

It's Never Too Late to Have a Happy Childhood

Written by Dr. Deborah Sandella | Tuesday, 07 September 2010 13:26



Remember when you started school for the first time and were scared to death. You were separated from your parents' love and protection and your uniqueness may have seemed more like being "different." Not long ago, a client of mine came in feeling she was different from everyone around her whether at work or in relationships. As we unraveled the thread back to the cause, she was shocked to discover her kindergarten experience was the soil upon which this belief had sprouted. She was one of those kids who just didn't want to rest during naptime; she couldn't understand how anyone would want to take time out from curious exploring to lay down and sleep. In her 5 year-old mind, she had unconsciously assumed that something must be wrong because she just wasn't like the other kids. During the following forty years of her life, she'd operated on this subconscious premise that she didn't fit in. As a result, she'd shied from relationships and become a workaholic with no time for naps. In fact she worked so hard, she began to have health issues.

As she and I worked with memories from her past, we employed her imagination to create a new and better emotional memory. Since emotional memory is stored in the amygdala and factual memory is stored in the hippocampus of the brain, we can re-generate new emotional memory without becoming amnesic. Rather, subconscious memory can be re-constructed to create a happier and more peaceful feeling in the body. For example, following my client's RIM® (Re-generating Images in the Mind) session, she felt different. The familiar feeling of "not being like other people" was absent and instead she felt a carefree lightness. The child-like joy that inspired her as a kindergartener was re-ignited and her eyes danced with excitement.

You, too, have the ability to transform unpleasant memories. Because the brain doesn't distinguish between real and imagined experience, you can intentionally re-do old experiences with a new ending. For example, a simple RIM® activity is to rewind and re-imagine a movie of a regrettable experience. Try it. Recently I got in touch with the memory of being two and conditioned not to touch the knick-knacks around our living room so they didn't break. With this childhood memory came a feeling of constriction and needing to hold back from reaching for what I want... An uncomfortable feeling I wished to breakthrough.

Taking a moment to breath deeply, I closed my eyes and relaxed into my body awareness... as I called up the essence of a screen in my heart, my imagination rewound this old movie back to the

perfect moment. Watching as my imagination directed, I witnessed a series of new spontaneously unfolding events. First thing I noticed was that although two, I was physically as big as my dad, and even better... I could do whatever I wanted... and I did... I spent several minutes reaching, touching and exploring every little thing that caught my eye and the freedom felt exuberant. With no breakage, my dad soon was laughing and joining me in this playful and unabashed exploration. What a liberating memory!

The subconscious is impermanent and impressionable. Memories are much like sandcastles. Although they have substance at the time, they can be re-sculpted, raked flat and washed away.

The next time, a regret flashes in your mind, take a moment to re-construct it. Your body will like how it feels... I promise!

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