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FAMILY COUNSELING
INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING

Nurture Body--Nurture Spirit

We nurture our body by taking in food and liquid. Our body is designed to take what sustains it and dump the rest. (Literally) Failure to allow our body to cleanse itself of unwanted material leads to constipation and, eventually, to physical illness.

Similarly, we nurture our spirit with the experiences that we give it. Our spirit is inclined to take what sustains it and dump the rest. Our spirit dumps the non-useful aspects of our experiences in many ways. This can be done through tears, words, physical exercise and artwork. Sometimes our dreams may be attempts to cleanse our spirit of toxicity. There can be many ways of “dumping” unwanted components of our experiences. Experiences that nurture our spirit uplift us. When we have experiences that we call “downers” it is important to dump the toxicity they contain. (Experiences can become spiritually toxic.) Failure to cleanse our spirit of “toxic” elements can lead to “spiritual constipation” and over time may contribute to depression or a general sense of spiritual malaise.

Children absorb spiritual toxins when angry parents or other significant adults belittle them or call them names or treat them as if they are not precious or valuable. Even ignoring a child can be toxic to that child’s spirit.

In our culture, we have generally deprived boys and young men of the chance to cleanse their spirits through expressing sadness or through tears by telling them that such behavior is only for girls. Girls are given the tool of tears but few of the other myriad possibilities for expression are fully developed even in them. As a consequence we see angry young men and older men going through life with a scowl on their faces as the cumulative effects of spiritual constipation takes it’s toll on the health of their spirit and our cultural spirit as well. When children of both sexes are taught to notice and express their feelings in appropriate ways such as art, dance, song, words and tears to a safe friend or a journal, our nation as a whole will evolve toward nurturing its inhabitants.