

Union Within

Union Within - Healing the Inner Child

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"As has been stated, we are not broken - we do not need fixing. It is our relationship with ourselves which needs to be healed; it was our sense of self that was shattered and fractured and broken into pieces - not our True Self. Recovery is a process of awakening to, of becoming conscious of, the perfect balance and harmony that has always been and always will be - of learning to accept a state of Grace - and integrating that Truth into our lives."

"We have a feeling place (stored emotional energy), and an arrested ego-state within us for an age that relates to each of those developmental stages. Sometimes we react out of our three-year-old, sometimes out of our fifteen-year-old, sometimes out of the seven-year-old that we were.

If you are in a relationship, check it out the next time you have a fight: Maybe you are both coming out of your twelve-year-olds. If you are a parent, maybe the reason you have a problem sometimes is because you are reacting to your six-year-old child out of the six-year-old child within you. If you have a problem with romantic relationships maybe it is because your fifteen-year-old is picking your mates for you."

Quote from Codependence: The Dance of Wounded Souls {/xtypo_info}

Recovery from Codependence is a process of owning all of the fractured parts of our selves so that we can find some wholeness - so that we can bring about an integrated and balanced union, a marriage if you will, of all the parts of our internal self. The most vital component of this process in my experience is the healing and integration of the inner children. In this column I am going to be talking about some of my inner children in order to try to communicate the importance of this integration process.

My wounding began in the womb. I incubated in my mother's terror and shame and I knew that this was not going to be a fun lifetime before I was born. After birth the deprivation started and the terror - a nameless terror with no words, only the squalling pain of an infant and the terror of being powerless in an alien environment. The toddler in me feels not only the pain and the terror but also an anger - an undifferentiated anger that needed to strike out, sometimes at my little brother, sometimes with willful destruction of things.

By the time I was 4 or 5 I felt overwhelming shame. I felt like I was inadequate and defective because I was unable to protect my mother from my father. My mother emotionally incested me - made me her surrogate spouse - and I felt at that young age that her feelings were my responsibility. By the time I was seven I would not allow my mother to touch me - because her touch felt "icky" - and would not show her any feelings. I was being cool at seven in a passive-aggressive response my mothers complete lack of emotional boundaries - I would not admit to being happy about

anything or hurt or scared or anything. I was completely emotionally isolated by the time I was seven years old. I was also full of despair, my spirit broken, and I tried to commit suicide by stepping in front of an oncoming car while being dropped off at a movie theater.

The seven year old within me is the most prominent and emotionally vocal of my inner children. There are two distinct sides to him - the despairing child who just wants to die, and a child full of rage because death/escape was not allowed.

The despairing seven year old is always close by, waiting in the wings, and when life seems too hard, when I am exhausted or lonely or discouraged - when impending doom or financial tragedy seem to be imminent - then I hear from him. Sometimes the first words I hear in the morning are his voice within me saying "I just want to die".

The feeling of wanting to die, of not wanting to be here, is the most overwhelming, most familiar feeling in my emotional inner landscape. Until I started doing my inner child healing I believed that who I really was at the deepest, truest part of my being, was that person who wanted to die. I thought that was the true 'me'. Now I know that is just a small part of me. When that feeling comes over me now I can say to that seven year old, "I am really sorry you feel that way Robbie. You had very good reason to feel that way. But that was a long time ago and things are different now. I am here to protect you now and I Love you very much. We are happy to be alive now and we are going to feel Joy today, so you can relax and this adult will deal with life."

The seven year old who is full of rage is Robby and he wants to destroy. When I was a teenager I heard about a guy who went up in a tower at the University of Texas and just started shooting people. I knew exactly how he felt. But because of the Karma that I was here to settle it was never an option to take that rage out on other people. So I turned it back in on myself. For most of my life that rage was focused on destroying my own body because I blamed it for trapping me here. I knew after my attempt that suicide was not an option for me in this lifetime so I worked on killing myself in other ways with alcohol and drugs, food and cigarettes, self-destructive and insane behavior. To this day the seven year old in me has incredible resistance to me treating my body in healthy, Loving ways.

The integration process involves consciously cultivating a healthy, Loving relationship with all of my inner children so that I can Love them, validate their feelings, and assure them that everything is different now and everything is going to be all right. When the feelings from the child come over me it feels like my whole being, like my absolute reality - it isn't, it is just a small part of me reacting out of the wounds from the past. I know that now because of my recovery, and I can lovingly parent and set boundaries for those inner children so they are not dictating how I live my life. By owning and honoring all of the parts of me I now have a chance to have some balance and union within.

Go to Union Within - 5 years later