some level we do the same to them.

With a lot of self-love and some gentle support from his partner my client is well on the way to finding

himself and the true meaning of love, for self and others.

The quote I would like to leave you with today is:-

Be invitational not confrontational

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter please reply and change the subject to Discontinue Newsletter. Thank you for being a valued member of the TLC referral network.