

## **Creating Inner Calm Despite Outer Chaos**

By Ellen Farrell, M.A., NCC, LPC

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Is it possible for one to feel calm even when it seems that the world is falling apart? Dealing with busy lives, day-to-day hassles, and often-complex schedules can cause anxiety! In addition, one may have personal issues that take up precious energy such as concerns about: a family member, friend, pet, personal health, love life, professional development/work-related stressors, spiritual issues, etc. – or focusing energy on things that COULD happen (in the future), or stressing/depressing about things that have happened in the past. Imbalances may also be experienced due to improper diet, lack of sleep, or substance overuse. When loved ones are exposed to external conflicts, potentially dangerous situations, major transitions, losses, or other challenges, one may feel responsible to 'fix' their problems. Especially when global/environmental/political issues are layered on top of personal issues, one may feel overwhelmed, which can feel like the proverbial "straw" that broke the camel's back. How can a person who is leading a chaotic feeling life, still find peace? As the Tao Te Ching states, "... stay at the center of the circle, and let all things take their course." Despite the fact that there may be many circumstances which are chaotic, and even despite the fact that these circumstances may at times feel overwhelming, people DO NOT need to identify with those problems.

As Eckhart Tolle shares in his book, "The Power of Now", "Forget about your life situation for a while and pay attention to your life. ... Focus your attention on the Now and tell me what problem you have at this moment. ... it is impossible to have a problem when your attention is fully in the Now - a situation that needs to be either dealt with or accepted – yes. The mind unconsciously loves problems because they give you an identity of sorts. You become so overwhelmed by your life situation that you lose your sense of life, of Being. Or you are carrying in your mind the insane burden of a hundred things that you will or may have to do in the future instead of focusing your attention on the one thing that you can do now. When you create a problem, you create pain."

Choosing to live in the present moment can be the beginning of a new, healthier experience – and a richer and more meaningful life. Making fundamental choices, as recommended by author Robert Fritz, and outlined in his book, "The Path of Least Resistance", support creating that in your life. These include: the fundamental choices: to be healthy, to be free, to be true to yourself, and to be the predominant creator in your life – all of these are to be made in alignment with the highest good.

Another insightful author, Don Miguel Ruiz, in his well-known book "The Four Agreements" encourages one to commit to four different choices which complement those proposed by Fritz. They are: always do your best, don't take anything personally, don't make assumptions, and be impeccable with your word.

To choose to live a more balanced life (and be able to access inner peace), be prepared to listen, to follow your intuition and to act on it, and begin by taking a nice slow breath – and decide what you want do NOW.