

# Emotional Baggage is Toxic

**Emotional baggage is heavy** - How much are you carrying around?

It's the end of the year, and what better time to clear out the old to make room for the new. One of the heaviest bags we carry around is our emotional baggage, our past frustrations, resentments, guilt, anger or regrets. They are heavy, weigh us down, prevent us from moving forward and damage our health and happiness.

Human Behaviour flows from three main sources: desire, emotion and knowledge.

Plato

The source of emotional baggage often comes from conversations we have had; what has been said and what hasn't been said; the meanings we attribute to the conversations; the clashes with our sense of right and wrong, blame, shame and polar beliefs and values.

Communication sits at the base of this, yet too often, people don't speak their truth or ask intelligent questions to seek clarity on what the other person actually meant. Poor communication is the root of most problems and affects everything, from relationships, effectiveness at school, and of course, our relationship with ourself.

Because we are emotional creatures, we often find it hard not to take things personally. Yet, if we realised that everyone is doing the best they can with their resources available and according to their 'rules,' it puts a different perspective on situations. We all interpret things through our unique perspective, yet when we stew on situations, we build up toxic emotional baggage that we carry, sometimes for years or even a lifetime.

Don Miguel Ruiz in his book 'The Four Agreements,' explains this brilliantly. He says:-

***'Don't take it personally, because the truth is that this person is dealing with his or her own feelings, beliefs and opinions. Nothing other people do is because of you. It is because of themselves. That person tried to send poison to you and if you take it personally, then you take that poison and it becomes yours.'***

Wow! So, write down who you haven't forgiven, what things, situations or people you are harbouring resentment, anger or other negative emotions against.

Ask yourself how you would feel if you could forgive them?

If you can't forgive, could you accept it?

What would happen if you accepted that you can't change things outside of your control, yet you can change things within your control, such as the way you feel and how you respond to events?

Learning to let go, opens space for better feelings, more joy, thoughts and new opportunities to enter.

## Key points

Our emotional baggage is toxic, heavy and unhealthy to carry around.

The source of our emotional baggage often comes from conversations we have and the meaning we attribute to them.

Try not to take things personally and assume that everyone is doing the best they can with the resources available to them and according to their 'rules'.

Nothing other people do is because of you. It is because of themselves.

Learning to let go creates space for better feelings.



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