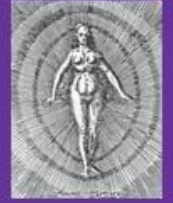


# CHARLYNE GELT, PH.D.

Encouraging Self-Discovery and Empowerment



## Mother's Day 2018 by Charlyne Gelt, Ph.D.

### **Mother love is also meant for mothering the un-mothered self.**

It is not uncommon that successful, strong, goal-oriented women give themselves away to men who can't or won't, or don't know how to give back. They get drawn into difficult or abusive relationships then get taken advantage of by men who don't give back. Why is that?



Many of the women I work with in my clinical practice are educated, self-sufficient, caring, compassionate, nurturing women who think of others before they think of the self. In relationships, however, their outward “strength” turns to mush. They often become emotionally submissive. Why is that?

### **History Repeats**

*“Growing up I felt a huge emptiness inside — like, I'm a nobody screaming, 'Somebody love me; somebody tell me who I am.'” Isabel*

Women, and men too, involved in destructive relationships unconsciously seek a resolution of early childhood wounding through a revolving door of destructive relationships. Learned behavior patterns evolve from fear of abandonment, aloneness and lack of boundaries; the upshot is continued danger and abuse in relationships that replicate early emotional environments.

The fear of being alone, and a life time of feeling emotionally isolated, drew Lois into a long-term relationship with an alcoholic with whom she didn't feel close enough to say, “I love you.” *“What I wanted and needed was for him to listen. I got a deaf ear and I got no support. I got put down, shamed and blamed.”*

Abandonment, isolation, and fear are key issues that keep one stuck in that old protective pumpkin shell. The protective armor of adaptive childhood survival strategies transfers into adult relationships, often preventing one from creating change. It becomes a comfortable shoe. When you can say: “I don't deserve to be treated like this” and you recognize you are allowing yourself to be short-changed, then it's time to turn the corner and put that nurturing into the self.

Bertha finally woke to the realization that she was giving love to someone who just didn't want it. She was starving, and his crumbs were no longer enough.

When getting “small change” is no longer good enough, you can make change happen: the need to nurture takes on a new twist, the fear of traveling life's road alone is no longer an invisible string that seduces or draws you or keeps you in abusive or co-dependent relationships.

*Charlyne Gelt, Ph.D. (PSY22909) is a clinical psychologist who practices in Encino. She leads **Women's Empowerment Groups that help women learn the tools to move beyond self-destructive relationship patterns.** She may be reached at 818.501.4123 or [cgelt@earthlink.net](mailto:cgelt@earthlink.net). Her website is [www.drgelt.com](http://www.drgelt.com). Her office address is 16055 Ventura Blvd. #1129 Encino, CA 91436.*