



## Wellness Week 2019

### Triggered from the Past

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Reflecting back on my life, I remember an associate of mine who I was really getting to know, someone I could call “friend” and possibly best friend. I met them as we were both contemplating separating from our husbands. We were able to help each other through some tough times. As we got closer, I started to feel fear. I feared the day she would betray me. “Any day now, she is going to show me she is phoney”, I thought. I played it in my head and I thought it was something I was keeping to myself but I was showing it in my behavior. The way I found out was when I called her one day and she didn’t answer my call. Now she always answers at this time of day but maybe she is just busy. It then happened another day and another day so I texted her and asked, “is everything ok”? She responded that “we need a break”. This text conversation looked like it was between a couple going through a rough patch but it was her communicating that she needed some space from me.

Time went by and I decided to reach out one day to ask how she was and the conversation was pleasant. I then asked, what happened to the friendship we had. She then told me, I seemed to be dishonoring our friendship because of what others did to me in the past. I had to admit that she was right. I never healed from being betrayed by the people I felt closest to so I began to treat her like a potential frenemy. The pain of my past haunted every friendship and even relationship I entered into. I feared getting close to someone because the ones that can hurt you must be close to you. How can someone truly call you a friend when you don’t even trust them? How can someone call you a friend when you questions their intentions even after they have showed you their loyalty? I did and it was more evident than I thought.

In order to have emotional wellness where you can cope with life effectively or have good relationships, you must first heal. I know this because I recognized that my past still haunted me. It was like a shadow that followed everywhere I went whispering to me a reminder of how

people can betray you. My emotions had too much control and to be successful in any relationship, I had to take the wheel. I believe your emotional health is dependent on how you have and will care for it. Just as you go to a doctor for an annual checkup or when you have aches and pains, we must look to get a regular mental health checkup. The pains and hurt of the past can “trigger” past emotions that can follow you into adulthood and left uncared for, it will continue to resurface. Who would have thought that the bullying I went through as a young adolescent will make me be so defensive? Who would have thought that an ex cheating would make me judge all men? We can sometimes allow our past trauma define our future experiences and in that we need to walk down the aisle of healing. Emotional health is an act of maintaining a level of wellness in heart, mind and spirit. What past hurts might be haunting you?

Next time you go through a negative experience ask yourself three things:

1. What lesson did I learn from it?
2. What part may I have played in it or what warning signs did I choose to ignore?
3. What easy applications of these lessons learned can I apply to my daily life in the case I am triggered?

Take control of your emotions or be stuck with an unhealthy emotional life.

Check out this article:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-creativity-cure/201606/12-thoughts-moving-past-betrayal-trauma-and-rumination>