



Focus: Fulfilling Relationship The Emotional Trap in Relationship

It still seems to be a taboo topic: Feelings! I recently read an article in which the author wrote about his experiment of creating a happier life for himself. What he wanted to do was – among other – to avoid anger and overreactions to small irritations. Do you know this? Have you ever tried to no longer be angry and to create especially your relationship in a harmonious way?

In search for happiness and satisfaction many people wish for a harmonious relationship with their partner. The purpose of creating such a relationship full of harmony is in fact very noble. The question however is what *harmonious* means. Many people mean by this not only that they don't fight and argue with their partners anymore, but that they ideally only feel joy leaving all other feelings like anger, sadness and fear behind. Well, this is exactly the point where harmony becomes an illusion. Because really, how long does this work? Exactly, it works until your partner pushes your red buttons. And one thing is for sure: they will find the buttons, most of the time unconsciously.

One of the main factors why things start bubbling up in a relationship is the missing distinction between feelings and emotions. Especially in a relationship a lot of old emotions come to the surface, which want to be healed. This seems to be a paradox, because most of the people just want to be happy when being in relationship. In addition, all the love movies end with the two lovers finding each other and living happily ever after. Have you realized that these movies always end, when things actually start getting interesting? When it is about navigating relationship in everyday life, being really in contact with the partner and creating a deep connection?

Fact is that as soon as you and your partner get closer and closer and love grows, deeper but also more painful feelings from the past can come up to get healed. However, instead of starting with the healing process many people try to either suppress the upcoming emotions – after all we want harmony, joy and luck in our relationship – or they project the emotions onto their partner and make them a „pig“. It's sad, but true. Unfortunately we don't have any classes in school called „Being in relationship“ or „Navigating relationships“, so where should we have learned differently?

Let us first of all take a look at the distinction between feelings and emotions.

1. Feelings

There are in total four feelings territories: Anger, Sadness, Joy and Fear (other feelings terms tend to fit into one of the mentioned territories). All feelings have a purpose and a use and they never go away. They are rather hard-wired in us and serve as inner navigation system that guides us unerringly through life. They arise in the present, here and now, and they are as neutral as the four directions of a compass.



Nevertheless we are trained in our society that feelings are not okay. Anger for example is regarded as destructive, childish, uncontrolled and unprofessional. Sadness is considered to be weak, miserable, pulling others down and in fact a person crying is classified as crybaby. Fear is also to be avoided, because fear blocks us, triggers panic in others, and is weak and definitely not a characteristic of a powerful person. Joy might be okay for a while, but when you sit in your office smiling all day long, your colleagues and boss ask you whether you smoked something or don't have enough work to do. Then you are suddenly called naïve, not to be taken seriously and childish. In short terms: All four feelings are not okay. You don't believe this? Well, then why during the soccer world championship did people eagerly discuss in public that some of the players should have controlled themselves better instead of crying for sadness or joy on the playground.

Yet our feelings are not a design error of evolution. Feelings are neutral energy and information that serve us in life. You need rage for example to set boundaries, make decisions, go forward, take action, clear the cellar and create clarity. Sadness serves you in the way that you can e. g. be authentically human, create heart-to-heart connections with other people and let go of old things. You need the sadness. Also fear is really useful. It helps you to be creative, make plans, go into unknown territory and try new things. And joy is useful to e. g. motivate others, be enthusiastic, lead, leap over boundaries, celebrate and follow your vision.

Feelings arise HERE and NOW and they vanish again as soon as you have used them responsibly and consciously. When for example your partner orders something for you in the restaurant without asking you and you feel a little bit angry then you can use the anger to make a boundary. You could e. g. tell them that it is not okay for you that they order without asking you and that you would like to order for yourself in the future. Then you have used your anger responsibly. As soon as you consciously recognize and responsibly use a feeling arising in the present, it vanishes directly.

Now what exactly is the difference to an emotion?

