



Affective Center for Therapy

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You're OK, I'm OK?

I'm OK, you're OK? Well, you're probably OK, but I am not sure about me sometimes. My client had just got through telling me that she comes on much too aggressive and harsh with her husband and children. "We made an agreement that when I do this, he is NOT to withdraw but to say to me, 'You're being harsh.' Yesterday, he had to tell me eight times! He was so right! I felt embarrassed."

Now, here it is twenty minutes later, in the same session and she is telling me, "I'm OK, you're OK." She had read the book and now was trying to convince herself. But it was a hard sell because every time she said it, there was this little voice in her head that kept saying, "The hell you are. Look at how you treat your husband and your kids." It is really hard to convince yourself of something when your behaviors do not match what you are saying.

When confronted with this discrepancy, she agreed, "I know and it doesn't make sense; it makes me a little crazy!"

So, what is the truth? You are not OK? That didn't feel right to her either.

May I suggest that the truth is always in the behavior and the lie is in the words. There is no way to convince yourself of a truth when it does not match your behaviors! Let me suggest that the real truth is, ***you are not OK, I'm not OK and that is OK.***

You are in a process of working on yourself. You have already done the first and most important part which is to recognize and accept that where you are, is where you are. You cannot be somewhere else (OK) and be where you are (not OK) at the same time. The only way you can start to change is to start from where you are. You cannot start from where you would like to be! I told her, "For you, your Ok is a denial of reality, it is a fantasy."

What does it mean to be not OK? What is so scary about not being OK? At this point, her abandonment issues started coming up. She had the fear that "I will be rejected. People will not love me if I'm not OK." What I've noticed is that there are no perfect people. There are only:

1. People who have accepted that their lives are a mess and blame everyone else, "You're Not OK and I can't be OK unless you live up to my expectations."
2. People who know that they are not OK and blame themselves, "I'm not OK. I'm a complete screw up. That is just the way I am."
3. People who live in denial, "I'm OK and you're OK."
4. People who have accepted that they are not OK and are pressing towards being OK. "I'm not OK, you're not OK and that is OK (until I can be somewhere else)."

The only time you really believed that, "I'm OK, you're OK," was when you were two years old. Now the question is, when did this thinking change? How were you able to create this change in your thinking? Let me suggest some ideas of where it might have started.

- ✓ As soon as you start putting people on a pedestal, you have just made yourself not OK.
- ✓ As soon as you made material things the index of success, you made yourself not OK.
- ✓ As soon as you started comparing (judging) yourself against others, you made yourself not OK.
- ✓ As soon as you say "I need my wife/husband," you have just made yourself not OK. You need air, water and food, but you don't need your mate. You may want your mate but you do not need him/her.
- ✓ As soon as you started saying "I should," it was more evidence that you were not OK. "Because if I was really OK, I would have done it."
- ✓ As soon as you became afraid of rejection, you made yourself not OK. This includes perfectionists who believe "If I do everything right and am never wrong, people will not leave me."
- ✓ As soon as you became afraid of emotional pain, you made yourself not OK. "I can never stand to be hurt this way again."

Wow, No wonder it is so hard to believe, "I'm OK, you're OK."

So, how about you and I making an agreement that, "You're not OK, I'm not OK, and that is OK until we can be someplace better." Could we agree to that? I believe that even God does not want good Christians. He wants honest Christians that he can make good! "I have come not to call the righteous but sinners. . . ." Mark 2:17

When you can be OK with not being OK, only then can you be OK.

If you are not OK with not being OK, then you are really not OK. It is only when you can accept that being not OK is OK that you can be OK!

Nobody can make you not OK, that is just what you are. You can give away your OKness to someone else by needing their approval and letting their approval be the determining factor of being OK. “You have to like (love) me or I’m really not any good.” If I was OK I would love and **accept** me, with or without your approval. When I am not OK with not being OK, then I have to go around trying to please everybody, thereby giving you the power to make me OK or not OK.

The way you think determines what you feel, what you feel determines what you do. If you do not like what you are doing, change what you are thinking and you will change your life. “As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.”

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