

Do You Come From Gratitude, Love and Trust — or from Doubt and Fear?

— by Dr Joe Rubino

As human beings, we often react emotionally to what others say or do. If our reactions are preceded by the emotions of fear, anger, or sadness, we forfeit our ability to act with personal power and effectiveness in lieu of a knee-jerk response.

This reaction is all too often sourced in fear and low self-esteem. We may focus on what's wrong with us and our lives, and fear being controlled, hurt, or taken advantage of.

We may overlook the many things we have in our lives for which we could be grateful, doubt our ability to thrive and access the abundance we see all around us in the world, reacting instead from the concern of scarcity and the expectation of failure, hurt, and disappointment.

We may see ourselves in competition for the world's resources and the love and attention of others rather than realizing that there is more than enough of all that is good to go around. Instead of needing to compete for limited resources, in reality we manifest what we expect.

Whenever we forget that we are magnificent beings and that there is plenty of wealth, happiness, fun and fulfillment to go around, we might feel the need to protect ourselves from what we perceive to be a dangerous world.

We likewise tend to forget that others often operate from the same lack of self-confidence, scarcity of gratitude and deficient self-love. Whenever two or more individuals see themselves as not good enough to tap into the world's abundance and get all their needs met from a physical, social, mental and emotional perspective, conflicts are likely to arise.

The result is broken relationships, strained communication, emotional pain and energy drain. All of these are needless and optional for those who realize their ability to detach from the struggle and master their emotional response.

When we stop to realize that everyone else suffers from the same self-doubt and fear of being dominated and cheated out of getting their fair share of love, fun, money, possessions and security, we can break the vicious cycle of endless competition and continual striving for domination.

We can realize that cooperation and communication are more effective in producing harmony than competition and a focus on self-interest based on fear. We can intentionally choose to trust that others are doing the best they know how to do based upon how they see the world.

We can assume that they act from good intentions, even when we fear the opposite. We can hold them as worthy, competent, loving, good natured and capable of creating win-win relationships rather than fearing them as hateful, ill-meaning, incompetent, unworthy, selfish opponents.

When we decide to champion others by looking for the best in them and interact with them out of an attitude of gratitude for their gifts, strengths and positive qualities, in such a manner that they are clear that we hold them as intrinsically good and worthy of our love and respect, we provide for them a new and exciting opportunity for them to show up for us in this manner.

Our decision to hold others as great (because they really are when we strip away their anger, fears, and insecurities) allows them the freedom to rise to our expectations.

By operating from love and gratitude for the wisdom and empathy we develop as a result of our interactions with others, we see their mistakes as temporary indiscretions producing valuable lessons from which we can learn and grow, rather than reflections of a fundamentally defective being.

The key to bringing out the best in others is non-attachment. When we realize that we have total control over our response to any situation, and we give up our right to be invalidated by others or control them, we will possess a newfound freedom that allows us to exit the drama of conflict in favor of understanding, compassion and love.

Decide now to be grateful for the challenges you will encounter in your life and business. See the problems that arise as opportunities for your personal development. Look for these challenges as you go about your day and be grateful when you encounter them.

Exercise for Expanding Gratitude and Shifting Your Reactive Nature

1. List all the things you have decided to be grateful for in your life and business.
2. In your daily journal, record each time you fail to express gratitude for a challenging situation.
3. Catch yourself reacting emotionally to what someone says or does and shift your perception in that moment to appreciate the learning experience at hand.
4. In your daily life and business, who are you not holding as magnificent?
5. How can you champion their excellence and express gratitude for the opportunity to grow in love and wisdom that they are gifting you with— instead of reacting with anger, sadness, or fear?
6. Who are you seeking to control or who do you avoid being controlled by? Will you take on the practice of non-attachment in your relationship with them by creating space for them to be who they are? Do this for 30 days and record in your journal how your interactions with them evolve. Make note of something that you can be grateful for in each situation.