

## LETTING GO

By Deb Elkin, LPC

I started writing this article 5 days ago, and have been writing and revising and writing and revising ever since. It's never right, it's never good enough. I've been deeply frustrated. Everything else I've written to date has flowed out of me pretty easily. But this time, I can't seem to say what I want to say. I've even wondered if I know what it is that I want to say.

I've been feeling this incredible pressure and responsibility to get this newsletter out. I'm leaving town for 5 days later this afternoon. Surely I've given myself enough time to do this! Stacey did her part, and now she's off in the islands getting married. It's my job to get this out! I said I would so I should!

I did think about scrapping it for this edition and just saying, "Oh, well! I just can't seem to do it." I got a little scared at the idea of giving myself permission to do that. My projections were that Stacey would be both disappointed and angry with me. That may well have been reality, and it may not. I also worried that we wouldn't be living up to our commitment to you, our readers, to put out a bi-monthly newsletter. But obviously, since you are reading this, I decided not to go that route.

The topic I was trying to write about was "letting go of outcome." (Pretty appropriate, huh?) What I came to realize as I struggled with myself and my writing was that in my work life right now, I am deeply attached to outcome. I have this picture in my head of what my practice is supposed to look like, ie how many clients I should be seeing each week and how much money my practice should be bringing me. And right now, I'm not really close. And deep down inside, I'm scared about it.

This fear has sent me into "survival mode." Am I going to be OK? Am I going to make it? These are old, old, old familiar voices inside my head. They are not in fact based in reality – I'm actually fine! But when my survival seems threatened, they come screaming up at me.

So recognizing this helped set me free from the pressure I was putting on myself. So did talking to friends who helped me put what was happening to me in perspective. How can I write about letting go of outcome when I can't do it myself right now?

It's important to realize, and remember, that we don't and can't always operate from these "lofty ideals", these spiritual truths. I'm not sure who I'm quoting when I say this, but, "after all, we ARE human beings having a spiritual experience!"

I consider myself to be pretty wise and aware. And yet, all of my best self-talk hasn't budged me away from my fear and attachment. Sometimes we just go there, and sometimes we just get stuck there. We're human! It's important to give ourselves permission to be where we are. Truly, what else can we do? I suppose we can beat ourselves up about it, but what good does that do? It surely doesn't help us get out of

that place. In fact, it usually makes it worse. Judging it, fighting it, denying it, that's what keeps us stuck. Acknowledging it, listening to it, allowing it to be what it is, that is what frees us up to move on.

I just called a friend and read her what I had written. I was looking for some input and feedback as well as some help on how to wrap this up. My thought was to say to you, the readers, "So sometime down the road when I am more able, I will share with you my article on letting go of outcome." And my friend just laughed and said, "Deb, you don't get it. You just did it. You acknowledged your fears and stuckness, you listened to it, and you allowed it to be OK. And then this article on letting go of outcome just flowed out of you. Don't you get it?"

Oh! Thanks Annette.

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