

How to deal with ourselves when we are less than perfect

(Based on Marshall Rosenberg's Self-Empathy process)

1. Think of a stimulus--something you did that triggers you to not think kindly of yourself. A time you made a "mistake." Write down what you said or did.
2. Recall what you said to yourself or what you guessed you said to yourself when you made the "mistake." Write down as much as you can remember.
3. Mourn
 - (Distinguish between mourning vs. blaming. Mourning is full attention focused on needs. Allows me to learn when not acting in harmony with my values. Blaming is concept of wrongness.)
 - Put full attention on needs
 - What need(s)/value(s) of mine was/were not met? Mourn when I don't act in harmony with my values/needs
 - See the good reasons why I did what I did or didn't do (Need(s) I was hoping to meet- "forgiveness"). When one empathizes, there is no need for forgiveness because we see the beauty in what we were trying to do. Most necessary step for social change is to see good reasons people do things I don't like.
 - Sometimes the needs we were trying to get met don't get met. Sometimes they are met at a high cost.
4. When both needs are in mind, learning can happen. How could (not "should") I have gotten both needs met? Needs are not in conflict, though I may not be creative enough in this moment to come up with strategies to meet all needs. I don't know how to yet (rather than "can't").
5. Speed learning by keeping a journal book. Note stimulus/situation, need(s) unmet, good reasons for doing it, then write how I could meet both needs.
6. Self-empathy is seeing truth of what needs were motivating our actions. It is not looking at world through rose-colored glasses. It is being honest so I can learn in ways that may help me find a different strategy next time to meet all needs.

Self-Empathy

Why bother?

- It reconnects us to our life's dreams/yearnings- our feelings and needs
- It provides learning as to how better meet our needs
- It connects us to our vision and energy from which we choose to live
- It allows us to connect with others

Process:

- Identify trigger
- Watch the jackal show (thoughts you tell yourself)- allow it to be w/o judgment
- Identify feelings
- Identify needs
- Mourn unmet needs (loss of dream, connection, caring, protection, valued, understanding, to be seen authentically) (articulate dream- I wished, I wanted, I yearned for. The more clearly the dream of what one aches for is stated, the more profound the connection)
- Empathize with the needs you were trying to meet-see the good reasons we did what we did (or didn't do)--forgiveness
- See beauty of the needs/connect with life energy of needs. Truly connect with the power of the "YES!" What am I saying "YES!" to?
- Requests/actions of self and others to realize dream

Hands on/personal journal work:

- Choose situation where you are triggered
- Go through each step of process above (leave space between jackal thoughts to go back and insert translation into feelings and needs)
- Share writing/talk through

Choosing reconnection because...

- Not willing to give up either person's needs, so I'm staying with the dance
- Belief in third way- a way where it is possible to meet both needs
- Mentality of abundance/creativity
- Connection with Soul Force/personal power
- Restoration of full humanity to both
- Appreciation of the power of dreams that sustain us from the inside. Reconnecting with the dreams we ache for.