

Why We Chose The Person We Love

 by: Terri Arnold, MS (Spicy Grandma) "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it." -- George Santayana "Why do I always wind up with the wrong person? I want someone who is kind, loving, reliable and open. Yet my relationships are always with men who are angry, hostile, emotionally unavailable and cannot keep a job." "I want a woman who is emotionally stable and independent, but I always wind up with women who are overly dramatic, tend to hysteria and depend on me to make their decisions." These are common problems brought to me by clients. They blame bad luck, coincidence or accident for winding up with the exact opposite of the type of person they say they prefer in a relationship. One very attractive female marketing manager in her mid thirties agonized - "If I went to a party and there were fifty men in the room - and 49 were college graduates who were business or professional men - and the 50th was a high-school dropout with a felony police record - number 50 and I would somehow find each other." We make our relationship choices based on life experiences accumulated from childhood. We subconsciously integrate these experiences and react from them to current situations. Children's psyches are like unwritten slates. The messages we receive from our parents are stored upon them as if etched in stone. We internalize these messages and accept them without question as we mature because in the child's mind, mommy and daddy - who are our ultimate authority figures - said it is so! When a little girl has a father who is physically present but emotionally absent and does not provide her with the love and nurturing she needs, she will grow up with a big empty space in her heart where that love should have been. The message - although unspoken - tells her that she is not important and not deserving of love. This little girl will subconsciously seek a man with her father's rejecting characteristics - so she can relive her initial relationship - and this time she will win. When a little boy grows up with a weak and dependent mother who increasingly leans on him in his father's absence, he is put in an adult situation inappropriate to his years. Although in manhood he states he resents female dependency, he is used to taking the role of rescuer and naturally will gravitate to women with emotional broken wings that need fixing. In our adult relationships, we seek to create situations in which we are comfortable - regardless of their dysfunctionality. If you grew up in a chaotic home, you will subconsciously tend to chaotic relationships. Our home environment, how we were raised, is what we consider normal. Our adult relationships follow a pattern. A simple exercise will reveal that pattern to you. Write the names of all of the people with whom you have had a significant relationship. Under each name, list all the negative characteristics you can remember - for instance: bad temper, continually late for dates, poor money manager, etc. After you have completed your list, review the character traits that are shared by your dating partners. Circle or yellow high-lite these recurring traits and you will see the emergence of a pattern. While discussing the concept of this article with a friend, she was motivated to make the list and was uncomfortable with the fact that these traits stood out among her three past serious relationships: aggressive personality, alcoholism, and emotional unavailability. I helped my friend work thru her feelings about this new realization as I did with my clients. Awareness of the pattern is the first step to changing it. Talking about it with a therapist or trusted friend is the next important step because you are then exposing this destructive pattern to the light and can carry this awareness with you when you begin your next relationship. Be assured - patterns are not etched in stone. They can be changed with awareness and work.

About the Author

Terri Arnold, MS (Spicy Grandma) has been a Psychotherapist for over twenty years. She invites you to visit her friendly, interactive and informative 50+ dating community at <http://www.spicy-senior-singles.com>.
spicysingles@aol.com

Source: <http://www.serverforever.com>