

MEMORIES AND EMOTIONS

(*"I remember when..."*)



In this exercise you will be identifying specific memories that are contained within the course of your relationship. If your relationship is like a painting, you have completed a sketch, some of the broad strokes, and are now ready to fill in color and details. The purpose here is to fill in some of the details of specific situations that are somehow significant or troublesome for you. In the RELATIONSHIP PATH exercise you looked at major times in sequential order. In this exercise you will allow the free play of your awareness to recall *specific* events that occurred within these times. You need not recall these memories in any particular order or sequence. Some memories may be positive and some negative. You will be using the results of the previous exercise and as you reflect on the milestones you have listed up to this present time, simply list these memories and emotions as they come to you in your awareness.

For the memories that have an emotional charge to them simply allow these emotions to surface. You are in a process of uncovering experiences you may have tried to repress from your awareness as your particular way of dealing with them. You don't need to analyze them, judge them, explain them or excuse them. All you need to do is to *see* them. You are opening up now an opportunity to face these times once again so that you can truly put them in a new perspective.

Again, when you list these memories, you don't need to go into much detail. Sometimes just a sentence or two can be enough to describe the memory but see if you can get in touch with the feeling or emotion that you felt *at the time* and write those down as well. As you write down your experiences, you may also activate *new* feelings that you feel *now* as you reflect back. Go ahead and include these feelings in your writing. Don't get stuck on any one memory and do not judge any particular memory as "significant" or "insignificant", "good" or "bad". The fact that you recall it, however minor it may appear to you, go ahead and write it down. Once you've listed it, described it and acknowledged the emotion associated with it, move on to the next one. If there is more to write about in any of these memories, you can go always go back to this list at a later time and write out your experience in more depth. Leave some space between each memory that you choose as you will come back to these entries in the next exercise.

The point here is to make a list of as many memories as you spontaneously recall. Some of the examples below are illustrative of this approach.

Take a moment now and close your eyes and reflect on the course of your relationship... Observe the sequence of events that have occurred... Allow memories to flow before your mind's eye, kind of like viewing a parade of images... And when you feel ready, allow your eyes to open and begin listing the memories that spontaneously arise along with the emotions.