

The Option Method Institute

Education based on the teachings of Bruce Di Marsico

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Happiness in Relationships

From

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Outline

- Being afraid of not having something is not the same as wanting it.
- The fundamental illusion about happiness is that we need reasons to be happy.
- Reactive emotions to others are based on the delusion that they don't also want to be happier.
- All relationship problems have to do with believing there is proof of not being loved.
- You can be happy in any relationship.

Introduction

In this talk, Bruce Di Marsico discusses happiness in relationships.

Being afraid of not having something is not the same as wanting it. We play a game that we have to move away from what makes us unhappy. Instead, we can simply move toward what we want. Why do we not simply move towards what we want? Because we believe we need reasons to be happy.

Reactive emotions to others are based on the delusion that they don't also want to be happier. All relationship problems have to do with believing there is proof of not being loved. If we knew that the other also wanted to be happier, we could never find proof of not being loved, and so you can be happy in any relationship.

READINGS

What two people start complaining about in relationships is “you don’t love me enough, and because you don’t love me enough, you are going to leave me. And, if you keep that up, I’ll be so miserable, I can’t stay with you, I am going to have to leave you, because I am so afraid of you’re leaving me. I just can’t stand you constantly being *this* kind of person because if you continue to be *this* kind of person, I am going to be unhappy enough to leave you, and that’s what I am most afraid of. If you continue to keep coming home late, and being interested in other man or other women, then I am going to just have to leave you . . . because I want to be with you.”

I have never known it to be different.

Take it from a bird’s eye view. Here are two people who love each other, who are leaving each other, and what they were most afraid of during their whole relationship together was one of the other being unfaithful, or leaving them, or not loving them enough and therefore wanting to leave them. Somehow they’re to the point where they are really glad to separate, yet if anytime during that relationship you ever tried to tell them that they didn’t need to be unhappy with the other one not being there, that they never needed to be unhappy to not have the other one, that they needn’t be unhappy if the other one didn’t love them, they could never hear that and would claim it to be absolutely impossible. Yet, what they are saying by the end of the relationship is, “I can’t be happy unless they’re gone, it’s impossible for me to be happy with them.” And they are often glad to split up: “Thank God it’s over”. They were: “Thank God I don’t have to learn to be happy without him, I don’t have to learn to be happy without her. That’s the thing I never want to learn.” So now they are without him or her, and they go on through the same cycle in the next relationship and on and on and on.

We play a game that we have to move away from what makes us so unhappy.

People do that with jobs. You want to make a move and get a better job, and you become very unhappy about where you are at. Mostly what you are unhappy about is that you are afraid of losing it. So you want another one.

Some fear that if they didn't think they needed something in order to be happy, that would mean that they wouldn't want it if they were happy. This comes from the idea that you need reasons to be happy. Many, in fact, have lived with others who never gave them anything unless they pretend to be need it.

“Can I want what I don't need?” become the next frightening question. The answer is always assumed that, if I merely wanted it, that's not going to be enough motivation for me to get it. We've been believing that just wanting it doesn't motivate me to get it; that that's not true. You haven't really been wanting it.

You have deduced that you wanted it because you were afraid of not having it, but that's not the same as wanting it. You think, well, if I don't need my wife, if I don't need my husband, if I don't need the person that I love, that will be same as not wanting them. Why? Because you think that wanting them isn't going to make it work. Why? Because you haven't really been wanting them. You've been more afraid of not having them than you have been in touch with wanting them. You are your own evidence against yourself. You are right: you wouldn't have them if you didn't need them –unless you started wanting them, because you *haven't* been wanting them. What you have been doing is being afraid of not having them.

Being afraid of not having is not really the substitute we think it is for wanting. It is not the same as wanting. It's the other path on another road that goes another place. We often say, “well, but I have wanted it” and that's how we can come to the conclusion that wanting isn't enough, that wanting doesn't motivate us – but anybody who says that about something hasn't really wanted it. “Oh, but I have wanted it and I cried every time I haven't had it.” That *might* mean you feared not having it, but that doesn't mean you wanted it.

And so each time you have had the feeling that you would want it and that wanting it wasn't going to work, and wanting it doesn't make it happen, it's because you haven't really wanting it. How many of you have really wanted to be happy? How often have you instead been afraid of being unhappy? That's not the same as wanting to be happy. It's nowhere near the same. It smells very bad, it has nothing to do with wanting.

If went shopping to not get an ugly dress, you probably would never leave the house. And then you might wonder "how come I am not going shopping, because I want a nice dress?" But every time you go out the door, you are going out of the door to not get an ugly dress, and you feel you might as well stay home. And how many people, when they go out on a date, want to meet another person? And how many on a date are not wanting to enjoy themselves, but instead are feeling "I don't want to be nervous tonight, I don't want to be bored", and so they stay home. You think that you are wanting to have a good time, and yet you find yourself not even leaving your apartment. But when you really are wanting something, there's no question. You don't go shopping because you don't want a can of beans; you go shopping because you do want hamburger or whatever you are going shopping for.

Questioner: I believe there are certain life situations that would automatically make someone unhappy. For example, I have a patient whose husband has had a stroke and he is left physically impaired, and has had a personality change to being demanding and childish. He was a quiet man who now talks excessively and preaches to people.

But what are her reasons for being unhappy? You might have good reasons to be unhappy in that situation, but are they good enough for her to be unhappy? Besides having a husband who has become an imbecile, does she also want to be unhappy? Isn't she certainly afraid that she can't take care of him or herself the way she

wants to, things like that? Can you see that she started out wanting to take of him or herself, and now that wanting has changed into fear, and now there is fearing instead of wanting.

