

## CLOSURE: Coming Full Circle

By Lissa Coffey

Each of us experiences some kind of loss in this lifetime. People come and go from our lives, whether by choice or circumstance. How we cope with these events affects how we move forward, how we see the world, and how we feel about our lives.

I'm not the only person to have been through a divorce. When my first marriage ended after 17 years, I thought I handled it well. It was an amicable parting, and we maintained a friendly relationship. But then a few years later my sister's husband died unexpectedly. My grief brought up new emotions, and I felt sad and angry and hurt as I relived the divorce in my mind. I realized through this experience that although I had moved on, I hadn't really gotten over it; I didn't have closure. I saw the parallels between my sister's loss and my own, and I actively sought to come up with a formula through which we could both alleviate our pain.

Relationships take many forms: marriage, friendships, family, co-workers, classmates, lovers. Whenever two people have some kind of a connection, a relationship is established. Our energy goes into these connections, our emotions, our hopes, our human vulnerabilities. A relationship is an organism itself, and it can have a life cycle. But since relationship is a spiritual organism, it doesn't die. It merely changes shape. The relationships we build with the people we encounter continue in spirit, in memories, and in lessons learned.

We are invested in our relationships with other people. We spend our time, and emotions, developing a kind of bond with a person. We give of ourselves, through our love, our friendship, our concern, and our efforts.

When we are faced with what seems to be the “end” of a relationship, we may feel loss, grief, anger or pain. We might even feel relief, or freedom. We may question the purpose for this change, whether it is abrupt or expected, and the necessity of it. The change may or may not be our choice, or our desire, but something we must learn to live with. The uneasiness may nag at us for years as we struggle to understand. How do we get that “closure” that our hearts and minds so desperately seek so that we can move forward with our lives?

We need to shift our perspective a little bit when it comes to relationships. In our human form, we see the illusion of death, and the ending of relationships. But what really takes place is a transformation. As we learn and grow through our relationships, our relationships evolve. We can use this evolution as an opportunity for continued growth, and for personal transformation. The pains that we feel are growing pains. However a relationship changes, whether it is a loss from physical death, a divorce, a move away, a growing up, or a falling out, we can not only survive, but thrive, knowing that everything, always, is exactly the way it is meant to be.

A Natural Law works whether we are aware of it or not. It is a principle of nature that is in effect at all times, without favoritism. Gravity is a natural law. It works the same for everyone, at all times. By being aware of gravity, we can move about more freely, with less risk of pain from falling down.

The Law of Relationship is two-fold. It says:

- 1) We are all connected.
- 2) We are here to help each other.

We are all connected in one way or another. We feel the same emotions; we share the same experiences. We are brothers and sisters on this planet. This connection bonds us, and gives us a relationship with each other. A mother in any part the world, can relate to another mother she has never seen because she knows what it means, and how it feels, to be a mother. We are all born the same way, and have to learn how to walk and talk and find our way in the world. We face challenges and heartache, no matter where we live, or how we live. Our connection cannot be broken.

With our challenges and experiences we learn and grow. Our relationships bring us many challenges and experiences, and through our relationships we learn and grow. This is how we help each other. We may not even know that we are doing it, but just by being in a person's life, in some small way, we are contributing to the learning process, as they are contributing to ours. Our actions affect other people in ways we can't even imagine. Even in times when we feel hurt by someone, that is an opportunity for us to learn and

grow. We might not realize it in the moment, but in some strange and miraculous way, we are helping each other by going through this experience together.

Closure is different than grief. Grieving is looking back; closure is about looking ahead.

We want to let go and move on. This is what closure gives us. We may have gone through the grieving process and still not have the closure we seek. The law of relationship helps us to maneuver our way through the five set process of closure:

Recognition, Acceptance, Understanding, Integration, and Gratitude. When we reach a feeling of gratitude, we know we've come full circle to experience closure.

Closure is actually the perfect word for it. It's more than neatly tying up loose ends.

Think about life as a series of events and relationships, all linked together in some sort of artistic way, like a beautiful piece of jewelry. We can't wear a necklace or a bracelet if the chain is just left dangling. The jewelry maker finishes off the piece by adding a clasp, one loop that kind of ties together the beginning and the end, the start and the finish, so that what we are left with is one strong continuous chain. Our closure is that clasp.

Closure helps it all make sense. It turns something seemingly broken into something useful, purposeful, and lovely.

*Lissa Coffey is the author of **CLOSURE and the Law of Relationship: Endings as New Beginnings**. <http://www.ClosureBook.com>*