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Two Faces of Addiction in a Relationship

Nicholas Pollak / July 20, 2009 /

[OP-ED \(http://www.thefrontpageonline.com/category/op-ed\)](http://www.thefrontpageonline.com/category/op-ed)



[img]560|left|Nicholas Pollak||no_popup[/img]Unconditional love may well be the core of most people's relationships.

This is where we completely accept all of our partner's quirks and foibles, and, still love him or her no matter how the person behaves.

A separation has to occur to allow unconditional love to take place, and that separation is that the person you love may do things of which you disapprove but that doesn't change your love for the person.

I'm sure Ted Bundy's mother abhorred what he did, but I am equally sure she still loved him.

As individuals, we do not have the power to change others if they do not want to be changed, but we are to accept them as they are and make no attempt to change them.

You may lead a horse to water, but if it doesn't want to drink, the only way you can make that happen is to hang all your weight around the horse's neck and drag his mouth into the water.

The horse still has to suck the water up. If he doesn't want to, he won't.

Twelve Step programs also say that "letting go and letting God" relieves you of the burdens of making decisions for your partner.

Surrendering the Steering Wheel

Thus, you relinquish the perceived control that you thought you had over your partner. The reality was that you had no control anyway. You just thought you did.

Remember how you used to throw those addictive substances away when you found where they were hidden?

Did that help?

Of course not. Your partner simply went out and bought more. You find them again and throw them out again, wasting the product and doubling your cost because if you had not thrown the substances away in the first place, chances are your partner would not have had to replace them.

It was your annoyance at what your partner was doing and your anger at him or her that caused you to act the way you did.

All that accomplished was more anger and hurt. Anger from the partner because you are trying to control the person and hurt from you because you cannot understand why your partner won't stop doing something that you know is killing him and destroying your relationship.

Two of Addictio...
Often, those that go into rehab make their attempts to quit their addiction, and while in the facility they do not use.

The disease of addiction is shrewd because it knows that while in rehab the addict cannot use, but once out, the addict can continue on as if rehab never occurred. So it just waits patiently.

In the end, the addict knows the only answer is, "Just say no," Nancy Regan's simplistic and much criticized "cure" for the addict.

Any addict will tell you that in the end she was right because using or not using is a moment-to-moment choice. Just saying no is the answer. Hard as it may be, that is the only answer.

Any addict who has a long period of sobriety will confirm that Nancy's logic is absolutely true.

Addicts and their partners agree you can only do for yourself, in spite of your good intentions.

Overcoming Separate Addictions

Each person must make his or her own choice. You still can love your partner, in spite of the person's addictions, if you acknowledge it is the addictive behavior you dislike and not the person. Once you understand this, unconditional love is present. Remember though, you want to be strong in living your life as an individual but still caring for your partner.

For those who cannot remain in a marriage with an addict and cannot give unconditional love, it is often best to separate from the marriage and learn to deal with themselves, to examine their contribution to the addict's behavior and to understand their own behaviors.

Generally the addict's spouse wants to control and the addict does not want to be controlled. So they are left with a simple choice, change themselves either within the relationship or change themselves after having left the relationship.

once cocaine. It was not until she pulled out a shotgun to shoot her husband during one of their frequent fights over his drug abuse and other issues that she realized she was more out of control than the addict.

(She did pull both triggers. Thankfully the shotgun was not loaded)

As it turned out, the husband was able to kick the cocaine habit. She went to Al Anon and learned that all her controlling was of no use, but unconditional love was her saving grace.

The unconditional love that they in fact still had for each other, allowed them to make good life choices and repair their fractured marriage. They remain in a marriage of over 20 years and never have never been happier.

They came to understand that they did love each other, that their behaviors were the problem.

Once each toned down his or her extreme behavior and once the addict quit his habit, their unconditional love created a rock-solid marriage.

They understand that each one has goals and life experiences and that they can learn from each other's points of view.

Their criticism of each other has stopped and their willingness to listen to what each has to say has created a mutual respect and caring that was not resent before.

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