



Reeling: Part 1

The Compliment



From June:

It would be nice to get a phone call from you. I am really hurting these days.

From April:

I'm really sorry you're down.

If we didn't have this history of my seeming to make things worse for you after talking, I'd be more of a support that you could lean on. I don't want to make you feel worse, but this is what happens- often- despite my best intentions.

Just know I wish you were feeling better, and I hope you can find something to do (workwise) that can lift your spirits as well as bring in some income.

From June:
I understand.

I am just more down and out than I've ever been. Losing that job did a number on me.

And I also had a nasty email exchange with my former coworker, Angelica. I'll tell you more about that another time...but suffice to say she is a complete ignorant, nasty piece of white trash.

I am going to try to get some sleep now.
I hope you are doing well.



From April:

I'm surprised you're still in touch with Angelica. Based on everything you told me I didn't think she'd be someone you'd continue to communicate with.

From June:

I did not keep in touch with Angelica. And I would not have ever contacted her again...but another coworker told me that she had gossiped about me... which he should not have...

And that made my blood boil.

So, I wrote her an email. And then she wrote back.


However, her return email has NOTHING to do with what I'd written her. She just wanted to put me down (like she did when we worked together) and make me feel bad.



From June:

She LOVED to play Freud with everyone, including me - and LOVED to think that she actually had the right qualifications to analyze people.

April, forgive me for what I am about to say - but Angelica is nothing but a white trash junkie, and that is all she will EVER be. She may have quit drugs, but she did NOT quit being a f-ing a-hole to people.



From June:

Here is the exchange between us.

This was what I wrote to her...

Hey there Angelica,

I recently heard through the grapevine that you were overheard gossiping about me to a coworker when I worked with you. Just to refresh your memory, you and I were hired to be a team. We both had strengths that the other did not have... and the company wanted us to work well together and help each other out when necessary. Rather than help me in any way, you hampered me and made my life miserable.

From June:

This is what I also wrote to Angelica...

Whenever I went to you with normal, intelligent questions, you were the opposite of kind (which surprised me, as you'd often professed to be a good, NON-JUDGEMENTAL Christian). You'd demean me and make me feel stupid on a regular basis.

You are a big part of the reason I left.



From June:

Here was Angelica's response:

June, I will not engage with you. I pray you find peace; you are not well and have not been well for quite some time. Stop messaging me- this is a pattern of yours and all it does is push people farther away from you. I am not qualified to deal with you now, nor do I have the time.



From June:

Hey there, April,

I am still reeling from getting fired.

But I've gotten TONS of feedback on my FB post, and at least 10 people sent me PMs or called me. I've been on the phone ALL day and evening. It's such a comfort during a time like this.

From June:

I know I shouldn't bring up SJ. And I am doing well moving forward from her... But this job thing reminded me of the way she'd treated me for so long. Loved me one minute. Hated me the next. Classic narcissist behavior.

I really don't think the loss of this job had anything to do with me. I think it was all about them and their weirdness. I hope that in time, they regret their decision.

Well, have a nice evening.

Hugs



From April:

Are you looking for a new job now?

I'm heading into work now. I hope you have a good day and start feeling better.

From June:

I applied for unemployment benefits today. Hopefully, I will get approved for a few hundred dollars per week. That would take a lot of pressure off - as I am too distraught to start job-hunting right now.

I am totally demoralized. I'm not sure I will ever get over this. I've been through too much horrible treatment from people... and I am feeling like I must be such a horrible person that I don't even deserve to live.

Anything you could say or write to make me feel like a good human being would be much appreciated.




From April:

You're a unique and special person who tries very hard for people and you're deserving of better treatment than what you've gotten.

People can be very cruel, and I think if you reach out and hear other people's stories it'll make you realize that you're not alone.

From June:





From April:
Just checking in. I haven't heard
from you in a few days.



From June:

Well, "unique and special" is nice...
but "wonderful and kind" would be
better. LOL I hope you DO think that
way of me, otherwise you shouldn't
be my friend.

From April:



From June:

Hey there...please don't take my last email as me trying to instigate any kind of argument. It had occurred to me that you never describe me as being kind, good, caring, and so forth...so it got me thinking that maybe you honestly don't feel that way about me. I have used words like that to describe you...but the most I've gotten from you over the years is that you "love and care about me." And your recent use of the words "unique and special" can also apply to BAD people. Those words didn't do anything to make me feel loved and accepted.



From June:

I just got a lovely email from my apartment complex friend, in which she described me as: Beautiful inside and out, kind, intelligent and loving. You have never used terms like this.



From June:

I need to know - yes or no (no beating around the bush) whether you feel in your heart that I am a good, kind person. Have you been reluctant to use these adjectives on me due to past pain I've caused you? If so, then you probably shouldn't be my friend. Why would anyone want to be friends with someone they did not deem good and kind?

Thanks,
June



From April:

To answer your question, and if I'm to be honest, sometimes when you're upset, you write and say things to me that are not easy for me to read or hear. I don't know why, and I don't think you know why either, but you've admitted to lashing out at the people who are closest to you, and who you know care about you.

From June:

There have been plenty of times when I've written hurtful emails because I have been hurt by you, and I was reacting. Even after a 20-year friendship, it's hard for me to get you to take responsibility for being wrong and hurtful yourself at times. I understand, because most people on this planet do not enjoy admitting their mistakes and flaws. And, unfortunately, you still do have a problem with constructive criticism, April, and this makes it really tough for me to get you to admit when you've been hurtful and caused me a great deal of pain.

From April:



From June:

The more I read this, the more unfair I think it is. I had asked you why YOU never said that I was a good/kind/loving person - not everyone else in my world. The evidence is, you are the only one of my friends who does not describe me as a wonderful, good, caring person. But your answer was "global." You stated that I "lash out **at the people** who care about me or are closest to me." And that is just NOT true. (The only other person I'd lashed out at when drinking was my mother...but she, being a good little narcissist, would always goad me into hurt and angry feelings - and even my sister saw that when we were all together, and she jumped to my defense).



From June:

I'd asked for YOUR feelings...but instead you presented alleged factual information. However, even if you WERE stating facts about me, how can you write something like that when I am already as down as possible, due to getting fired from a job I'd really wanted??? ***Why would you do that?*** Are you TRYING to make me feel worse about myself than I already feel?

From April:





From June:

Hey there, my lovely,

Look. I apologize profusely for using the “c” word, and ALL other hurtful language with you in emails and/or texts. I promise ever to stoop so low again. If I am tempted to use hateful language, I will refrain from writing anything at all. Hopefully, over time, trust will build up again.



From June:

An old college friend contacted me the other day by FB chat. We were inseparable...and for some reason, never, EVER argued. We'd sometimes bicker over broadcast stuff - like how best to shoot a story...but we never were estranged for any reason. That could be because our basic outlooks on life were the same. Our ethics and morals lined up perfectly.

From June:

Who knows what makes some friendships more successful than others? I just can't figure it out. She and I came from the exact same (conservative Catholic) world. You and I came from different worlds. Maybe that's part of it.

But that said, I still want to work on our (your and my) friendship. We've gone through too much at this point to just discard it.

Please respond when you get a spare moment. I know how busy you are, but I'd love to hear your thoughts on all this.

I do love and care about you!

From June:

And I think you are a wonderful, kind person - in addition to being unique and special!



Reeling: Part 2

The Opinion

From June:


Need your opinion on something ASAP. I just had a war of words with my sister via email.

We have different opinions on the suspect in the Georgia school shooting. While we both think that what happened was heinous and unforgivable, I have sympathy and empathy for this kid because he had a HORRENDOUS homelife AND was BULLIED mercilessly by his peers.



From June:

My sister has been spending enormous time and energy trying to convince me that I should not feel anything but hatred toward the suspect. Am I not entitled to my opinion??? I have tried to explain that I cannot help feeling sorry for victims of bullying, due to what I went through as a young teenager. But she continues to hound me about it.



From June:

Did I handle it okay? As I learn more self-love and self-respect, I am not so inclined to agree with my sister just to make her like and accept me more. I am working hard at not caring as much...and valuing my OWN thoughts and opinions on things. Isn't that a good thing?

How do YOU feel about the Georgia suspect?
Do you think it is understandable that I would feel some sympathy for him?

From April:

I knew the shooting was related to bullying the same day it happened, before seeing a picture of him or hearing his backstory. That day I was texting with my friend, and she was focusing on the purchase of guns and gun control being the main issue. I wrote, "Get people to treat each other with more kindness. So many of these shootings happen because of bullying." So, I had a strong suspicion.




From April:


As you know, kindness and compassion are important to me, and I often feel there's a lack of these things and this can lead to bad things. That said, there's no justification for violence.

From June:





From April:
Yeah, so. Those
are my thoughts.





From June:


But my intention was NOT to "justify"
this kid's actions! I merely have
EMPATHY for a suffering boy!

Whatever his background, I agree with
you that there is NO justification for
killing. I made that perfectly clear to my
sister. Did I not make it clear enough to
YOU?



From April:

You asked me for my opinion about the Georgia suspect, and I gave it to you. I wrote that I suspected it had to do with bullying, and I wrote about the importance of kindness and compassion.






From June:

But you went sideways on me, as you often do. You did not answer my questions head-on. You took the discussion in another (sideways) direction. This is why I tend to get frustrated with you sometimes.



From June:

I asked you if you thought I was right to express my opinion (and stick with it) to my sister, even though she had a totally different opinion. You never came close to answering that question.



From April:

This is what you asked me:

“How do YOU feel about the Georgia suspect? Do you think it is understandable that I would feel some sympathy for him?”




From April:

I gave you my answer about how I felt about the Georgia shooting suspect, in that I was pretty sure it was in response to bullying, and this was before I got any facts about him. Then I wrote there's no justification for that kind of violence. That was my answer, and I thought it was sufficient and not going sideways. I thought it was obvious what I meant.



From April:

If you want elaboration, while I understand where the anger is coming from, I can't imagine feeling anger to the point of doing what this person did. Hurting people hurt people is a phrase people like to use, and I've used it myself. But this isn't a phrase that I stand behind. Two wrongs don't make a right.



From April:

I would have sympathy for this person had they not taken their pain and caused the deaths of four people. The action of this person and people who do what he did loses me. He needed to get help.

From June:

Thank you for elaborating...however, I also asked you if you thought I had a right to express my opinion to my sister. And I sent you an exchange between her and me - in which she accused me of bullying and baiting her into changing her mind. Do you see my comments (in our exchange) as trying to force her into changing her opinion?

From April:

You have a right to express your opinion on anything. But if it's going to turn into a "war of words" then someone (either you or her) is likely doing some bullying or trying too hard to convince the other person she is right. A healthy debate is one thing. But an email argument is another. You'll have to re-read what you guys wrote to each other and figure out if one or both of you wasn't being respectful.



