"Good To know" File

Now that you have identified your rights and understand that EVERYONE shares these rights, it's time to put them into a mental file. The **"Good to Know" File** is a mindfulness tool. You create this mental file by acknowledging information at face value. **You receive information without judgement, fear or emotional reaction.** Rather than become wounded,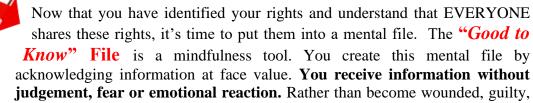 guilty, angry or fearful, you simply acknowledge the information as data. *"It is what it is."* You can use your "*good to know"* file to store information that will help you determine a response that is both logical and aligned with your values."

Example: When someone has a pattern of lying to you, or a pattern of being critical of you, rather than responding with denial, anger, shame or defensiveness, simply place that piece of information in your "*good to know*" file. The next time this person speaks to you, pull up the file. **This file allows you to use insight, logic and reason to make a choice about your response.** Your logic and use of this historic file of past events helps you establish reasonable expectations of this relationship.

Reasonable Expectations: Apple Tree or Pine Tree?

Your "good to know file" is most useful when combined with "reasonable expectations." I use the following tree analogy to clarify "reasonable expectations." **Imagine that an apple tree represents a healthy relationship.** The apple tree bares the fruit of **emotional intelligence, love, trust, respect, loyalty, empathy, compassion, communication, conflict negotiation and problem-solving.**

Now imagine that a pine tree represents an unhealthy relationship (Ranges from Passive/Avoidant to Domineering /Aggressive). The pine tree needles cause **fear, disrespect, distrust, deception, anger, betrayal, manipulation, verbal or emotional abuse** and perhaps even **addictions or violence**.
Using this analogy, ask yourself if, while sitting under the pine tree, "am I expecting an apple?"
People often complain, "they *NEVER listen to me!"* or "*I was cheated AGAIN.*" And "*I can't believe they KEEP doing that!"*

Are you climbing a pine tree, looking for apples? Are you mad every time you get poked by another needle in the same tree? What did you expect?

✓ Use your "*good to know*" file to collect information about people. Notice whether or not their words match their actions. People's choices and actions reveal character.

✓ Once collected, use the data in the file to determine whether you have realistic expectations about your relationships.

✓ Realistic expectations improve emotional intelligence by eliminating denial and building stronger boundaries, healthier relationships.