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Need help figuring out this whole "parenting" thing?



Sizzling Salsa

Family Feuding

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and resentment about things our various family members have done in the past, or continue to do in the present. Unfortunately, we cannot erase the past or instill changes in other people who do not want to change. All we can do is change ourselves, and do our own inner work so that we are not the ones suffering. There are some behaviors and experiences that some of us have with various family members that our society, culture, and hearts deem unforgivable. Some examples of these behaviors are sexual, physical and emotional abuse, neglect and extreme cruelty. Some of us have family members who are active addicts, or have engaged in deviant or criminal behavior.

What do we do when we have family members who are dangerous to our physical and emotional health?

Personal Safety First First, we must make sure that we are safe from any further harm and that the person is not harming anyone else. Then comes the hard part- to accept the situation as it is. We all wish things could be different, but it is truly imperative to see both the good and the bad in this family member and to accept that this is who they are. Perhaps they would be different if they could. But, this is who they are right now and they are doing the best they can with the limited internal resources they have. A part of them is suffering and it is necessary to remind yourself that they are ill.

Finding Inner Piece Doing our own inner work can take many forms. Sometimes it can be deciding to cut off all communication with a dangerous person who is jeopardizing our safety and well being until they agree to get help and do a significant amount of work on their problems. Whatever road we take, we can come to a place of emotional peace. We can forgive without ever letting them know. Forgiveness does not mean condoning their behavior. Forgiveness does not mean forgetting. Forgiveness does not mean ever having to talk to that person again. Forgiveness does not even mean releasing all your anger. Forgiveness is simply loving yourself more than the person who hurt you. Forgiveness is telling yourself that you are too important and too special and worthy to have to walk around feeling bad.

When you live in a state of "unforgiveness," where you rehash the transgression in your mind and feel rage at the thought of that person, and long for vengeance, you are the only one hurting. Have the intention to forgive, and to understand why they have become so ill. Then, decide to focus on experiencing your own joy.

Alisa Ruby M.A., M.F.T.I. is a successful therapist. She sees individuals, couples, and children, and runs a Law Of Attraction support group. Please feel free to send Alisa your questions at alisaruby@familymagazingroup.com.

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