

The Value Of Detoxing From Emotionally Incestuous (Enmeshed) Family

Today's podcast is about the value of detoxing from emotionally incestuous (enmeshed) family.

When someone grows up in an enmeshed, emotionally incestuous family, they naturally have many issues stemming from this. One of those many issues is that they need time away from their toxic family to detox.

One example of this that comes to mind is a good friend of mine. Around me, he's usually kind, caring, fun loving & laid back. I always can tell when he has dealt with his toxic immediate family in the recent past however, because that great guy disappears. The person who replaces him is impatient, irritable, & quick to judge & criticize. In other words, nothing like who he usually is. It takes some time away from them for the hard to deal with person to go away & the good guy he usually is to come back. I've started referring to this as his detox.

Sadly, this need to detox after being around an emotionally incestuous family is normal for the adult who grew up in this situation. Also sadly, it makes sense if you think about it.

Someone who doesn't understand the extreme toxicity that is emotional incest wants to fit in with their family, even if they hate the dynamic. They will behave however they need to in order to fit in. On some level however, they know this isn't normal so they are dealing with cognitive dissonance. In other words, they grew up thinking this is normal & anything that threatens that belief makes them extremely uncomfortable & confused. Time away from their toxic family is their detox, & it relieves them of that uncomfortable feeling, at least until the next time they deal with their family.

Even if someone is aware of what is happening & how dysfunctional their family is, being around such people can bring old habits back to the surface disturbingly easily. It's a lot like drug addicts. They can stay clean much easier when they avoid people who are still addicts & are around people who don't do drugs. Getting around those who are still actively addicted makes it very hard for them to stay on their healthier path. When they backslide, they may get clean again but they are NOT going to be happy with themselves for backsliding. The same goes for those with emotionally incestuous families. If a person has worked hard to get healthier, then slides back into old habits, they are going to be pretty upset with themselves when they recognize their bad behavior. They need time away from their family so they can detox to get back on the right path.

Another problem is the emotionally incestuous family encourages the dysfunctional behavior. They reward bad behavior, throwing some breadcrumbs of affection or praise to their family members who follow the rules of the family & don't try to make any healthy changes. No matter how much someone may want to break free of this to live in a healthier way, the pressure to "behave" & get those crumbs of affection can

be very great, which also can account for the need to detox. Distance from these highly dysfunctional people helps them to recognize what is happening, & to get back on the right path.

Emotionally incestuous family members also despise anyone who doesn't enable & encourage their toxic behavior. They will talk badly about anyone who encourages someone in the emotionally incestuous family to distance themselves from the toxicity. If someone in such a family has a friend or spouse that speaks against this behavior, the family is not going to tolerate this quietly. They will tell everyone just how awful that person is, how they're trying to tear apart the family or even steal their family member away from the family. If someone hears this enough from their family, they may believe it in time, & return to the dysfunctional fold. Time away from them, time to detox from the dysfunction, can clear their head.

If your family is emotionally incestuous, then please, do yourself a huge favor & take the time to detox from them as frequently as you can! It will be good for your mental health! Or, if someone you know is in such a situation, encourage them to do the same. Be willing to listen to them without judgment & speak the truth to them about what their family is really like (gently of course!).

Thank you for listening to my podcast!