**Who Hurt You?**

**J.R. Mahon’s quick and dirty guide to getting through Hurt**

**Your Life’s Work**

**www.jrmahon.com**

We do horrible things to each other. We kill, maim, rape. lie and tear the human spirit apart. It’s the ugly part of being human.

Dealing with hurt and pain will be an ongoing journey with your life's work.

I won't take your experience away, nor do I want to minimize the feelings you are dealing with. What you've been through is your story and the pain is very real. With that… what do we do with that pain?

We tend to carry the hurt and pain through our life, creating a justifiable excuse for anger and outrage, making every experience “post” pain about the pain. Recycling into a self-righteous anger that intoxicates and comforts us. It allows us to take our hands off feelings and stay focused on feelings that are far more comfortable than dealing with the brokenness of pain which conjure up a multitude of feelings from shame, guilt, fear and the list goes on and on. In our anger, we point to someone else every time the wheels seem to come off the tracks or we are met with another painful experience. “It’s not my fault, it’s theirs,” becomes our new mantra. The bitter irony is this behavior, left unchecked, simply creates more hurt and pain, leading to shame, guilt, addictions, non-trust, ambivalence and ultimately a life lead in bitterness.

**“Anger needs to carry for a season, not for a lifetime.”**

**What to do:**

We can stay pissed or exercise the feelings that come alongside hurt and pain. To exercise means we will produce activity requiring effort to understand and form a new consciousness about the feelings that plague us. Again, definitely your life’s work. You will begin by understanding the value of the pain and what it has done to you. Not the person or situation, but what is going on inside of you. Identify the feelings. Are you mad, sad, alone, fearful, ashamed? Each one needs a look and a positive I.D. so you don't become lost in emotions, which is possible, and frankly easy to do.

**Ask yourself, “What are you feeling?”**

**Here's a list of possible feelings to identify:**

* **Fear**
* **Anger**
* **Loneliness**
* **Guilt**
* **Shame**
* **Sadness**
* **Embarrassment**

Once you've identified the feelings, stay present with the emotions or at least try to. Being present means you will have to start taking responsibility for what is going on inside of you, and yes it’s a pain in the ass, but the more you exercise and take ownership of the emotions, the better you will feel.

**The Practicality:**

1. Talk, talk, talk … being present and taking responsibility means you talk! Step into the line of fire by simply opening up about those feelings that are kicking your butt and keeping you angry. Anchor yourself to talking to a trusted and wise friend. That person needs to be invested in your life, preferably someone with a bit of distance to your painful situation… someone who is not going to simply help keep the pain alive by cheerleading with,“you're right” and, “the other guys an asshole!” You need someone who can see the wisdom in exercising the emotions in you while helping you into the future.
2. Community … most people will not want to be around anyone after a very painful situation, but keeping close to people helps keep you away from constantly living in angry energy, which does nothing but produce more anger. Community is hard, but such a necessary exorcism of angry energy.
3. Faith… help yourself by connecting to love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness. All of these words have loaded complications when it comes to the person who hurt you. Why would you want to find love, mercy, grace or forgiveness for anyone who hurts you? I agree, but we are looking for freedom from hurt and anger. We are looking for liberation and faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. In other words, we start to believe getting past the hurt is possible and this is accomplished by understanding the wisdom of a faith living in you and around you. For the record, God knows you are hurt and angry. He would never deny you your hurt and wants you liberated from its grasp.

**Four great ways to exercise faith**

1. **Pray for the person who hurt you.**
2. **Invite God into the pain. Tell God what happened and tell him what it feels like.**
3. **Contemplate what forgiving the person would look like and try to see a future where you are not living with the pain.**
4. **Work with a Spiritual Director to identify how personal transformation can lead to freedom through forgiveness.**

**Responsibility:**

Move into a position of recognizing what happened. Allow “it” to have happened to you. Feeling shame or even embarrassment is normal after being hurt. Most of us think we shouldn't have been so stupid or naive to have been taken advantage of but we must allow the hurt to have its day, remembering we are seeking liberation from the pain and that means knowing it happened and knowing the offense doesn't have to own us. So, look deep inside and know no one feeling has to dominate you or your life. Know your feelings and own them.

**Forgiveness:**

“What? Forgive the asshole who hurt me?” Yes! And that means the exercising gets a bit harder because you have to look at yourself. I am not talking about forcing yourself back into the relationship that hurt you. that never has to happen. Forgiveness is the ultimate liberator. Forgiveness releases you from the weight of pain and hurt, freeing you to love. Again, hard...and your life’s work. To do so means you must dive deep and examine what you’d be giving up if you forgive and what the future looks like free from that person. It might be you don't want to. And that's where the rubber hits the road. Can you allow yourself the space to live free from the offense, free from the asshole, free from hurt and pain!? Ultimately will you let hurt take root in your life, never allowing anyone to live up to the massive perfect expectations you've created as a result of the pain. Forgiveness saves us from a life of bitterness, but forgiveness requires you to love in ways perhaps presently you simply can't grasp, and that's o.k. for now. But you must be willing to give it a go.

**The future:**

I’ve seen the future and guess what? You will be hurt again. It's inevitable. Coming to terms with being hurt is key and accepting that may be difficult but necessary. People will let you down especially those closest to you. Does that mean you don't trust or you pull back from every relationship? No. It means we all fall short of perfection and that's being human... less than perfect, thank God. What burden it would be to maintain perfection. Take every expectation you have for another and clear the table while opening yourself to love. Love that has boundaries, love that seeks more forgiveness and gives forgiveness, love that has mercy and for God’s sake, love that knows we are less than perfect.

**Be love, own love and seek to love:**

When you are cut off from love you will hurt others. Love wants to build and restore more love, that's how you know you are hitting the target with the relationships around you.

**If you know someone who has been hurt:**

* Don't... push them to “move on.”
* Do... love them with your ears, allow them to vent and process the hurt - ask questions about the hurt and pain.
* Don't... tell them to pray more.
* Do... encourage an inward look at the feelings involved and ask your friend to invite God into those feelings
* Don’t... take sides. You are not a judge or jury for your friend. Side taking leads to more justifiable anger and new resentment.
* Do… encourage healing by helping people see hope in the future.
* Don’t... set a metric of time to “get over it.”
* Do… encourage progress rather than perfection.

**About J.R. Mahon**

**Life Coach, Mentor and Certified Spiritual Director.**

The most successful people I know have “somebody.” Someone who knows them. Someone who shoots straight, always pushes forward, won't take any crap and encourages the best.

I’ve been that “somebody” for years. I have a unique gift to open people up, helping them quickly see what is and what isn't. I have a direct and honest approach. It's who I am, and I've learned it serves people well. I move people to higher levels of awareness for the best possible growth, both personally and professionally.

I can help. Call today to book a session - 619.964.0337

[www.jrmahon.com](http://www.jrmahon.com)

jr@jrmahon.com

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