

## Ask Your Therapist

By Krishnabai, MSW, LICSW, the Ashby Center for Counseling

### Attachment and Letting Go

Two years ago I sold my house and moved into a house less than half its size. I spent the 6 months prior to the move giving away over half of my possessions in order to be able to fit into my new home. I gave away many things that I had worked hard to acquire over time and would now no longer need.

It was a very interesting process to watch myself deal with all the letting go. I saw that when I kept the big picture in mind (I'm going to be free of so much stuff I have felt overwhelmed by") I felt great but when I focused on the individual things I was parting with I often felt the pull of attachment. "Who am I without my hot tub, my dining table that seats 12, my walls of books?" For not only was I letting go of the things, I was letting go of the dreams that were attached to the things. I was letting go of pieces of my self image, my ambitions and hopes for a way of life I never had, no longer had, or would not have anymore.

I did a fair amount of "What if" and "Maybe someday" as I surgically removed crates of books, arm loads of clothes and boxes of a life left behind or never lived. I admitted I will never be a knitter, no matter how much I think I want to be, nor will I read all those magazines I squirreled away, each with at least one "important article" I thought I must read. I faced what is rather than what I hoped would be. And it was liberating.

So this weekend I am taking a second swipe at all I did manage to cram into my tiny house and all I've accumulated in the last two years. I have developed a cheer for my work - "Two years and OUT!" If I haven't used it since I've lived here, it's history.

A friend told me about finding a box in the back of her attic marked "Important. Open immediately" that had been sitting there for 12 years since she moved. Nothing in it was important to her now. It was all in her perspective.

Being attached is a source of our suffering. It creates our pain, our drama and our small world view. I contemplated all this as I filled up another recycling bin of papers I have saved for years to read and am finally saying "Uncle" - I'll never read them.

To read all the prior Ask Your Therapist columns go to [www.krishnabai.com](http://www.krishnabai.com) where you can also send Krishnabai a general question for her column.

Krishnabai, MSW is a therapist in Ashby and Wellesley Hills where she sees adults, older teens and couples. The core of her work is the discovery and expression of the Authentic Self. She focuses on the identification, expression,

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