

20 Days of Trouble

Topic #8 – Drama

Textbook Def:

A situation or succession of events in real life having the dramatic progression or emotional characteristic of a play; the quality of being dramatic.*

Real-Life Look:

Barbie is always stirring up trouble. She's the first to tell you everything about everyone and enjoys getting credit for it. She's got no shame at all. But it's more than just gossip, which is bad enough. It's a craving to insert herself into the most dysfunctional situations and fuel them along. I haven't heard any helpful suggestions or sage advice, yet instead have just witnessed a bunch of kerosene being dumped on the fires.

There are people who don't want to fix things, but they sure want to talk about their problems over and over again. I've dubbed them 'Professional Victims'. This description fits Eric to a 'T'. He has no interest in 'fixing', just in complaining, and listening to him is getting really old. Perhaps if he put his best foot forward and made a serious attempt to right the ship, he'd have less to complain about, but as a professional victim, this clearly isn't his goal.

We all make mistakes, right? The difference is some people are more interested in learning from their mistakes than others. I'm not trying to be mean, but I just have no tolerance for people, like Penny, who cause their own issues. You know the saying, "Making the same mistake more than once is a choice." Grrr!

Every family has a busybody; a nosey member... or two. In our family, it's Aunt Ruth. She sits on the phone, going from one victim to another, stirring up a big ole' pot of trouble. Unfortunately, she's got nothing better to do, or more accurately, she doesn't choose to do anything better.

I feel so bad for Anne. She's down on her luck and really needs help. The problem is she's actually got a great support system already in place, but she still doesn't seem to be making any forward progress. I'm starting to wonder if she's intentionally creating some of her own issues for attention.

Sword of the Spirit:

“and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life; You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.” 1 Thes 4:11-12

“Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone.” Titus 3:1

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.” Matthew 5:3

Breaking It Down:

The textbook definition above just sounds so benign, doesn't it? You can be a mini-movie star with a lead role in your very own production. How very exciting! Stage, lights, center of attention... Perhaps you're playing a supporting role and are there to bolster the main actors? Well done you! Every character is vital in a full blown drama.

We all know, however, *there's nothing exciting or fun about drama in real life*. It's often time-consuming, exhausting, unhelpful, and destructive.

We jokingly call our home the 'Drama Free Zone', but the truth is, we aren't joking. We desperately try to keep drama at bay. If you're going to cross the threshold of our humble abode, leave the drama behind. It's not welcome.

To be clear, there's a significant difference between someone who is genuinely concerned about another person, and someone who is more intent on starting trouble, or at the very least, pushing it along. There are those who are doing their level best and are in need of assistance, and others who choose to remain stuck. It doesn't take much to figure out who is who.

Try as we might, my husband and I aren't always successful in distinguishing between the two. Sometimes it's hindsight that provides the clearest view, but we are fast learners and generally don't make the same mistake twice.

By far and large, I just don't have the time, patience, or desire to devote to the drama that I used to, and for that I am grateful. Conversations, that in the past would have captured my undivided attention, are now nothing more than an annoying waste of time. Most of the time, I just don't want to hear about em'.

It takes a disciplined effort to combat temptation and there are many pitfalls to avoid:

- The feeling of being needed
- Being the center of attention
- The desire to be the first to know, or even, just to be 'in the know'
- Surrounding yourself with drama in an effort to feel better about your own life
- Allowing yourself to get sucked into the drama of it all

It also takes growth. The older I've gotten and the more I've grown, the less patience I have for stupidity, victim mentality, and time wasters. Again, this doesn't mean I wouldn't help someone in need, and I'm always praying, but I aspire to make healthy, positive choices and I'm careful where I invest my personal resources.

The Benefit in Decluttering Trouble:

Most of us complain there just isn't enough time in a day. Life is full and our personal resources are often tapped out. We don't have the luxury of wasting time, energy, and emotions, especially when the end result isn't beneficial to anyone involved. If this describes you, it's time to declutter drama! What will you gain?

Release from obligation – The less drama you're involved in, the less obligation you'll feel to help those who are center stage.

Trust – Your witness and walk is evident in your actions. Gain trust with those around you by not participating in negative behavior. For those who matter, it matters!

Breathability – Drama is suffocating. You'll breathe deeper and easier when it's removed.

Time and energy – If your resources aren't being sucked dry with unnecessary stuff, you'll have more of your precious commodities to spend on the things that truly need your attention. Say no so you can say yes!

Decluttering drama isn't always easy. Satan seeks to gain a stronghold in our lives and will use any means at his disposal to do so. The point? He wouldn't bother if drama wasn't harmful. Keep drama out of your life and on the stage where it belongs.

*thefreedictionary.com

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