

The CHOICE Connection

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CHOICES
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Quotable Quotes

"The most basic and powerful way to connect with another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention...A loving silence often has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned words." ~ Rachel Naomi Remen

"Omnia vivunt, omnia inter se conexas. Everything is alive, everything is interconnected." ~ Cicero

"The privilege of a lifetime is to be who you really are."
~ C. G. Jung

Dear Jean,

Our featured writer this month is Eric Tonningsen. I especially love the topic of 'connections' that Eric is presenting this month. Connections has proven to be a significant activity in my life - both professionally and personally. My connection with Eric began quite a few years ago when he showed up at a professional meeting of coaches. From the first introduction, he has touched my life deeply. His sense of humor, his joy in living, his passion for creating a life so connected to his adopted state of New Mexico - all this and more have strengthened how his connections reach back to support him as he continues to embrace a spirit of leadership for many. Do check out his blogs and his [website](#). You will find a connection of heart.

For 25+ years, Eric Tonningsen held progressively responsible leadership positions in the corporate world. While quite successful, he long knew he was misaligned between what he did to earn a living and who he was at his core. He wasn't living and being his values. So he walked away from the comfort of that cocoon - cold turkey. He chose a new life direction and profession and launched his Life Coaching business in early 2006. Blissfully, he's never looked back.

PCC Credentialed by the International Coach Federation, his immensely fulfilling work now involves

inspiring people entering life's third chapter, to review and renew their lives. His collaborations with "chronologically gifted" people (a.k.a. Baby Boomers) help them to shift their life focus from success to significance.

Thank you, Eric!

In the spirit of sharing our gifts,
Jean

Becoming More Connected by Eric Tonningsen

The value of our life, work, and relationships is the power of our connection to and with them. The question is, are we connected to them or just attached to them? The answer affects not only the value, but the energy they give to or take from us. If we are connected to them they enrich the time we give to them. If we are attached to them, they drain our energy and can leave us disappointed.



The source of our attachment is always found in the perceived needs of what is missing in our lives. We want to possess people, money, and things. We find meaning in titles, property, and roles. And finally, the trappings of success, which includes everything from public recognition to power - reinforce our need for more. Society convinces us that this is what life is about.

Connection is a different life experience grounded in a belief that we are already connected to people, work, and experiences and our life's purpose is to enjoy, contribute and share with everyone else. Connection differs from attachment in that it is the connection that enriches us, not the illusion of possessing or having. We have the freedom to enjoy an interaction, the work on a project, or a new experience because it doesn't have to be owned or given meaning to in some way - we simply enjoy the connection to it. Most importantly, because we're already connected to it, nothing is missing or lacking, it just adds depth and richness to the work, relationship, or experience.

The irony of connection versus attachment is that in connecting more we attract more and everything is easier. And many know that I'm all about making things easier. We can have a relaxing and enjoyable lifestyle all by going from attachment to connection. So how can we make this shift?

Tools and Resources **FROM THE BOOKSHELF**

[The Soul of Money, Reclaiming the Wealth of Our Inner Resources](#) by Lynne Twist

[Becoming Who You Were Born to Be](#) by Brian Souza

THE INTERNET CONNECTIONS

I recommend that people consider reading blog posts (there are more than one-half million bloggers on WordPress.com alone). What you will find in the blogosphere is people sharing real-life, authentic experiences, rather than not always practical theoretical views expressed in journals, white papers, etc.

Eric's Blog ... <http://tonningsen.wordpress.com/author/tonningsen>

My favorite blogger is James Browning. He writes beautifully and his daily message inspires and reminds people how valuable it is to reflect on and express gratitude. <http://goodmorninggratitude.com>

Reflection

To connect more and be less attached, consider taking these three conscious actions.

1. Reduce the meanings. Reduce the investment in what an experience, relationship, or decision means, especially to other people. It is often the seeking of approval and permission from others that attaches us to the meanings of what we do with our time and energy. When the meaning comes from the connection itself, we are free to enjoy what we are doing and to leave it without guilt or regret.
2. Connect with Yourself. This doesn't mean getting to know more about what you need to be, do, or have, but rather getting to know more about who you really are as a human being. Connect with your spirit and discover your gifts, life purpose, and what you have to contribute in a positive way to the world as a whole.
3. Choose What Inspires You - Remove What Doesn't. Inspiration isn't motivation, it is what connects us to what we are doing and want to do. When we are connected to how we are doing something rather than the outcome of doing something, we are inspired by doing it and motivated to do it. Whatever we are doing that disconnects us from ourselves, ought to be eliminated, or at least reduced.

Shifting from attachment to connection not only changes us, it changes the quality of what we do. When we're connected to interactions, work, or choices - we find peace, inspiration and passion in the connection.

There's a difference between the two. Which aligns more closely with your desired life? And what, if anything, are you prompted to do?

Choose To

Connect more.... become less attached ... reduce the meanings - enjoy what you are doing and leave it without guilt and regret ... connect with your spirit ... discover your gifts ... choose what inspires you - remove what doesn't ... discover your peace ... your inspiration and your passion ... know that these reside in your connections.



Administrivia

My Constructive Choices Audience...

- * Professionals wanting to be at choice in their career and daily work,
- * New managers (and aspiring leaders) transitioning to establish a leadership role in their communities,
- * Individuals wanting to sort through the choices, build a more fulfilling life, life their voices, and...
- * Coaches who choose to step out, show up, and say - YES, it IS all about YOU!

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