

What our Most Intimate Relationships Show us about Ourselves.

By Kate Eckmanon

We all know that when we look in a mirror, we see our own reflection staring back at us.

I think what many of us fail to realize (at least I did) is that our relationships, especially our most intimate ones, are also mirroring back to us both our light and shadows—the qualities we like about ourselves and the disowned parts of us.

This is great news—our relationships give us opportunities to learn about ourselves on a deep level and grow tremendously.

How does this work? Well, what we adore and admire in another is also in us—and what triggers a negative reaction in us, in the relationship, are the wounds that need to be healed. I call these wounds our life assignments.

I'll give you an example. I recently met a man who I connected with very quickly and organically on every level. He filled me up—physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually. I felt as though I had finally met my match. However, almost as soon as I felt a strong connection to him, I began to feel a cool distance from him. Fear and insecurities came up for me.

Does he feel the same way? Why is he acting distant?

Why would he say all those things to me and then not call me to connect to continue to get to know me?

Am I enough for him? Am I too much for him?

What if he stops liking me?

It gives me anxiety just to type those words.

But in a matter of days, we went from discussions of our future together—to silence. What happened? My heart told me he was scared. I get it—I was scared, too. But let's run with it, and see what happens.

I found his lack of communication hurtful, especially after the time we had spent together. I felt sad, angry and betrayed. I knew I needed help and guidance to shift my thoughts and give me a clearer perspective. I prayed for a miracle, which is really just a shift in perspective.

Rather than trying to change or control my love interest—which never works—I knew I was the person who needed to change.

The guidance I received during my transcendental meditation—which I do twice a day, for 20 minutes—was profound. What came up for me was a deep-seated wound that was being triggered by this man

and this unfulfilling relationship. My wound of not feeling good enough in romantic relationships was wide open—ready for the light to come in and be healed.

“The wound is the place where the light enters you.” ~ Rumi

My message from the universe was simple—you have to show up for your wound.

In accepting this divine assignment, I was giving myself permission to heal this damage once and for all. I thought I had already dealt with this pain, but the gift of this relationship was showing me I still had work to do.

I must feel the pain, feel the discomfort and feel the sadness.

It’s easy to see why so many of us stay stuck for so long—it isn’t easy, comfortable or pleasant to be vulnerable and heal—but it is necessary if we want a beautiful, committed, fulfilling relationship with ourselves and a life partner. That’s what I want, so I’m committed to putting in the required work.

I use the following mantras to keep myself on track:

I’m willing to show up for this universal assignment. We face our fears straight on witnessing and working through insecurities. In this case, this man wasn’t there for me, and rather than blame him, I saw it as a reflection of ways I wasn’t there for myself.

I’m willing to see this differently. I see my partner’s behavior as a gift, lesson and opportunity. I need help—God/Universe/whatever—show me what you’ve got. This is where prayer, mediation and faith come in for me. I trust that everything is happening for me.

I’ve learned that when we pray for guidance, it will be given to us. We have to be willing to show up for ourselves—and when we do, we are free.

What exactly does it mean to show up for ourselves?

It means instead of blaming others, for not treating us the way we want and deserve to be treated, we choose to acknowledge the ways in which we don’t treat ourselves the way we want and deserve to be treated.

This is huge! It may sting a little bit, but it is also incredibly empowering. Once we recognize that we are in the driver’s seat, and in total control, we don’t have to wait around for someone to act “right.”

This is so liberating for me! What a generous gift to give to ourselves!

If this scares you, that’s wonderful, because it’s a divine opportunity to heal, grow and release all that no longer serves you. The next time you are being triggered in any relationship—take a deep breath, step back and ask yourself the following questions:.

What am I present to?

Example: I am present to the fact that I am scared. What am I scared of—not being enough? Being too much? Not being loved back? Rejection?

What am I feeling?

Example: My strong feelings for a man make me uncomfortable. Why? I feel out of control. I want it to work out and that's not fully dependent on me—scary.

What is making me uncomfortable?

Example: Feeling worthy of a healthy, beautiful, loving, fulfilling relationship with a man or life partner.

Why don't I feel worthy? What are the past experiences that aren't based in reality? The past hurts? What needs to be healed?

Example: My self worth, self esteem.

What needs to be worked on?

Example: I need to trust myself and accept, honor, own and embrace that I am worthy of a healthy, beautiful, fulfilling romantic relationship with a man that leads to a lifelong commitment.

Once you have sat in your truth—or said it aloud to yourself, a friend, therapist or coach—sit in meditation, or moment of silence, and be in the presence of those feelings. Allow the feelings to move through you, no matter how uncomfortable or painful they may be. When you feel those feelings, you heal those feelings, and they can be released so they no longer block you from what you desire.

When I am feeling hurt and need to re-center myself, I say the following prayer—Help me see this person with love. Help me see my divine assignment.

Exhale, listen and allow your inner guide to show you the lesson.