

REPLACING FEAR WITH LOVE

Many years ago I read in a spiritual book that there are only two emotions: love and fear. I forget the name of the book but I liked the simplicity of the concept so much that I've repeated that sentence in my workshops at every opportunity. In my own very recent confrontation with fear I received that same message from my Higher Self as well as this insight: **"Healing is simply replacing fear with love. That is the healing process at the highest level"**. I didn't know that I felt fear when I received the message. I just felt resentment because someone I cared very deeply for wasn't giving me what I thought I needed. I created suffering for myself for many weeks before I quieted down and asked for some help. Even then, my first reaction to the message was to look outside of myself and notice all the examples of fear-driven actions in society. I only had to read the newspaper to see how wars and crime and greed were, at their core, based on fear. It was easy to imagine how love could transform all of the hatred that exists in our world. But I wasn't quite ready to bring the message home - how fear, at that moment, dominated my own life and I needed to heal.

I have witnessed the miracle of transforming fear into love many times in my life. I know I can call on my Higher Self to give me the strength to move through the fear, to shine a light on it and bring into my conscious awareness the boundless love I am seeking. I have also accompanied many others on the same path and seen the beautiful results of facing internal fear and replacing it with love.

I've been present when a daughter, who had suffered an eating disorder her whole life, saw herself as a child being forced to eat food that she didn't want because she feared her mother's wrath. When her Higher Self brought them together in her consciousness the daughter understood for the first time the reason for her mother's behavior. As a young woman, during the second World War, the mother suffered terrible hunger and malnutrition. She believed she was protecting her daughter from the same suffering by forcing her to eat. At that moment of awareness, the daughter forgave her mother and her forgiveness transformed her fear into love.

I've seen a middle-aged man finally replace decades of fear of his critical and unloving father with love and understanding because his Higher Self helped him to clearly see how wounded and vulnerable his father really was. And I've seen the Higher Self bring many an angry and reproachful couple together in Light and help them to acknowledge hidden fears and insecurities only to be replaced with love.

I've moved through many dark places with people who believed or feared they weren't worthy of love and then discover, through the help of the Higher Self, abundant love and self-forgiveness on the other side of the fear. These examples of compassion and healing are not rare. There is absolutely never a situation that cannot be transformed from fear into love. But we must be conscious and willing to acknowledge that we may not be seeing clearly, that our mind and ego have confused us into thinking we are alone and a victim.

Despite our willingness, though, fear is often difficult to recognize. It wears many clever disguises, **and nowhere more so than in relationships**. When someone we love acts in a way that feels negative to us, a usual response is to blame the other person for being insensitive,

stupid, unloving, uncaring, or even cruel. We tell ourselves, our friends and anyone else who will listen, a good story about our victimization and we believe it, or think we do. What we don't see is that our own, or rather disowned, fear is the source of the problem. Underlying all negative emotion is fear. We may call it anger, guilt, shame, etc. but at its base it is still fear. In my case, I descended into a self-pitying resentment that caused me a great deal of unhappiness before I allowed myself to surrender to the truth of what I was feeling. And the truth was that **I feared not being loved**. My own fear created the suffering, not the action of the other person.

As vulnerable children we're all susceptible to the actions of others. We depend on them for love and for survival and we believe what they tell us about ourselves. We believe that they don't love us when they withhold affection or abuse us in some way. Those fears get carried in our emotional bodies well into adulthood and often become the driving force in our relationships. "I am not loved. I am not worthy of love." It is no surprise, with those beliefs, that relationships dissolve into withdrawal, emotional separation and divorce.

We've all known people who say they have never experienced love and who resist even believing that love exists. Most of us just don't recognize how we create fear and distrust and accordingly, don't want to accept that fear can be replaced by love. My Higher Self tried to send me the message through the emotional minefield that I was experiencing but I refused it. That is, until the pain of losing someone I loved became greater than facing the fear my old beliefs created. It took days to uncover all the ways that the fear of not being loved had translated into relationship problems during my life. As I began to acknowledge the fear, and see myself more clearly, I felt a sense of compassion emerging. I could forgive myself for all the pain I had created and allow myself to love the person whom I resented only a few days earlier.

This isn't the first or the last time I will fool myself into believing in the illusion of fear but I gratefully accept this most recent spiritual blessing. I replaced fear with love.