From June:

You didn't answer me. Did YOU think I was bullying her in that exchange??? Her main objection was when I sent a segment of an article about the suspect being bullied. Was I **WRONG** to send that? I only did it to explain my opinion - **NOT** to change her mind.



From April:

She explained how she feels, being a teacher, and that emotions are high. You need to pay attention to what she wrote and understand you may have hit a nerve. You weren't wrong in sending it to her, but now that you know she's sensitive about it, you might want to rethink sending something like that again if there's another school shooting and the shooter has a history of bullying.



From June:

Okay - fair enough. However, I am ALSO very sensitive to the whole bullying issue. And it hit a nerve with ME, too - albeit a different nerve. I DO feel sorry for the suspect, I cannot help it. He had a horrible home life and a horrible school life. The kid was doomed. And it breaks my heart for him.



From April:

I think you missed what I wrote in my original email about the importance of kindness and compassion.

From June:

No, I didn't miss it. I was just more focused on the unfair accusations my sister was making of me. She literally accused ME of "bullying" and "baiting" her into changing her mind...and that could not be further from the truth. I think it was REALLY wrong and unfair for her to say that to me. I thought you might have been a lot more on "my side" in this.



From April:

I don't take sides, June. I try to give you an honest opinion and you rarely seem OK with that.

From June:

Because I do feel that I get mistreated by certain people - but you rarely seem to see that. Even when I was blatantly BETRAYED by my high school friend, Jim (and cut him out of my life), you emailed something about "maybe trying to work things out with him" because he was such an old friend.

SERIOUSLY??? WTF!

Some of your "not taking sides" feels like you ARE taking sides - the other person's rather than mine. And I cannot for the life of me understand it.



From April:

I've explained many times where I'm coming from. I approach life differently from you. No matter how many email discussions we have it's not going to change who I am versus who you are and how we both look at people and deal with situations. We are similar in some respects, but very different (polar opposites maybe) in other respects. And I'm sure that's why we have as many conflicts as we do.



From June:

My sister was being adamant about having NO sympathy for the suspect. I sent that article segment - ***just to show her my reasons for empathizing with the kid.*** How the HELL could that be perceived as BULLYING???



From April:

Bullying is when you won't stop trying to make the other person do or say something that fits what you want to see or hear. We all have to be careful of doing that. That's what makes the difference between a healthy debate or discussion and an argument.



From June:

I'm sorry, but your "approach" to my various relationship issues is f-d up. You have literally ENCOURAGED me to find ways of staying in toxic relationships. It's just f-ing crazy.



From April:

This is pretty f-ed up too, to get this kind of criticism. I just said bullying is forcing your opinion on someone, and that's what you're doing. I try to make bad relationships better (less toxic or not toxic at all) because that's what I want to do. It's my choice. If you don't agree with it, then stop asking me for feedback and advice. You do this often and reject what I say because you have no respect for my thoughts and feelings about things.



From April:

Please stop this, OK?

From June:

I understand that you want everything to be peaches & cream between people - but that is not only flawed thinking, it's downright dangerous. You have encouraged me in the past and recently with Jim - to try to fix things when it would be extremely risky to me to do so. For example, Jim has a mean temper. He used to physically abuse his wife. If I forgave him for betraying me, he might eventually turn that temper on me. Or if not something that extreme, he would likely betray me again.

From June:

How can you possibly be so naive as to think I could or should "fix" a friendship (no matter how long-term) with a person who betrayed me and lied to my face about it??? How can you want to encourage me to do this - when it could lead me down a very dark rabbit hole, and possibly death??? I could end up becoming so depressed about a toxic relationship that I could end it! NO ONE in their right mind (not me, or any of my other friends) would EVER encourage me to try fixing a toxic relationship that had caused me severe pain.



From June:

You have tried to do this yourself with people in your life – Savannah, Herbert, and Rutherford- and it DOES NOT WORK. Once you are in a toxic relationship, it's always going to be toxic. Mine with SJ remained toxic for 50 years! So, April, I am not "bullying" you here...I am trying to make you understand that the way you have been with me regarding toxic people is unsafe for me.



From June:

I have actually tried fixing things with a few people on your encouragement...and they have all blown up in my face. You are playing with fire when you do this...and I have no idea what could possibly motivate you to throw me to the wolves...



From April:

Not throwing you to the wolves. Many of my efforts in otherwise not so great relationships have worked out and I'm really happy about that. You siphoned out a few exceptions in my life and I'm still in touch with at least one of them and am still connected online with another and the third has tried to contact me over the years, but I rejected it.



From April:

You've tried hard to fix things with our relationship and expressed gratitude recently... It's not all bad to try your best for people and hope they do the same in return... But if you feel like my thinking is really dangerous then we shouldn't be communicating, and you certainly shouldn't be asking me for my thoughts or advice.


From June:



From April:

From you just a few days ago:

“Today in one of our groups, we talked about how to repair relationships that were harmed. So, I actually talked about you, and the issues we've had - especially all the emails I'd sent you over the years when I'd felt hurt and/or angry. I told the group how grateful I was that you've forgiven me, and still want to be my friend. Everyone seemed to have a person in their life like that - who they wanted to make amends with, to keep in their lives.”



From June: Toxic Relationships
I was referring to otherwise GOOD
relationships that could be repaired. I wanted
to repair my relationship with YOU. But not
with SJ, Rachel, Tim, Lisa, or Janet. These
people are F-D UP AND TOXIC TO A
DANGEROUS DEGREE.



From June: Toxic Relationships

And yes, I do think it's "all bad" to try one's best for certain abusive people. You always seemed to think I should hang in there with them and try to work things out. Yes, I do think that is mighty dangerous - for me, at least.

From June: Toxic Relationships

When Fred was bullying me, you encouraged me to try talking with him one-on-one as a friend - because we'd been friends in college (however that was 30 years prior). I foolishly took your advice, and he told me to get the f out of his office. After that, things got progressively worse...and I ended up having to take a month-long leave of absence due to emotional trauma. Yeah, you're right. I should stop asking for your advice/suggestions on anything. It really is too risky for me.

From June: Toxic Relationships

Oh, and btw, I also had Robert read that exchange between my sister and me...and he said that I did absolutely nothing that could be construed as bullying or baiting. He said that SHE kept the conversation going, and all I was doing was using part of an article to back up my opinion on the troubled suspect.

From April:





From June: P.S.

Do you not realize that the "friends" I had to eliminate from my life were batsh-t crazy and evil???



From June: P.S.

SJ is a con who literally stole money from me.

Janet is a psycho who practices witchcraft. And she would put me down regularly.

Jim is a cowardly worm (his sister's words) and is physically abusive.



From June: P.S.

Rachel repeats negative things that have been said about me, and other extremely insensitive things. She once tried to make me jealous immediately after Gill and I broke up, knowing how much pain I was in. She told me that she thought Gill wanted her - which could not have been further from the truth.



From June: P.S.

Lisa only wanted to talk about her own issues and problems and would chastise me for wanting to lean on her at times. She also said many insensitive things.



From June: P.S.

Do you REALLY think I should have tried hard to make these relationships work??? How could I when none of them would have been willing to change because they did not think they'd done anything wrong! Therefore, they would have kept abusing me. I did give ALL of them (except Jim, because I had finally learned my lesson) second and third chances...but it was futile. They were just SOOOOO unkind to me in all kinds of ways.

From April:





From June: I know that...

...your heart is always in the right place. And I respect that. However, we've all heard the saying that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. Sometimes too much niceness and naivete (about toxic people, in this case) can lead to a very bad place.

From April:





From June:

Hey...I did not mean to barrage you with emails "bullying" you into being a different kind of person than you are. I just wish you would be tougher on people who hurt me - so I won't think that I should keep them in my life, you know what I mean?



From June:

I guess what I am trying to say is: When I have someone in my life who is hurting me time and time again, and I discuss it with you, I need you to encourage me to GET RID OF THEM, not try to fix the broken relationship.



From June:

That is ALL I am trying to say. I hope you understand. I cannot change the way you are inherently...but maybe I can at least get you to change toward ME. Don't we all have to adjust our personalities a bit, depending on who we were dealing with? If I tell you what I need, as my close friend, you should be able to give it to me.



From April:

June, I guess I don't understand why you need encouragement to get rid of someone you know isn't healthy to keep in your life. So many times, you have already had your mind made up about all of these people and have sent the Dear John or Jane letters and unfriended or blocked without my involvement. So many times, I've heard "I already sent the email."



From April:

So, my take home is that you know what you want and you're going to do it regardless of what I or anyone else thinks. That's the way it should be- You are the one who knows better than anyone who deserves to stay in your life and who doesn't.



From June:

OK... you make good points. It's just that I don't have a lot of self-confidence, therefore, I always question my decisions. When I ask you for an opinion of having already dumped a friend, I guess I'm just looking for validation...you know, atta girl, you did the right thing!



Reeling: Part 3

The Interview

From April:

Hi, June. I hope you're having a good week. Anything new with the librarian assistant position? Did you have your interview yet?

From June:

I already told you when the interview was going to be when I first emailed you about the position. Didn't you read the email?



From June:

There is something I need to express. Over the years, I've had the strong feeling that you do not really listen to me or read all of what I've written with genuine focus. You once acknowledged that you tend to "drift away" like your father used to do.

From June:

When I came to visit you recently, I was absolutely shocked that you asked me (again) to explain the nature of my friendship with Jim, and what had happened to drive us apart. I had sent you an email, detailing the entire situation **THAT VERY MORNING**. It was painfully clear that you had not read that email...or if you did, it had not penetrated. So, I had to put energy into explaining to you for a third time what had happened between Jim and me. This is **VERY** hurtful to me.



From June:

But - then again, you have a right to be the kind of person you are. However, I also have a right to set boundaries with someone who does not listen to me when I share really personal things. The Jim situation is only one of many times I've felt not really heard by you. It's no one's fault. It's just that we are very different in this regard.



From April:

June,

You'll have to forgive me for not being able to pay as much attention to what you tell me, as I have a lot going on in my life right now and can't keep track of everything I'm being told. That said, I was hoping that you would appreciate the fact that I took the time to check in with you to see about your job prospect.

April



From June:

It's just that I need more validation and attentiveness from my close friends than I've ever been able to get from you...and it's not fair to YOU for me to keep badgering you to get my needs met. It is 100% MY fault for continuing to try getting blood from a stone. Not saying you are a stone... but I should know after 20 years of friendship that I am not gonna get what I need, and I am a fool to keep trying.

