

The Past Trap

I've been divorced 16 years from a man I truly loved. When my hormones changed and our sex life shut down, he took it personally. One evening I asked, "Are you happy?" When he said no, I blurted out, "Well, I think we should go our separate ways." That was the end! I've regretted ever since not asking what we could do to make it better. He moved in with a gal he'd been sneaking around with. I was stunned he would cheat on me. Last year I met a man at a senior center. I'm 78, he's 92. I'd love to experience chemistry and consider joining a dating site but keep stalling because of what happened in my marriage. I need to face my fears and get back into dating. Help!

There is no denying the dissolution of your marriage was painful. Regret and betrayal can be especially prickly elements of loss to disentangle from. Your past, as for all of us, contains a mix of love, joy, loss and heartache. It is important to realize that every experience has the power to support you in living your life fully *now*. But first you must choose to stop protecting yourself from the past, thereby undermining your happiness in the present and future.

The habit of focusing primarily on prior hardships keeps you trapped. I value what my friend Tama Kieves says about this: "Negativity denies your chances by convincing you to deny yourself of chances. Don't do it. Don't believe the lie."

Let's get real. You are 78. You've already survived loss and hurt. You deserve to relish in the delights of being human. Continuing to rob yourself of fulfillment would be the greatest loss of all. Let the good memories, as well as the wisdom gleaned from pain, grant you the freedom that propels you forward.

Take to heart these final words from Kieves, with which I wholeheartedly agree: "You are meant for good. You are meant to thrive. You have love inside you, always. Love can always create new life." I say, let it. Namaste. ☸



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