

# The many gifts of crying

by **Connie Brisson**

No one cried in my house. You could get as angry as you wanted, but there was no crying where I grew up. In fact, to me, there was nothing worse than crying. It was a sign of doom - that something was irreparably wrong.

I only have two memories of my Mom crying. Once was when she found out that her brother, Tony, had died in a farming accident. I was only about seven or eight. It was the first time I had ever seen her cry and it scared me more than anything. I don't remember my Dad crying either. I'm not sure why, but I took this as a clear sign that crying was not good or right. If someone cried, the world was coming to an end. Therefore, one must never cry.

And I didn't... ever. If there were a few tears, it was an involuntary response to physical pain. But I never cried because I was sad or hurt or in response to any of my many emotions. I just learned to bury those things deep, deep inside, thinking that ignoring them was the only way to handle them.

How did that work out for me? Not so good. Not only did I not know how to handle the many things that life handed me over the years, but my inability to process them, internally and externally, lead to a sort of vacuum inside of me. Whether I liked what was happening to me or not, I knew how to vacuum it up and lock it away deep inside. Or so I thought...

I was in my late 20's when the inevitable tsunami hit. I had moved away to another city for a job, but something happened inside of me that, looking back, I would call a mini break-down. I sat in my apartment and when I started to cry, I could not stop. I called my brother Gene that night and he talked to me for hours and hours and I cried all that time. It was like a dam had broken loose inside of me and even Noah couldn't have saved me from the flood of my own tears. I cried, sporadically and intensely, for about a week. Everyone was worried about me, but honestly, no one more than me.

But that one reckless week with my new friend, Crying, changed me forever. I didn't know what happened, didn't understand it at all, but by the end of that week, something inside of me began to calm. I discovered that I could cry, could go into my deepest, darkest abysses and not only survive, I even found some serenity there.

I discovered that crying is cleansing, cathartic. It heals our souls. It goes into those tiny, dark spaces in us and washes away all that is wounded and sad. It nourishes the places in us that are dry and hopeless. It isn't the enemy, but our friend.

Years later, as I began to consciously work on myself, I took many classes. But in a particular chakra class that Catherine Potter was teaching, I had another amazing crying experience/release that could not help but change me forever. I cried so hard that I could barely breathe but when it was over, there was a quiet peacefulness inside of me, like a silent church.

I cried like that again the night my Mom died. By the time I drove three hours to get to her in the hospital, only to find out that she was already dead, I sounded like a wounded animal as I cried over her body. I had NOT wanted her to die without me there. It broke my heart. I cried ALL night and I let myself... because by then I knew that raw emotion that is caged inside, hidden away, can only hurt you. I knew I had to let my pain and grief out in order to heal.

I've cried like this many times, especially over these last 13 years since I've come to understand the mind/body/spirit connection and consciously work at healing my wounds instead of hiding them. And the irony is that the thing that I once dreaded the most, is now the thing that I am so thrilled with when it occasionally still comes to visit me.

Now when I have these deep emotional cries, there is a part of me sobbing my heart out, and then there is this other part of me that is clapping its hands, so happy that I am releasing whatever is hurtful and wounded in me. Now I know that crying is a gift. I know that I will be lighter (both emotionally and physically) afterwards. I know that I will be happier after releasing whatever has burdened me. I know this cry will change my life for the better and that I will find more peace, inside of me, and in the world.

I've had many friends in my life, but one that I've learned to really cherish over time is Crying. Thank you for your many gifts.

*Connie*



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