

Depression - Emotional Disconnection

I once suggested to a depressed gentleman by the end of our first session that he was depressed primarily because his relationships (with his wife, children and extended family) were very disconnected. I also observed that he had no close friend that he could call on in a crisis. In each session thereafter, he talked about the need for organization in his life, his lack of motivation, and poor self-esteem, among other things. He talked little about how he might change his behavior to increase emotional connection in his primary relationships. He seemed uninterested in how the distance in his family of origin may be impacting his current relationships. He remained depressed. During most sessions, I brought him back to his presenting problem, which was that **he lacked the things that bring any happiness in life**- deep emotional connections with a few significant people whom he served and from whom he received. I let him know that pursuing more organization or a higher self-esteem may bring improvements. However, I stressed that deep, lasting healing would only come from the hard work of building relationship- connections wherein he felt comfortable serving, as well as telling the secrets of the past, the raw thoughts and feelings of today, and wherein he felt safe to be wrong. After enough sessions of our coming back to this reality, he began to get the picture. And, as soon as he began his journey into emotional connection, his depression began to lift.