

## *Parallel Learning Technology*

### **Thinking Love/Fear**

Life is a great teacher. It does not intend to tell you what to think, but only how to think. Have you ever stopped to think about where your thoughts come from? The answer is, "It is all in your perception."

A child's life experience moves from having a feeling, to making a decision, to taking action. In adulthood, this is reversed. Feelings no longer dictate and dominate the flow of life. As an adult, you make decisions, take action, and experience feelings. These feelings serve as feedback for making even better decisions.

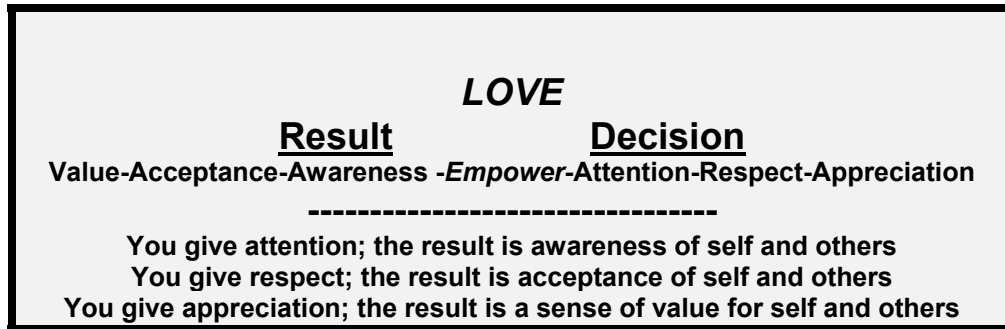
For an adult, life is all about making decisions and taking action. This requires a healthy process of reasoning. What would such a process look like?

- You would be able to see what is really going on in life. You would not imagine things that are not there nor deny things that are there. You would not distort things by adding the judgment of right or wrong, good or bad.
- You would be able to accept things the way you discover them and do not insist that or something has to change. You would be able to leave things as they are.
- You would be able to appreciate things for the value they possess even if you could not identify that value in the moment.

This healthy reasoning process just happens to match the essential ingredients for LOVE. Love is the mutual exchange of attention, respect, and appreciation:

- **Attention** – You look at another person and see them for who they are. You do not judge them as right or wrong, good or bad.
- **Respect** – You accept another person without needing to change him/her

- **Appreciation** – You believe that another person has value even if you do not know what this value is.



When love becomes a life decision and not just a passing feeling, something wonderful happens:

- Love given as attention results in a sense of **SELF-AWARENESS**. When you see others for who they are, you can be who you are.
- Love given as respect results in **SELF-ACCEPTANCE**. When you resist judging another person, you let go of self-judgment.
- Love given as appreciation, results in **SELF-VALUE**. When you simply 'know' that every person has value, you live from a deep sense of self-worth.

When your reasoning process is aligned with love, you know you are whole. But there is always a flip side to everything. What happens when your feelings are still in charge of your life?

The answer is simple. You would be walking around in fear. Living from the child or adolescent perspective does not provide you with enough tools to meet your basic human needs for self-identity, love, usefulness, freedom, and survival. When the fulfillment of your needs is threatened, you experience fear.

## **FEAR**

### **Learned Emotions**

### **Learned**

### **Behaviors**

**Shame - Guilt - Hurt - Control - Blame - Anger - Apathy**

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**You manage hurt with blame**  
**You manage guilt with anger**  
**You manage shame with apathy**

When you live in fear, “how you feel” becomes the driving force in your reasoning process. Your thinking becomes based on FEAR, which causes you to try to control others by transferring responsibility. Your feelings are in control of your ability to make decisions, take action, and hear feedback. You resort to automatic emotions and behaviors that cover up the fear.

If you feel **hurt**, you manage by **blaming** others. Since blame seldom makes you feel better, you deduce that if it is not the other person’s fault, it must be your fault. You then switch to **guilt** by blaming yourself. But you have learned to cover up your guilt by getting **angry**.

If feeling guilty and angry does not make the fear go away, you conclude that YOU are wrong. “It is not what I have done that is wrong, but that I am wrong. This is **shame**.”

Shame is a deep belief that “I am damaged.” Your “truth decay” is made up of shame. But you have learned to cover up shame with **apathy**. Apathy is numbness, a feeling of not caring.

Fear is a powerful force. It eventually removes your experience of love. In fact, eventually you are not even aware of the fear. Your life becomes more and more focused on controlling things outside yourself. You may deny that you are afraid but when something triggers your defenses, you might notice the signs of fear:

- You don’t get over things as easily or as quickly as you used to

- You lose someone or something and you are unable to fill the void and go on with life
- Hurtful experiences leave you unable to accept support and love from others
- You feel guilty and have an overwhelming desire to give and help others
- You feel full of resistance and are unable to try new things
- You experience injustices and begin to notice a compulsion to be right, at any cost
- You may not always insist on being right, but you can't tolerate the accusation of being wrong

There is one simple truth to life. **You have only two emotions, love and fear.** All other feelings and emotions come from one of these. If your thinking is distorted and life is determined by how you feel, you will have fear as your constant companion.

**(Excerpts: Practical Spirituality, Chapter 5)**