And maybe, questioning will lead to the fear of not wanting. You might ask, “Why do you believe you really want it?” There may be fear that they *didn't* want what they know they really want. There can be fears of not having fears. So, just question, and find out what comes up. Maybe there is a wanting underneath it all, maybe there is no wanting anymore, just fear of the implications of not wanting. You'll find out. Questions the best way to help someone get in touch with their wanting..

There is a kind of wanting that doesn't do any good, and there is a kind of wanting that does do some good. We've made the distinction, we called them wanting and needing. They seem to be two kinds of one thing. In a sense, though, needing is not really a form of wanting because it doesn't get you anywhere that you want to go. What it gets you is unhappy, which is not really what you want. And even if you get you the thing you want, it doesn't get you what you wanted it for, which was to be happy.

People who are happy together are different because what they wanting from the other person is exactly what other person is wanting from themselves. If my biggest complaint in my heart is, “I am going to all of this hell because you are not wanting to be happy”, I am wasting my time wishing you were happier. All I am saying, then, is that you don't want to exist as a human being and so basically I am accusing you of not being human. To ever be angry or unhappy with another human being is to basically accuse them of not being human, to say somehow that they don't have the same basic human energy need that you do, the same tending, the same desires, same desire to be happier.

And so to hate anyone is to consider them not human. There are all kinds of

corollaries; in the history of every murderer or any soldier they cannot believe that they've killed a human being. In any case that I have ever known, everyone who has ever murdered anyone, they would never allow themselves to believe that what they killed was a human being. They always believe that what they killed some kind of a perverted miscreant creature, some kind of creature that didn't want to be human and therefore deserved to die. It was okay to kill them.

Every war has a vocabulary that's meant to dehumanize the so-called the enemy, whether it be "gook" or "kraut" or whatever. It is not wanting to believe that the enemy are human beings. Human beings simply cannot kill other human beings intentionally. They have no reasons to do so. So the only the reason they have ever come up with is that they made those they kill not human in some way in order to be able to kill them.

When I am helping those who have hurt others, physically, I help them with whatever form guilt takes. They have to know what they did was out of unhappiness. They have to know that they lied themselves to do it. It can be very easy to help see that they didn't believe it was humans they killed, that they really aren't capable of killing human beings. You first humanize them.

The state can't even honestly admit that it kills human beings. First they have to call them criminals, which is something that is not a human being, or has to call them an enemy, and give a reason for killing the enemy, by showing all kinds of inhuman things about them. "Look what they did here and look what they did there, they are inhuman!". They couldn't kill them any other way.

"Senseless" killings are hardly senseless, you invariably find there is great rationality behind it, overloaded with reasons. You have to think that you and I are not alike, that we don't basically both desire the same things, we are not both trying to be happy and that somehow I become a threat to you, an accusation against your happiness and your being.

Back to loving relationships. If you are counseling an individual, or if a couple came to you, or three or four or whatever constellation of people who have a relationship, you would be able to see that their problem, whatever it was, had to do with their beliefs about getting all kinds of proof that they were not loved. And that really bugs them – the presented problem is not what really bugs them.

For example, if a person is unhappy because her husband slapped her, she was never unhappy that she has been slapped, she is unhappy about what that means. It means he doesn't love her, that if he loved her, he wouldn't have done that. Anybody who has ever been slapped accidentally and really believes that it was an accident does not have an issue. In order to get angry at an accident, you would have to believe, if you loved me you would have been more careful. People do get angry at accidents. But first they have to convert that into "not really" an accident by saying "you wouldn't have that accident if you were more careful and if you loved me." That's not the same as being happy with accidents, that's just not being unhappy with them.

Your butcher and you may both be having a good day and you go to your butcher, and you are happy, and he is happy, and you meet this morning and you are gone. You loved each other. But there will be some people that we are happier with than others based on flimsiest reasons, like we've known them for a while, or we are both are interested in same thing. There is a fear there, that is the reason we are avoiding being happier with other people, so we pick a few people to be happy with, and choose not to be happy with many others.

It seems like one of the signs of being a happier person if you more open to being happy with anybody. Even though you may not making a move to love anybody, you could be very open to something going on so, that if somebody asks you to love them, they are only asking you to be who you are with them, and you can say "sure". If asked, "would you like to do this with me?" it wouldn't be decided

anymore on the basis of whether you like them or not, it would be decided on the basis whether you like to do what you are going to do together or not. If someone said to you, “would you like to go to the museum with me this weekend?” the response would be in terms of museum, not in terms of, “I don’t like that person, I wouldn’t want to spend in the afternoon with the museum with them.” There would be a kind of openness to “I would be glad to go with you any place that I would be glad to go by myself.” You could be happy without them. Now, would you like to be happier with them?

You just know that you are going to be happy no matter what you do, whether you try or don’t try, that you are going to be more happy every minute of every day. You won’t be using desire to be happy, then, to make decisions. If you were just moving toward more happiness, no matter what you did, you can stay in bed and you would be happier or if you got up out of bed, you would be more happy.

Questions for Reflection

What are you afraid of not having?

What is the want underlying that fear? Is there a want underlying that fear?

Think of the last person you got in an argument with. Were you aware during the argument that they also want to be happier?

Meditation for the Week

- Everyone is doing everything they do in order to move towards greater happiness.