

## **Choosing Courageous Wellbeing**

### **Felt-thinking About Thinking<sup>1</sup>**

By Mary Elaine Kiener, RN, PhD

I'd spent over a week literally thinking about...thinking. After jotting down copious notes, I was feeling overwhelmed. There was far too much I might write about for one brief article. And, all of it seemed equally relevant and important--like how my values and beliefs influence my thoughts as well as my process of thinking. I didn't know how to move forward. That's when I decided to pause to sense inside what might be wanting to be heard and shared.

The first thing to come was a feeling of "something" in my chest. It was less about being a particular feeling. Rather, there was a sense to it of..."thoughts don't happen in a vacuum, there are usually feelings attached". Gradually, an image emerged into my awareness--as though that feeling-part of me had overheard the invitation and was now running to catch up, breathlessly saying, "Wait, I'm part of this, too! But, we're not 'attached'. We're more like travel companions."

As that feeling part began to equate with a now-growing, loose-yet-contained creative bundle of energy in my chest, I became aware of something else curiously asking, "But where does the 'thinking' come from?" And then, it felt as though there was somehow an observer part of me--located right behind my eyes--looking all around inside of me for some kind of box or container of thoughts. "Oh, is there a box of thoughts? Is there a little workshop somewhere inside here where thoughts are put together?"

I then noticed a creative, playful, imaginative "something" that seemed to be...doing "something"...that felt like it was mentally, "thinking-ly" wading its way through all those earlier notes, pondering freshly how to make sense of it all. Affirming how much there was to think about, to know and understand.

For a moment, again, it all felt so complicated. So, another brief pause, as if to offer a comforting breath of fresh air inside with an unspoken invitation. If there could be one main point that I could convey in this article, what might it be?

At first, a calming sense that all this stuff about thinking is simply more "complex" than "complicated". With a delighted, fascinated recognition of how a single word can change the whole emotional landscape of a situation. Next to arrive was the concept of CHOICE--acknowledging the liberating influence arising from our ability to consciously choose our thoughts. To the extent that thinking is like a journey or a pathway, we choose the path upon which we wish to walk.

We choose the path we want our thoughts to take: based either timidly in fear, or boldly and courageously from love. And finally, a broad, sweet inner smile of recognition. "Ah, there are the feelings! That's how they are such close companions of my thoughts!"

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<sup>1</sup> Kiener, M.E. (2016, July). Choosing Courageous Wellbeing: Felt-thinking About Thinking. *Sibyl Magazine. For the Spirit and Soul of Woman*. Retrieved from [www.sibylmagazine.com](http://www.sibylmagazine.com).