



EMOTIONAL INTIMACY - AN EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Marian Baltazar
Class of 1980, University of the Philippines College of Manila
AB Political Science

The personal relationships that we have had talk about not only support, per se, but also emotional support included, thereby establishing and nurturing it into an emotional intimacy. This is very true with close relationships and if yo...u happen to be in this kind of relationship, then you get to experience emotional support. It feels elating and good to know if someone supports you emotionally for this only means that there is a person close to you who not only supports you but is also after your welfare and well-being too. It also shows empathy to the other partner's feelings in life instead of dismissing them or trying to condemn them. In fact, they would be more than glad to lend their ears to that special person.

They not only listen intently but also patiently trying to understand how their partners feel. Isn't it such a heroic act? It is entirely different from understanding what that person's problem is. When we talk about emotional support, it actually means understanding how the person feels. To confirm this understanding, the person needs to show the form of "active listening." Yes, that sincere desire to understand the other person is the emotional support that a person can give to his partner. This effort alone demonstrates and shows how much effort he does to understand how his partner feels.

We all have these social needs, the need to belong, or to love and be loved. Being loved is at its peak when we open up, share your true feelings, and find out that the other person accepts us and empathizes with us. This alone creates emotional intimacy between two people. When that need for love and that emotional intimacy are met, then people are happy and they become fulfilled. Most probably, the biggest factor in a person's quality of life is the quality of their relationships. Actually, if our social needs are not met, our moods get worse, even if we experience success in other areas of our life, as in our work too.

I must say that negative emotions are an inevitable part of life because there are times wherein we feel that life is not always fair or just. We face not only disappointments growing in numbers but also countless hurts that breaks our heart. People who do not experience emotional intimacy feel lonely, isolated and they experience chronic negative emotions. In spite of being financially stable having all the material needs and resources, people still succumb to addiction, violence, child abuse, depression, divorce, crime and other self-defeating behaviors. Most of them who suffer from these problems I must say are not experiencing hunger or not even homeless but they are suffering from chronic emotional stress.

When a person is in this state of negative emotions, it can only be healed or resolved through emotional intimacy. This can free that individual of his emotional pain that prevails inside the very hollow of one's heart; there is that closeness that is then created between two people. That person just needs the assurance of another person and that there is someone who stands by his side to go through all these things, that everything will be okay. The importance that emotional intimacy can play in a person's life is what will give that person emotional support which will make him a whole person in the real sense of the word itself.

Questions for discussion:

1. Have you ever experienced emotional intimacy? In what way?
2. What is the effect of being emotionally intimate in your life? Explain further.
3. Do you often feel negative emotions nowadays? What do you do during these situations?
4. How can you then develop that intimacy with someone whom you value as the closest to your heart? Elaborate on your answer.
5. How do you feel when you are emotionally intimate with a person? Does it create and give you that emotional support that you may need? How?