

# Double Insight



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In my personal life, one of the things that I carried for many years was the fact that my first marriage ended in divorce. The marriage itself only lasted, from wedding to divorce, about 3 years. The way that it came apart was very hurtful to me, and though I moved on into a very wonderful and satisfying second marriage, I was aware that I still carried the hurt of the first one within me.

The moment of “double insight” that came to me occurred a few years ago, while I was engaged in a year-long, insight-oriented training. We had gathered in the converted barn where the training was held, preparing for a more intensive weekend training. One of my classmates who I really, really liked had a profound insight about forgiveness. It was so powerful for her that she kept saying that she had seen that, “It’s all about forgiveness.” Now, I didn’t see this at all. In fact, I found this really annoying because we were talking about insight and how our mind works, and how people create their own reality from the inside out. I emphatically did not see how any of this related to forgiveness. In fact, I was quite sure that no one else had even used the word forgiveness. I didn’t see at all where her insight had come from. Even so, she was rock solid in her clarity about what she had seen.

Now I wasn’t arguing with her or anything, because I both liked and respected her. But her certainty kept eating at me, because I so totally didn’t get it.

The next morning, it was early Friday morning and I was driving my, at that time, something-of-a-beater of a car to the seminar. And as I was driving, my mind was kind of light and clear. I found that as I was driving I kept tossing over in the back of my mind, “forgiveness?”. The question that popped into my head was, “How would that apply to me and my ex-wife?” Running the situation lightly over in my mind, I didn’t see how there could be any avenue to forgiveness.

Out of the blue my inner chatter got even quieter than it had been, and I experienced an inner voice that wasn’t quite like my usual mental chatter. It just said, “Maybe you’re trying to forgive the wrong person.”

This of course set me off. “What the hell is that supposed to mean?”

As I continued to drive down the road it just sort of hit me, it really hit me; maybe I needed to forgive myself. It wasn’t about forgiving my ex-wife. At this point I immediately launched into some counter-chatter. Why do I have to forgive myself? And the little voice popped up again and said maybe you need to forgive yourself for losing her. And at that point the bubble popped, and I saw that the hurt and anger wasn’t being held in place by something having to do with Rebecca. It was how angry I was at myself and how hurt I was that I had tried my best and it hadn’t worked.

As I saw that, the anger bubble popped. All of a sudden the anger bubble didn’t make any sense. It wasn’t like I had to then go and rethink my whole relationship and dig my way out of it laboriously. It really was like a bubble popping. I saw it differently, and I couldn’t go back to seeing or thinking of it or feeling about it the way I had been.

But that’s not the end of the story. I intended to speak to the training leader about it, but I didn’t. I got a little teary on the drive, and kept it to myself.



The next morning, on the same stretch of road, some idiot, driving aggressively, cut me off on the highway. He was weaving in and out of traffic and he came really close to my front bumper and almost hit me. I was livid and I was angry and I was swearing. I'm in my little beater of a car, steaming with anger, and in the back of my mind some little part of me asked, "Now, how does forgiveness play into this? He's a jerk!" Same little voice from the day before says: "Maybe you're trying to forgive the wrong guy." And my normal inner voice was like, "What in the hell is that supposed to mean? Come on, now!"

As I continued to drive, that little voice popped up again, and said, "Maybe you need to forgive yourself." I did not want to hear that. "He's the jerk, not me!" In response I got a complicated but clear ball of feeling and thought and a sort of vision: He's in his fast and flashy car and he can weave around me and I'm in my beater of a Nova and I was feeling bad that I couldn't compete. It's not like I could accelerate and get ahead of him.

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I continued driving down the road flipping back and forth between the larger pain of my first marriage and the lesser pain of this moment in traffic, just looking at them. I kept thinking, "I can't believe it, but it's all the same thing and forgiveness is at the heart of both. Look at that!"

This time I did talk to the trainer about it. I told him about both mornings and both insights, and I was in tears at the end of it. I said, "Look, it's like stupid traffic and my first marriage and it's like the same thing!" I still remember him standing there eating pistachios, looking at me, and he said, "Yeah, you got a homerun on this one."

What I saw was not just a nice idea. It was more like: "Look, the world just changed!" The old bubble popped, and I couldn't remake the old bubble, couldn't refashion it. I could go back to thinking those thoughts but there is always this part of me that saw through it. There is always this part of me that, when I'm clear-minded, knows better. I can be in a bad mood, a low mood, it can be a rainy gloomy day and there's a sad song on the radio and I can go back to resentment against my first wife. There can be a bad day when somebody cuts me off in traffic and I'm irritated by it. But there is always that part of me that sees through it and that part of me is still there. No matter what happens, this part of me knows better.

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