

A Life Changing Aha Moment

By Donna Bishop

The memory of that moment, June 12, 1999 at precisely 6:23 a.m. is etched in my mind. I awoke with the incredible understanding that I love my sister. Don't give me that "so what" look. This was a life changing aha moment for me.

In our fifty-seven-year history, we had not shared even moments of sisterly love. I didn't like her. She was a nuisance from the time Mother returned from the hospital with her. She was ugly, cried most of the time, smelled badly and demanded a great deal of my Mother's attention. She was also making my Mother cry a lot. All in all she was a bad deal and I suspect in my three-year-old mind I just wanted her gone.

Unfortunately, she was there to stay but the passing of years did not change my attitude. She was a problem from the get go. She broke my china headed doll, scribbled on my pretty pictures, and was forever tagging along. We shared a bedroom till I left for college. That led to fights over clothes, records and even "property line" in the double bed! I was embarrassed by way she dressed and behaved and she insisted she couldn't get dates in high school because I was such a "goody-two shoes"!

After college our lives intersected very little. We both married and divorced. I was a single parent with three children and she had no children. Our paths diverged, I returned to work, slowly moving into management positions. My sister quit her job traveled to Europe till she was broke and returned home. She recently published a book *101 Ways I Tried to Make Money* and she has!

Our life experiences were so different we allowed that to build a wall to any meaningful relationship. However on the evenings of June 10 and June 11, 1999 we took the time to sit down and talk honestly about how we felt about each other. There were painful memories followed with clearer understandings, lots of years of anger shared and worked through together. The process of forgiving myself for my judgement of my sister was underway.

Aha moment was the recognition that I had the power to choose how I thought about my sister and I decided to choose love.