

Tell A New Story
By Jeanne Loehnis

Your neighbor or coworker has stopped you again and you can hardly believe your ears: isn't this the hundredth time you've heard that story? Yet, when the very next person you see asks how you are, you, also, find yourself sharing again about the difficulties that the economy has made for you and how there simply is never enough money to go around.

How can we possibly move beyond present circumstances if we merely rehash the old ideas and never entertain new ones? And, if we only entertain them, allowing safe passage in one ear and out the other, but not incorporate them into our lives, have they done us any good at all?

Go on a journey with me into your personal space, your inner world. Identify an ongoing issue or concern - something that has been around for awhile, causes fear or worry, doesn't seem to change even though you've tried. Are you ready?

First, what is the story, as you tell it, around this issue? When you tell folks about it, what do you say? How do you feel? Give yourself enough time to fully experience the current story. How does your body react as you embrace it? Do you feel tension, anxiety, anger, fear?

Recall that we are reviewing a situation that you have likely tried to resolve. Yet, as you can see, it remains open within you in a very powerful, controlling way.

How often do you tell and retell the stories around your woes? Are these the first things that come to mind and lips when a friend asks, "How are you?"

Are you ready to tell a new story? If so, let's continue the journey. A few questions to get you going:

- Have you, with an open mind, asked others for positive ideas about changing the situation?
- Have you given yourself time to go within and listen for ideas of your own that could make a difference?
- Have you, with an open heart, allowed yourself to imagine the outcome of your dreams?

Let's go there. Imagine the situation, your ongoing issue or concern, unfolding in the direction of joy, fulfillment, and health. What is happening? What does it feel like? What words would describe the events that are present on this journey?

Take your time. Tell this new story again. Imagine an even more perfect outcome. Yes, it **is** possible and yes, you **do** deserve it!

What ideas, actions, and habits does this new story incorporate? Which old ideas, actions, and habits are not present in this new story? Are you ready to release the old and incorporate the new?

Before the journey is complete, before we leave this imaginary walk, it is vital that you identify some clear steps that you are willing to include in a personal commitment. These action steps may include things you are ready to release as well as those you are ready to incorporate into your daily life. Perhaps one or more of each will create a balance that makes the commitment achievable. Consider steps like:

- Write an affirmation around the new story, post it where it is very visible, and read it morning and night.
- Tell one safe person about your new story and ask for their support.
- Each time you catch yourself telling the old story, both to others and as thoughts swimming in your mind, be willing to stop and tell the new story. If the person you are with is safe and would support you, tell them that you are redirecting yourself.
- If there are physical objects which keep you stuck in the old story (clothes which do not fit, clutter in your home, etc.), pick some to discard.

Commitment clear, willingness engaged, you are ready to move ahead. Realize that you have new stories awaiting you in every corner of your life. Each time you find yourself feeling stuck, go on a journey and tell a new story!

*Jeanne Loehnis, spiritual singer and songwriter, encourages your creativity through teaching *The Artist's Way*. Contact Jeanne at SongsForYourSpirit@new.rr.com.*

SIDEBAR POEM:

The Process

*Release the old, release and trust.
On wings of God, fly I must
to the future yet unknown.
Release with love; God's way be shown.*

*Aware within of emptiness.
No longer living in the past.
Not yet sure of that to come.
Searching for the pathway home.*

*Round the corner, now I see
my future clear in front of me.
New directions grace the day.
Pursuing, I, the Guided way.*

By Jeanne Loehnis, 2004