

AFFECTIVE BETRAYALS

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Once a love or friendship is over, we despise the person who we believe have abandoned us, and sometimes a wound is created which is so deep that it seems incurable forever. We can spend the rest of our life mulling over our misfortune for having met the wrong person, a despicable being to whom we have dedicated years of our life and who in return has disappointed us. We blame them for our suffering.

When falling in love we emphasize some of the beloved's characteristics according to our expectations, or we deny, we are unable to see and admit, the parts that are unpleasant to us. If we subsequently realize the existence of denied defects or that the qualities we attribute do not belong to the other, we are disappointed and blame them for not being what we thought they were, for having deceived us. The blind love of falling in love subsequently becomes absolute hatred for the person once loved, or even cynicism extended about every loving feeling.

We look for what we want in other people. I see what I need to see at that moment. The strengths and weaknesses that we believe are the others can be images created by ourselves and by our desires that we project on the loved one.

Our attachments to things or people can be caused by our deepest fears and can cause us to never leave the situation alone.

We are afraid of being alone, we fear the sense of emptiness that we would have to face without the help and sense of identity that the other gave us.

We use the partner to hide our insecurities, our inability to deal with life, and when they leave us, we cry not because they are gone, but because we are left alone. We love the other person because we need them.

We try to keep and control the people we are intimate

with by asking them for eternal loyalty. By controlling people, we seek a greater security, but in truth we suffocate them and push them away.

Betrayal is considered one of the worst sins a human being can be responsible for. In fact, those who betray us are our friends, lovers, parents, brothers, those we believe we can trust. But love is a relationship that cannot be separated from the full realization of ourselves. The philosopher and psychoanalyst Umberto Galimberti writes:

“To betray a lover, to betray a friend, to betray an idea, to betray a party, to betray even one's homeland means to free oneself from belonging and to create a space of identity not protected by any relationship of trust, and therefore in a certain sense more authentic. We are born in the trust that someone will nourish and love us, but we can grow and become ourselves only if we get out of this trust, if we do not remain prisoners, if to those who first loved us, one day we know how to say: ‘I am not like you want me to be’.

There is in every love, from that of parents, husbands, wives, friends, lovers, even that of the ideas we have espoused, a form of possession that stops our growth and forces our identity to be constituted only inside that enclosed space.

But in every loyalty that does not know betrayal and does not even assume the possibility of it, there is too much of childhood, too much naivety, too much fear of living on our own, alone. What they call ‘loyalty’ is the inability to leave protected shores, to go out at one's own risk to the unknown regions of life that are offered only to those who really know how to say ‘goodbye’ I”.

All the events that we consider negative have in themselves a possibility of emancipation. Even a “betrayal” allows us to escape from the torpor of the habit, from the fear of the new, from our insecurities that we hide behind the word “love”. The search for security can lead to self-denial. Life always and in any case evolves and change involves both us and the

people we love. And change is troublesome, it is easier to continue living in the false certainty of loyalty rather than redefining ourselves and our relationship.

If we want everything to be better or different for ourselves and for the people who are close to us, the subject we have to work on is ourselves. Loving and the “need to be loved” are two completely different things. The affective demand is not part of the adult world, but of that of childhood. Only a child, unable to look after himself, can legitimately demand to be loved and protected. And, the adult who has remained a “child” sometimes kills. The so-called crimes of passion, present in the Italian chronicles, are a tragic example of this. Often it is the man who kills his partner, the “mother” who abandoned him.

This type of relationship is just selfish, whose purpose is to be loved, not to love. If we free ourselves from any emotional dependence on others, if we are able to provide for ourselves and define our identity without this being a gift from the other, we improve our ability to give love rather than just to receive it. And in this way, love manifests itself in its fullness because it is no longer a need.

The idea of romantic love is to find only one person to love and to keep firmly tied to oneself and the thought of that love determines a closure towards all others. In reality this is not love, but attachment, possession of the body and the feelings of the other. Love is not even a sacrifice and renunciation of oneself in favor of the loved one. The act of loving is an internal quality of every human being that can be directed towards everyone and also be focused in particular on a person with the aim of happiness, development and freedom of the latter. While maintaining my sense of integrity and independence, by loving, I am the other, the stranger; I love everything that exists and not just a single person, my family, my homeland, excluding everything else.

We can authentically love our neighbor to the extent that we are able to love ourselves as well. When we are sufficiently self-actualized, we become able to experience relationships with others in a meaningful

way as well. Apparent forms of altruism sometimes hide our weaknesses so it must always be clear to us what the real motives of our behavior are.

Developing an “adult” personality involves the effort to grow, feed one’s self-esteem by going through the adversities of life by learning to dominate the environment in which we live. It also means to become independent emotionally, no longer looking in the partner for someone from whom to demand exclusive and absolute dedication, learning to be comfortable with others without feeling the terror of loneliness.

“Falling in love” can also occur through joining political, social and religious groups. We look for ourselves in other people, objects or situations, we attribute positive feelings to an ideal or faith and to people who have a leading role within that movement. Love can turn into hatred and disappointment if, subsequently, we feel betrayed by those we had previously strongly idealized. The person who was previously mythologized turns into a negative character.

We must accept that the feeling that was once true may no longer be true in the present. If you truly love, you let go, love is not possession. People don’t belong to others. Being abandoned by a partner or a loved person can lead to a decline in self-esteem, but the rejection we receive does not affect the entirety of our person. It is the single opinion given by another human being at a precise moment of our existence. If we know who we are, we will not need anyone’s support to define our identity and we will not feel devalued if we experience betrayal or detachment.

What we do together must be a free act of will. The freedom to change, to grow, to make other choices must be respected. Love is full recognition of oneself and of the other. Only when attachment and the need for the other ends, does Love begin.