

## WAKING UP MARRIAGE

never comprehend.

I had found a forlorn hurt, my grandmother's ache. I began to realize an inheritance that 23andMe would never comprehend. Twenty-three years ago, when I first started meditation, those first pangs of sadness awoke. What was different was that I did not long for things in some past, or regret what had not occurred, as she did. My desires were pointed to the future. I yearned to create into some tomorrow but felt hindered by the weight of a past. I had found a world, only discovered by sitting quietly, that would be my source for everything that was meaningful and real. It set me off on this search and my research. Only by going into my SIB could I ever understand this rich, powerful sadness that was sent down to me.

The hearts of our parents act like cell towers, sending out their joys and desires. The mythology and beliefs of our parents and ancestors were written and sung in the bio-magnetic frequency of their hearts and bodies. Their dreams were and are the language and coding of their DNA sequences, which formed and powered their genes, in turn becoming the foundations of ours.

### **Passing Down the Impatience**

A man will naturally harbor anger and resentment towards his dad for all the years the man never was available, resenting all of his dad's surly, inattentive, and emotionally neglectful behavior. I have counseled many male clients who have this suburban family mythology. Maybe this man's dad drank, or traveled, or just did not know how to be a parent. This man's frustration for his dad will live quietly in the neuro-transmitting cells of his

stomach and mid-brain for years. In his twenties and thirties, this latent frustration never gets loosened. He has his career, buddies, sports, casual girlfriends, and long stupor-filled nights in front of the TV.

His emotional state is never disturbed enough by love, loss, vulnerability, or the exasperation of caring beyond self to stir up any deep-seated emotions. This boy-man is the classic emblem of the modern, business male warrior.

And then he gets married. The intensity begins. The whirl, proximity, and passion of his wife's love and desires, the arrival of children, the sleepless nights, the discourse with in-laws and his wife's spending habits all crack open his heart and mind. His rational mind, that could always escape with his buddies to a bar, or just go off and read or watch TV, is confronted with lives of others now in his purview of care.

The disquiet and anger formed by his unmet desire for his father's affection — which he had never addressed and unwound, feelings that have rested for years as a dull, nameless ache — are awakened. They emerge in different eddies of his marriage, sometimes as frustration when his wife is unavailable due to the basic household and parental demands. Or when the kids cry.

These reaction patterns in him, echoes of his father's neglect, arrive in all the basic flavors. Underneath most of them is a sadness and a longing, but they come out as the opposite, disparaging remarks to his wife or possibly sardonic criticism of his kids. This is why marriage is such a wonderful challenge. We do not know what we will find in ourselves as the marriage unfolds, until life shows up.

### Loss Becomes Hurt, Becomes Anger

Five years ago, I was counseling Laurie, a forty-one-year-old mother of two. She was riddled with an incessant frustration towards her husband and a deep anxiousness about losing money and their family's place in the community. Even though her family's current financial status was secure, she could not stop worrying.

Laurie said she was always criticizing, questioning, and demeaning others as well. These small bites of sarcasm, she said, would interrupt her conversations with friends and family. It was like a faint voice, an echo, pinching her ear, cutting at her thoughts and sense of self. She said she always felt unsure and less than all her friends, but instead of trying to be more accommodating to their views, she said she was always judging. What was more disturbing to her was that she started to notice her teenaged daughter doing the same thing with her high school friends.

This is a universal experience. When any person is not feeling whole and creative — and unable to fully open up to others, especially those we care about — we end up judging others. If a woman, in particular, does not feel full in her giving and receiving of love, if she holds back her need to give, then she cuts off this stream of creative generosity. When this flow is stunted in ourselves, then automatically and unconsciously we seek to cut it off in others. Whatever we do inside unconsciously to ourselves, we end up throwing out and up at others.

That is what Laurie was doing to her friends. So was her daughter, which was damaging her relationships with her girlfriends in high school. Her daughter was making

innocuous but snide comments about her friends. Friendly fire, she thought. But she would come home in tears because her closer friends were avoiding her, clipping her out of their chats and parties.

Laurie's husband walked on eggshells as well, careful not to set her off. As I asked her more about her background and childhood, she started to share stories about her mom being an intelligent yet sarcastic force in her life. It was never an easy conversation with her mother. Her mom always commented on everything, her choice of curtains, the kids' clothes, and even how she toasted the bread.

During one pivotal session, as I had her close her eyes, breathe deeply, and recount some of her earlier years, Laurie began sharing vignettes about her grandmother who had passed away ten years earlier. With a hypnotic-like tone to her voice, like she was talking from a dream, she said her grandmother had been a talented singer and painter way back in the Twenties. But during WWII her husband was sent off to Europe, leaving her with their four young kids.

That husband, Laurie's grandfather, came back a decorated veteran — but her grandmother never recovered from the fear, anxiety, dread, and sense of impending and imminent loss that consumed her during his absence.

During Laurie's childhood, she spent long hours at her grandparents' house. There was a sweetness, she said, to her grandmother. She appreciated and delighted in talking about the arts, her garden, the unique shades of each season, and the daily visits of the birds. But underneath and behind these endearing observations was a seething

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frustration and anger. No one, no politician, friend, family member or newscaster could escape her vitriol. She cut everything down, especially her husband. It was at times like the onslaught of German tanks all over again for her grandfather, facing the relentless, derisive commentary coming from his wife.

*“Nothing has a stronger influence psychologically on their environment and especially on their children than the un-lived life of the parent.”*

—Carl Jung

### **An Ancient Tale of the Unlived Life**

Can you see where all of this is going, as we expound on the SIB, absorbing emotions, and source moments? Think about the relative ease and comfort that Laurie’s grandmother experienced as a mother of four. She had a beautiful home and doting, successful husband. And then the war and life broke this for her. From that singular moment, her husband walking out the door, her fear and anxiety became unconscious anger and rage. Her ability to sense and recognize joy and possibility died during those war years, waiting for a serviceman to arrive with a flag at her door and news of her husband’s death.

That flag never came, nor did her belief, trust, or faith in abundance ever return, even though her husband and family were safe. That sadness and unreleased grip of loss and melancholy became the familiar center around which she circled, a vortex that then engendered an emotional disposition of unending sarcasm and gently meted rage. This vortex had stormed and been released into her

daughter, her granddaughter Laurie, and finally even Laurie's daughter. Four generations were being impacted.

Carl Jung tells us how deep and strong the current of our ancestors' lives is, the one we are born on and swim in, and how important it is to at least recognize the correlation between our parents' lives and our current issues and challenges. He states, "Nothing has a stronger influence psychologically on their environment and especially on their children than the un-lived life of the parent."

Dr. Jacques Benveniste says, "Life depends on signals exchanged among molecules." The science of frequency transference tells us we inherited much more than hair color, height and our grandfather's last name. Laurie inherited the current of her grandmother's temperament and disposition, and it is from these currents that the spirit of her emotional life began. This is where the work lies for her and her marriage.

## **Laurie Will Find a Cross**

Loss and recovery are the death/rebirth experience, the foundation of every religion and culture. The ability to walk our rational adult self back into old memories, to kill our self-conscious and analytical fear of these old, painful, tear-infused sensations is all Laurie's grandmother had to do. It is what all of us have to do.

The figure of person nailed to a cross, whether we want to believe it or not, is a symbol for the psychological and psycho-emotional exercise of Laurie's grandmother dying from an abject fear that she would be left alone with four young children when her husband was killed in war.