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Psychotherapy
Couples
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Buddhist Psychology and Mindfulness
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Group Seminar Audio Series

The Dynamics of “Parasitic” Love

This seminar presents a view of intimate romantic relationships that revolves around previously unresolved relational traumas. This perspective argues that all intimate relationships are constituted by a sender who transmits unconscious representations of his/her own traumas (metaphorically called “parasites”) to a recipient. Once housed in this new host, the parasitic material compels the host to conform to its directives by re-traumatizing the sender. An understanding of this universal dynamic offers a paradigm for managing repetition and self-fulfilling forces responsible for most forms of relational distress and conflict.

Please note: This interactive seminar in which Dr. Tobin presented to a small live audience as part of his ongoing Men’s Group was recorded on December 2, 2017 in Laguna Hills, CA.

Key Excerpts:

- It’s inevitable that we get injured early in development in our primary relationships with our parents and other family members and as we begin to have significant relationships with others. These relational traumas stay alive within us, lying dormant in our psychology. These traumas are metaphorically called “parasites.”*
- All of us have this parasitic material in our minds; they are accumulated rejections and shaming experiences.*
- In adulthood, we are motivated unconsciously to evacuate these parasites into others. We unconsciously choose potential hosts for our parasites.*
- This is related to the notion of “familiarity.” We are unconsciously walking around the planet, finding people who can serve as hosts for our parasites, and when we find them, we inject the parasites into them. As these parasites live and grow inside our chosen host, this person ends up re-traumatizing us all over again.*

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Key Excerpts (continued)

- *We choose parasitic hosts unconsciously through “testing.” Testing is an unconscious verification process -- we find people who are going to be receptive to our parasites.*
- *Our intuition signals us that we have found a host for our parasites, and we end up avoiding or denying our intuition. We ignore it and move forward with the relationship.*
- *Projection is a psychological mechanism for transmitting the parasites from one person to another.*

