



10 LIFE-CHANGING FACTS ABOUT ATTACHMENT

By Gail Brenner

Just for a moment, imagine being free of attachments. Things come and go, but you are stable and unmoving in the midst of it all. It doesn't mean you don't care. In fact, in the lack of clinging, you are free to care deeply. The most intimate state of being is devoid of the separation that attachment brings.

Are You Attached?

Chance are that whenever you find yourself in reaction, you are attached. You are looking through a lens of "me" – how I think things should be, what I think should or shouldn't happen – and then reacting when things don't go according to your plan.

Do you find yourself feeling frustrated, angry, scared, sad? Then you are probably attached. You are stuck and not available to the comings and goings of life. Consider exploring your attachments, and re-discovering freedom, with these potentially life-changing facts.

10 Life-Changing Facts

- 1. Attachments to people prevent us from examining ourselves.** Clinging to someone in a relationship often masks an underlying sense of lack or unworthiness that can benefit from your loving exploration. Are you willing to take the focus off the other to see what thoughts and feelings are driving you?
- 2. Attachments to identities keep us stuck.** Are you aware of any habitual ways in which you react emotionally? See if you can pinpoint the identity you hold about yourself. Maybe it doesn't serve you anymore, and you can give yourself the freedom to respond with greater wisdom and awareness.
- 3. What often underlies attachment is a fear of not being in control.** Can you befriend the unknown and receive things as they happen?
- 4. The root of many relationship problems is that people are attached to what others should say or do.** Recognize when someone is attached to how you should be. Rather than resisting and creating conflict, stay grounded in yourself. Feel compassion for the other's fear and confusion.

5. **Attachment to possessions or money is all about fear.** Have as many possessions as you want, but don't stake your happiness on them. Do your possessions define you? Deeply contemplate losing them all, and realize that you don't really own anything.

6. **Attachment to wanting what you don't have leads to interminable unhappiness.** Can you shift your orientation to appreciate what is already here?

7. **Being attached to your needs makes you a victim of circumstances.** Do you really need what you think you need? Maybe you are stronger and more whole than you think.

8. **Not being attached brings relaxation and ease.** You no longer worry about losing what you have. This doesn't mean that you aren't excited about having something or sad about its loss. But your underlying peace is not disturbed.

9. **Attachment to beliefs and ideas is like living in a small space with many walls.** Everywhere you turn, you bump into one. Can you let yourself be vulnerable and open by abandoning your treasured beliefs?

10. **When all attachments fall away, what remains is reality.** When we see things without the veil of our attachments, we realize life – delicious, pure, luminous, and true.

Pain caused by your attachment to the ego could come from:

- Not hitting your personal performance goals at work, leading you to question if your abilities are declining.
- Not performing as well during a basketball game with some old friends as you used to when you were younger, realizing you're not as fit as you used to be and maybe no longer the athlete you thought yourself as.
- Finding out your spouse cheated on you and your dream of having a family and living the rest of your life with this great person consequently shattering.

Also, when life doesn't = your expectations, the same happens:

- Losing a loved one and having to come to grips with the fact that this person who meant so much to you and who you're used to having in your life is gone forever.
- Being fired from the job you've had for the past 10 years and thought you'd spend the rest of your life at.
- A co-worker whom you trusted stabbing you in the back to win a promotion over you.

~ Matt Valentine

