

Being Whole

by Nicholas de Castella

Emotional healing is about becoming whole. We have lost touch with the experience of wholeness through the suppression of incomplete emotional experiences. Our emotions are a great source of personal power and energy, they provide us with a wisdom that assists us in knowing what we want, and what is right for us.

The sad fact is that we live in a culture that shames the expression of emotion and teaches denial, invalidation and suppression.

In shutting down we begin to fragment our being.

We lose touch with our sense of who we are, our essence. We become stiff, rigid and 'frozen' in our physical body, ways of thinking and expressing our selves. We lose our sense of aliveness, creativity, spontaneity and freedom. As we shut down on one emotion, say anger, we lose our capacity to feel all of them - including joy, peace and love.

There are many reasons for the suppression of emotions: Sometimes the intensity experienced has been too much for us to integrate at the time, for example a child in birth can be overwhelmed by the intensity of fear, sadness or anger. In this case the brain sets up 'gates' which limit the intensity of feeling possible at the time.

We have been trained to suppress emotion. We are told that children should be 'seen and not heard', 'not to answer back', 'to do what we are told' and to 'be polite'. In our culture we uphold the false image that being strong means not being emotional; not crying at funerals, not getting angry...

Shame is another reason for not expressing emotions. We may have been told that we were 'being emotional', 'too sensitive' or laughed at when we were angry, scared or sad. Often boys are called wimps, weaklings, or babies if they cry, and chickens or scaredy cats if they are afraid and girls are called bitches, nasty or catty if they express their anger.

The suppression of emotions was often necessary to avoid experiencing more pain. This is true for most children being reprimanded. If they express their anger about being hurt they would most likely be punished more severely.

We may be blocked to natural feeling responses by beliefs or philosophies that we carry about ourselves or life. For instance; a person who is being abused may not feel angry about the abuse because they subconsciously believe that they deserve that kind of treatment: it fits with their self image created in their abusive childhood. Somebody else may not feel angry when they are being abused because they were taught to 'turn the other cheek', 'to be bigger than that', or 'to rise

above it'.

It was often sensible for us to suppress ourselves as children, but the problem for many adults is that we can not access our emotions when we want to. For example; when we want to share our feelings with a loved one; when we are trying to discover our passion in life; when we need to call on our anger if some one is threatening to abuse us; when we need to let go of the loss of a lover and cannot connect to the grief; when we go for a job interview and we need to express enthusiasm etc.

The suppression of emotions does not mean the freedom from them. As we suppress the expression of emotional energy it builds up in our body. Our energy becomes knotted and tight. In place of fully felt emotions we often experience states of frustration, confusion, hopelessness, anxiety, nervousness, 'stuckness' or blankness. I believe that many illness' physical, mental, and emotional are related to the breaking out of emotional energies that have built up in our bodies. Our addictions (eating, drinking, smoking, over working, co-dependent relationships etc.) are unconscious attempts to either hold down the unexpressed energies, or to fill the emptiness caused by our loss of sense of self (through the suppression of our emotional energy).

The healing is in the feeling. Fear, sadness and anger are innate to human experience. To be whole we need to embrace these 'darker' aspects of life. Healing then involves reclaiming and releasing the emotions that we have suppressed. As the emotional energy from these experiences is released we automatically strengthen our confidence in who we are and feel more vividly the oneness and wealth of love and energy that is naturally us.

As we release the backlog of suppressed emotions we free up the energy used to hold emotions in suppression. We gain energy in our everyday lives. Experiences of aliveness, freedom and lightness are common for those who are exploring the healing power of emotional expression.

Passionately Alive seminars are designed to create safe, non judgmental, supportive and honouring spaces: to gain greater understandings of our emotions: to connect with our feelings: to open up our passion: to complete our incomplete experiences: to connect with our full energy and our sense of who we are and to teach us how to bring our full being into rich, intimate, satisfying and mutually honouring relationships.

During the seminar participants learn skills to implement in their everyday lives that lead to increased experiences of heart opening and enjoyment of life.