



NEWSLETTER
May 2006

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For busy professional women and small business owners wanting more success and fulfillment in their careers and more time, balance, and joy in their personal lives.

The Rest of the Story...

The Preview

In April of 2004, I wrote what turned out to be one of my favorite newsletters entitled "Love or Fear? Your Choice." It was very personal to me because of the struggle I was having with a family member.

Now, two years later, I'd like to share with you the rest of the story...

But first, here's a slightly edited version of the original newsletter, so you can get the context of what I'm talking about.

Feature: Love or Fear? Your Choice

A few weeks ago when ideas were beginning to percolate for this newsletter I asked myself, "If I could live by only one guiding principle, what would that be?" Loud and clear my inner wisdom said, "coming from love, not fear." Specifically, I mean responding to life and all of its opportunities and challenges with love as the underlying context, framework, outlook or motivation.

We always have a choice. We can approach situations from a standpoint of love or fear. When we're responding with love, we're coming from our highest self, our highest good. When love is present, our experience is one of warmth, generosity, kindness, understanding, compassion, and abundance. When we're reacting from fear, we feel a need to be guarded and to protect ourselves from being hurt. Our overriding concerns are worry, lack, judgment, resentment, and scarcity.

The challenge is in seeing that in ANY situation, we have the CHOICE of whether we want to respond from fear or love. Now, let's be very clear that I'm not talking about times when your safety is being physically threatened. Let's set those circumstances aside.

In everyday life, in any situation that arises with your family, your friends, your co-workers, or your partner, you absolutely DO HAVE A CHOICE IN HOW YOU RESPOND.

Granted, the automatic response is often one of fear or protection. But you can stop, take a deep breath, and choose to respond differently. You can intentionally choose to respond with love.

All your actions, responses, and emotions are determined by who you are "being" in the moment. It is the underlying context that drives your behavior. Do you want the underlying context that drives you to be love or fear?

Start asking yourself, "What context am I coming from? Is it love or fear?" If it's fear, ask yourself, "what would I be doing differently if I was coming from a place of love?" Chances are the answers are very different from the place you're currently experiencing. When you have those answers, you'll know where to focus your energy in the future and how to stop a fear reaction and turn it into a loving response.

April 2004: A Note From Denise

It's funny how life works. Since I've been exploring this distinction of responding from love rather than fear, life has given me an *abundance* of opportunities to learn and grow.

Here's the one that is most difficult for me – a family member who's upset with me. This is somebody close to me who was in trouble and called asking me for a major commitment to help. I responded immediately with the help she asked for, exactly as I thought she had asked. She saw it differently and is upset with me for the way I responded.

Frankly, I could feel justified to respond to this person with all of the anger and negative energy that's being thrown at me. I could respond with anger, fear, lack, and the need to protect myself. Or I could choose to respond with as much generosity and love that I can find in my heart. I am human; I've had many instances of vacillating between the two.

And this is the lesson: When I respond from fear, I get angry, upset, self-righteous, and vindictive. When I respond with love, I feel compassion, understanding, and the possibility of healing.

So, here's what I've chosen to do. As soon as I catch myself with a negative thought about this person, I transform it and send her a HUGE beam of love and lightness.

Unfortunately, to date, my loving approach has not visibly changed that person's reaction. And yet, I still choose love. That may be the greatest challenge of all.

I choose love because of the difference it makes in my life and in the lives of everybody this situation affects. I choose love because MY experience of life is much more peaceful, centered, and sure. *I choose love because I know in my heart of hearts it's the only thing that will ever*

make a real difference.

May 2006: A Note From Denise

I'll never forget the reaction from my editor when I originally submitted my April 2004 newsletter for her review. Paraphrasing her words, "But where's the happy ending... the resolution?"

And what she came to understand was that it was *the act of coming from love* that makes the difference. No matter the outcome. No matter what the other person is doing.

You take a stance for love. Over and over and over again. Even when you're hurt. Even when you're frustrated. Even when you want to give up.

Let me tell you, there were many times I wanted to give up in the last two years. But there was too much at stake. This was my stepdaughter... my deceased husband's first-born... the mother of my grandchildren.

As a person, and as a coach, I'm committed to the healthy resolution of any interpersonal conflicts. It's what I believe and what I teach my clients. But in this situation, it became clear that my direct way of approaching a problem and gaining resolution was not going to work.

There was only one possible way of being that could make a difference. Stand for love, no matter what. So I did and slowly but surely my daughter's responses to me began to soften.

And now I get my happy ending.

I've just returned from a visit home to New York where I spent time with my daughter and grandchildren. She let the kids skip school for a day to play with Grandma. She made me dinner. It felt like old times. And best of all, a big surprise for Grandma. She's letting the kids fly here and spend a week with me this summer. At that moment, I knew that my stand for love had prevailed.

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