From April:



From June:

Btw, I am going through a SH-TLOAD right now, too. I don't have a job (which I desperately need) and worry about being able to pay my bills; my mobility is getting worse all the time...and last night, my Aunt Edie's caretaker contacted me to let me know that her health is declining to the point where she may not be well enough to go to Oregon with me for Thanksgiving, and in fact, she may not LIVE much longer. Are you reading this??? Is it sinking in? My point is, I am just as crazed with sh-t as you are.



From June:

And btw, you have chosen to be overly busy for as long as I've known you. If it's not one thing, it's another.

From April:





From June:

I want you to know that I DON'T want to feel the way I do. The last thing I want is to feel like you don't have my back when I need it the most., or that you are "drifting off" when I share personal things with you. But the feelings just come up; I don't pull them out of my ass to deliberately cause problems between us.

From June:

Sometimes I think that maybe I am just too boring, and you are just not interested in what I have to say. I can't help but take it personally. Is this the case? Is it similar to SJ - when she got tired of listening to me, she would put the phone down when I talked and just let me talk to no one? Am I too needy for you too? I am very, VERY perplexed about this, and wish I could fix it. 😞😞



From April:

June, you don't see yourself the way others who are close to you see you. I would never call anyone too needy who is reaching out to me for help (quite the opposite- I consider my friendships with people who trust me enough to confide in me and lean on me a blessing). But if my compassion and concern are going to be met with anger, shaming and criticism, as they often are with you, then I will not want to put myself in that position.

From June:





From April:

I don't have anything even close to this with anyone else that I know. If I forget something someone has told me, they simply remind me and let me know they appreciate that I took the interest to bring the subject up. You have forgotten things I've told you and you've laughed about it. You seem to hold yourself to a different standard than me. You can be imperfect, and I need to either understand and forgive it or embrace it.

From April:

I can't ask you a question about a job you're applying for without getting lambasted for not paying attention to something you said about it in a previous email. You push people away, and you are not going to get the "so how is this or that going? I hope you're well" because you don't appreciate the concern. Instead, you punish it. I know you wouldn't be too motivated to reach out to me to ask how I'm doing if I was just to attack or criticize you for not asking the question the way YOU would want it to be asked.

From April:

You wrote, "When I came to visit you recently, I was absolutely shocked..." If I had a dime for every visit we've had that you later bring up having some kind of problem with I'd be a very rich woman. We shouldn't visit each other anymore since you usually (9 out of 10 times) have an issue or criticism. I don't do this to you, ever. But you do this to me, often. I know you wouldn't feel comfortable if the tables were reversed.



From April:

I am going to direct my energy and love to where I know it will be valued. It is not valued with you.

April



From June:

OK. I appreciate what you are saying. And I realize that I am not perfect, and I sometimes forget things too. However, I have honed my listening skills, and I know that I do not drift off when people are sharing things with me, nor do I go off on sideways tangents when they are done. Since high school, people always sought me out for advice, because they knew that I would listen and help them with their issues.



From June:

Your statement that "I push people away..." is not only unfair, but dead wrong. This dynamic does not happen with anyone except you. None of my other friends would ever accuse me of pushing them away because I'm not getting the empathy/validation that I need. I do not have anywhere near these issues with Ginger, Beatrice, Don, Dick, Miriam, Sally, Tricia, Henrietta, and the list goes on and on.



From June:

I am at a loss of what to do or say at this point. I don't want to abandon our friendship...but I don't want either of us to be in pain because of it anymore. I just don't know what to do.



From April:

June,

Please hone your listening skills now. This isn't about anything other than the fact that you criticize me on an almost constant basis, and I don't like it and don't want to keep experiencing it.



From April:

I want to invest my time and energy in people who love me for who I am- the way that I am- and appreciate my efforts and love in return. You don't seem to, and this is an ongoing thing that never changes.

I don't need justifications for why you keep writing things that are put downs and criticisms.



From April:

Good luck with your therapy. I have a busy day and can't email anymore.



From June:

Your arrogance and self-righteousness are unparalleled. Please accept my apologies for sometimes forgetting that you are perfect, and never make any mistakes.



From April:

I'm honest with you, June.

Your behavior is toxic and damaging.

Never said I was perfect. But I don't want to be reminded of how imperfect I am by someone who feels a need to use me as a punching bag as often as possible.



From June:

This is my last email. I do not use you as a punching bag. I let you know when I've been hurt by you.

From April:

I'll remind you, again, of what you wrote to me recently: "Today in one of our groups, we talked about how to repair relationships that were harmed. So I actually talked about you, and the issues we've had - especially all the emails I'd sent you over the years when I'd felt hurt and/or angry. I told the group how grateful I was that you've forgiven me, and still want to be my friend. Everyone seemed to have a person in their life like that - who they wanted to make amends with, to keep in their lives."

From June:

Yes, let's put all the blame June!!! She
can never be right about anything! 😂😂😂

From June:

This is why I don't want to send anymore
emails. You save them and use them against
me later, taken out of context.



From April:

June, I see it this way. You have a crisis, or two, you're feeling really bad, and you come out of it, or them, with your arms flailing. The people who are close enough to you to be within striking distance are the ones that get punched. The people around you end up suffering as much as or more than you are suffering yourself.



From April:

I don't want to get into why I think this happens. I'll leave that up to the people who you are getting help from. I care about you and your problems, but I can't seem to get anything through to you in the way I intend, namely in the positive way I intend, and nothing gets solved. Quite the contrary, new problems are created.

And I know it will continue as long as I let it.

April



From June:

We all have mental issues, and mine is no worse (or better) than anyone else's.

From June:

This conflict between us started when I shared an email conversation with you between my sister and me about the Georgia school shooting... and my sister bullied me, then projected her unfair behavior onto me. You seemed to empathize/sympathize with HER more than ME. And yet, even my therapist concluded that SHE had been the one to mistreat me...and that all I had done was share why I felt empathy/sympathy for the suspect. I was not trying to alter her opinion at all - just elaborate on mine.



From June:

If anything, my sister should have been sympathetic to ME because of the 8 years of bullying I endured (from ages 8 to 16). I wanted your empathy/sympathy too - but it did not feel like I got it.



From June:

Likewise, you asked me to explain (for the third time) what had happened with Jim. And again, you did not seem to have much sympathy for me, due to his betrayal. And btw, this would have happened anytime - not just because we got together. I had already felt (before our lunch date) that you didn't seem to feel that I should have dropped Jim.

From April:





From June:

I feel that it's COMPLETELY unfair of you to accuse me of hurting "people" and "others" (plural words). Who else have I hurt other than you? This does not occur with any of my other friends... nor my sister, who I never talk with anyhow.



From June:

The bottom line is, I just need more validation, empathy, compassion from you when I share things about how badly someone has treated me. Instead, I often feel that you are giving them the benefit of doubt.

In my younger days (high school), I often chose toxic people to be friends with. SJ, Lisa, Jim, and even Janet were all friends from high school. I had issues with all of them, as you know.



From June:

However, I also had good, healthy friends including Stacy, Mindy and Brenda. I also have wonderful close friends from college – like Isabel, Jean, and Danica, and a host of friends from grad school. What I am trying to convey here is I've had MANY more healthy friendships than toxic ones. And the people with whom I've had toxic friendships have also had problems with other people.



From June:

So, while of course I am not perfect, I have rarely been the perpetrator of mistreatment. I've been the one mistreated - by several people. I'm not going to let you imply that I am not a good person.

June

From April:





From June:

Coincidentally enough, I JUST received a text from my sister about how difficult it is to let go of the painful past. I know her well enough to know this is her way of apologizing for the way she treated me last week. So, it would seem that even SHE knows she was unfair to me.

June

From April:





From June:

Hey there, April,

I am here to wave the white flag of truce. For both of our mental and physical well-being, it is essential that we stop arguing. After our recent exchange, my blood pressure went through the roof. It was damn scary. I am sure you also are having negative physical issues stemming from our regular arguments.



From June:

I have been thinking a lot about the nature of our problems...and landed upon what I think is a valid conclusion: ***It's simply a matter of style.*** You and I have vastly different styles - of listening, giving advice, validating others, and showing compassion, empathy, and sympathy. Neither of our styles is right or wrong. They are just different. And unfortunately, I don't respond well to your style.



From June:

I've tried, God knows I've tried, but 80% of the times I share deep, personal issues with you, I am left empty by your responses. They rarely give me the validation I need, and often make me feel more insecure than before I talked with you. Perhaps it's the same with you, and my style is not right for you either.

From April:



From June:

As God as my witness, April, I never EVER mean to use you as a "punching bag" as you put it.

That's just not who June is. But, just to validate your feelings, you must have a reason for feeling that way - so all I can do is apologize for inadvertently hurting you. I never intend to hurt you... and when you tell me that I have, I am usually very surprised. In my view, I am just trying to be honest about my feelings - in direct response to things you have said.



From June:

But the sad fact is, we are BOTH hurting each other without meaning to. Again, I honestly think it comes down to a matter of style.

Hope you had a good day. Thankfully, my aunt is doing a bit better.

June



From April:

It's not style. Re-read what I wrote and listen to my words.



From June:

**YOU REREAD AND TRULY LISTEN TO MY WORDS
AND STOP YOUR OWN PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS
TO UNDERSTAND ME! *What part of it don't you
understand???***



From June:

The only **PERSON** (not *people*) who seems to have suffered because of me is **YOU**. And - so you've told me - your family. Everyone else in my world thinks highly of me and would never make the kinds of false accusations you make. Other than your family, it has affected NO ONE. WHY MUST YOU INSIST ON BRANDING ME AS AN ABUSER OF ALL PEOPLE?????



From June:

You are using my weaknesses against me...and that is not only slanderous, but it is a form of classic ***Trauma Bonding***. I do value our friendship (though less and less as time goes on - due to MY regularly getting hurt), but I won't be contacting you anymore, because I just don't get what I need from you. Period. And I stand by my theory that it's because our STYLES are very different.



From June:

That is how I feel...so if you disagree and have a need to believe that I am the big bad wolf who hurts poor little Red Riding Hood, then we are at an impasse that I fear will never be resolved.

From April:





From June:

Read the attachment I've included on Trauma Bonding. Perhaps it's not conscious, but it often does feel that you want to undermine me to the point of hating myself and not feeling worthy of living - because I often end up feeling like a bad person after conversing with you.



From June:

I think we need some SERIOUS time, space, and distance between us. This is truly getting into the danger zone. We can't afford to allow this friendship to continue. All the best to you. Maybe our paths will cross someday at the local library.

June



From April:

I must ask you to please stop writing to me and trying to get this validation you say you can't get from me, but you can get from a half a dozen other people. Just writing that to me is hurtful (it's called triangulation- Let me show April all the people in my life who aren't an abysmal disappointment and failure the way she is).



From April:

You don't like/accept who I am and read what you read into and analyze everything I do and then let me know how I disappointed you. The constant (and at this point it's constant) criticism is really affecting my self-esteem and overall health and it's toxic.

