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Relationships: Giving to Get

By Margaret Paul, Ph.D.

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Are you giving love to your partner for the joy of giving, or are you giving to get love?

I received the following email on this topic, asking for my help:

"Hi, my name is Adam. I am living with my parents and I'm thinking of moving out with my girlfriend Patty. But there are some things that make me feel upset, and I don't really know what to do. I love her but she doesn't seem to be the person she was. At times she feels bad and upset. These periods last for about 4 – 5 days. During these times she seems more distant and our sex life just stops. This makes me frustrated because for the past year I have been working so hard to try and make her feel better when she feels bad. I thought that it was working but now it seems nothing I do works. I miss the old times because she kissed me randomly all day and it made me feel so loved and wanted. She would hold me, and tell me great things. It was like a fantasy. Now, I'm lucky if she kisses me at least once in about 3 hours. I actually start all of the kissing. I start all of the holding. It feels like I have to start everything.

Mainly at times it feels like she just wants me as a friend. She doesn't make me feel loved or wanted. My feelings about this come and go mainly around the times when she feels bad. But these feelings also come around sometimes when she is not feeling bad.

I just don't have a clue what to do, and I need some help."

Adam is giving to get. He wants control over getting Patty to validate his worth and fill him up. He is fine as long as Patty is having sex with him and kissing him a lot and making him feel "loved and wanted." But, because Adam is not doing anything to make himself feel loved and wanted, he is addicted to Patty doing this. He is not giving his love to Patty from a full place inside, a place inside filled with love. Instead, he is empty inside and hopes that if he "works hard" and is nice to Patty, he can have control over getting her to fill his empty hole. As a result, Patty feels pulled on to take

responsibility for Adam's wellbeing, and becomes upset and distant in the face of the pull. She is getting turned off to Adam and just wants him as a friend because his neediness is not attractive to her. When sex is a way for Adam to get validated – rather than an expression of his love – Patty will feel used rather than loved. when they have sex.

Nothing will change in this relationship until Adam decides to learn how to take responsibility for his own good feelings rather than expect Patty to do it for him. Patty wants him to come to her as a powerful and secure man, not as a needy little boy needing her constant kisses to feel okay about himself.

Adam needs to take his eyes off how Patty is treating him and instead focus on how he is treating himself and Patty. He needs to open to learning about what he is telling himself and how he is treating himself that is causing his emptiness and neediness. He needs to stop being a victim of Patty's behavior and instead focus within on what he needs to do for himself, for the little boy within him that

wants love and attention. He would have love to share with Patty if he were to focus on giving himself love and attention and on making himself happy, instead of trying to make Patty happy in the hopes that she will make him happy. As it is, he is just trying to get love – giving to get.

Adam is coming from a very common false belief - that our best feelings come from being loved and desired. The truth is that our best feelings come from being loving to ourselves and to others. Adam won't know this until he decides to change his intention from trying to have control over getting love to learning about being loving.

Margaret Paul, Ph.D. is the best-selling author and co-author of eight books, including "Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By You?" and "Healing Your Aloneness." She is the co-creator of the powerful Inner Bonding healing process. Learn Inner Bonding now! Visit her web site for a FREE Inner Bonding course:

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Do Not Get Depressed When You Have Trouble In Your Relationships

By Stan Popovich

Do you get depressed when your relationships with the opposite sex give you a hard time? It can be very depressing to have to deal with relationships that are not going well. As a result, here are some ways to remain optimistic when your dating relationships don't go as well as expected.

Make the best of your situation whether you are alone or in a relationship. If you are happy in your

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current relationship then take of advantage of that. If you are alone, make the best with your situation. The key is to be happy whether you are alone or with someone else.

Do not be afraid of being alone. Some people get into a relationship to avoid being alone. This is not a good idea because you are forcing something that may just not work out in the long run. We will all have to spend some time alone in our lives. Don't let loneliness become an issue in your relationships.

Develop a network of friends and establish some hobbies. This will increase your chances of meeting people and will make you happy when you are by yourself. Join the local volleyball team or go to the gym. This is a lot better than staying home and being depressed over the disappointments of your last relationship.

Learn from your mistakes in your past relationships. It takes practice and a lot of effort to maintain a successful relationship. Try to learn what you did right and what you need to improve on. If you still have trouble, then talk to a professional who can give you additional advice.

It can be depressing when your current relationships do not work out. The key is to be happy with yourself and to learn from your past mistakes. Hopefully, things will work out in the long run.

Stan Popovich is the author of "A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear" an easy to read book that presents a overview of techniques that are effective in managing persistent fears and anxieties. For additional information go to:

<http://www.managingfear.com>



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