

Taos News Article

The Taos News has committed to implement a weekly column to help educate our community about emotional healing through grief. People may write questions to Golden Willow Retreat and they will be answered privately to you and possibly as a future article for others. Please list a first name that grants permission for printing.

August 13, 2015

Healthy Change can be Scary

Dear Ted,

I have had many losses in my life and have chosen a lot of coping skills that have been detrimental to me and others in my life. I'm trying to change many of those behaviors and find that it is very scary to change, even though I know they will be good for me and my loved ones. This seems so crazy to me! If I know it will be beneficial for me, why is it so scary to grieve and heal other emotional parts of my life? Thanks,
Perplexed and Confused

Dear Perplexed,

Thank you for stepping into your healing by asking a question and sharing part of your life. I have a feeling that writing this question and sending it in had elements of fear as well.

First of all, you're not crazy for having fear and resistance while choosing to step into emotional recovery from whatever issues and behaviors are not serving you in a manner that leads to the quality of life you deserve. I chose the word "deserve," because most of us play certain negative tapes in our heads that include a belief that we do not deserve to enjoy quality and abundance in our lives.

As you lean into healing this will be one of the obstacles to mentally remove and you may possibly have to navigate this, because there may be social pressure to stay "just the way you were".

Another internal struggle can be stepping into the unknown mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. When there is self-healing, you will change and you may find it scary to let go of behaviors and thinking processes that you have become accustomed to and are quite comfortable with. You may be comfortably miserable.

From your question, it sounds like you have become uncomfortably miserable and there is something that is demanding you change. Moving into the unknown, even when you know it is for the best, is scary as you are choosing to be vulnerable. No matter what your age, it is like being the new kid in class and having to walk through that door.

Lastly, your brain has learned ways to survive and even if those behaviors are no longer working for you; you are asking your brain to go against itself and do something different from what your brain has found to keep you alive.

Now, the ways you have survived may not work and may even be killing you. The leap of faith to do something different and possibly have a better outcome and a higher quality of life is what healing from loss is all about. It takes a lot of bravery to step out of comfort zones and move into proactive actions. This may mean new losses such as unhealthy or toxic friends, groups, and places.

As you rebuild your life, you will find that, over time, your new environment will support you but you will need to grieve your old life as you honor your progress towards a healthier and happier life. Please remember that the healing process is something that is an ongoing process and it does not happen quickly. Being gentle to yourself, finding healthy support, and celebrating your victories, while learning from difficulties, is the key to a healthy life. I wish you well. Until next week, take care.

Golden Willow Retreat is a nonprofit organization focused on emotional healing and recovery from any type of loss. Direct any questions to Ted Wiard, LPCC, CGC, Founder of Golden Willow Retreat at (575) 776-2024 or GWR@newmex.com