From June:





From April:

I asked you about your friend Jim. I asked you about a job interview. The fact that I brought these things up to make conversation and touch on topics that I knew were on your mind or important to you was completely lost on you. You just wanted a fight, and an excuse to dig into me about a perceived flaw.



From April:

April doesn't pay enough attention to you, April doesn't give you enough validation, April takes evil people's sides... And yet you want me to sympathize and care and show you love and support? When do you give me the chance to do this? How could you possibly expect me to have the will or motivation when all I get is cut down by you?



From April:

The tone of your emails last couple of days, with insults and laughing emojis, is coming from a hateful, angry place. If you cared about me at all you wouldn't do this. I may be direct in my emails to you but I'm not disrespectful or mocking.



From April:

It's gotten to the point where it's inevitable you are going to lash out at me, over nothing, and then pretend it didn't happen or try to justify your actions. And it's just not something I feel I can keep subjecting myself to without me losing a part of myself that I need to keep other people I care about going.



From June:

No matter what I say/write to try to make peace, and blame NO ONE, you misconstrue it and twist it to the point where it may as well have been said by a completely different person. You seem to love playing the victim and making me the bad guy...and it's just SOOOOOO tedious at this point.



From June:

This email shows that you don't know me at ALL...and you never really did. My stating that it was a "style" difference did not blame ANYONE. We just have a different way of communicating, that is ALL I was trying to say! And not every two people are meant to be friends.



Reeling: Part 4

The Suggestion



From June:

I'd like to remind you of what really happened with Jim (because you have selective memory)... When I blocked him out of my life after his betrayal, you encouraged me to try to "work things out with him" - due to the fact that he'd been such a long-term friend. Your Pollyanna attitude was NOT a good suggestion for me!



From June:

You would have been wise to applaud me for getting rid of a toxic person and encourage me to **STAY AWAY FROM HIM.**

From April:





From June:

Your "style" is to try to befriend EVERYONE - even the scum of the earth. I used to be like that, but I am NOT anymore. Otherwise, I would have fought much harder for SJ. But she is toxic and dangerous...and so is Jim. I do not appreciate the times you've encouraged me to make peace with these mother f-ers.



From June:

We have a difference in style, April. You seem to love turning toxic jerks into friends. I DO NOT WANT TO DO THAT ANYMORE. And I do not appreciate ANY advice - be it from you or anyone else - that encourages me to do so!!!!



From April:

You don't see anything wrong or toxic about your behavior. You think you're OK.

OK.

From June:

For the love of God, please leave me the f alone.

Go play the pitiful victim with someone else.

I can recommend a few narcissists for you. I am sure SJ would love a new victim to torment.

From April:



From June:

I just had a most delightful lunch with my friend, Henrietta...and it was SO NICE not to have to be terrified of saying or doing the wrong thing. Henny and I go back 5 years, and we have become very close. I told her about my break with Jim; she knows all about the SJ situation - and never once did I ever feel anything but 100% validation and compassion from her - and most importantly, she strongly urged me to NEVER allow these losers back into my life...



From June:

She is also a great listener and remembers even details of what I share. She doesn't "drift away" during conversations...nor does she go off on tangents about her life while I am in the middle of sharing something private and important.



From June:

Our "styles" are very much alike. We communicate well, and this makes for a smooth, healthy relationship. I do not have this with you - as you well know - but you are fond of blaming ME for everything that goes wrong. And you accuse me of horrible things - i.e., being hateful and abusive, and treating you like a punching bag.



From June:

If someone like Henrietta (or my friends Ginger, Beatrice, etc.) ever heard your accusations of me, they would laugh in your face. I am SO different with them - and yet they are every bit as close to me as you (allegedly) are. I've known them all for YEARS, and never had a single issue with any of them.



From June:

I am not suggesting that our problems are ALL your fault, or ALL my fault. I am saying it's a communication problem - and YOU just want to keep slandering ME for being the main culprit.



From April:

June, there's just so much there that I keep hoping is in the past that is still happening. And it's taking a physical toll on me, as well as emotional. You used the word "terrified" and that is a good one to describe how I feel when I've opened emails from you because I know it's going to be something you feel I did wrong. Regardless of how good I know my intentions have been and it feels like a punch. It just shouldn't be, you know? None of this should be.



From April:

I know, from what you've told me, that you have deep pain, but it's pain that I end up experiencing right along with you. Time and time again. It doesn't slow down. If anything, it seems to be speeding up.

From June:





From April:

I understand your needs exceed what I'm able to give. You've made that clear and alluded to accepting it (in an email in which you used the phrase "you can't get blood from a stone"). Obviously, that made me feel bad despite your insistence that I'm not a "stone." But at least you wrote that you understand you're holding me to an expectation that doesn't match the reality. So why does the expectation still surface when it comes to me?



From April:

And why does it bother you so much when you have all these people who you tell me are there for you in ways I'm not or can't be? It's like getting angry at a person with no legs because they can't walk, and yet having all these other people with legs who you can walk with. But you focus on the legless person and remind them how much they're letting you down.



From April:

If you could please just pay attention to what I'm writing here. I think it makes sense, and it just requires a little consideration on your part. The emails you send to me make me feel bad about myself. I don't want to feel like this.



From June:

Okay, let's try something. I am going to ask you a series of questions. NO going sideways. NO tangents. NO drifting away. Just 100% FOCUS, please.

From June:

1. If SJ called me, begging for my friendship back, apologizing profusely for everything she ever did to hurt me, what advice would you give me?
2. If Jim called to apologize for betraying me, and begged forgiveness, what advice would you give me?
3. If Lisa contacted me and finally took responsibility for HER side of the street, and begged for a second chance with me, how would you advise me?



From June:

4. If Rachel called and apologized for being an insensitive c--t, and begged for a third chance (we were already estranged once, due to her insensitivity - which she eventually apologized for and made amends), what advice would you give me?

From April:

The advice I'd want to give to you would be what I would do in each case, which would be to take them back.

But the advice that would probably be best for YOU (not me), given how hurt and betrayed you feel by each of them, would be to not take them back.

You'd need to specify better what you are looking for from me.



From April:

You'd need to ask: "What would April do, based on her nature, and what would bring her peace of mind?"

Or ask: "What does April think I should do, based on what April knows about my nature and the way I feel about each of these people and the fact that I would probably be unlikely to trust them ever again or really forgive them?"



From June:

So, there it is, right there. There is NO F-ING WAY I should EVER be advised to take back any of these SCOUNDRELS!



From June:

JESUS CHRIST, one stole my credit card and almost got me arrested. Another betrayed me. And on and on. Yes indeed: UNFORGIVABLE things.



From June:

I was traumatized to the point of severe PTSD. If you would advise me to take them back, it would be literally sending me to the f-ing wolves. And even if YOU would take back people like this, then you have not been listening to me at all over the years, as I described how immoral and inherently evil they are. These kinds of sick human beings do not change!



From June:

Your response proves to me that there has been NO validation of what I have shared with you about them. Both Lisa and SJ have in the past tried to make amends with me. And I FOOLISHLY took them back. And what happened to me, April? THEY. TREATED. ME. WORSE. THAN. EVER.

From June:

And respectfully, you are either a complete idiot or completely insane - or maybe both. NARCISSISTS (like all the people I mentioned) RARELY change! You should bloody well know that. Just because, down the road, SJ or Jim, etc. might try to get back into my good graces, it would NEVER be for the sake of having a healthy friendship! They would ONLY seek to make me into their plaything again and victimize me in even crueller ways than ever.



From June:

So, how in f-'s name could you possibly, in good conscience, urge me to take back my tormentors???

From June:

Perhaps, YOU also have narcissistic tendencies, and would enjoy seeing me tormented to the point of ending it? I hate to think that is the case, but why else would you be so willing to encourage me to reconnect with people who have done that very thing to me time and time again??? Why would you not instead, implore me to STAY AWAY from these DANGEROUS PEOPLE???



From June:

Furthermore, the aforementioned people - SJ, Lisa, Jim, Rachel - are all in their late 50s and 60s. It is NOT likely that they are going to magically admit they are cruel narcissists and get psychological help for their disorder. SJ is so ignorant and uneducated that she likely doesn't even know what narcissist means.

From June:

DO NOT EVER CONTACT ME AGAIN. My health is at stake here. We need to walk away from this dysfunctional mess before even more damage can be done. Block me on FB and everywhere else if you want; I no longer care. I no longer want anything to do with you.

I do wish the best for your mother.

June

From April:



From April:

This is what I wrote to you: "But the advice that would probably be best for YOU (not me), given how hurt and betrayed you feel by each of them, would be to not take them back."

I wrote this, too:

"...versus what I think you should do, based on what I know about your nature and the way you feel about each of these people and the fact that you'd probably be unlikely to trust them ever again or really forgive them."



From April:

I said I'd suggest you not take them back based on everything.

I'm not sure what you are accusing me of here.

From June:



From April:

So, I gave you the advice you were looking for. I told you not to take these people back. I made sure to distinguish between what I thought you should do versus how I might handle the situation for myself. I was very careful to make this distinction because I know you and I are very different people and what I might decide to do for myself doesn't necessarily translate into what would be good for you. I thought I made this pretty clear, and so I'm not sure why you wrote everything you wrote.

From June:





From April:

Did you actually read what I wrote?

From June:

Makes no difference. Even if YOU would take these people back, you'd be making a deal with the devil. And it would indicate that you had not been paying attention to anything I'd told you about them and their narcissistic natures. In any event my trust in you is GONE...and it's too dangerous to continue a friendship. I do not like or respect the kind of person you are. Please...NO MORE NOTES.



From June:

I repeat: Just the fact that YOU would consider making amends with these evil people is despicable to me. You got rid of Savannah. SJ is 10 times worse than Savannah. Yet you'd consider letting her back in your life???

If you and I are THAT different on this issue, it definitely precludes a friendship.



From April:

June, I had first-hand experience with Savannah that led me to make the decision I did with her. I'm not saying I don't believe you with anything you've told me about SJ or any of the others. I'm sure you're telling me the truth about what you went through with each of them at different times. But what you conveyed to me about ALL of them is that there were good times and there were bad times but not all of it was bad!



From April:

You know from experiences you and I have had that we've had ups and downs, good and bad times, and if I only focused on the bad, I'd be looking at our relationship the way you're looking at all these other relationships. If someone means enough to me, I will try to make the relationship work. I'm a very sentimental person and I tend to get nostalgic when it comes to people, and that's what I'm talking about when I say I tend to try to see the good in people.

From June:





From April:

I'm sure you've heard this: "People come into your life for a reason, a season, or a lifetime." Maybe it would help you feel less anger toward these people if you looked at friendships like that. Maybe they weren't meant to be forever. But maybe you did see something good in these people at times over the years that you just can't see right now.



