



By Silver Rose

I think one of the more difficult situations to handle in life is how to respond when you are disappointed by something someone has done. You can usually tell someone has disappointed you if you are feeling one or all of the following emotions when you think about him or her: anger, outrage, hurt or sadness.

Yesterday we held a memorial service for my dear friend Gayna who lost a horrific battle with metastatic breast cancer.

One of the “themes” of what people said about Gayna is that she had great expectations for the people she loved. She sure did. She did not suffer fools gladly and if she liked you, it was because she respected you and thought you were up for a “bigger game” in life than most people play. When you only see the best in people, you are likely to be disappointed from time to time, and she was.

The lesson to be learned about Passionate Self Care from Gayna is that she never adjusted her own personality to accommodate anyone else’s unresolved issues. What do I mean by that? Well, Gayna was very direct. If you reacted negatively to something she said, she was willing to discuss it with you and make sure there was no misunderstanding but she never filtered your negative reaction to mean that there was something wrong with how she communicates. She knew your reaction was your responsibility, not hers.

As someone who has been trying to recover from “people pleasing,” I cannot help but admire that. To take a stand that we are each responsible for our own reactions to things takes lots of courage. It is saying, “I will be responsible for taking care of my emotions; you are responsible for taking care of yours.”

The people who were willing to live that way flourished around Gayna. I can tell you that I am a better person after hanging out with her these last three years and others who stood up and shared at her Memorial said the same about themselves. She held out a mirror to me and let me see that I get to choose how I interpret disappointments.

As I’ve traveled through life, the people I meet who are the most spiritual are the ones who have suffered most. As a wise person once said, “Religion is for people who don’t want to go to hell; spirituality is for people who have been there.” Gayna had suffered greatly in her life and she lived with fear every day. Because of that, whenever people

Passionate Self Care

When People Disappointment

disappointed her, (and she felt hurt very deeply) she eventually would say, “They’re just afraid.” I learned from her that hurt people hurt people.

This past week I’ve thought a lot about how weird death is. One day a person is here and the next they are gone. I realize that the test of what you’ve left behind is how often people think about you after. I know Gayna will be in my thoughts for years and that she has and will continue to impact how I live my life.

What a gift.