

Reflections: Always About Us

My boyfriend has been shut down toward me lately. He says he's tired of my bad moods and depression. But I don't feel depressed and think he's just projecting on me because he hates his job and complains about it all the time. When I try to get him to talk about his feelings, he gets mad or leaves. How do I know if I should keep trying or just break up?

The blame game gets you nowhere. There is a higher road available in every relationship. It can initially be a rockier, more challenging path, but it is worth it. And it starts with being accountable.

Regarding our reactions toward other people, a brilliant spiritual teacher of mine said, "It is never, ever about the other person." When I first heard this, I almost laughed out loud at how ridiculous it seemed. Of course we are affected by the actions of others. But I've learned there is great freedom in realizing my emotional reaction is purely my responsibility.

A common pattern in relationships is to unconsciously lug our unhealed baggage around, then dump the contents on others, believing they're the cause or it's their responsibility to fix us. Consider your boyfriend's faulty behavior. Instead of deprecating him or being defensive, step back and ask yourself if you ever complain or withdraw. He is your mirror, like it or not.

To gain the clarity you seek to stay or go requires you clean up your own consciousness. Do not wait for him — or anyone else — to forgive or change before you do. Initiate your own healing and freedom. As your sabotaging beliefs and behaviors are revealed and begin to heal, they'll offer the gift of compassion, and the judgment and criticism you've both felt will be transmuted.

Taking responsibility for your own well-being, while serving as a safe space for others to do the same, is the greatest gift of true love you can give. The world needs more of this kind of love, and I believe the one reading this is just the one to give it. ☘



STEF SWINK, RScP, has been a practitioner since 1999. As protégé and assistant to Louise Hay, she was a frequent ghostwriter for the "Dear Louise" column. Through speaking, spiritual counseling and workshops, she inspires others to create fulfilling lives they love. Connect with her online at StefSwink.com/Ask-Stef-Submission.