

## Fairy Tale - A Bear Faces His Losses

Once upon a time there was a bear. The bear had a very nice wife bear and two special female cubs. By the time of this story, the female cubs had grown up or were almost grown. The bear had finished one career. The bear knew that the Great One had been kind to him. The bear knew he had much to be grateful for. He was thankful for his family and for the kindness of many friends. When he thought of his family and friends, the bear realized he could not count all the Happy Occurrences in his life because there were so many. But...

But, the bear was often deeply troubled by the Unhappy Occurrences that he had experienced in his life. He often felt much hurt and sadness; much embarrassment and shame; much regret.

The bear thought of the Happy and Unhappy Occurrences as though they were boxes. It was pleasing for the bear to see the pile of boxes that represented the Happy Occurrences. These boxes helped him remember the kindness of the Great One, his family and his friends. These boxes reminded the bear of the successes the Great One had granted him over the years.

However, the bear could not keep his eyes off the boxes that represented the Unhappy Occurrences. Though they were fewer in number, this pile of boxes seemed so large. They seemed so scary. Seeing or thinking of them was what made the bear feel hurt and sadness, embarrassment and shame, and regret. It was awful for the bear.

The bear tried to push the boxes that represented the Unhappy Occurrences out of sight. He tried to cover them up so that he and others would not see them. But even though the bear could hide the boxes from others, there was nowhere the boxes of Unhappy Occurrences could be hidden from himself. They were always there.

In time the bear learned something. He learned that some of the boxes of Unhappy Occurrences really were not his to own. They belonged to others, not to him! But the bear thought they were his. He had kept the boxes for so long that it was hard to not count them as his own. And some of the other boxes contained Unhappy Occurrences that the bear created but only because he didn't know any better. But the bear believed that he should have known better and that he was no good for what he had created.

It was not easy, but with the help of some Special Friends and the Great One, the bear began to open some of these boxes. He knew if he didn't do so he would always be trapped by the presence of those boxes! The bear decided it was best to open the ones he was most scared to open. He looked at the Unhappy Occurrence inside each box. It was hard to face the pain in this way. But when the bear accepted that these Occurrences had touched his life in a deep way, when the bear counted the Loss that he had sustained as a result of each Occurrence...why, the pain started to go away. And the bear found that those boxes didn't make him fearful or sad any more, or embarrassed or ashamed, or regretful at least not nearly as much. And he was surprised to discover that some of the other boxes of Unhappy Occurrences were not important any more. He didn't even have to open them to look at them. He could just remember the Occurrence that was in the box and accept it. He was able to accept the Loss that the Unhappy Occurrence box represented.

The bear learned something else, as well. He learned that he DID own some of the boxes of Unhappy Occurrences. These boxes contained Unhappy Occurrences that the bear was responsible for creating. It was hard for the bear to face and admit this to himself and to some Special Friends and to the Great One. The bear knew, however, that if he did not admit ownership, he would never be free from the sadness of these Unhappy Occurrences.

With great fear and a feeling of embarrassment the bear selected the boxes he knew held the Unhappy Occurrences that he was most fearful or ashamed of. When the bear looked at each of these Unhappy

Occurrences it did hurt! Some brought him a sense of great shame. Some brought a feeling of tremendous disappointment! But the act of looking at them out in the open, of admitting them to his Special Friends, of receiving forgiveness from himself (he didn't have to receive forgiveness from the Great One...that had already been given!) made such a difference. He could look at the Unhappy Occurrences and not be nearly as sad. In fact, over time he was hardly sad at all!

In time the bear could look at the stack of boxes of Unhappy Occurrences. He didn't have to try to cover the boxes up. He didn't have the sad feeling any more...just the memory. And the memory was something the bear learned he could use to be a better and more helpful bear.

The End