

Dear Friends,

Recently, I've been musing about stress and have come to believe that, while stress is inevitable, feeling *stressed-out* is often avoidable.

Two crucial factors in determining whether stress turns into stressed-out are *beliefs* about the stress we experience and the *stories* those beliefs generate in our minds and hearts.

### **Bottom-Out Beliefs**

Whether expressed consciously or acted upon without awareness, self-sabotaging beliefs are masters at obliterating peace of mind and outwitting happiness. Such beliefs cause emotions to bottom-out and send stress levels into the stratosphere.

#### **A few bottom-out beliefs**

- \* I am neither lovable nor worthwhile.
- \* The world is an unfriendly place.
- \* "They" can't be trusted. (even God is vengeful)
- \* I can't...
- \* There is never enough time.
- \* Why *me*?
- \* I *should* be able to control X, Y, and Z.

When my computer spontaneously ate the first draft of this MuseLetter, my knee-jerk response was filled with bottom-out beliefs... "Good grief! Why now? What did I do wrong? I'll never remember what I wrote. These damn computers *always* do this sort of stuff...!" Naturally, my response exacerbated the stress and, by the time the swearing and lamenting stopped, both my irritation and heart rates were sky high.

And then I laughed...

### **Buoyant Beliefs**

Laughter springs from a buoyant, self-supporting belief that there is usually humor to be found in most situations. Buoyant beliefs help us avoid feeling stressed-out. Or, as was true for me in *The Case of the Ingested MuseLetter*, they free us from existing stressed-out feelings. Buoyant beliefs allow us to spot rainbows after even the fiercest storm, keep our spirits hopeful, and open our hearts and minds to the valuable--albeit often difficult--lessons life continually offers.

#### **A few buoyant beliefs**

- \* I am loveable and loving.
- \* I am safe.
- \* People are basically good and God/Beloved/Spirit is Love and loving.
- \* There is always something to be thankful for.
- \* Humor is the best medicine and has only positive side-effects.
- \* Acceptance is both empowering and peace-inducing.
- \* I am skilled at going-with-the-flow.

Most of us are a potpourri of buoyant and bottom-out beliefs. We have positive perceptions that create supportive inner stories and negative assumptions that lead to stressful internal tales.

### **Belief-Generated Stories**

Self-talk tales can be either Friend or Enemy. When inner stories view you in a positive and loving light and imagine you as **supported** by the Universe and others, they provide the courage and strength to handle stress with aplomb. However, private sagas casting you as a misunderstood victim of others, as well as a capricious Universe, drain energy from body, mind, and spirit and leave you vulnerable to feeling stressed-out by even the smallest setback or slight.

### **The Good News**

The good news is... *You, and only you, are the spinner of your inner yarns!* Therefore, you have all the power to rejoice in uplifting inner narratives and rewrite discouraging and draining ones.

#### **A few hints**

- \* Become aware of inner stories told in the privacy of your own mind .
- \* Muse about the beliefs inspiring such stories.
- \* When you are pleased with both a belief, and the stories it evokes, empower and embed it in your consciousness through gratitude.

For instance, you might say, "Thank you, thank you, thank you for my belief in the goodness of others *and* myself!"

- \* If you discover a belief that leads to self-defeating and stress-inducing stories, without judgment, ponder how you'd like to change it.

For instance, if you uncover beliefs such as the need to do everything perfectly, control others and outcomes of all kinds, or never cry and show vulnerability, imagine altering them into more you-friendly beliefs. Write down the new beliefs. One small, mindful step at a time, incorporate them into your mind's data bank by becoming aware of the old-belief-stories as they appear. Rewrite the outdated story and gently remind yourself of the new belief you've chosen.

**(a caveat: )** *Deeply ingrained beliefs may require professional guidance to heal the*

*wounds causing them.*

- \* Most of all, have fun. We are all here to learn and evolve. Transforming beliefs and rewriting inner stories is a part of our natural and necessary process.

*If you're going to have a fantasy, make it a good one!*

Love and hugs,  
Sue

[www.suepattonthoele.com](http://www.suepattonthoele.com)

### ***An Invitation from The Buddha Chick Crone:***

*In case it strikes your fancy, I will be the first guest on Jan Lundy's upcoming online class entitled **Buddha Chick**, for which I have nicknamed myself the Buddha Chick Crone. The link to Jan's site is [www.awakenedliving.com](http://www.awakenedliving.com). Having known and admired Jan, and her work, for many years, I'm sure the class will be both fun and enlightening.*