From June:

Jesus Christ Almighty, why can't you just leave me alone??? You ALWAYS need to get the last word. You have ZERO respect for me, or the fact that this craziness is driving my blood pressure up to a dangerous degree. You just don't give a sh-t about ANYONE but yourself and proving that you are right.



From June:

Regarding Savannah, when you first met her and became friends, YOU ALSO HAD SOME GOOD TIMES WITH HER! As I recall, you even loaned her money once and let her stay at your place with her child. It was only later that you discovered what a psycho she was, and eventually cast her out of your life for good.



From June:

THE SAME IS TRUE FOR ME WITH ALL OF THE TOXIC PEOPLE IN MY LIFE - AND YOU F-ING KNOW THAT. If you don't know it, you really have NOT been paying a bloody bit of attention to everything I've been sharing with you over the years!!!! It does not matter that I had SOME good times with SJ or these other toxic people.



From June:

The overarching issue is that I HAD A TON OF RED
FLAGS WITH ALL OF THEM WHEN WE FIRST MET,
AND I FOOLISHLY IGNORED THEM BECAUSE I DID
NOT FEEL WORTHY OF ANYTHING BETTER THAN
THESE TOXIC LOSERS!!!!!!!!!!!!



From June:

So, I SETTLED for the likes of SJ, Rachel, Jim, Lisa, Janet. READ THIS TWICE: I SETTLED FOR PEOPLE I KNEW WERE TOXIC. I SETTLED FOR PEOPLE I KNEW WERE TOXIC. Did it get through to your thick head yet???

From April:





From June:

No healthy good times can ever be experienced with people like these! I'm sure that even if I were friends with Adolf Hitler or Joseph Stalin, we'd have **SOME** good times. Does that mean I should have them in my life????? Rhetorical question.

From June:

Regardless of the very few "good times" (which were not even all that good) I may have had with these toxic people IT DOES NOT MEAN I SHOULD EVER RETURN TO FRIENDSHIPS WITH THEM - EVEN IF THEY BEGGED AND PLEADED TO KINGDOM COME!!!!!! They are ALL f-ing EVIL narcissists who do not deserve my friendship - or YOURS.



From June:

You have always given f-ing a-holes second, third, and fourth chances. I don't want to be like that. I don't like or respect that way of being. It amounts to enabling evil people for their evil behaviors. NOW PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, FOR THE LOVE OF GOD - SHOW SOME MERCY AND LEAVE ME ALONE.



From April:

I agree you shouldn't be friends with them
anymore.

From June:

And I should not be friends with YOU anymore.
Too much water under the bridge.
Goodbye and Good Luck.



From June:



From April: Final thoughts (and not because I need to get the last word)

This conflict between us actually has an anniversary that is decades old. It was at a restaurant, and it was the very first argument we ever had. It was over the fact that I had extended an olive branch to a colleague I was having problems with at the time. You felt I shouldn't have despite he and I becoming close friends. So, this has been a bone of contention for us since the early days of our relationship.

From April: Final thoughts (and not because I need to get the last word)

The reason I didn't accept the problems we're having as just a difference in style is because of the tone of the emails I've been receiving. We can't agree to disagree and leave it at that. My thoughts on the subject are regarded as "dangerous" by you. Not to mention insults and name-calling. All this brings any differences in style or nature or personality to a different level and is a serious impasse.

From April:

I don't wish any harm on you, or myself. I just want peace. I've always just wanted peace. If you've felt for two decades that I don't do life or relationships the way you do, then why do you ask me for advice? You say you'll stop asking me for advice because you don't get from me what you want, and yet you keep asking me for advice and then hold me accountable for the outcome. I don't want to have this responsibility and I'm sure you wouldn't want it if the roles were reversed.



From April:

If you feel you have other friends that are more in sync with your beliefs when it comes to relationships, they are the ones you should be getting support from. If this means a different kind of relationship between us, then perhaps that's for the best if it means we can get along.

From June:

Coincidentally, I had been trying to craft a letter to you when I got this email from you. I appreciate and respect that you took the time to write it. I've been devastated over the lack of communication between us. Yes, I remember that night at the restaurant. But the sad truth is, I too have given WAAAAAY too many chances to unworthy people -because, like you, I always hope to resolve and fix broken relationships. But I have learned (the hard way) that what my father once said was right: ***Not all things can be resolved.***



From June:

It took me way too long and way too much pain to learn this with SJ. I'm not exaggerating when I tell you that she was truly driving me to ending it. And that is the final goal of a narcissist. If SJ ever came crawling back, my first impulse would be to take her back - because I am like you in this regard and strive for peace.

From June:

But my therapist is imploring me to think it through - because SJ will NEVER change...and her motive for returning would not be to force a good, healthy friendship. Her motive would only be to continue her narcissistic work of killing me with her words and actions. You, above all my other friends, should know this - because you were the one who exposed me to Trauma Bonding. If SJ ever dares to contact me again, you should say only one word, but say it loudly: ***RUN.***



From June:

I just want you to know that I was incredibly hurt, with feelings of betrayal. But I realize you were not betraying me. I'd love to have a verbal conversation about this at some point. Not immediately, but maybe in a few weeks... so we can understand each other better. I've been crying nonstop since our latest shenanigans... thinking I'd lost you forever.



From June:

Good Morning!

Just checking to see how you are doing. I've been mainly depressed.

I had to "banish" another old friend. Sharon. She is another one, like SJ, who I should have cast out of my life long ago.

From June:

It's a long story, and you might remember some of it...but recently I posted something positive about Taylor Swift doing a lot to help victims of bullying. Sharon decided to use my post as a "bully pulpit" so to speak and made negative political comments about Swift. I deleted her post, and sent her a PM to please not post negativity on my page anymore. She replied with a SCATHING note, tearing me a new one.



From June:

I was shocked and hurt. I asked my high power what to do...and the resounding intuition I received was to block her everywhere. So, I did.

From June:

Sharon had given me grief since the late 1980s. She was part of that "rat pack" with a couple of other women - who had eased me out of their little clique when I was dating Gill. All of them were single, and they seemed to be jealous of my having a boyfriend. Anyhow, years later when I was at work, Sharon came bouncing in one day - with no call, no previous notice. She just found out where I worked and came in - to try to mend fences and be friends again.



From June:

Apparently, that "mean girls" clique had eventually dropped her too, and she didn't have any friends. Against my better judgement, I accepted her friendship...and we got together every now and then. But I was NEVER completely comfortable with her, and never particularly enjoyed our time together.

From June:

You may remember the time I helped her get a job...and she RUINED it and made tons of enemies. And my boss there told me NEVER to recommend anyone to her again. I was quite angry and embarrassed. Yet, Sharon never owned up to any wrong-doing and pointed fingers at everyone there instead. It was a sh-t show. Sharon and I did not communicate for about 2 years after that. Then she contacted me one day wanting to meet for lunch, and in typical foolish June fashion, I met her.



From June:

But at this point, after her shenanigans on my FB Page, I am officially DONE with her. I tried my best. But I don't want her in my life.



From June:

You don't need to respond to this at all, except to give me support for doing the right thing. I most definitely do not need you (or anyone) to encourage me to continue to try to make that friendship work. I tried over a 40-year period - and I think that's more than fair.

June



From April:
You're doing the right thing.



From June:

I can't tell you how GRATEFUL I am that you are validating me with Sharon. I have tried SO HARD with that women - just like I busted my ass with SJ. Some relationships really are not salvageable. It just takes too much energy and effort.

From June:

I know that you & I have had our share of trouble communicating at times... but NOTHING like the problems I've had trying to have meaningful dialogue with SJ or Sharon. I think they are SO mentally ill, that they honestly do not have the capacity to admit their mistakes. When Sharon lost her job - she blamed everyone else on staff for it. Yet it was 100%, squarely HER fault. She messed up a host of stations.

June

From June:

The thing with Sharon (that is 100% like SJ) is that they conveniently FORGET what they've said and done to hurt me! They have completely distorted recollections of various incidents. And I don't mean to sound arrogant, but I can't help it, I was born with a near perfect memory. It's not as great as it was 30 years ago, but I can still recall things that happened many decades ago with 99.9% precision.



From June:

Oye...these f-ing people... Someone please carry me off to a distant deserted island where there are NO people!!!!

From June:

So...it turns out that someone posed as Sharon on FB and wrote weird sh-t on people's pages. She had no idea what I was talking about when I asked her to please refrain from posting negative shit on my page. I felt really bad. We ended up having a fairly lengthy text chat - and she is going through unthinkable medical issues. It's a wonder the poor woman is still alive. I wanted to share this with you - to show you how alike we are about relationships. Sharon was not very kind to me in many ways, but I still care about her...and want her to be well. I am always willing to give people second chances.

From June:

In fact, if any of the people I mentioned in a previous email to you - Jim, Rachel, Janet, Lisa - made honest amends, I **would** take them back. The ONLY one I would not take back is - you guessed it - SJ. Because the sh-t she has done FAR exceeds any of the sh-t the others have done to me COMBINED. And I honestly think that when she contacted my sister to talk about me, she was trying to drive me to end it all. Maybe it was subconscious, but still, I truly believe SJ is dangerous.



From June:

Hope you are having a decent day, my dear.

XO



From June:

I am feeling nervous. The library manager said she would be contacting candidates for interviews today...but so far, I have not heard a word. Should I be worried??? I have not gotten a rejection note either...I hate this waiting game!!!

June



From April:

I hope you get the position and heard back. Sorry I'm only replying now. I just got home from work.

From June:

No, I still haven't heard anything.

From June:

BUT - get this - I had to rearrange my hair appointment with Mindy a few times...and just got a cold text from her, firing me as her client. I've had her for 12 years, and thought we were friends. She gave me no warning, no indication that my cancellations bothered her. I always gave her plenty of time to schedule someone else in my spot - except for the last time, because my Jeep broke down! Doesn't seem fair, does it? I made her a blanket, regularly brought her favorite wine, and confided in her a lot (and vice versa). I actually considered her a friend.



From June:

WTF??? I texted this back: "We've had a 12-year relationship, and this is how you handle things. No call? No warning? No chance to make things right? Wow."

From June:

Then I blocked her on phone and FB. I am SO hurt right now. I stayed loyal to her for 10 years, even after moving to MA. And she blows me off for a couple of missed appointments (over 12 years) in a TEXT.





From June:

But I am proud of myself for RESPONDING rather than REACTING. I feel that my response to her was fair and honest - not angry and nasty.



Reeling: Part 5

The Letter

From June:

I'd REALLY been hoping to hear from the library by this time - on that job I applied for. I know that they are reviewing resumes today...but I wish I knew where I stood. I hate the f-ing waiting game.

