

Change the quality of your thoughts and you'll change the quality of your experience.

# INTENTIONS

August 1999  
VOLUME 2  
ISSUE 8

"Rather than trying to stop your reactions, why not let them play out? Then, use them to get to know yourself a lot better."

-Thomas J. Leonard

## **C**onverting A Fearful Decision into A Loving Choice

Making a *decision* is an intellectual (fear-based) process, being at *choice* is an emotionally intelligent (love-based) process. Decisions have a win/lose orientation, that is, giving something up Vs. the win/win orientation of choice; choices in which wholeness is present.

Decisions require courage due to a perceived danger, where there is no perceived danger there is no need for courage. One soldier sees a need to be courageous going into war perceiving an obvious threat to his life. Another soldier's patriotic focus is on love of country and therefore does not view himself as a courageous hero; his focus is love-based. It is quite fascinating to me how incredibly diverse our perceptions can be of any given situation. The appraisal we assign to an event has an enormous impact on our personal experience of reality.

The following scenario offers an illustration of how we can convert a fearful decision into a love-based choice:

A doctor suggests to a man in his 40's, that it would be prudent for him to have a colonoscopy due to his family history. His initial reaction is fear-based, "I'm too young to be concerned about this - this is a foolish waste of time - I'll lose a day's work or more - the preparation for this procedure is bothersome - what if they find something wrong with me? - what if I have cancer? - this decision is difficult for me."

Our friend, however, does have a few emotional intelligence tools in his tool belt.

They are:

- 1) Time to Respond - Dedicate a specific time to review the situation
- 2) Observe - Be a non-critical witness of the *fear*-based emotional *reactions*
- 3) Seek - Seek the *love*-based benefits the situation has to offer
- 4) Project - Use mental rehearsal and dynamic imaging

Our friend is stuck in the reactive, negative appraisal of the event seeing all aspects of his decision as giving something up, that is, "if I do this, I give up that." For example, "If I go for the procedure, I lose time."

Using Tool #1, he honors his own feelings and sets aside a specific time dedicated to review the situation and think things through. The intention is to mindfully respond Vs. emotionally react. Without employing this tool he

*"Programs designed with the whole brain in mind."*

*John Felitto, trainer & coach*

would carry the agitation of this concern within him, thereby affecting everything else he touches to some degree. A piece of his energy is somewhere else rather than with him presently. The richness of his interactions with family, friends and clients are at some level compromised. The clarity of his conscious awareness is dampened, potentially causing him to miss opportunities which may be present. Knowing the importance of this, he allocates this time to respond and...

Using Tool #2, he non-critically observes his feelings. His love for himself acknowledges that his "critical" mind wants to protect him. This is fully accepting his humanness and the protective nature of his "critical" mind. The critical mind sends up a red flag when an event is perceived as a threat. In a way, you can glimpse a love-based protectiveness within the fear. As an overly protective parent may want to spare her child from a painful experience, the critical mind sends the message "I want you to be safe." Coming to understand this aspect of the mind's motivation is the first step in reappraising fearfulness into love.

Our friend begins to step back from his emotionally attached reactivity to a more emotionally detached view. The conversion from decision (win/lose) to free choice (win/win) has begun.

Sitting quietly, our friend employs Tool #3; he seeks to find the potential benefits of what is quickly becoming a choice. "I want to act in my best interest - by having more information about the status of my health, I will eliminate unnecessary worry - I love myself and want to take good care of my body - I will have a great sense of peace after the procedure - I want to be around a long time to enjoy my family - I have an opportunity to be a model for my children - I can be an advocate for others, encourage them and offer them comfort." All statements resounding with love. In sharp contrast, the "creative" mind seeks peace offensively from the heart, where the "critical" mind operates defensively from the head.

Using dynamic imaging, Tool #4, our friend takes the present moment to run mental movies of the desired outcome. Through the direction of his loving, "creative" mind, he mentally projects images of his intentions. Like the professional athlete, he mentally rehearses the event, seeing himself safe, relaxed and genuinely pleased with his choice. His brain is now in full cooperation as it generates the supporting chemistry. The choice is now clear. Love has transformed fear.

The following illustrates the distinction between Choice Vs. Decision as used in the context of this essay:

<u>Choice</u>	<u>Decision</u>
Light	Heavy
Win/Win	Win/lose
Wholeness	Compromise
Love-based	Fear-based
Heart	Head

If you'd like support in reviewing a pending *decision*, gift yourself the time and make the *choice* to call the "coach."

"Intentions" is a free publication promoting the use of the whole brain and mind, to live life mindfully and purposefully through the awesome power of awareness and intention, for the benefit of all. Written by: John Felitto, Mind Development Trainer & Coach, 65 Mendolia Ct., Pearl River, NY 10965 (845) 735-4284 Email comments to: John@EvokeYourGreatness.com.