

## Emotions

Let's talk about resentment today because that's what popped up in my head on this lazy Sunday morning as I emotionally prepared myself for the day ahead, reading up on Positive Intelligence for my forthcoming group meeting this week.

Resentment comes from our perception of experiencing an unfair situation. We might feel unappreciated, misunderstood, not listened to, invalidated, unloved, unwanted, rejected or abandoned even. Now that is my perspective, using my map of the world which is in my head and my understanding and my geography of emotions, which is why these words. Apart from it being my style and way of writing and communicating. Yours is, I am sure, very different, even using other words to describe how you feel and what's going on in your world of resentment. Perhaps you don't particularly experience resentment, which I doubt, because we all do at one time or another. Maybe it's a milder or stronger form of resentment that you feel, which you might want to word as irritation, feeling disgruntled, discontented, bitterness, hatred, hostility.

We become defensive and may well physically or emotionally lash out at the other person who we feel had the affront to confront us with something that we find uncomfortable yet end up blaming them (well they started it after all, of course it's their fault, why on earth would it be ours?) and so on and so forth. Our tendency, if we are a fairly emotionally balanced person, is to stay calm and respond rather than have a knee jerk reaction, but if we're caught off balance in that moment, then we are likely to emotionally react. If we're completely hijacked by resentment because we aren't yet emotionally aware, we may well get physical and shove that person out of frustration, denial, shame, guilt, resentment, or any other emotion we feel at the time.

We might try to avoid it completely by walking away from the situation, only to then let it sit and simmer and fester away inside of us, only for those very feelings to become more intensive, which in turn leads to us being verbose in our verbal interaction, or physical as I said before. Once again, we may feel guilty, embarrassed, or ashamed with how we dealt with the situation which makes everything feel so much worse than it might have been.

By holding in our emotions we are firstly, not accessing and accepting how we feel for whatever reason, and secondly, we are putting our bodies under immense physical and emotional pressure which may lead to us being ill either mildly, ill more often with colds and other illnesses or if we continue for years on end, in a life changing way. Why compromise our health?

The problem is that we probably won't make the connection to what's happening with our health and that we aren't in touch with our emotions, which is what is affecting us. After all, it's not something that is readily taught in schools because it's more about the logical part of using our brains.

This inaccurate perspective of the world that we hold in this particular situation and future ones, can be changed by reframing, that is, changing our perspective by looking at things in a different way, with a different world lens, from a different angle, but only as long as we are prepared to. To do that might mean swallowing our pride and embarking on a journey of discovery which will allow us to grow as a person and feel pride in what we're learning. Not only that, but we can use those new learnings to help others who struggle with their emotions. By taking on a new perspective, it enables us to see the other persons view of the world with their lens.

When we do react in the way I described above, we are defending ourselves and our egos against being hurt and we're using blame in this situation and projecting our fears onto someone else, in an effort to avoid our emotions which underlie our resentment. Not only that, but we're in denial and avoiding feeling what lies underneath our protective layer, which is probably feelings of sadness, shame, anxiousness, guilt, or anything else.

Usually, the reason we become resentful is because of our communication style as well as expectations and assumptions of other people. When we have certain expectations of others, or assumptions, they tend to be unfulfilled because we aren't communicating our needs, or, if we are, we are not necessarily doing it in a forthright, clear, and easily understood way.

Our intent and motivation is that we want to be heard, listened to, valued, validated, understood, and loved. What we do and what we expect or want are two completely different things, but we aren't always aware which is why we get things wrong.

We all learn different coping mechanisms as we grow up, most, if not all, belong to our childhood and a stage of development where we got stuck.

By becoming clearer in our communication with others, we do stand a much better chance of being heard and of improving our relationships whether intimate, social, or professional.

By taking a look at what we feel we've lost or are about to lose in a conversation, will help us to understand ourselves better and why we say what we say and how we say it.

Just pause, take a breath before you reply and ask, "what am I about to lose/what have I lost?" It might be dignity, a friendship, pride, a place, or person where you feel safe. What is it for you? Taking that breath alone, makes a space of time gained in order to calm the amygdala and think, "am I really being attacked or is it my thinking that I am?"

After that, ask yourself, what's one small, specific thing you can do to change your communication style in your relationship with others? It must be something tiny so there's no overwhelm, worry or anxiety about what is being done.

Try it and see what happens, miracles usually, I know, because I've done it and it works!