Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Intimate Whirlwinds, Part III

Christopher · Wednesday, February 26th, 2020

Read Intimate Whirlwinds, Part I, Part II

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"*To return to love, to get the love we always wanted, but never had, to have the love we want but are not prepared to give we seek romantic relationships. We believe these relationships, more than any other will rescue and redeem us, but only if we are ready for redemption. Love saves us only if we want to be saved.*" -bell hooks

For as long as I can remember, my relationships progressed in an unhealthy manner, by me avoiding conflict. Growing up I witnessed my parents' arguments escalate from being mild to disrespectful. There were times me and my sister stepped in to let them know that how they were going about discussing conflict was affecting us as kids. On top of that, being fearful of being gaslighted, I barely held any trust for anyone to initiate conversations where tensions were high.

When conflict arose between me and that woman, I became a bit obsessive about amending the situation, not to end on bad terms as they were someone I cared about. I asked way too many people for advice on how to tackle each situation. Unfortunately, things escalated to the point that she felt she was in danger, falsely accusing me of sexual harassment, and violence.

It seemed all of my greatest fears came into fruition because I had a hard time learning an important life lesson of letting go. Near the end of my fourth year of school, randomly, the charges got dropped. The trauma stayed with me though. I felt guilty. The imposter syndrome of being an activist grew. Depression got stronger. Anxiety got more severe.

In the midst of processing these emotions, I attended a leadership retreat called Leadershape in San Rafael, CA. During this week long retreat of 10 plus hour days of activities, I was able to cultivate a few lifelong intimate friendships. I am proud to have them as part of my family. I confide in them. They confide in me. We understand each other.

Taking the practices I learned at Leadershape, regarding developing connections with others, into the real world was still difficult. I did not seek out professional help. My trauma bled out into my everyday interactions with my friends and women.

This resulted in me stepping out of character, by reacting to situations even more rather than responding. Everyone became an enemy with the exception of very few. With having notoriety as an artist and activist, I constantly confused myself with the idea that some community members or the following I gained loved me unconditionally. However, that definitely was not the case.

Interesting enough, the campus community as a whole had not developed a strong connection with me; which begs the question, where did the thought of being loved unconditionally come from? How do you have a close intimate relationship with a community of thousands of people at the same time? Is that even possible?

Presenting myself as an artist or a public speaker, I came to learn that people are fickle. Making one decision can cost you the silhouette of a relationship easily. The relationships that were not strong will evaporate as well. Being foolish I was impressed with the silhouette; the outline or the figure of what can be supporting my college community and beyond throughout the county itself.

As a result, I put myself in danger by choosing to continue to live in an environment that didn't love me one hundred and ten percent. I knew that the world did not owe me anything. However, I felt I owed everybody something. The reality is that I don't owe anybody anything. No one owes anyone a damn thing. I broke my spirit fending for intimacy.

Terrified – Awaken, My Love!

"*Sex is not the most intimate way you can be in contact with another human being. That is part of the problem that we have created that sex is the ultimate and only way we can be intimate and involved with somebody. I can pick up the characters of someone by hanging around them, I do not have to have sex with them. Being around people, you are not only having a physical relationship with them, you are spending time with them, being around their experiences.*"- Uchechi, Panelist via Grapevine podcast

2016, I messed up my first and so far only sexual experience with intercourse by having sex with a woman I did not have feelings for and was not attracted to. Since the end of high school, I always dreamt of saving myself for someone I was in a relationship with. My temptations got the best of me, being eager to go out and explore.

We consented after a normal day of hanging out, the problem is she revealed she had feelings for me I could not return. We had an honest and upfront conversation about where I was at in the sense of trying to explore sex and understanding my body. Obtaining an understanding, she continued to make the offer to have sex and I accepted it. We did not talk about what we did and did not like or what we felt comfortable with doing.

I did not necessarily feel uncomfortable, but there were positions we were doing that I now consider to be intense for the first time having sex. I did not enjoy the experience. We cuddled afterwards and she kissed me asking what we were in regards to our relationship. Despite feeling extremely uncomfortable, knowing she did want to be something more, I suggested that I would be okay with being friends with benefits. That turned out to be another bad decision. We had sex one more time and then I expressed that we should not continue as I did not want her feelings to get

stronger.

About a week later, she started sending me Snapchat messages everyday, every hour (literally during the day time.) I told her we should stop, but she continued to attempt to convince me that we should carry on. It got to the point where I blocked her from everything and avoided her around campus.

Near the end of the academic year, in 2017, we both happen to attend the same event. She sat behind me, and I kept a calm cool head. We spoke. Everything was fine until she decided to run her fingers around the crack of my butt, seductively. She tried to cover it up by saying she was trying to tickle me, after turning around and snapping at her. We have not spoken since.

Months later, near the end of my journey of living in Monterey I ran into a poet at a local open mic. Sadly my initial thought to my attraction towards them was "***I'm not good enough. I wonder if they like black people***." During the start of our acquaintance I was fearful sharing myself with them even though I had so much to say and express. I wanted to get close, however per usual I waited until the very last minute when life changes rear their ugly head.

I had to move out of Monterey, due to being homeless and no longer being able to support myself financially. Unable to meet in person, I battled with myself for weeks on whether or not I should send a long message explaining my feelings for them. Interesting enough, while writing out what I was going to send, it finally clicked in my head, that I should build stronger connections with people I am interested in first. Things have been very surface level regarding my interactions with people of interest. They expressed they were dealing with some personal life things at the time, but appreciated the friendship.

Several months later, visiting friends, my feelings resurged after having an intimate moment sharing stories. They held my hand. No one has ever held my hand before. I did not know what to think other than to sit there and not say a word. A few awkward moments came about and I could not bring myself to express.

Later on, I finally built up the courage to say what I need to say. We both agreed we should be friends to know each other more. Along with that, they used the word "*Intimacy"*. I was confused, based on previous experiences, that word has only been used in the context of getting physical. I did not ask questions of what the intimacy entailed between us both. My emotional immaturity became one of the reasons why we distance ourselves from each other. I passed down my rose quartz crystal to show I now understand what they meant. However, I may not be fitting to give what they want.

Reflecting now, I think I'm just understanding the tip of the iceberg when it comes to intimacy. For any form whether it be platonic or romantic, working on yourself is essential. Specifically to be emotionally intelligent, to know how to comprehend as well as communicate, and putting forth energy to cultivate is all very important. I shy away feeling that I am sacrificing parts of myself; while that is not the case I was indeed exposing parts of myself I have yet to deconstruct myself. I don't know if I subconsciously knew about these character traits and I just avoid them by establishing romantic relationships to express them. With almost every attempted romantic relationship, I handled it with a huge sense of immaturity in some form or fashion. Same thing goes for my platonic relationships as well.

Recently, a family member of mine I had a falling out with nearly ten years ago decided to reach

out to me. He has shown me that despite our differences we can still love each other. I feel it is essential to treat every relationship with care, even ones that have expired. Not to wish harm, but the best and the betterment of everyone’s lives.

A fear of intimacy is a fear of living. Intimacy is a basic human necessity.

ARE WE STILL FRIENDS? – IGOR

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