From June:

The jeans I ordered came in today...and they fit perfectly! I think having good, well-made jeans is the BOMB. lol They are expensive, but soooooo worth it. These are called jeggings, so they fit really tight, but they are extremely comfortable. They were on sale for 40% off the full price of \$90.

From June:

How do you feel about jeans? Do you invest in good ones? I also have a few from Walmart - just because I am fat, and they have decent fat clothing at Walmart. hahahaha But I just LOVE buying a truly GOOD pair of jeans.

Anyhow...hope your week is off to a good start.

From April:

I have a couple of pairs of jeans in my closet and I tend to wear jeans until they are unwearable (until they get big holes in the knees).

From April:

I've been into wearing dresses more than jeans ever since Bob made a remark about how dresses made me look younger or better or something along those lines. I started wearing skirts and dresses more and I realized I'm more comfortable in them with sweaters and boots than jeans. Unless it's a really snowy day you'll usually see me in a dress these days.

From June:

What a complete asshat Bob is to make a comment like that. He's a married man.

Totally inappropriate and even lecherous. And you actually took that to heart - to the point where it inspired you to wear more dresses?

Wow. It blows my mind how desperately you seem to need male attention...even if it comes in this disgusting manner.

From April:

I think he just meant it as a compliment. My mother started complimenting me on the dresses I was wearing and I got compliments from strangers (men and women) in her apartment complex. That, plus the fact that I was comfortable in them, was why I started wearing dresses more than jeans. :)

From June:

It was sexist and even immoral - just another way for Bob to tell you he'd f you if he could.

From April:



From June: Yay Me!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I made it into the Women's Chorus!!!! The audition was f-ing GRUELLING...and I really thought I'd blown it at one point when I had to repeat some whacky note patterns. But Dolly (the director) knew that I was nervous, because I had not sung in many years...so she was very patient and kind to me. She said that I have wonderful tonal quality and intonation (pitch).

From June: YAY ME!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Meantime, I am getting MEGA support and kudos on FB - well over 200 at this point - not even counting the personal messages! I really love FB...and think it's a wonderful way of communicating things like this to all of one's friends. And even though it's social media, I think people are generally sincere and supportive. I got a ton of responses from old high school friends who remember when June owned the stage. LOL

From June: YAY ME!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

One noted that people STILL remember my name in my hometown! I was the ONLY student to EVER get a leading role as a sophomore. And that's because my beloved music teacher took a chance on me, when he cast me as in "Guys & Dolls." I ended up getting standing ovations after every solo. It was wild!

I am feeling something like JOY for the first time in YEARS.

Hope your day is going well.

From April:



From June:

I also heard from the library and have a first (phone) interview on Friday. So, it's been a good week so far! I really want one of those library jobs. I've been researching how to best "sell" myself without having any library background. Take care, enjoy Hump Day!

From April:



From June: Anything Wrong?

Hi there... I get the sense that you are upset with me for some reason. Just the curt way you responded to my texts this morning...and never having responded to my last email. If you are ticked off at what I stated about Bob, I apologize if I offended you. But I just don't think you should be flattered by it that kind of attention from a married man. I'm quite sure most women would side with me on this. But maybe there is something else that's bothering you?

From April:



From June: Please tell me what is wrong
Hi - I just left a message on your cell phone... but
there's one more thing I need to say. I realize that you
are super busy these days - and I know all the
reasons. However, still, you have been so
disconnected from me; there's a difference in how you
are dealing with me. I am far from stupid, and I can
sense that something is going on.

From June: Please tell me what is wrong
I can't think of anything I did to offend you - except for
what I said about Bob. But that was not an insult to
YOU in any way.

Pleeeeeeease don't treat me that way you would hate
to be treated. Please let me know if you have any
issues with me, so we can talk them out.

Thanks,
June

From April:

June, I wrote something that I'll send to you later today when I'm finished with work. I've been doing a lot of thinking, and I would like to share a few things.

From June:

Okay... but now I'm going to be on edge all day expecting the worst.

Whatever I might have done to upset you, I am very sorry.



From April:

You've read what I'm about to write many times before. We just haven't wanted to take this seriously and it's been easier to ignore and try (unsuccessfully) to push it behind us and forget. Neither one of us has forgotten anything though. And so, the problem persists.

From April:

We've had rough times, but I would say the last couple of months have been the roughest. Friendships are meant to bring comfort to people's lives. Our friendship doesn't do that. It mainly brings shame and frustration. Anxiety. Sadness.

From April:

I don't want to be enemies, as I've said many times in the past. But I continue to not be able to see any real hope for a close friendship. Not after so many years and the conflicts between us getting worse and more frequent.

From April:

I found a few things you wrote to me in the past few weeks that I'd like to remind us both about. This way I won't be seen as just going on another one of my diatribes that you've heard countless times. I need for you to see what you wrote and how you feel and try to envision how I felt being on the receiving end.

From April:

I've read over the years emails and texts about how much I've hurt you and you've hurt me, how you don't want to be friends with me anymore, and how I compare with other friends of yours and don't measure up.

From April:

You recently wrote that you were very hurt because you thought I betrayed you, but then you realized I didn't betray you and you wanted to talk with me about it at some point. This misconstruing of where I'm coming from is not an isolated incident and has happened a lot between us. It's happened so frequently that I believe you see me in a certain, unshakable way, which is negative and likely fed into by other experiences (both good and bad) that you've had with other people.

From April:

Whatever the reason or the source, it's become obvious that it can't be reversed no matter what I say or do.

From April:

Things are up and down and when they're down you see me as someone you don't trust- for whatever reason- and you see me as the enemy. I respond or react to this, and then you tell me how much I've hurt you.

From April:

I'm finding it very difficult if not impossible to be close to someone who doesn't feel my friendship is an asset and who, when particularly distressed, feels my friendship is a detriment. Of course, I'm not going to react or respond well to this, and what makes it even worse is you tell me how my response/reaction makes YOU feel like a terrible person. It's a really bad cycle that goes nowhere except south.

From April:

Below my name are what I received from you recently. I didn't include anything you wrote that I'm pretty sure you wrote out of anger. I'm only including things you wrote that send a clear and sober message that you are unhappy being friends with me. I can't try any harder than I have, and I can't be a different person than I am just so you and I are a better fit.

From April:

We really have to take this seriously (more seriously than we have been) and accept the fact that we don't meet each other's needs or share each other's values, and we browbeat each other because of it- too often for there to be a healthy friendship.

From April:

I don't want to throw labels like depression or anxiety or codependency or cluster b personality disorder or alcoholism or trauma bonding because all they do is divert attention away from the fact that what we have is not the kind of relationship either of us wants- regardless of the cause(s). I also know it takes two to tango- and we've been doing this dance now for over 20 years and that's a long time for two people to be in each other's lives if both didn't commit to trying hard to make it work.

From April:

I don't want you to think I'm putting blame only on you or only on myself. It's time to give each other the space and distance we both need, or this is just going to continue and make us both miserable. I don't want to throw my or your life away by doing this, but I feel we've been doing just that.

Life is too precious and short.

From April:

I hope you understand what I'm saying and that I'm not saying it to hurt you or to hurt myself. I really need for things to be better than they've been, and I believe you do, too.

We can't keep going on like this.

From April:

You wrote this sometime in the past few weeks to me:

“It is 100% MY fault for continuing to try getting blood from a stone. Not saying you are a stone...but I should know after 20 years of friendship that I am not gonna get what I need, and I am a fool to keep trying.”

From April:

You also wrote this sometime in the past few weeks to me:

“80% of the times I share deep, personal issues with you, I am left empty by your responses. They rarely give me the validation I need, and often make me feel more insecure than before I talked with you.”

From April:

And you wrote this as well to me recently:

“I do value our friendship (though less and less as time goes on - due to MY regularly getting hurt), but I won't be contacting you anymore, drunk or sober, because I just don't get what I need from you. Period.”

From April:

Here's more of what you wrote to me recently:

“I think we need some **SERIOUS** time, space, and distance between us. This is truly getting into the danger zone. We can't afford to allow this friendship to continue. All the best to you. Good luck with all your projects. Maybe our paths will cross someday at the local library.”

From April:

And you wrote this not too long ago:

“In any event my trust in you is GONE...and it's too dangerous to continue a friendship. I do not like or respect the kind of person you are. Please...NO MORE NOTES.”

“And I should not be friends with YOU anymore. Too much water under the bridge. Goodbye and Good Luck.”

From April:
You also wrote this:

“I just want you to know that I had not been drinking-hand to God. I’d been incredibly hurt, with feelings of betrayal. But I realize you were not betraying me.”

From June:

My mind is so filled with things going on in my life right now that I cannot remember why I'd felt "betrayed" by you. Could you please remind me of the situation?

From June:

I understand what you are saying, and where you are coming from. It sounds like you have lost all hope for us to be close friends. But I have not lost hope - regardless of some of the things I'd written when I was hurt and/or angry. I keep thinking that at some point, something will click, and our whole friendship will turn around for the better. But maybe that's just wishful thinking.

From June:

Maybe with some time and distance, we can try again in a year or so. I certainly don't want us to be enemies or block each other on FB. I want peace as much as you do.

From April:



From June:

I acknowledge that I have a lot of anger in me - going back to my childhood, when people started to mentally abuse me. Maybe I take out that anger on the people closest to me when I think THEY are doing something mean to me. Perhaps that is how my PTSD manifests.

From June:

I will be starting the EMDR treatments soon. Meantime, I am seeing a therapist once a week and doing some deep trauma work. She says that I have been abused so much and for so long that the healing is not going to happen in a day.

From June:

Maybe you could find it within you to pity me for that, and not be hurt by anything I've said/done. I've become a very troubled person because of all the trauma I've experienced at the hands of MANY people.

From June:

When I was a little girl, my mother told me that I was the most loving, caring, sensitive child she'd ever seen. If I thought I'd hurt someone, I would literally start crying and apologizing a million times. Somewhere along the line, circumstances turned me into a bitter, angry woman. "Hurt people hurt people." And I desperately need to overcome that.

From April:



From June:

I'm so sorry for any pain I've caused you over the years. It truly makes me heartsick to know how much I've hurt you. I swear to God, I never meant to. You are a very special person... and will always be special to me, no matter what kind of relationship we end up having.



From April:



From June:

I have been thinking a LOT about PTSD - and the more I read about it, the more I think I've suffered from it in ways that I never even realized! Maybe my PTSD manifests itself when I get upset with you unnecessarily and I convince myself that you don't respect me or care about me enough... No wonder you've been frustrated! Yet you have stuck with me and tried again and again to work things out with me.

From June:

I know you have at times questioned whether I like you or not - but in your soul you must know that I do like you - in fact I love you - very much. I know that we both need time and distance... so please forgive me for even sending this note. But it's important to me to share my discoveries with you - as they pertain directly to our friendship.

