

## Resist or respond

The thought I want to write about today has been developing since January when I had an “aha” moment in the course of my daily life.

I recognised a dynamic that was taking place between me and a loved ASD adult in my life and I developed a theory. I then thought about every relationship I’ve had with any ASD individual in the past or present, related or not, and the theory was spot on in every situation.

This doesn’t mean my theory is true in everyone else’s situation. Debate or discussion is always good, but it’s always good to put forward any ideas because there will always be someone within our partner network who will experience validation when an experience or idea is shared.

When I approach my ASD individual with a statement or request I am met with resistance. Of course it *could* be me 😊

My statement or request has to be analyzed and approved in order to be valid. There is resistance, argument. I am shut down. The outcome is rarely approval, rather all the reasons why my need is invalid and my request unjustified. My need is therefore left unmet. I feel invalidated ... powerless ... like a vapour. I stop asking.

I think of all the characteristics that seem to go along with this analytical response - critical, “negative thinker”, “glass half empty”. I feel sucked dry. The light goes from my eyes.

I, on the other hand, am responsive. To every statement, request, opinion or need that is expressed. These are opportunities. Most of the partners I speak to or observe in our meetings are also responsive in nature. Open, warm, co-operative, helpful, optimistic, respectful of the opinions of others, available to the needs or requests of others. Accepting, positive and “glass half full” thinkers in many instances. Our natures just automatically respond and our motivation is to meet needs or fulfil requests if at all possible. To us, this is what relationship is all about.

One can see how we are so vulnerable to partners and also other individuals who have strongly apparent or expressed essential needs and demands. We are naturally caring and co-operative, keen to help make another person’s life better if we can. We regularly defer to their needs and preferences in the belief we’re helping to nurture a growing and mutually satisfying relationship. But the more we co-operate and adjust, the more we have to, there is no fulfilling the needs. It becomes a way of life. Little or no reciprocation of the care we show.

And what of ourselves do we have left? It’s at this point that many partners begin to seriously seek counselling and support, and thoughts of separation begin to germinate.

It is essential that each one of us has contexts other than home where we are valued and feel credible.

We cannot allow the analysis of one to continue to define who we are or what we need.

Carol Grigg, March 2014