

Women use men to destroy themselves

When H.R. came to my office for her psychoanalytical session she was very upset. She had just gotten the news that her friend Rosa was diagnosed with colon cancer. Rosa's son gave H.R. the bad news, warning her that she should say nothing about it to Rosa because the family had decided it was best not to tell their mother about the diagnosis.

My client cried out of sympathy, but at the same time out of fear that the same thing could happen to her. She spoke of how a person could be caught by surprise and have their life transformed by a disease like this. To suffer the pain, the treatment, the side effects, not to mention the danger of imminent death. Apparently bad luck, unhappiness, came to the home of the victim, transforming a happy life, a family that lived well, into a sea of worry and unhappiness. HR's anxiety showed that she saw no relationship between the way that the sick woman lived her life and what was happening to her.

But this was only the way it appeared.

I asked H.R. if Rosa had ever gotten sick before. Yes, she said, she had had a radical hysterectomy some months earlier, and after her recuperation, the cancer returned more severely than before.

As for her personal life, Rosa was very aggressive and impulsive with her family, mainly with her husband, whom she treated with special disdain and aggression. "I feel really sorry for that man, because Rosa often attacked him without motive. And when I told her she ought to treat him better, be more loving, as I do with my husband, she became angry with me. And ironically, she said that her husband was not the saint he appears to be. Sincerely, doctor," said HR, "I think she treats him unfairly, and what's worse, how can she demand that he treat her like a queen if she treats him like a dog? "

When a person becomes seriously ill, it's because the manner that they treat the good in their life is also sick. The good, patient, caring husband is a good thing that Rosa attacked and tried to destroy. She did the same with her children and her femininity, nourishing much envy toward men.

The idea that cancer is "bad luck", a misfortune that comes out of the blue, is wrong. Yet it's a common idea. The person who acquires a serious illness is already on a path of self-destruction and this does not happen suddenly.

All suffering, whether we perceive it or not, is related to our psychopathology.

Another example – client JS, a 52 year old woman, very pretty, in great shape and professionally very successful. An antique dealer, she was a self-made woman, a woman who achieved success as a result of her own efforts. However, she had a history of much unhappiness in her love life.

She had been unhappily married three times. Each time, her husbands were very destructive – they were either violent, lazy, alcoholic or mentally imbalanced.

How could there have been such a dichotomy between her love life and her professional life? Why did she make such disastrous choices in love? In this case, JS' envy was directed toward the possible goodness in her love life. She fed her pathology with the tensions in her love life, not needing to destroy the other areas. On the other hand, being in the company of imbalanced and misadjusted husbands, she could feel “above” them, because her emotional balance was superior. But why did she fail in love if she was so successful, so sharp in other areas? Here is another aspect of envy. If she would have to compare herself to men who were more balanced, she would have to conscientize *her* pathology...

Her social and economic success grew in inverse proportion to her unhappiness in love. Through analysis JS has the opportunity to conscientize her destructive paths so as not to run the risk, after breaking up with her most recent husband, of not making a worse choice, or of not starting to destroy the other areas previously preserved in her life.

An insidious universal envy exists in everything we do, like a monster we shelter inside ourselves and that we feed by destroying the goodness and happiness in our lives.