

Pain + Time

May 8, 2013

There is a saying in comedy: pain + time = comedy. Just this morning I remembered a story a friend told me. When he and his wife separated many years ago, his 20-something daughter called him and said, "I will never speak to you again as long as I live." Five minutes later she called back and said, "I just want to make sure you're not going to kill yourself or something." Not funny at the time, not at all. But now that he is back in her good graces, it is a touching and funny memory.

I am on a plane headed to Hawaii, listening to a music channel they provide. A song from my teenage years played, Bob Dylan's *Like a Rolling Stone*.



Oh, what memories it evoked. It was the summer before 10th grade and I was at a dance with my friends. Joe Sances asked me to slow dance to the Dylan song. Dancing is probably a stretch. Mostly we swayed to the music with our arms draped around each other. We were so close I could smell the soap he had washed with. As I hugged his back I felt his sweat under my palms and prayed he didn't feel mine. I could feel his breath as we surreptitiously repositioned our cheeks against each other's, edging closer to each other's lips.

Thankfully, it was a public dance so there were no nuns to separate us because I promise you they would have put an end to this before Dylan got to the first "How does it feel?" Joe and I pressed against each other tighter as each stanza played. And, because there is a God, the song lasted six whole minutes! Oh, joy. That night Joe walked me home and kissed me. I could hear the angels sing.



It was a short-lived romance with much pain when we broke up. I cried inconsolably for a week. For years I only remembered the pain. But today, listening to Dylan while I relived those six minutes of magic, I realized that what I have left is the sweet memory of my first sexual stirrings and the music that cemented it into my mind.

Pain + Time = Bittersweet Memories.

The Law of Attraction says you get more of what you focus on. For more than two decades, whenever I heard *Like a Rolling Stone*, it triggered within me feelings of pain. Thankfully, enough time has passed for me to both remember and focus on the wonderful awakening this classic song was for me. The pain is now a memory without feeling, like something I once read in a book.

Much of our past *can* be rewritten. All it takes is time and re-focus.

What memory do you have that was once a source of pain and is now your own bittersweet memory or something you laugh about?

What painful experience are you holding onto that *could* be transformed?