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SUBJECT: mp68 more why dad

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mp68 more Why Dad? 3.24.14

The emptiness and lostness I felt in my academic career is echoed in my personal and spiritual life. My sense of a damaged unlovely self had me searching for people to complete me. I married with the expectation that having someone to love and love me would be enough to make me feel whole. When neither relationship fulfilled this unrealistic goal, I kept searching for other people, activities, projects, and causes to fill the hole. None did.

This took its toll on my marriage. My rootlessness with the resulting depression assured that my marriage would generate more emptiness for both of us. I was in a fog and Connie had to fend for herself. My mental absence made it a marriage in name only, two people existing in the same house, tolerating each other as best we could. My actions belied my words of love.

At the same time my spiritual path was rooted in my intellect. Coming from an evangelical "home", belief was about concepts and ideas. So I took up my Unitarianism in the same vein. Ideas of justice and Love with external actions social justice and equality fit with this overly intellectualization of the realm of spirituality. My head not integrated into my body and heart. My idea of my self was one who had all the right ideas about just communities and politics. I was the guy that supported women. I was the white guy that supported minority rights. I was the rich guy that supported economic justice. All very strong construction a Self I consciously worked to create.

The new "self" I was creating didn't really replace my damaged self, but cleverly hid it behind a mask of social activism and personal "good guy"ism. My deep seated unworthiness I left unaddressed while performing these public and private dances to distract others and most importantly myself. Over time the dances became less convincing to me. Once the emptiness of the performance began to weigh more heavily (interestingly coinciding with my 40th birthday and 911) I needed more high powered distraction. Enter the internet first, then porn. Then after both combined still didn't provide the chemical jolt it used to. Like a real junkie, I upped the dose again: illegal internet porn.

Again to repeat, this is not really "why." I am not providing a "reason" for my behavior. I am really providing a "what" to my behavior, this happened before or at the same time as that. There is no reasonable explanation for illegal or self/other destructive behavior. The bottom line is that they are bad, unwise choices that I could have not chosen. While addiction complicates the picture, In my case the addictive quality internet sex, because from within an addictive system of stimulus and response I was convinced I had no choice, that I was powerless to not chose.

Like any addict, I have to rework my whole system of habit energy to create a new relationship to everything that once provided me pleasure and what I considered to painful to experience so that I sought out pleasure to numb my system so it did not experience that pain. Once all those destructive clinging and fleeing relationships are addressed and reworked, I now can choose healthy (and legal) ways to experience pleasure and can choose to be with my painful emotions and feelings so that I no longer have the desire to numb myself in my old self destructive ways. The truth (for me now) is that I can be intimate with any experience I face and be fully present with that experience. My belief now is that there is nothing that I cannot face and experience, no experience would make me feel I had to chose a numbing response. That is not to say I will never choose and legal numbing response, but that I see that as an unwise choice not as an unconscious habitual response. I am fully able to chose to experience directly whatever comes my way. I have never truly felt that way about my life before. I have the both my spiritual path (religious humanism - UUism with mindfulness meditation practice) and recovery path (12 step) to thank for the transformation.

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