From June:

Please don't feel obligated to respond. I promise I
WILL understand if you don't. Hope you have a
wonderful day.

XO

From April:





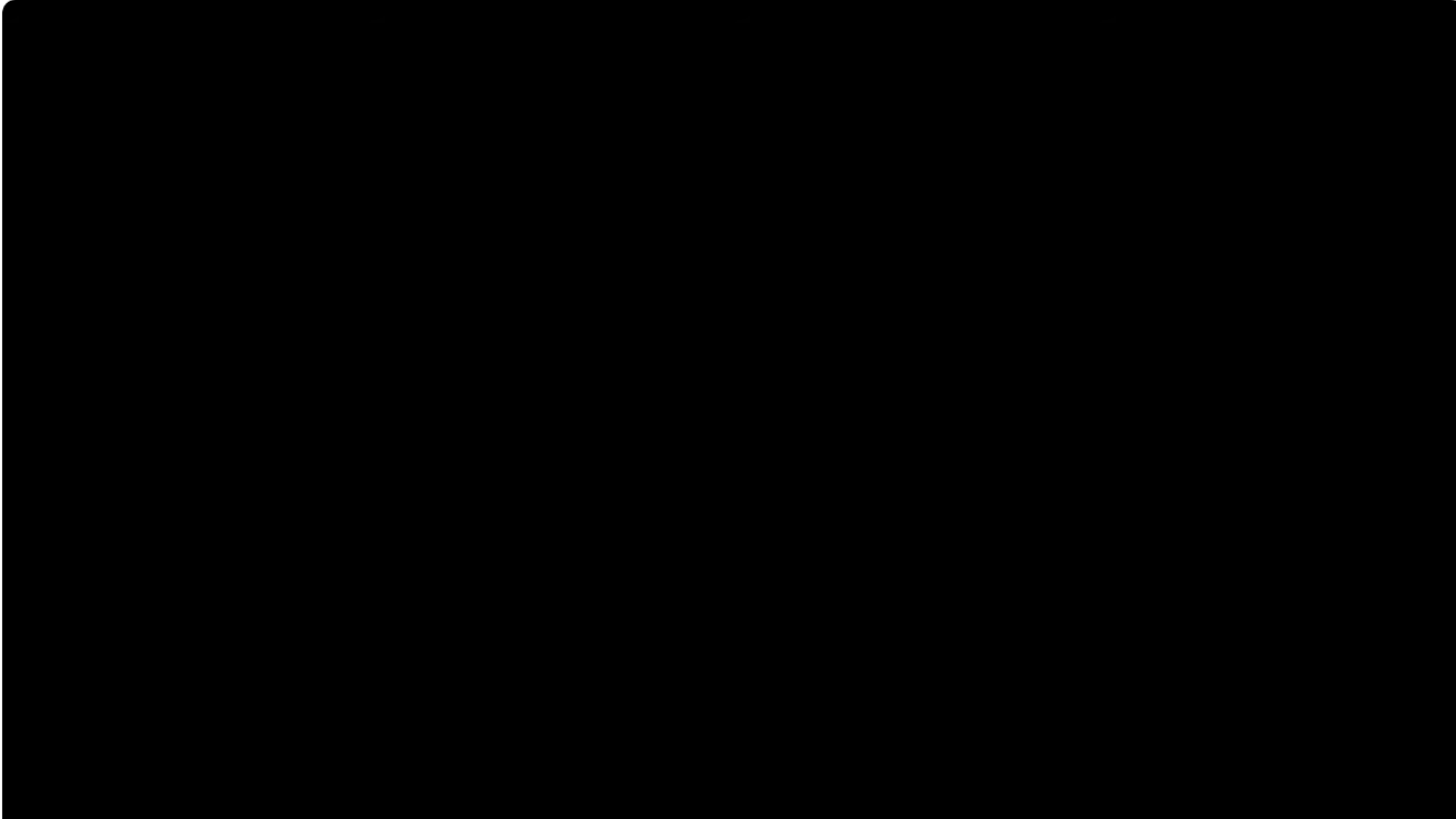












REELING PART 6

Space, Time, and Distance

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

Subject title: I don't understand...

...why you seem to be ghosting me. You'd said that you needed some distance, but did you mean no contact at all? Were you just nicely trying to get rid of me altogether? You know that you HATE when people ghost you. Why then would you do it to someone else? I think it's so mean - and unfair.

June

From April:

Hi, June,

I'm taking the things you've written to me in recent months to heart and seriously, and I'm giving us the distance you've said you want. I certainly don't want either of us to feel ghosted. But given what you've written, I don't feel comfortable being close.

From April:

In addition to saying, about our relationship, that there was too much water under the bridge and damage that could never be fully repaired, you mentioned you will always have trust issues with me, you will always feel like I don't "have your back" and am defending people you've had problems with more than you.

From April:

You said you believe the only solution for us is to have the most casual of relationships, and you think we need some SERIOUS time, space and distance between us, and this is truly getting into the “danger zone” and we can’t afford this friendship to continue. You also said that your sister did not trust me from the moment she met me, called me “bad news” and encouraged you to stay the hell away from me.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

The things I've said to you that have to do with not trusting you come from the trauma I experienced as a child and young adult. I've had PTSD with you, where I have (erroneously) thought that I could not trust you (because of things OTHER PEOPLE had done to me). You know what PTSD is, so you should understand this.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

As far as telling you what my sister said, I should NEVER have done that. My sister based her opinions of you (and your husband) on her own incorrect and unfair view of you trying to help us at our yard sale. My sister has said negative, unfair things about 90% of my friends. I learned the hard way never to discuss with her any of my issues with friends.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

In my sister's defense though, just like your friends had your back during our issues, she was only trying to protect me. I would bet my bottom dollar that your friends, Dick, and others, do not have a positive impression of me - due to what they've heard about me.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

No, I don't agree with having just a casual friendship. I think we should try again - and literally (like the Bible says) throw all our past issues into the deepest part of the ocean, never to be remembered again. (haha - listen to me, being Miss Bible Thumper!) I really miss you. I miss writing to you, talking to you, getting together with you. Don't you miss me at all?

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

I am in SERIOUS EMDR treatment right now, and it's making me feel like a completely different person. Can't you see fit to try - just try - to trust that, and give us another chance? We have both said things in the past that are regrettable. They ALL belong in the deepest part of that ocean.

Meantime, how is your mother? How is your own health?

JUNE

From April:

Hi, June,

I'm going to address this as honestly as I can. I know about PTSD and childhood trauma, and you've often mentioned you are suffering from these things. I do understand and I've had to work my way through my own issues. The problem is when your PTSD and trauma end up negatively affecting me, it becomes impossible for me to be and stay close. I know you're doing EMDR and are trying very hard to get past this, and I really hope it helps. But it will take time.

From April:

As far as your sister goes, you have complicated feelings toward her. You see her as protective of you for things you confided in her, although she was never personally there for any conflicts we had. You've had your own conflicts with her and continue to, and recently mentioned wanting her to disappear off the face of the earth.

From April:

These days, I'm not so concerned about your sister or anything she may have said about me and my husband. I'm concerned about the number of times I've told you how much it hurts my feelings to hear from you what she said (many times, after many requests from me for you to stop bringing her comments up to me).

From April:

When you're upset with me, you will remind me how much she never liked me, thought I was "bad news," had a "dark energy" about me, etc. etc. You wrote "I should NEVER have done that." But you have written this same thing to me in previous emails, lamenting having told me negative things she said about me, and yet you keep doing it.

From April:

That makes me feel that you likely don't care about my feelings- or even worse- want to see me uncomfortable- if you know (because I've told you a number of times) something you're saying or doing is hurting me.

From April:

That is another reason why I need space, time and distance. It has been a very long time (a decade or more?) since I've brought up anything anyone may have said about you to me that was negative because I know you're sensitive and I know it's just not something someone does to someone else if they really care about that person.

I hope you understand.

April

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

Gosh... I don't know where to begin. The original reason I told you about the negative things my sister had said about you was a selfish reason. I wanted you to know experientially what a bitch she was. It was a classic case of "misery loves company." Nevertheless, I should never have told you ANY of her unsubstantiated comments.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

Another of my motives (though still not a good one), was to protect you from any animosity you might feel from her, should you end up in the same space as my sister again - for instance, a funeral, or hanging out at the Inn for music (which you'd considered going a few times).

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

At this point, I think it's appropriate to bring up the "Savannah saga." I had NO IDEA that Savannah did not like me and in fact gossiped about me to you - until you told me. I was hurt and shocked. You claimed that you'd done it as a way to protect me from thinking she was a loyal friend, when all the while she was dissing me behind my back.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

Bottom line: Neither you nor I revealed these negative things out of a desire to be hurtful or nasty. We actually wanted to protect each other from "f-d up people." But that line of reasoning kind of backfired - for the both of us. I was furious after learning of Savannah's transgressions against me. And you ended up extremely hurt about things my sister had said about you - with no real knowledge of you. We both would have been better off just keeping our mouths shut, and letting history take its natural course.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

In fact, before I ever said a thing to you about my sister, you had a negative impression of her, and even called her “ugly inside and out” - for the despicable way she'd treated you and your husband at our garage sale. Still - I added fuel to the fire, AND THAT WAS WRONG. It was also wrong to use my sister's words against you at other times - when I was feeling mistreated and/or disrespected by you. I used a very juvenile strategy... “Even my sister bla bla bla”...

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

So immature of me. I will regret that forever. But what can I do NOW about it??? Should I slit my wrists as punishment?

**From April,
June, you are reinventing history. I had absolutely no
opinion of your sister before you started telling me
negative things she allegedly said to you about me. A
while ago, you admitted that you had complained to
her about arguments you and I had. These were all
from your perspective, and you told me that she
formed a shitty impression of me based on that. It was
only after I heard the same negative comments from
you that she supposedly said about me, many times
over, that I started forming a negative impression of
her.**

From April,
I had no negative impression of your sister before this, and no reason to have a negative impression because I'd never met her. Actually, because she was your sister- I had initially tried to get you to resolve things with her. Your reaction was to tell me she thought I sucked. Quite the opposite of the spin you're putting on the story now. It was either "misery loves company," as you said, or it was because I wasn't supporting your insistence that your sister was a piece of shit. Not sure why you're saying the opposite now.

From April,
Another disclaimer. Your sister didn't treat me and my husband in a "despicable way" at the yard sale. We remember it being uneventful. We didn't feel your sister was either friendly or rude to us. She was just there doing her thing, and we were there doing our thing. We walked away from the yard sale with no impression of her because we didn't feel she did anything to warrant an impression. But you seem to want to recall it being something different than how we remember it.