2. Emotions:

Emotions are basically just like feelings, but they last longer. Have you ever experienced that you were angry, sad or afraid (or all mixed) for several hours, the whole day or even several days, because your partner said something or did something in a certain way? That is an emotion. There are basically three kinds of emotions:

Child-Emotion:

Child emotions are incomplete feelings from the past. Maybe it was not safe to express a feeling in the past when it came up. Therefore we suppressed it and locked it away in our nervous and muscle cells. However, it is still there. When our partner now pushes one of the red buttons by saying or doing something – most of the time unconsciously – they remind us of the old situation and suddenly the emotions come to the surface with an incredible impact. When are not aware of



what's happening it can easily happen that we project these emotions onto our partner causing a relationship fight. We probably start arguing and blaming (e. g. „you always say...you never do...“) without our partner even knowing what's going on.

The bad news is: this pattern repeats until you finally dissolve this emotion. This may happen through e. g. conscious feelings work and the dissolution of old decisions or through energetic healing sessions during which you take a look at the specific topic (Hint: the experience shows that pure logical analysis of the topic does not solve the root cause, because in that case only the mind – i. e. the intellectually body – is addressed. Emotions are however stuck in the so called emotional body and energetic body).

The good news is: When you consciously go through this healing process it brings your relationship to a whole new level. A relationship is like a symbiotic system, a unity. As soon as one piece in the symbiotic system changes, the whole system changes. As soon as you dissolve an old block and courageously take the next step, your partner will also change. When your energy and frequency changes your partner will adapt to this new frequency. So if you have tried so far to change your partner (which presumably hasn't really worked) then try the other direction: change something within yourself and let yourself be surprised.

Parent-Emotion:

Parent emotions are feelings you have taken over from other people at an earlier stage. These can be feelings of parents or other authorities (e. g. teachers), institutions, brands or religions. Let's assume your parents constantly spoke about a specific person in a negative way or made fun of them and you now meet this person. What would happen? It could well be that in the instant you see that person your mind goes „Oh man, I don't want to see that one right now.“ However, this would be just a parent emotion you have adopted. It is not your feeling arising Here and Now. Or when you blame your partner, because they apparently cleaned the glasses the „wrong“ way and your Mom used to reprehend your father for the same thing, this would also be a parent emotion. It gets even more interesting in case your father or mother had a certain critical attitude towards the other gender and kept telling you in your childhood what it is, then you might have adopted this attitude and the relating feelings from your parents. Through whose eyes do you really see your partner? Through your mother's eyes? Through your father's eyes?

Also with regard to this kind of emotion it is all about consciousness. It is about clearly distinguishing, whether you adopted feelings and beliefs unexamined from others and are now running these emotional patterns unconsciously in your relationship.

Gremlin-Emotion:

This category is tricky. In this specific case the king of your own underworld (your little monster, your ratfink, your Gremlin) magic-wise pretends a feeling without prior notice to e. g. fight with your partner and make him a pig. Just so. That's what the Gremlin likes best, destroying intimacy and relationship and creating a wonderful Low Drama. That's his favorite food. You may have



witnessed a couple arguing and fighting and in the end none of them could remember what it was all about and how this all actually started. Kind regards from the Gremlin monster!

The only chance to get the Gremlin emotion under control is to become more aware about your shadow side and get clarity about the subtle – or also obvious – words and actions your Gremlin uses to manipulate your life and your relationship. Shadow aspects are e. g. the following: Being right (very common in relationship. Just check when, where, how often and with whom you want to be right), manipulation, envy, jealousy, control, greed, resentment, revenge, better knowing, arrogance, ignorance, etc. The list of shadow principles is endless and each person has their personal shadow aspects. In order to be in a fulfilling relationship with your partner I invite you to really investigate into this topic in detail so that you can clearly distinguish when your Gremlin comes up with an emotion just to destroy intimacy and trust. As soon as you are aware of your underworld you can consciously give your Gremlin much more interesting tasks than destroying your relationship.

