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The joy in letting go

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Two colleagues were arguing about the pain that each of them had felt at a certain exchange of words between them. The conversation seemed to have reached an impasse. A senior colleague, who was also present during the exchange, interrupted the conversation and asked the two warring colleagues to let go. He said that in letting go, there is victory and not defeat.

The truth of this struck me, for I realised that any conversation which is suffused with blame, judgment, acrimony and retribution can never be resolved unless one of the two involved is willing to let go.

Letting go is not a defeatist stand but a respectful stance that one takes towards the other. When I stop the infraction that is taking place between another and me, by telling myself that it is okay if I don't win, I, in effect, release myself from having to justify or explain myself to the other. By dropping the arguments, I am simply telling the other person that we should focus on the issue and not on the personalities behind the conflict.

In so doing, I create possibilities of continuing the dialogue, perhaps even strengthening our relationship and rebuilding harmony. Letting go is not a sign of vulnerability, but is a demonstration of triumph.

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