**From April,
You're inventing things that never happened.**

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

Please don't forget some of the horrible things you saw fit to tell me when we'd have arguments. One that I will never forget is when you told me that your mother disliked me so much she would not even waste her saliva to spit in my face. That was when I sent back some flowers that I'd specifically asked you NOT to send. Let's face it, April, we have BOTH behaved like children at times, and the results have been incredibly hurtful.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

If you TRULY want to end this friendship forever, I won't keep resisting. I don't feel that I should beg for anyone's friendship. Flaws notwithstanding, I am a good, kind, giving human being - and this is validated every day by at least one of my dear friends. But deep down, I don't think you want to end the friendship either. We've had a lot of really great times over the last few decades. We've also had some good laughs! Please don't give up on me!

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

At least give it a chance, now that I am doing EMDR... and it is visibly helping. After intense sessions, I can literally feel past trauma lose its power to hurt me in the present. I am also still doing regular tapping...which is another visceral way of healing the mind. I don't know what more to say.

Much love,

June

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

I'm just wondering if you read this yet. I hope I didn't say anything to upset you...?

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

I need to point out one more thing. You stated that, no matter how many times I promised not to bring up negative things my sister had said, I would inevitably bring them up again the heat of an argument. Well, I don't mean this as a tit for tat - but there are a couple of things you did regularly that hurt me terribly, and continued to do regardless of promising not to. I will just remind you of one of those things.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

You CONSTANTLY threw back at me old emails, to apparently remind me of what I'd said in the past. However, they were often taken out of context and had NO relation to our current situation. I begged you to stop doing that - it's "dirty fighting" and extremely hurtful. You acknowledged this being unfair and promised never to do it again. Yet you continued to do it over and over again.

**From April:
June,**

You are deflecting away from the fact that you are continuing to bring your sister up to me after I asked you many, many times not to because it hurt my feelings. You mentioned her as recently as a month or two ago. I haven't spoken to Savannah in over 18 years, which means the "Savannah saga" you referred to and thought was appropriate to bring up was over two decades ago, earliest. The thing with my mother was also a number of years ago. It's been a long time since I've done anything like this, because I don't want to hurt you.

From April,

As for emails you'd written... I will remind you of something like "My sister thought you were "bad news" the moment she met you and I should stay the hell away from you. I should have listened to her. Go ahead and block me everywhere! I don't care!" I do this so you can see what you wrote and envision how it feels to be on the receiving end. Again, you sent this to me weeks- not years- ago. This was not taken out of context, since you meant what you wrote at that time, about your sister's feelings toward me. It supported, at the time you wrote it, your feelings of not being able to trust me. Then you said you later realized you were wrong for feeling that way. But not at the time you wrote it and sent it to me to read!

From April:

Also not taken out of context are the things you wrote about not wanting to be friends with me anymore, too much water under the bridge, at best we should be casual friends, any closer and it's dangerous... At the time you wrote those things, you meant them, even if they were later realized by you to be driven by PTSD and childhood trauma. I was the one on the receiving end of them- at the time you wrote them- and I was the one who was hurt by your words.

From April:

If I don't remind you what you wrote, then as far as you're concerned it may not have happened or I'm exaggerating. If you're not reminded of what you wrote, you also may not understand the gravity of what I'm saying about how your words affect me, and how I don't want to get hurt anymore by the things you write when you are feeling a certain way and then later regret. Like us not being friends. Obviously you feel very different today, right now. But I have many emails from you over the past several months that indicate otherwise.

From April:

It's simple, with me. I will be the most loyal, loving friend you could hope for (as I've tried to be many times in the past) if I don't find myself on the receiving end of messages that hurt me. If you're hurting, I only ask that you try to work through it and don't take your hurt out on me.

From April:

That's all I ask for. If the EMDR is helping you to get over trauma and things that cause you to feel pain, then... that's great. But there also has to be a conscious effort to not lash out when you are feeling a certain way. I have been trying to be a good friend to you for many years now. But I can't do it alone and expect our relationship is going to thrive.

April

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

How can you say I am deflecting from the fact that I've brought up my sister's negative feelings after you'd asked me not to??? I have admitted many times that this was WRONG...and I SHOULD NOT HAVE DONE IT. What else can I do - but continue to admit wrong-doing???

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

I just get frustrated when you don't seem to acknowledge that YOU have hurt ME too - in different ways, of course, but you've hurt me just the same. Like when I've tried countless times to discuss deep, personal things with you, and you either "drift away" or go off on a tangent that has nothing to do with my issue.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

You have acknowledged that you do this and said that you get it from your father. But it makes me feel frustrated and disrespected when you don't seem interested in what I'm trying to confide in you.

The hurt goes both ways, April. But of course, I agree with you - that regurgitating my sister's harsh words when we've argued is WRONG, WRONG, WRONG. And I regret it 100%.

From April:

Deflection. We are talking something you did in the past few weeks, versus whatever you're saying that I did- at the earliest- a couple of decades ago. I'm trying to get you to realize that your sister's remark and all the other remarks you made were just a few weeks ago. If you want things to be better between us, I'm asking you to focus on what I'm saying here. Try not to write things you know, deep down, are going to hurt me and our friendship.

From April:

I'm trying to help, not hurt. You don't want ghosting and all that bullshit, and neither do I. But I can't read things like what you wrote recently and feel OK about us.

I need to get back to work. I'm not writing anything here to inflame or aggravate. I'm just looking at everything with fresh eyes and I'm asking you to do the same.

April

Why is this message in spam?

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Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

I know that I've said things recently... but believe me, it has NOT been to hurt you. Rather it's been to defend myself. It's that old saying, "There's strength in numbers." After feeling hurt by you (for whatever reasons), I used my sister's words as a weapon against you - to try to make you realize how much you'd hurt me. I never EVER did it, thinking to myself, here's how I can hurt April.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

And in retrospect, I deeply regret having hurt you with this kind of "dirty fighting." I've behaved badly, for sure, but I never DELIBERATELY wanted to hurt you. You must please believe me on that. Maybe we could try talking on the phone sometime over the weekend...?

Have a good day,

JUNE

(Text from June)

Hi again,

Just thought you'd like to know that I FINALLY got a really great new part time job! I will be working weekends – 15 minutes from my home! I am soooooo happy about this, April, it's a great place to work...and I beat out a shitload of candidates for the job, which is basically a receptionist position – but the title is “associate.” Sounds a bit “bigger and better” – haha.

(Text from April)

June, I'm still at work and then need to see my mother in rehab. Quickly, do you understand what I said in my last email?

(Text from June)

**Are you talking about your need for space and distance?
Or are you referring to my continuing to use my sister's
words against you, even after you'd asked me not to? If it's
the latter, I did respond via email. I responded that what I
did was 100% wrong, but I honestly never deliberately tried
to hurt you. I'd been hurt myself by you and responded
inappropriately.**

(Text from April)

OK. Thanks for understanding.

(Text from June)

Yes, I absolutely understand, and I will NEVER do that again. If I do, you have my permission to engrave this text on a very large, heavy rock and throw it at my head.

I'm not joking.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

I wish we could talk face to face, or even on the phone, but you don't seem to have time for that at this point. (And that's okay - I truly do understand!)

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

From June: Unblock sender Move to Inbox

You mean a lot to me, and I truly hope our friendship can be salvaged.

I continue to see my therapist and go to AA meetings - in hopes of healing from all the trauma I've suffered. And I remain very regretful of any pain I've caused you due to my own suffering.

**Have a good day,
June**

From April:

Hi, June. Our friendship is, I think, what it needs to be right now. We need time to heal, and considering how long we've been in each other's lives, it's going to take time. I realize I also have trauma I need to get over, so I'll ask that we keep things as they've been so we can both get better.

April

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

Okay, thank you for responding. And thank you for owning your trauma too. When things get unhealthy between two friends, it is never only one person's fault. We have both hurt each other - but unintentionally in every instance. And yes, we both need to heal from past trauma that causes issues in current relationships. The EMDR is really helping me. After 4 sessions, I already feel "lighter" somehow - less burdened by the pain of the past.

From April:

Yes, we all have trauma, and I know you've mentioned many times the hurt I've caused you. It was never intentional and if it was caused by something within me, I'm sorry for that and I've been working hard over the years to be healthy and to grow. However, in my message I was specifically referring to the trauma caused by our relationship. It will take time for it to heal, as will yours.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

I understand. I just don't necessarily agree that it will take "forever" for us to heal from the trauma of our friendship. I wish we could TALK more than WRITE... but I cannot force you to do that. Meantime - I am sorry for mentioning "many times" the hurt you've caused me. The reason is because I felt that you always blamed me for a majority of our issues, and I knew that wasn't right or fair. I think we both hurt each other equally (though unintentionally), just in different ways.

Take care, JUNE

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

Subject title: Let's please try to do this!

Just start a new story.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

Hey there, April,

I've been doing a lot of research into narcissism - to better understand how both my sister and SJ are fond of behaving. And while I have learned a lot about THEM, I am unfortunately learning some disturbing things about MYSELF too.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

I am an extremely insecure human being - having been subjected to SO much bullying my entire life (not only from my classmates in school...but my father...and certain bosses I've had (such as Fred at WFUG). And this has left me with some of my own highly disturbing narcissistic tendencies. 😞

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

Some of this has been manifested in my behaviors toward you... and this makes me heartsick. There are no words to describe how much I regret having hurt you - due to these horrible narcissistic behaviors.

I suppose the good news is that I am becoming so self-aware. But in the meantime, I've done a lot of damage to some people I love dearly, including you.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

And even though SJ was very mean to me in many ways, I was no angel to her either. But - I have apologized to her countless times for having hurt her... and it will always trouble me that, even after I had changed drastically toward her, she still did not want my friendship. And it hurts even more that she does seem to want my sister's friendship.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

I can honestly say that I have NEVER hurt my sister the way she has hurt me. She takes her resentment toward our parents out on ME - because they showed blatant favoritism for me. That is the problem between my sister & me - and it has nothing to do with my being narcissistic toward her.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

Anyhow, I just needed to write this to you - so that you will know that I am NOT taking our issues (yours and mine) lightly. And I am working VERY hard to not lose you - because I do care so much about you.

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June
Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

Hopefully I will see you tomorrow at your mother's rehab place. I am not feeling great today, though, I have a sore throat and dizziness. Hopefully a good night's sleep will make these symptoms go away.

Goodnight, my dear friend.

XO

Why is this message in spam?

You have blocked June

Unblock sender Move to Inbox

From June:

I don't expect you to read this - it's way too long - but I am very relieved that I do not have ANY of these narcissistic tendencies. Similar things have been done to me BY narcissists (especially Psycho Paul),,, but I was the victim, not the perp.

From: Quora Suggested Spaces

Subject: As a narcissist ages and grows old, how do they normally end up?



