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Adult Twin Survey Findings: A Preliminary Discussion

I want to thank everyone who filled out the survey. More than 250 people participated, from ages 18 to 85, and I continue to receive responses every day. I was surprised by some findings and validated by others. More than ever, I am convinced about my book's relevance since so many twin pairs are hungry for information and advice concerning their relationship to their twin. The majority of respondents were very motivated to understand the aspects of their twin relationship that contribute to feelings of sadness, confusion, and fear. While a small percentage of people were incredulous that being a twin would have any unpleasant or negative consequences, most authentically acknowledged difficulties and desired help in resolving them. Many twin pairs are attempting to work out their issues so that the twinship can maintain its integrity alongside other primary relationships.

I was not surprised by the fact that there were only a handful of respondents who expressed unmitigated resentment and estrangement from their twin. The few who did so described years of legitimate frustration and angst. The segment where I appeared on the Rachel Ray Show entitled "I Hate My Twin" a few years ago was an exaggerated and sensationalized ploy geared to generate audience ratings and publicity. Like so many survey respondents, the young women on this show were struggling to understand and rework their issues with separation and individuation. Presently both are doing well – living in separate cities, pursuing different career paths, and appreciating their cherished connection. It is imperative that non-twins along with society-at-large recognize that twins, just like singletons, have expectable developmental struggles with their siblings. Conflict does not signal that they hate each other nor insinuate that they are no longer close. Twins' yearnings to forge other intimate relationships without alienating or hurting their twin emerge as the salient struggle.

I do want to mention the many poignant stories shared by twins who describe how their powerful connection to their twin helped them survive traumatic events such as the death of a loved one, divorce, and illness. The multiple references to fear about twin loss reflect the love and devotion that many twins feel for each other. Also, the diverse parenting styles reported by twin pairs were intriguing.

Thanks again for your continuing interest in and support for my work. I will keep you updated on my research and the book's publication.▪