

## Resentments

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knowledgeed resentment can go underground where it is put on a shelf, much like one of my aunt's pantries where she would put up Mason jars of vegetables and fruit from her garden. They just sat there until she needed them, and then voila, in the middle of winter, she would pull out a jar of strawberries and plopp them on the table. Resentments can be like that sometimes... when we least expect it, our partner may grab them from their dark shelves and plopp them on the table, right in front of us."

This shelf filled with bottles of poison feelings blocks me off from Spirit, creating stress, fear, anxiety, and foreboding. My personal relationships become stale, my body feels tired, my work suffers, and life feels complicated and heavy.

All recovery programs use the "inventory" metaphor when speaking of resentments, stressing the importance of clearing the

shelves of damaged goods. A business that does not do a routine inventory always goes broke. The human mind, no matter how much spiritual knowledge it has, will go broke if there are jars of old resentments left on the mental shelves. This is a universal law and you can literally bet your peace of mind and personal prosperity on it. Old resentments left un-inventoried deteriorate and block me off from the sunlight of Spirit. The results are depression, outrageous eruptions, cynicism, bitterness, inconsideration, dulled feelings and a vague sense of sadness and uselessness to others. This is the least understood and neglected aspect of modern spirituality.

### The National Department of Resentments

If we do not have a regular, daily practice of clearing the shelves, we are spiritually bankrupt sooner rather than later. This ruins personal peace, families, businesses, churches and whole civilizations. I would love to see our presidential candidates discuss their policies on resolving resentments in addition to their economic and defense policies. How many

world problems are the result of shelves filled with unresolved resentments? Why don't we develop a National Department of Resentment Resolution for our citizenry? Why is this not part of our public educational curriculum?

### How I Resolve Resentments

On a piece of paper, I make five columns. In column one I write down which of the four basic human instincts has been threatened and who threatened me:

**1. Pleasure:** Jill threatened my self fulfillment and happiness.

**2. Prestige:** Greg threatened my self-esteem or image.

**3. Power:** Susan got in the way of me controlling a situation in my life.

**4. Purpose:** Harry blocked me from expressing my values and contributing my gifts and talents to life.

In column two, I write out the feeling my "ego-self" experienced. It is usually fear, sadness, or anger: "When Jill threatened my self image in front of my fellow employees, I was hurt, angry, afraid for my reputation."

In column three, I honestly and searchingly

write out where I am responsible for the situation: "I have gossiped about Jill, never did like her much and never said anything to her after she did what she did."

In column four, I look for recurring selfish character flaws that have caused me to have similar experiences in the past: "I often obsess about my self-image and how I must be perceived as perfect, brilliant, and right."

In column five, I ask Spirit to give me the ability to resolve this situation; and secondly, perhaps most importantly, pray for the person who has offended me. Pray for them to receive what I most want for myself: "I pray that Jill will be filled with peace and joy. I pray that she will be successful at work and connected to others in a way that allows her to have a rich, full life."

*Michael Bogar, MDiv, ThM, believes we are on this planet to make souls; he utilizes scholarship, humor, honesty, and practical application in his writings, seminars, classes and workshops. You can find out more about Michael's work at [www.michaelbogard.com](http://www.michaelbogard.com)*




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**Kim Miller**  
(206) 353-5600  
[www.kimmillermedium.com](http://www.kimmillermedium.com)  
kimmillermedium  
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