

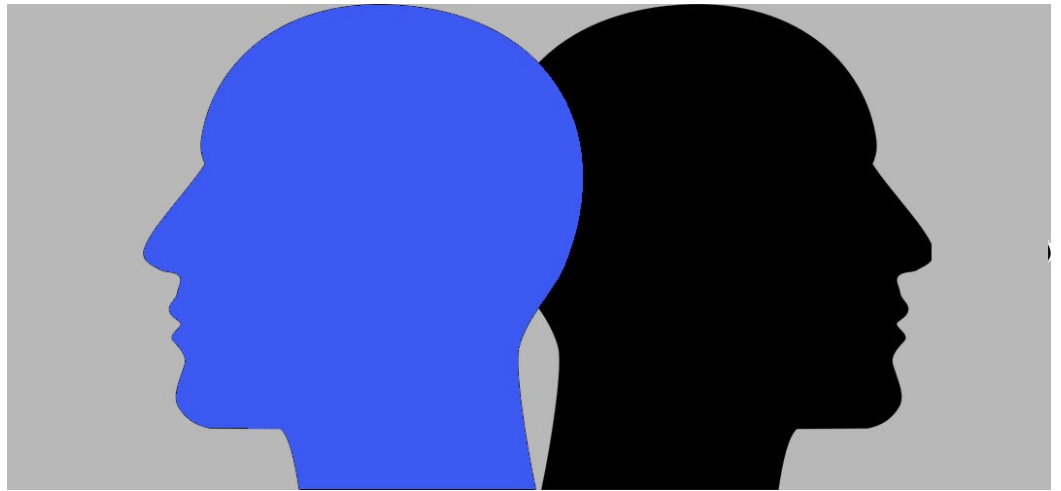
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JOEL BRASS AND ASSOCIATES LTD.

The Growing Edge

“To share your weakness is to make yourself vulnerable; to make yourself vulnerable is to show your strength.” – Crissi Jami



Vulnerability: Our Greatest Need And Our Greatest Fear

“Your life is a journey into vulnerability. You do not trust that journey. The consequences of this are terrifying.”

- Gary Zukav, The Heart of the Soul

The “symptoms” are always the same. My heart starts to beat very fast. My mouth dries up. Often my body shakes with an involuntary tremor. I usually have the thought “This matter isn’t very important. Why don’t I just let it pass?” At the very last instant, I forget what it is that I want to say. But then, as if carried by a friendly, protective wave, I notice that I am very soon “on the other shore.” I have said what I wanted to say. I have told the truth. I have been awkward, embarrassed and vulnerable, but at least I remain in communication and in relationship with another human being.

I hate being vulnerable. I hate losing my composure, my security, my command of the situation. I don’t like opening myself to another person’s acceptance or rejection of my deeper inner self. I don’t like hearing from my inner voices of judgement calling me weak, foolish, unmanly or weird when I do open up, when I do choose to be vulnerable.

Yet I know that if I want close relationships in my lifetime, it requires that I be known to other human beings. If I want to experience intimacy, it requires that I be willing to be vulnerable. Over and over and over again. No vulnerability – no experience of intimacy. It’s that simple.

Simple, perhaps. But, for most of us, not easy.

I have spent over three decades as an individual and relationship therapist, and it is my professional experience that the conscious choice to be vulnerable is one of the most difficult things for any human being to do. We are extremely conflicted about it. On the one hand, I have yet to meet a couple who do not long to feel understood, accepted and supported by each other, to feel special and celebrated over by their partner.

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When, early on in our work, I ask both of them if they have any objections to being loved by their partner with all of his or her mind, heart, body and soul, few have indignantly replied: “No! I couldn’t stand to be loved that way!” Wanting to be loved and loving is, seemingly, an apple pie and motherhood type of issue.

However, as we begin to examine the issues, the grievances and the feelings which are currently blocking one heart from the other, it becomes gradually apparent to our two eager and apparently willing lovers that love requires vulnerability, and great love requires great vulnerability. What happens then? As my grandmother would sometimes say to me as a child: “Oy, such a fuss! Such a fuss!”

Why? What makes it so hard to be vulnerable, and, in the case of our couple, vulnerable and responsible in their communication with each other? Consciously choosing to be vulnerable takes us back in time to our original and natural state – our child consciousness. As that undefended and open child, we loved, I assert, with our hearts wide open. Some returned that same kind of love to us. Others, for reasons too many to mention here (and sometimes, there were no reasons at all), couldn’t love us or refused to love us. As I have come to see in both myself and my clients over the years: *we are shaped, in almost equal measure, by those who loved us and those who couldn’t love us.*

In response to the love which we have received, we carry love, confidence and optimism. In response to the lack of love we have received, we carry fear, a fear so large it passes understanding. We carry pain, a deep, often buried reservoir of emotional pain which has been contained over time but hardly drained, or even made shallow. Lastly, and perhaps most impactfully, we carry an aggressive / defensive ego consciousness which encloses our child consciousness. The ego has become skilled, in a hundred temporarily effective ways, of covering up that fear and pain – deflecting it, numbing it and, perhaps our favorite avoidance technique – projecting it onto others and blaming them for it (most especially that partner by whom we want to be loved silly!)

