

The Main Characteristic of Illness is lack of Awareness

From The Origin of Illness, by Norberto Keppe

The main characteristic of illness is the absence of awareness, for the person who has harmful attitudes does not perceive what he is doing. Only the person whose attitudes and action are good is conscious of the harm he causes. Thus, we can say that illness is unconsciousness, lack of awareness; or better, unconsciousness is illness.

Patient: my husband doesn't allow me to move anything in our home. If I move the table even slightly he puts it back in its original place.

Analyst: What do you associate your husband's attitude with?

Patient: Not wanting any change for the better.

Analyst: Not accepting the perception of a rigid, sick attitude.

Whether in its healthy or pathological aspect, we have difficulty seeing life the way it really is – and mainly the goodness life has to offer.

Patient: Yesterday I became irritated with my husband. He didn't make the deliveries for our business with the excuse that he didn't have time. But even worse, he is always criticizing me.

Analyst: Your husband's inactivity shows how he sabotages the business and your censorship of his attitude shows your sabotage.

Patient: I don't see that attitude in myself, even though my family is incredibly censoring. What I don't like to see is how I'm constantly being reprimanded.

Analyst: Then at this moment are you censoring your perception?

Censorship is a Gordian knot in the life of the human being because first, it prevents us from seeing our problems; and second, if we're unaware, how can we become aware of our unawareness. This is why it is necessary to enlist the help of a trained psychoanalyst. As the saying goes: no one can be his own judge and jury.