



# ONE CHOICE CAN CHANGE A LIFE™

NEWSLETTER  
NOVEMBER 2009

## AUTHORS' NOTE



Fall is in full swing. It is a time of transformation, represented by fire in some native cultures. If you live in the eastern United States, the vibrant oranges and reds of the leaves turning certainly embody the feeling and color of fire, and they warn of the cooler, quieter winter season ahead. The transformative season of Fall is time to reflect on what has transpired for you this year, including your progress toward your goals and dreams. A reasonable amount of introspection can help to remind us of what is truly important and put us back on track in our lives.

Until next month.....Lin

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Just thought I'd share the photo of myself (I'm on the left) and my sword instructor, Shihan Dana Abbott. This was taken in August at the Masters Hall of Fame awards ceremony. The award I'm holding is for Outstanding Contributions in the Martial Arts.





This is another article on a series that will explore different types of fear, their formation, their affect in our lives, and how to diminish or eliminate their presence.

### ***Fear of Acceptance (Fear of Abandonment)***

One of the most prevalent fears is the fear we will not be accepted. The fear that we won't be accepted is often tied to the fear of abandonment because if we do not fit in we fear we may be left out, left alone or abandoned.

It is extremely unusual to find a person who does not want to be accepted by their parents. Starting at a very young age we look for the approval of our parents as a way of gauging our acceptance by them. When we are unaware of our need for their acceptance, we can spend countless hours over the course of our lives fretting about how to please mom or dad. This need can be so strong that even abused children will seek their parents approval. In "normal" (if there is such a thing) parent-child relationships, there comes a time for the child to take on an adult role. Once aware, sons and daughters can approach the relationship with their parents from a more adult-adult perspective. When parents can allow the shift to happen, the relationship evolves to a new and wonderful level, which in many ways releases the child from craving the acceptance of their parents so strongly.

There are not many people who do not worry -- even just a little bit -- about what others think of them. For some the fear is tiny and does not affect their lives in a major way, such as being concerned about what people will think about how you look in a certain pair of pants. Fear of acceptance is often demonstrated during the teenage years, such as when a person feels pressured to wear certain clothing, drink alcohol or take drugs in order to fit in and be accepted. For teens who do not feel comfortable with themselves or who feel misunderstood by their family, the temptation to act in ways they wouldn't normally behave in order to be accepted increases. For others the fear of acceptance is large enough to control their lives. Taken to an extreme a person may be in a job they don't want, a marriage they are unhappy in, a mortgage they can't afford, and/or a life they generally don't enjoy.

Comments and judgements made by someone we learn from or respect, like a parent or teacher, is very influential in our development. The influence is usually greater when we are young or if we are insecure. When those we care about make judgements about our actions and reactions -- our behavior -- those judgements can have a positive or detrimental affect on our development. In fact the same comment can impact us in completely different ways depending on our self-view, the importance of the person in our life or the respect we have for their opinion/input.

We come into this world at the mercy of our parents and other adults. Babies need love and nourishment to thrive. Through the way in which our caretakers respond to our cries and demands, we begin to learn how to get our needs met. Babies who receive adequate amounts of human interaction, sustenance and nurturing get their basic needs fulfilled and feel secure. As children mature they continue to look to their parents and other adults for reassurance that they are accepted. A healthy upbringing will go a long way to result in an adult who is confident and has few fears about being accepted. Being mindful of how we judge others, how we act toward them and what are reactions are can be the difference in helping someone to feel accepted or rejected.



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