ENMESHMENT: TANGLED UP IN YOU!

I am he as you are he as you are me and we are all together. I am the Walrus…The Beatles

WHAT TO KNOW!

- Enmeshed people don’t have clear ego boundaries that separate one from another.
- They cannot identify the differences between their needs from the other person’s needs.
- They don’t see where they begin and end and the other person begins and ends.
- Enmeshment is not true love but the loss of identity, freedom, and self-worth.
- Typical descriptions of enmeshed people include: “joined at the hip”, “momma’s boy”, “they finish each other’s sentences”, and “they can’t live without each other”.
- Enmeshment is the opposite of independence and can range from mild to extreme.
- Enmeshed people often blame each other for their unhappiness and one person’s issues becomes the other person’s issues and vice versa.
- In enmeshment, there is no sense of emotional health, personal identity, individuality, or control over one’s life.
- They look to their partner to fix them, to solve their problems, and to make them happy.
- Enmeshed people will often text or call their partner many times a day and need to know where they are at all times and who they are with.
- In enmeshed families, everyone knows everyone else’s business and triangulation among family members often occurs.
- Enmeshed families are so intertwined that when one person gets depressed, eventually all will get depressed or will try to rescue that person.
- Enmeshed partners can also include boss and employee, co-workers, parents and children, and whole families.
- As in codependence, enmeshed people mutually rely upon and need the other person to meet their needs and “complete them”.
- Many love songs are written about enmeshed relationships including “Can’t Live if Living is Without You”, “Tainted Love”, and “With or Without You”.
- In enmeshed relationships, there is a great fear of abandonment or losing the other person as that would be similar to losing part of oneself or one’s identity.
- Enmeshed parents try to be friends with their children or hover over them to rescue and protect them but actually deny them the opportunity to develop their own strengths.
- Enmeshed adult children often feel a burden to make their parents happy or to take care of them or to be a surrogate partner.
- In a healthy relationship, people maintain their identity and are respected for it.
- In a healthy relationship, people do not change who they are to just to please the other.
- People in healthy relationships value their own abilities to solve their own issues.
- People in healthy relationships want to be with their partner not need to be with them.
- People in healthy relationships can be alone and not fall apart without their partner.

WHAT TO DO!

- Be aware of your negative feelings about your partner, co-worker, or family member.
- Recognize when the relationship becomes one of need not love and when it becomes suffocating or controlling.
- Understand your personal boundaries and how to set limits to maintain them.
- If enmeshment persists and leads to depression or anxiety, seek professional counseling.

WE CAN HELP!

Call us at 954 755-2885 or email us at DrKimmel@aol.com.

Joel I. Kimmel, Ph.D. P.A. and Associates
5551 N University Drive
Coral Springs FL 33067

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