

So What?

“Was I,” the man questioned, “focusing on the negative? Or was I telling my story?”

The man stopped to review what he remembered.

“My youth wasn’t good. That’s a fact. I lived every single minute of it, so I know firsthand. I didn’t get many things that, apparently, the majority of people did get. I did get many things that, once again, the majority of people didn’t get.”

The man was trying to figure out how to say what he wanted. “I got some of what the majority of people got, and the majority of people got some of what I got. I say some of what I got and mean a little, a small amount; perhaps just enough to know what abuse feels like.”

“I asked people to connect these dots: if I wasn’t getting what you were learning, what was I learning?”

The man had been going over this for as long as he could remember. Dissecting and separating experiences as he tried to find the common thread or threads. Then, one day, he stumbled upon emotions, which led him to discover instinctive emotions versus learned emotions.

Learning about himself was fraught with anger, frustration, loss, and fear. He threw books at the walls in pure frustration. When the man was fourteen, and his Spanish teacher put his arm around his shoulders in a show of friendship, he shook the arm away and angrily marched out of the class, slamming the door. He was given a week of detention, and his grade went from a B to a D.

“I remember,” he thought, “that no one connected any dots. No one asked me why I did what I did, nor did I offer any explanation.”

The man told some people later in his life about the abuses he had experienced, only to have them use what he said to them against him. So he stopped telling people. The simplicity of living alone began to calm him, and confrontations mostly ceased. He dated busy women who wanted

physical relationships and then wanted to get on with their lives. All was good until the relationship evolved past just being physical. Then he was lost.

“But,” the man shouted to himself, “there’s so much more than this stupid emotion called love! I have a lot of good in me, a lot of happiness, and lots of positive and creative experiences. Love gets turned off, dies sometimes, and controls hours, days, and even lifetimes.”

“My dilemma,” he thought, “is that I want people around, but at the same time, I get annoyed by people being around. Is that where this emotion called love comes into play? Is that the key that could unlock my dilemma?”

He laughed aloud. “I don’t live a stark life. In contrast to many that I meet, my life is abundant. My curiosity and desire have brought me profound happiness, and planted the seeds for my deepest sense of belonging on this planet and living my life as best I can.”

He sighed, with the pre-feeling that what he was about to say might be significant: “By worrying about not possessing this emotion called love, instead of nurturing all I do have, it seems to me that I’m doing what others want rather than what I want. And that’s why, and when, I throw my hands up in frustration and quit; I drop out again of trying to be what others want me to be.”

“Nurturing curiosity and desire is not a competition; rather, they are my motivators to live a happier, healthier, and more productive life. Meanness sucks life from rooms and conversations, while positivity seems to raise vibrancy and creativity.”

“I know I’m happy when I’m alone, with a select few people, or animals. And the experiences that make me happy, I repeat. That’s what I know.”

The End.

Written by Peter Skeels © 4-25-2025