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## Choice Relationships: Creating Love – It Really IS a Choice

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### Being Mindful of Love

There are many different people upon whom you bestow your love – a mate, a friend, a child. And there are a variety of expressions of love – among them passion, respect, nurturance, and compassion. The common thread, I believe, that runs between all of the various types of love is caring for another.

### My Personal Insights:



There are so many different hats I wear – wife, mother, friend, therapist, professor, relative. And even within some of these roles, there are varying degrees or demands made at alternate times.

Yet, I find myself saying to many of these people, "I love you." Or, if it's not expressed verbally, I'm aware of having this feeling. Also, as you might imagine, sometimes I'm more emotionally vulnerable in some roles than I am in others. And when that happens, it's much harder to access those loving feelings.

At this Season, I'm particularly sensitive to the idea that though

Sometimes, it's hard to access that caring when you feel you've been hurt by the other person. Maybe they've slighted you or done something you feel was a real disregard of you. It is truly my belief that most of the time, when people act not nice, it's because something has gotten in the way of them doing so.

I've encountered many people like this. What I've found is that if I don't "get grabbed" and continue to treat the person respectfully and with understanding, the very same person eventually acts in a far more positive way. It boils down to the simple fact that people will react differently based on how they are treated.

So, at this Season of Joy, the real gifts come in sharing your love. Each of you has the choice to create more love for others and in your life!

### Choice Tips:

1. Be aware that when someone is acting rude or bitchy or nasty, it is most likely that there is something troubling him or her. Keep in mind that the person may not necessarily be aware of it.
2. If you start to react – your body gets tight, you feel like you're "getting grabbed" or your "buttons or getting pushed," chances are something from your past are getting triggered.
3. It is at this point that you can make a choice as to how you react. Take a deep slow breath

we all share different rituals for the Holidays, it's a time of year in which we all share one thing mutually – a feeling of love. And so to all of you, I send my heartfelt love.

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4. Honor your feelings. In other words, acknowledge that your reaction is something from the past and it's understandable that you have them. But now know that you do not have to act based on what you are feeling.
5. Whether you have gotten set off or not, respond to the other person with compassion and understanding. Try to validate what they might be feeling underneath. As an example, if she is complaining about what a bad day she's had, don't minimize it or comment on the complaining but say something that lets the person know you understand how she feels. Important: you don't necessarily have to agree. When people feel emotionally understood, they react much better.

#### Additional Resources I Recommend:

Though this came through to me via an e-mail, it certainly shows the theme of this month's newsletter. This hippo story shows us that if we are there for one another and show love rather than look at differences there are far greater benefits:

[Click here for story!](#)

Another story that I came across spoke about the significance of hand-holding - it offers lots of benefits in a relationship. It's been found to really let the other person know you care as it is a gesture of affection, of intimacy, of connection. Additionally, research has shown that hand-holding allows people to feel more relaxed. And when couples are in a deep partnership, this behavior allows one to stop looking for something potentially threatening which may then help buffer them from experiencing stress. To read the full article, go to this link:

[Click here for story!](#)

Finally, I couldn't resist sharing parts of an email I got where a bunch of children gave their definitions of love. Out of the mouths of babes...

- "When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love." Rebecca- age 8
- "When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that your name is safe in their mouth." Billy - age 4

- "Love is what makes you smile when you're tired." Terri - age 4
- "Love is when you kiss all the time. Then when you get tired of kissing, you still want to be together and you talk more. My Mommy and Daddy are like that. They look gross when they kiss" Emily - age 8
- "Love is what's in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents and listen." Bobby - age 7
- "If you want to learn to love better, you should start with a friend who you hate," Nikka - age 6
- "Love is like a little old woman and a little old man who are still friends even after they know each other so well." Tommy - age 6
- "Love is when Mommy sees Daddy on the toilet and she doesn't think it's gross." Mark - age 6
- "You really shouldn't say 'I love you' unless you mean it. But if you mean it, you should say it a lot. People forget." Jessica - age 8
- From a four year old child whose next door neighbor was an elderly gentleman who had recently lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentleman's yard, climbed onto his lap, and just sat there. When his Mother asked what he had said to the neighbor, the little boy said, "Nothing, I just helped him cry"

#### Empowering Information and Tools:

As my Holiday gift to all of you to thank you for all your support, I am offering a FREE mini e-course on **The 5 Top Tips to a Great Relationship!** *There are absolutely no strings attached.* I've put this course together and it's being offered on my website. All you have to do to claim your Free mini e-course is go to [www.drkaren.sherman.com](http://www.drkaren.sherman.com) and sign up for it. I know you'll be glad you did!

I've lightened my schedule so I can devote more of myself to this work. There will be a FREE teleseminar as I promised a while back. So, you can still get in on it by asking your most important relationship question by going to:

[ASK your question here!](#)

email: [drk723@aol.com](mailto:drk723@aol.com)

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