

## Awareness Practice: Creating Joyful Solutions with Everyone

1. **Begin looking at situations in your daily life where you are making decisions with others. See how often you're creating Joyful Solutions without thinking much about it.**

For example, you might choose to go to a movie everyone wants to see, or maybe someone unexpectedly wants to meet an hour later than planned, and you're easily able to rearrange your schedule.

2. **You might see a situation where your automatic response is to let the other person have it their way. Here you might consider what you would do if it were entirely up to you.**

- @ Think of the essence of what you want.

- ★ See if you can discern the essence of what the other person wants. (If it feels right, you can ask the other person to explore the essence of what they want.)

- ★ Go wide and think of alternative solutions.

At this point it doesn't matter if you share your new ideas with the people around you. The focus is on feeling your creative power. (But if one of the solutions you come up with works, go for it.)

3. **Get comfortable with looking for the essence as you go about making decisions with others.**

4. **Feel the power of your creativity in finding new solutions.**

This is a time to be playful, to learn and practice with total freedom to create Joyful Solutions or not. It's like learning to play a musical instrument. If you try to perform before you're ready, you can get a reputation that you're not harmonious.

You can share what you're doing with those close to you who will understand that you're exploring something new.

The key at this point is to develop a new creative habit of looking for the essence in any situation where you feel stuck and then exploring wider options. Once you feel confident doing this, it will be much easier to apply your skills to more significant situations in your life.

## Awareness Practice: Creating Joyfull Solutions on Your Own

As you think about creating Joyful Solutions, the first things that come to mind may be knotty issues that have been bothering you for some time. You'll get to those, but we highly recommend starting with a decision you're planning to make with someone where the emotional stakes aren't high. It may be as simple as which movie to go to or what to have for dinner. Or it could be something more complex, such as where to go on vacation. The key at this point is that no one is intensely attached to a particular outcome. Low-emotional-impact decisions are the best when you're first learning the process of Joyful Solutions.

Think of a situation where your usual response would be to let others have their way or where you want someone to change.

1. Think about or write down as clearly as possible exactly what you want. Don't take the other person into consideration at this point. What is the ideal outcome that you can see at the moment?
2. Imaginatively put yourself in the other person's shoes. What do they want? Be as specific as possible. What do you imagine their ideal outcome would be?
3. In what aspects of the situation do you agree? Take a moment to write them down.
4. Now write down the need or desire that is behind the outcome you described for yourself. What is the essence of what you want?
5. Put yourself in the other person's shoes. What is the need or desire behind the outcome they want? What is the essence of what they want? (For some things, it may take some time to get a clear picture here. It may help to get a better feel for this while you're with them, observing them.)
6. Looking at the statements of your and the other person's essential desires, explore different possible scenarios that address them. (Sometimes a solution comes right away. At other times, it may take a while to imagine something that feels good to everyone. If you feel stuck, you can sleep on it, or mull it over the way you would if you were trying to find the perfect present for someone. Also, ask your Inner Wise Self to help you.)

If you have a solution where you can picture both of you being genuinely happy, you may simply be able to begin actualizing it, as John did with his girlfriend. In other

situations, it's a matter of suggesting your idea in such a way that the other person sees how it works for them and is willing to accept it. This is what happened with Susan's neighbors and the tree branches.

Your actions and shift in attitude may change everything in a wonderful way without the other person ever knowing what was behind it. All they may be aware of is that things are suddenly better. If you have evaluated the situation accurately, they will be happy to join you. If you feel resistance, you either missed something or you may need to give them time to see the value of what you're suggesting.

You can also approach the other person with the attitude that you want to help them get what they want and invite them to describe what they're looking for in more detail. You can then go back to step 6.

If you can create a Joyful Solution, that's great. If the situation is too difficult, go on to another one. As with the Awareness Practice in the previous chapter (page 130), at first it doesn't matter if you can create a Joyful Solution in every situation.

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*We can't emphasize enough that it is best to start with simple things you want to change. If you begin with a complex issue that has been frustrating you for a while, you may not succeed. It's like someone trying to run a marathon without training their muscles first. They get partway and think they failed and can never do it, when in reality they have successfully run farther than ever before, and it's simply a matter of training to go all the way.*

*The focus at first is on feeling your creative power — your ability to find the essence in situations where you feel stuck and imagine wider options. Once you become skilled in doing this, you will be able to find Joyful Solutions to most situations in your life.*

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- 🌀 What do you want? What is the essence?
- ☆ What do they want? What is the essence?
- 🌀 Go wide. What are solutions that would satisfy the essence?

For more about creating Joyful Solutions on your own, go to:

[SucculentWildLove.com/JoyfulSolutions](http://SucculentWildLove.com/JoyfulSolutions)