

Resentment is a strong negative emotion that you experience when you remember or recall an incident from the past that caused an emotional pain at the time, which has never been resolved. Upon recalling the event, the body generates an emotion (see "Emotion Families" page 2) that can be described as anger or a feeling of being deeply upset. This emotion is a stress response.

Some people recall an event so vividly that it is almost as though the event is reoccurring. Certainly the emotion that is generated is real, resulting in the memory of the event being re-experienced as if it were happening in the present tense. This is because the picture in the brain, whether a memory or current reality, will cause the body to have a stress response, and this is what is experienced as the emotion.

When an upsetting event has been resolved, it can be recalled to mind later without the body generating the same strong emotion. You might remember the incident well, and remember that you were upset or angry about it at the time, but your body does not feel that emotion now. This means that the matter has been resolved and you have moved on. Good. For your continued emotional health and well-being, this is how it should be. If the event is not happening now, it is not present tense. Things only happen in the present tense. Anything that is stored in the brain as a memory is a fantasy; it is not reality.

In other words, resentments are fantasies that continue to cause us pain and make us suffer. It is common for a person to dwell on resentments and continue his/her own suffering. If you are feeling the pain of an old hurt, it is you and only you who is continuing the pain, because you are continuing to think of it. Even after the "sorrys" have been said and the behaviour of a loved one has changed, the memory of a past deed can keep the pain alive. But you are doing it to yourself, not the other person.

If, however, an emotional pain keeps reoccurring in the present tense (for example, you repeatedly feel put down), there is a possibility that you may experience a physical reaction of traumatic proportions, that is, a whole body reaction - nausea, quivering, and a need to run away. This is a Post Traumatic Stress Response, and is the reason you may withdraw and remain silent and not engage in the relationship. A person will do anything to avoid such a hideous and painful response. You can become "allergic" to another person, when even the thought of that person or the mention of his/her name, can produce in you an intense physical response. This can result in a bewildering aversion to a person that you at one stage felt close to. Understandably this is not a healthy situation to find yourself in, and often medical or counselling help is required to settle such a reaction.

Goslings International's vision is 100 million successful people worldwide practising ELP by 2010. Our mission is one of education and empowerment; improving emotional skills with ELP. Michael and Karen Gosling help you learn emotional knowledge, understand your emotional style, and develop emotional intelligence. Act now. Join Goslings Global Community at www.goslings.net/echanges/join.htm. Call the Goslings on (65) 6256-7710 or email contact@goslings.net to arrange your personal, executive, or staff emotional leadership practice coaching or counselling consultation, seminar, or speaking engagement that will change your mind and change your life.

Emotion Families

ANGER	FEAR	SADNESS	ENJOYMENT	DISGUST	SURPRISE
-------	------	---------	-----------	---------	----------

High Intensity Emotions

betrayed	desperate	crushed	alive	abused	aghast
controlled	distrustful	dejected	confident	appalled	bewildered
criticised	insecure	disillusioned	determined	betrayed	confounded
deceived	isolated	distraught	energetic	coerced	distracted
furious	intimidated	fragile	excited	humiliated	flabbergasted
hostile	panic-stricken	insecure	indestructible	rejected	flustered
misunderstood	scared	unable to cope	overjoyed	shamed	misinterpreted
outraged	terrified	unloved	powerful	trapped	perplexed
resentful	terrorised	unwanted	secure	used	shocked
revengeful	threatened	vulnerable	trusting	violated	stunned

Medium Intensity Emotions

angry	agitated	alone	accepted	awkward	amazed
attacked	anxious	deflated	capable	burdened	disoriented
bitter	claustrophobic	depressed	content	disrespected	embarrassed
defensive	fearful	discouraged	full of life	guilty	horrified
embarrassed	frightened	drained	happy	jealous	puzzled
excluded	harassed	miserable	healthy	overwhelmed	startled
frustrated	panicky	pathetic	loving	punished	taken aback
indignant	pressured	run down	positive	suspicious	unprepared
irritated	tense	unhappy	relaxed	unloved	unsettled

Low Intensity Emotions

annoyed	afraid	despondent	aglow	disapproved of	astonished
bothered	alarmed	disappointed	bright	distrustful	baffled
cross	concerned	disbelief	bubbly	inferior	bothered
disgruntled	lonely	dismayed	calm	insecure	dazed
distracted	nauseous	down	glad	offended	disappointed
disturbed	shaky	lethargic	good	self-conscious	disconcerted
fed up	unsure	low	joyful	self-righteous	disorganised
troubled	uptight	solemn	light-hearted	unattractive	mixed up
upset	worried	useless	smiling	unimportant	uncertain