
TAPROOTS

The portion of a plant that descends downward into the deepest place. Emotional taproots are pathways that carry a current stimulus or experience into the earliest places within us.

PERSONAL AXIOMS

1. Everyone has taproots because no human is without suffering in his/her past.
2. When a taproot is touched it causes an involuntary and painful response.
3. It is a great vulnerability to be in the world and not know of your personal taproots (and can place an impossible burden on those around you).

AXIOMS FOR COUPLES

1. Neither you nor your partner will ever be “completely cured” of your taproots.
2. Functional couples adjust their relationships in response to taproots with increasing sensitivity, awareness and tenderness.
3. Loving relationships hold enormous potential for holding and healing the pain of taproots.

WISDOM

1. Your partner is not the cause of your taproot pain because it was there before the relationship began.
2. It is easy to hold your partner responsible for the pain from taproots because it seems to be true.
3. Compassion in response to taproot pain is a sign of healthy function and callousness in those moments is a reason for concern.

GUIDELINES

1. What comes out of your partner’s mouth in a taproot moment is “not personal” but is truth in that moment for your partner.
2. In these “taproot moments” the great challenge is to remain present, warm and curious.
3. No matter how intense the emotional pain from a taproot moment, in and by itself, it does not signal the presence of the survival world.

RULES

1. It is a mortal sin to demean a partner's taproot pain, especially in public, so don't do it.
2. It is an unwinnable battle to blame your partner for your own taproot pain so resist that temptation.
3. It is not enough to apologize when you have touched your partner's taproot pain without true contrition and a determination to change that behavior.

HEALING

1. Learning to give and receive empathy is life changing.
2. Forgiving your own imperfections allows you to do the same for your partner.
3. The more the other's personality is loved and accepted the easier it is for him or her to change harmful behaviors.