

In It Together

April 2015

Hello, Everyone....

'Tis Spring time here in the United States. I always love this time of year, when the promise of new life is evident in the budding of leaves, the bloom of flowers, the return of the birds' songs, the longer days, the milder weather. Here in central California, of course, we didn't have much of a winter. We had one small snowfall in December - we were overjoyed to think we were finally going to have a decent winter. That thought fizzled out fairly quickly.

MY greatest challenge these days is staying in the Now and not allowing the anxiety about fires and water shortages affect the incredible, incredible beauty of Today. Just about everyone I know who lives in my neck of the woods is challenged in a similar way. In a maudlin moment, I was thinking that my inability to enjoy the Now must be similar to what a Death Row prisoner feels when he gets his last meal. Though everything he could desire to eat is there in front of him, how much pleasure does he ultimately derive from it when he knows what comes afterwards? (Now did I mention the word "maudlin"? And did I mention the word "challenge"?). AND of course I'm being ridiculous to compare the two situations as being similar; I am certain that given the choice, the Death Row inmate would happily choose MY "dilemma" over his.

Which brings me to another word: choice. You've no doubt seen this posted a few times on Facebook or similar media sites: "If you've got regrets, you're living in the past. If you've got anxieties, you're living in the future. If you're at peace, you're living in the present." I have no idea who should get credit for that passage, but I like the overall truth of it. It helps me return to the Now when I catch myself feeling anxious about the coming months and what drought-stricken California might be experiencing. Feeling that anxiety does me absolutely no good, of course - it's going to be whatever it's going to be, and beyond preparing as best I can, there's nothing I can do except pray for the highest good, and work on my attitude and KNOW that I have a choice to see the beauty of THIS Now..... or not see it.

I was talking to a close friend a few days ago about this very thing - about our attitudes and the choices we make and the resultant experiences we have in life. She had decided she was no longer going to let herself be affected by her partner's emotional state of being - she realized she had a choice to let him be in whatever emotional state he needed to be in without it affecting her. I in turn recalled "falling into a fight" with my husband many years ago - anger was instantly between us over something that was relatively unimportant, and there we were, arguing all of a sudden. I can recall as clear as a bell the moment I understood that I was CHOOSING to be in a fight with him. I recall thinking, "Now Marty - do you REALLY want to be a part of ruining

this wonderful day you've had together over an issue that really doesn't matter?" Of course the answer was no, so I went to him, put my arms around him, told him I did NOT want to fight over such a minor issue, and that was all it took to flip us both back into enjoying the day again. That was a major "ah-ha" moment for me, to realize I truly could consciously choose how I wanted to experience my moment, and since he also chose harmony, that ended quite well.

Now if he had decided he wanted to continue to fight, I would have had yet another choice to make. I could perhaps have chosen to allow him to continue to express his anger without (hopefully) taking it personally, OR I could have taken it personally and stayed in the fight with him. I could have chosen to tell him I wanted a time out so we could continue the discussion at a later time when our emotions had settled down and we could perhaps "hear" each other better. I could have chosen to simply turn and walk away from him. I could have chosen several ways of handling that moment, all of which could have been just as "right" as the choice I made. The thing is, though - I finally got it in that moment that I was consciously choosing to change my moment by shifting my attitude and choosing to let go of the automatic fight mode I went into....wow, THAT was empowering!

With the ongoing reactive energy that is intensifying in our world, it's hard not to be affected by another person's strong emotions, whatever that emotion might be - anger, fear, sorrow, etc. Maybe our partner is having a horrible day and flinging out all kinds of angry "poo". It's up to us to decide whether or not we want to step into that poo with them, taking it on and wearing it too. We get to CHOOSE how we want it to affect us. Or maybe a friend is so intensely down in the dumps that we have great difficulty staying upbeat and positive as their dense, heavy cloud of sadness swirls around us. Again, though....we get to CHOOSE if we want their sadness to affect us. We can make those choices by reminding ourselves that what they're experiencing is about THEM, and it only becomes about us when we allow it to be about us instead of them. When we truly know it is about them and not about us, we can continue to be in the exchange without it affecting us in any way other than bringing our compassion, our understanding and our caring to the forefront of our Being so that we can be there for them as they need us to be.

More than ever, it's so important for us to remember that WE get to choose whether or not we want to be affected by another's emotions. Intellectually we know that - emotionally, it's hard to remember, especially when our hearts are being ripped up by witnessing and feeling their pain, or our own buttons are being pushed to the point of seeing red ourselves. But if ever there is a time TO remember that we do indeed have a choice in how we respond to any person or situation, now is that time. By our conscious awareness of our attitude and our choices, we can sail through our days.....or we can flail through our days - the choice is ours.....BECAUSE, for the umpteenth time:

The lesson is never in the event, but always in our response to it.

This is a short one because I've got a BIG case of Spring fever and am heading outside to enjoy this beautiful NOW!!

Hold On To Your Spirit,

Marty

PS: In case you didn't see the brief paragraph on Dixie's newsletter and calendar pages, please send an email to info@dixieyeterian.com and let us know you'd like to be contacted when she posts to either or both pages. That way you won't have to keep checking for new information from her. Though she was feeling so much better after her surgery, something still isn't quite right; we're continuing to pursue the cause for her ongoing nausea and fatigue.