

January 2002

Keys for Living

This month the key is: "*Trust*"

Trust is basic to life. As children we need to trust that we are safe and will be fed, clothed, cared for, touched and loved. As we grow, we need to trust that we can explore the world, who we are, test out limits, and return to the safety of those who love us when we need their comfort. As adults, we need to trust in our own skills, wisdom and strength. When we do not have these foundational pieces of trust in our lives, developing the skills and knowledge needed for healthy trust can be a challenge.

Often people think of trust as an all-or-nothing concept: either you trust someone or you don't. **However, trust is a process that involves discernment.** To blindly trust someone without observing the other person's actions, their strengths and vulnerabilities, or stopping to listen to your own inner voice and intuition can be dangerous, if not risky. I often tell clients that if they trust me to, be a good therapist and a clear conduit for healing and information from the Universe, I think it is a fine choice. However, to trust me to give their car a tune-up could be troublesome –and costly. (Last time I tried to give my own car a tune-up it cost me \$80 to fix it!) **Trust means knowing for what you are trusting.**

I heard a powerful concert about-trust at a recent continuing education seminar on couples counseling. In choosing to share vulnerable or personal thoughts and feelings with another, one element can be, "Do I trust this person to be sensitive and careful with what I share?"

Though this is an important part of decision-making, **the most important issue of trust lies within: "Do I trust myself** to be fine, *however* the other person responds? Can I feel good about myself, my choice to share and how I have shared information, regardless of how the other person responds?" And do I trust I can somehow find my strength, whatever the situation in which I find myself?

This internal focus on trust is similar to what I heard in meditation recently about the issue of trust: "Trust is at the core." **Though there are many skills involved in choosing to trust appropriately, they all reside within us:** our clarity of observation, evaluation and discernment about ourselves and others, our ability to access our intuition and calm voice within, our abilities set boundaries, and our ability to trust that the Universe will provide us with all we need to succeed in being ourselves.

Trust is also "at the core" of a loving and open relationship with the Divine. With our limited human view, **it can be easy to see experiences as negative or unnecessary;** we can get caught up in trying control events or people. When this happens, we often experience anxiety, fear or confusion. Whenever I feel any of these restrictive emotions, I take a deep, slow breath and repeat the simple phrase: "I trust the Universe to provide me with all I need." *I take as many slow breaths and repeat this phrase as many times as I need.* Once I re-connect to my calm center, where trust resides, I am able to move forward freely. The Universe has a greater vision and knowledge of the lessons and love I need. **All I need to do is connect to my core, find trust, and be open to the signs and opportunities put in my path.**

So go ahead—develop your practical skills in healthy trust. And remember that trust is at the core—of our selves and the core of love, joy and gratefulness. If we choose to trust the Universe to provide us with all we need, then we are freer to love and dance and smile and laugh. And that is what real living is about!

In the wake of all that has happened recently in our world, I suggest we each state an intention every morning, that we trust the Universe to provide us with all we need and we trust the Universe to take whatever exists and turn it into something wonderful that serves the higher good for all of us. We all deserve to freely love, dance, smile and laugh!