On levels both known and unknown to our keen and apparently motivated couple, all of this surfaces when each is invited to become completely vulnerable with the other. I can count, on more fingers and toes than I possess, couples who started off with an “I’m willing to do almost anything” attitude only to shift to a “Just not that!” position, when the real work, the work of love began. A soft smile comes over my lips and my heart warms though, when I think of the many couples who took up the challenge and let themselves surrender into their mutual and total vulnerability.

That vulnerability carried them too, like a friendly, protective wave onto a new shore.

**For the First Time In Close To Two Years, Come Join Me in the Resurrection
of my Weekend Workshops.**

Relationships: The Work of Love Working Through Our Fears in Matters of Love

This weekend seminar shows us:

- Our fear based, survival orientated patterns of behavior in relationships.
- How and why we sabotage our love relationships.
- How to have more loving relationships in our lives.

The very same ego consciousness that helped us to survive the emotional pain of our childhood and adolescence comes back to haunt and sabotage us in our most significant relationships in the present. If the experience of loving and being loved is associated in the unconscious mind with the experience of trauma, violation, conflict or abandonment, nothing will be scarier than "love" approaching. The ego consciousness will mobilize to protect the inner family from perceived *enemies* like trust, closeness, commitment, vulnerability and honesty, not to mention men or women. The extent to which the adult consciousness has become identified with the ego in this lifetime is the extent to which love in all intimate, committed, monogamous, long-term, primary relationships will become problematic, dysfunctional and even destructive.

In the weekend seminar Relationships: The Work of Love we examine ourselves as the perpetrators of pain. We examine the myriad flight and fight responses that we have employed to keep from our hearts and souls the very people we say we want to love, the very people who have committed the "crime" of loving us. This most certainly could include our love interest but we will also examine our relationship with our father, mother, sister, brother, son, daughter and past loves to discover the ego patterns that have run us and our relationships into the ground. We begin to move from being baffled, righteous, or victimized by our love lives to taking 100% responsibility for the state that our most significant relationships are in. All of our dynamics and imposed barriers to real intimacy, committed love and monogamy are faced.

Only then can we discover and examine the components of a healthy, loving and mutually beneficial relationship. Only then can we discover that with courage, vulnerability, honesty and humility, we can begin to experiment with laying down our survival-oriented, fear based ego patterns and return to our connection with the child and spiritual consciousness within as an entirely new base from which to interact with the people of our lives.

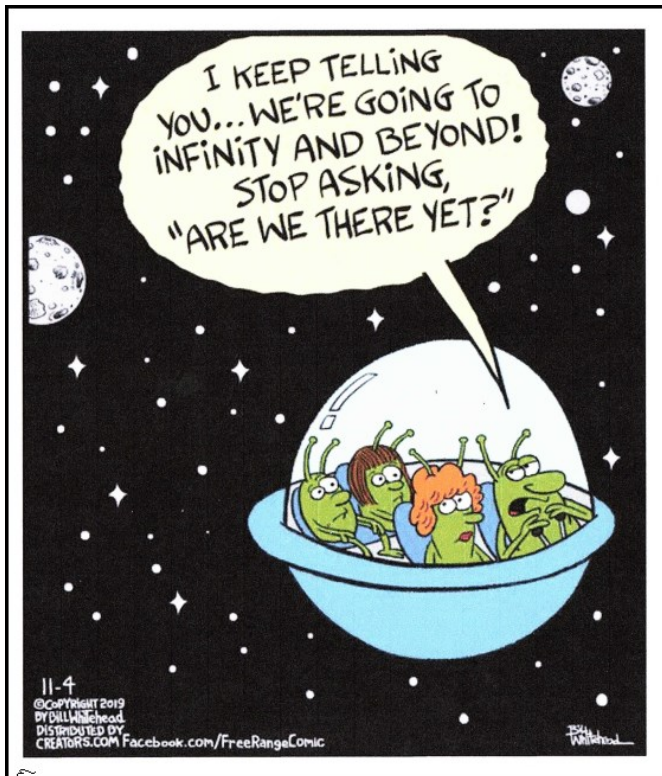
**Cost - \$275.00 + GST per person (deferred payment plan available)
bursaries available to those in financial need**

When: Saturday, March 26th, 2022 & Sunday, March 27th, 2022

**www.joelbrass.com
info@joelbrass.com**

**If you have further questions or would like to register contact:
Jason (seminar coordinator) at (236) 330-4703 /
seminarsjoelbrass@gmail.com or
Joel at (604) 535-4220 or (604) 732-9091**

For Private Individual or Relationship Therapy, contact Joel at (604) 535-4220 or (604) 732-9091. All Sessions Are Being Conducted Remotely.



When it's 3am and you're still awake, reflecting on your own existence:

