

## Dealing With Unresolved Emotions

Do you ever get the feeling that something in your life is missing? That you're not reaching your fullest potential? Are you plagued by unresolved issues from your past? One of the biggest mistakes we make in life is closing ourselves up emotionally. We attempt to deny that the emotional pain is inside. We run from it as hard as we can. However, as much as we try to hide from these feelings, they still follow us everywhere we go. Hence, the term "emotional baggage."

Were you taught to be strong, to always keep going regardless of the pain? Do you listen to the well-intended advice to "get over it"? Pushing your feelings to the side or covering them up is a good short-term solution, or so it falsely appears. The problem arises when we continue to push these feelings down day after day, week after week and year after year. Whenever you avoid dealing with your emotions, they eventually will pile up to a point that the feelings will overwhelm you. Holding onto resentments, grief, guilt, shame and will set you up to have problems with depression, anxiety and physical symptoms such as headaches, high blood pressure, and stomach problems.

No one is immune to their feelings. By avoiding our feelings, we begin to distort how we see ourselves; how we view relationships and how we see the world we live in. It's OK to be strong, but the complete statement needs to be "I can be strong and still have my needs and my feelings."

It is not a sign of weakness to acknowledge your feelings. There are both appropriate and inappropriate ways to share your feelings. When you are having tough times in life, there are often people around you who can provide the comfort and support you need. You must learn to seek them out. Do not set yourself up as an island fortress. Seek out friends, family members, church leaders, and your human resource department at work or local therapists through either the public or private practices.

You have a responsibility to yourself and those you care about to take care of yourself. This includes your emotional well being. You are bigger than your feelings regardless as to how intense they may seem. Your secrets make you sick. Seek freedom from your pain. Allow yourself to process your feelings. You'll be glad you did. The truth will set you free. Remember, we are all in this together.

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