Love Independence Day: Declare Emotional Freedom and Break the Chains of a Bad Relationship

July 1, 2015 By Alexander Avila

With July 4th approaching, it's time that we celebrate a different kind of independence--freedom from unfulfilling, incompatible, and emotionally unhealthy relationships. You may be caught in an unhealthy or unproductive relationship--but you don't know how to get out. For a while, your mind keeps you in the relationship by focusing on the pleasurable parts of being with that person (although there may be few bright spots), but then the negative and painful parts of the relationship hit you on the brain, and you want to get out. How can you free yourself a bad relationship? Here are 3 tips for Love Independence.

1. DON'T MISTAKE ADDICTION FOR LOVE: Psychologists have researched the brain chemistry of sex and love, and have found that certain brain chemicals are released when you first fall in love--these chemicals give you a "high" (euphoric) feeling like being on cocaine. But, the chemicals wear off over time--then you are back to square one. Like any drug, you build up tolerance, and then have withdrawal symptoms (you feel bad when you're not around your drug, "that person"). For some people, the constant breakup and makeup phases in a relationship are ways to get their "fix" of that love brain chemical. But, that is not true love. Love is not just excitement, thrills, and pleasure. Healthy love includes the qualities of trust, respect, and commitment. These elements provides far more pleasure to you in the long run of a relationship than the physical chemistry or attraction that wears off after a relationship has progressed.

2. MEDITATE ON YOUR LOVE FUTURE: Here is a simple exercise to help you look into the future of your relationship. Sit in a comfortable place, close your eyes, and take a deep breath--in and out. Now, visualize your Love Future: See what it will be like to be with your partner, 5 years from today--see what you will look like, what you will be doing, who is around you, and what you are feeling. Then, do the same mental projection into the future for 10, 20, and 30 years. Pay particular attention to your feelings during each time period--are you happy, sad, joyful, contented, frustrated, resentful, relaxed, or loving? Then, write down what you saw and felt in a journal. You may discover some interesting insights. Perhaps, you see that you worked out your differences with your love partner in the future, and you enjoyed a happy long-term relationship. Or, you may see that you have a dead-end with the person--the relationship will go nowhere--and you will be living a life of inauthenticity, sadness, and pain. If the latter is the case, then you know your answer--you need to leave the relationship, and save yourself years of heartache and trouble.

See your future, and act on it now.

3. PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION: When you are torn between leaving or staying in a relationship, your friends and family members will often give you well-intentioned advice. Some will support you unconditionally (“Whatever you decide is best”), while others will chastise you for staying (“Don’t be a fool; leave”). Now is the time to take a momentary break from the advice of others, and practice self-compassion--love and embrace yourself, no matter what--regardless of your weaknesses and soft spot for a particular individual whom you know, deep down, is no good for you. Realize that you are still a good person, even though you are staying (for now) with a person who is not emotionally healthy for you. You may be staying because you are still attracted to them--there is still something about that incompatible partner that you crave, even though you know that they are all wrong for you. If that is the case, be compassionate to yourself. Recognize that your “weakness” for that person is perfectly natural; as a human being, you may have a strong irrational desire for a particular person. At the same time, decide that you will embrace and love yourself no matter what decision you make in the relationship--to stay or go. You will be guided by your inner sense of rightness, and not by the opinions of others. You will love yourself, no matter what you decide to do.

Follow the 3 tips of Love Independence today, and break the chains of an unhealthy and incompatible relationship. If you decide that you need to move on, now is the right time for you to do it. Declare your emotional freedom today.

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