

August 2001

Keys for Living

This month the key is: "Comfort"

On a recent trip "home" to Michigan, I had opportunity to visit Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, and Lake Superior. I have always felt a strong connection to the Great Lakes. I love the shades of blue, the sounds of the waves rolling in, the smell of the fresh water and wind, the soft, white sand of Lake Michigan, and the brisk, refreshing temperature of the water. As I sat on the shore looking at the power and beauty of the lakes, I was filled with gratefulness for the comfort and love I have always felt from the waters of our Earth. I knew in that moment that the topic of my next newsletter would be the necessary joy of comfort.

When I think of comfort, I think of feeling safe, soothed, and consoled. **Comfort** means knowing and feeling we are not alone, and we will be okay, no matter what the present circumstance. **It is a glorious feeling based in connection.**

Comfort can come from many sources, and it is important that it does. If we rely on only one relationship, job, animal, or activity to provide us with all the comfort we deserve, we are creating an imbalance that is ripe for upheaval. It is important that we gain skills in utilizing various sources of connection: people, things, activities, and our selves.

A primary relationship can be a significant source of comfort by providing a constant presence that allows us to feel loved, safe, and touched. Sometimes it can be comforting to just know someone else is near. However, if being in a primary relationship means we avoid developing skills in self-comfort and self-reliance, then we are cheating ourselves out of an important part of our own strength. We end up limiting who we are and stifling the potential given to us by the Universe. **To fully connect in a relationship, we must know we can also be okay on our own.**

Friends are a crucial part of comfort's foundation. It is a wonderful gift to have people in our lives that can offer us support, guidance, truth, continuity, and perspective. **Different people can provide comfort about different things and in different ways.** Some may offer support about work, others about spiritual concerns, others about parenting or relationships, and others offer physical help that can be comforting. Remember, comfort flows from connection. **Do you have people in your life with whom you can connect in comforting ways?**

For many people, things are a source of comfort. Maybe something provides us with a connection to the caring feelings of someone in our lives. However, **it is important to consider what it is we are connecting with in a place or thing.** If we are finding comfort in possessions, to what are we really connecting? Ask yourself if you are finding comfort in ways that honor and strengthen your core, or if you are connecting to things that seem comforting but do not really move you forward towards your best self.

Activities can also be sources of comfort. I find great comfort in the energy of Reiki, which often feels soothing, like the peace of being totally loved and in the womb. I also find great comfort in Journeying, which allows me to connect with the love of the Divine. In connecting with the Universe in these ways, I feel great love, and I refuel my trust that all will be okay and everything works for the greatest good. It is this kind of comforting connection to the greater Love that flows to us from Mother Earth, the stars and planets of Father Sky, and the beautiful power of the oceans and lakes. **What activities bring you comfort? In what ways do they allow you to feel a comforting connection?**

Two of *the* most common difficulties with comfort that I see in my healing work with others is a reliance on only a few resources and a need to develop skills in self-soothing. Reading and journaling

are very comforting for me. Sometimes I find great comfort in silence, which allows me to focus and reconnect with my self. **It is important to discover how you can comfort yourself. It is when we are not sure of our own ability to comfort ourselves, that we enter into unhelpful relationships or make impulsive decisions that do not serve our greatest good.** Consider how you can connect with your inner self and/or the great love of the Divine. This will likely be the path to comforting yourself. Consider writing down the people, things, and activities that bring you comfort. How do they comfort you? With what are you connecting? And how can you comfort yourself? **Everyone deserves to feel safe, loved and hopeful. Find the connections that offer this to you.**