



A FEW THOUGHTS ABOUT LOVE AND LOSS

by

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It seems to me, that real love is definitely not for those without courage. One of the things, that I know to be true, is that risk taking is in direct proportion to growth. The more I am able to risk on life's game of "pitch and toss" as Kipling said, the greater the possible winnings.

Throughout life we hear of great successes and failures experienced by sometimes extraordinary people in extraordinary circumstances. It is my belief that victory is a decision made prior to winning. It is simply the decision to pay more than the next guy to get what you really want.

We all have choice when it comes to what we want, and what we are willing to pay for what we want. Basically it is the price tag that goes with our needs and desires.

Implicit it is the notion of a price tag in relationship to our investment. This is as true for the refrigerator that you decide to buy, as it is for the food you put in there. Life is a quid pro quo attached to our daily living.

There are those who for conscious and unconscious reasons choose to limit their investment in life's big game. To those who approach life in this fashion they often use value judgments as a kind of tool to rationalize their involvement and investment. Or lack of commitment in daily choices.

The formula is simple and ancient. It is the pleasure-pain principle. It ultimately boils down to the relationship between what you want, and what you're willing to pay for it. Every day in life we are given the opportunity to choose how much we

are going to invest. Not just in goods and services, but in the ultimate game of love and loss.

Real love is not for those without courage. When those unique moments in life are presented to us, and emotional investment is clear in relationship to our emotional need, we are confronted with real choice.

Here is a simple statement of that formula. How much do I have? What does it cost? What do I believe? What will I receive for my investment? Am I willing to pay the price?

This simple calculation relates to most all people and things in life. It is as true at the supermarket, as it is when shopping at Tiffany's. As our parents taught us, you get what you pay for. And so it is, that there are those who are jealous when they look at what their neighbors have, and do not have.

What you have in your driveway, and what you have in your heart, relate to that simple formula I have just mentioned. What you're willing to spend is in direct portion to what are able to receive. Can it really be that simple?

It is in fact basically true. If this is the statement of the obvious, then why is it that we dance around this fact of life? I believe that the answer to the question basically relates to our personal experience with success and failure.

If we experienced repeated failure, with regard to our emotional investments, then by definition good judgment would suggest re-evaluation of our investment strategies. This is something that we do on both a conscious and unconscious level.

How many times we said, "I'll never do that again!" or "I must have been stupid to get involved like that!" They are all learning points as we struggle to life.

The paradox here is, that prudence is not necessarily the best guarantee of a positive outcome, when it comes to emotional investment. Risk taking is indeed in direct proportion to growth. Unfortunately, it is in direct proportion to failure as well.

So how does this relate to love and loss? In General Semantics we call this a polar term or a two valued term. If there is success there must be the notion of failure. Just as if there is happiness, there must be the notion of unhappiness. As I said, it goes back to the pleasure-pain principle and the notion of cause and effect.

I remind myself of this fact when I experience the pain of loss in my life. I am reminded of choice. If I decide to feel less pain, because I can't stand the hurt, I am

making the decision to invest less in others. Maybe because of my own fear of how much it will hurt, when I am confronted with their loss or absence in my life.

And so it really is a question of courage and pay off. It may even be thought of as an existential question. It is about as fundamental decision that we have choice.

When I hear a person, whom I love dearly, experience the pain of loss I must ultimately reflect on my perception of their answer to this basic formula. Is this person a big game hunter in life? Or a cautious investor trying to have control risk and limited failure?

Somehow, for me, I feel more empathy and involvement with those great risk-takers in life like the Winston Churchill's, the Amelia Ehrhardt's. Those for whom the formula of guts and glory dominate their life itself.

I must confess, I would rather experience the excruciating pain of loss. I guess there is no right or wrong here. If there is, it is the failure to realize that we have choice in this extraordinary decision about investment and involvement with life itself.

I made the decision a long time ago, I want to live in the here and now, with all the hot and cold, sharp and soft, bitter and sweet that God gives me to experience. I reach out for love, with the clear knowledge that pain may follow. My days are filled with deep laughter, genuine tears and the clear awareness that I live my life, and love those around me with all that's in me.

To this I commit myself every day.

Ref: West African Wisdom: Adinkra Symbols & Meanings

NEA ONNIM NO SUA A, OHU

"He who does not know can know from learning"

symbol of knowledge, life-long education and continued quest for knowledge

Source: Cloth As Metaphor by G.F. Kojo Arthur

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