

ALLOWING YOUR FEELINGS

by Deb Elkin, LPC

When adversity and unpleasant experiences present themselves in our lives, there are usually lessons to be learned from them. Paying attention to them is often what is called for before we can let go and move on. Usually what is called for first is that we experience our feelings about what has happened.

A client said to me recently that she thought if she allowed herself to go into her "negative" feelings (which is what usually comes up in the face of adversity), she would stop the flow of abundance. The truth is, if we don't allow those negative feelings, we contract, and that is where the stoppage happens. When we cut off, avoid, deny, ignore our negative feelings, we cannot flow and move in life. What is important is that we give our true feelings their voice, acknowledge them, don't shame ourselves with them. They need to be nurtured and reassured. They are usually old wounded places inside of us that never got heard or reassured (and they/you still need that!). If we ignore or shame them, we are re-wounding ourselves, doing to ourselves what was done to us in our past. This shuts us down. We can't flow from shame and hurt and shut down.

My client became aware of an inner fearful voice telling her she would probably always be alone. She decided that if she let the fear be expressed, she would be giving power to that instead of to a more positive, hopeful, abundant message of allowing relationship to come to her. So she was pushing it down and away. The problem is that the voice didn't go away, it just went underground. And in trying to keep that voice down, she became contracted. That is what stopped the flow.

It's important when we feel those "negative" feelings, that we allow them and listen to them. We need to honor their presence in our lives. This is how we can change our lifelong patterns and stop re-wounding ourselves. By bringing love, compassion and acceptance to ourselves, we re-open the door to the flow of abundance.

One other thing on allowing our feelings...it's important that we don't give them so much power that they take over our lives. We can, and need to be, angry, sad, or frustrated. But there comes a time when these voices get so loud and stay so long that they are the only ones we can hear. We become "over-identified" with them. We come to believe that we ARE the anger, we ARE the sadness, rather than remember that it's what is flowing through us right now. We are NOT the anger, NOT the sadness, etc.

Again, hear their voices, honor them, reassure them, let them know that they are in fact important, because they are. But if they haven't run their course in what feels like a reasonable amount of time (which can be measured by how much they are interfering with your daily functioning), then they may need some reigning in. Again, this doesn't mean shut them down or bury them. You can call on "the adult" part of you to take over so that you can let yourself get on with what you need to be doing. Put your feelings "on the back burner", but don't forget to get back to them or you will stay contracted and stop the flow of abundance.

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