When you don't have clarity about the difference between emotions and feelings, emotions can become a real trap in your relationship. Especially in a couple's relationship it is extremely valuable to have clarity about the three kinds of emotions in order to avoid that you project these onto your partner and thus start a fight that destroys love and trust and turns your relationship into an exhausting experience. Just be aware of this: **Your emotions have nothing to do with your partner, nothing at all!** Each of us is carrying a certain baggage from the past. The question is how consciously you deal with it.

Many people try to make their partners responsible for their happiness. The partner should fix it and if possible make up for the missing love or whatever you experienced during childhood. However, this shot backfires considerably. You can only be happy in a relationship, if you are happy yourself. Your partner cannot fill the hole from the past. They can only give you the space you need for healing old emotions coming up in your relationship.

So what do you do now when you have been overreacting as soon as your partner e. g. said something in a certain voice or with certain words, or they have been driving you nuts (even if you didn't show it) just by acting repeatedly in a certain way?

STEP 1: Recognize the trigger

First of all it is essential that you consciously perceive when they push the red button and set off the mechanism. Maybe it is a trigger that just makes you sad all day long or triggers anger or fear for the rest of the day. Recognize this trigger.

STEP 2: „Stop! It has got nothing to do with him/her”

When you are emotionally stirred up, let your partner know that they triggered something in you and that you would like to let things settle down. You may want to take some time for yourself and go for a walk, but please at any price stay away from the hook of making your partner a pig by running your emotional protection mechanism.



As soon as you realize that an emotion is bubbling up try to not get hooked and suppress the emotion or use your partner as emotional garbage can. One possibility is to immediately push on the brakes saying to yourself „Stop! It has nothing to do with him/her!“ Hold on. Take two deep breaths. You may want to repeat the sentence two or three times to bypass the automatism. When you don't push the brakes the moment the emotion gets you, it may well happen that you kill your partner with words, make them a pig, even hurt them, destroy intimacy and trust and regret it afterwards. Your Gremlin is very clever and fast in using words and gestures that destroy intimacy and trust. And the Gremlin is similarly fast in using old emotions as welcomed food to create a Low Drama. Making up afterwards for what you said in an emotionally charged situation is most of the times much more complex and time-consuming. Be alert. You can also make your partner a pig silently by collecting secret resentment points against them and blaming them just in your mind. From an energetic point of view there is no difference.

STEP 3: What is it really about?

When you have successfully stopped the automatism you can ask the question “What is it really about? What is the root cause?” Why do the words or actions of your partner probably hurt you in such an intensive way? Why are you angry, sad or afraid? Who might have said something similar to you? Pay attention to all body reactions and pictures you get. Whom or what do you project onto your partner in this moment? Is it an old experience from another relationship or from your childhood? Is it a reprehension you often heard from your father? What do you project in that very moment onto your partner? Keep referring to yourself.

The one or other person might now say „Ha-Ha, very funny, and you think that's enough?“ No, it is not enough. Yet the first step towards change is the step of becoming aware of what is going on. This happens through attention and self-observation.

Take into consideration that your partner offers you a big gift when triggering old emotions in you. It is about realizing “Ah, there is an old wound coming up.” Then you can do the next step for yourself and start with the healing process of the old wound. This might happen in a vulnerable conversation with your partner, or – if the wounds are bigger – in a safe space, where you can do conscious feelings work. Pay attention to not use your relationship space to run through all healing processes with your partner. Your relationship space is precious and sacred and it is useful to clean emotional baggage with the help of other people than your partner. Rather use the precious time with your partner to create and enjoy intimacy, trust and being with.

Be aware that your partner is your mirror. They show you exactly the topics that still need to be healed or where you can further grow. Consider this as a present. Because to be truly authentic and vulnerably in relationship and grow together is one of the biggest gifts. And this is what could possibly amount to true fulfillment.

Best wishes,

Yours Nicola Neumann-Mangoldt

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