What have YOU earned?

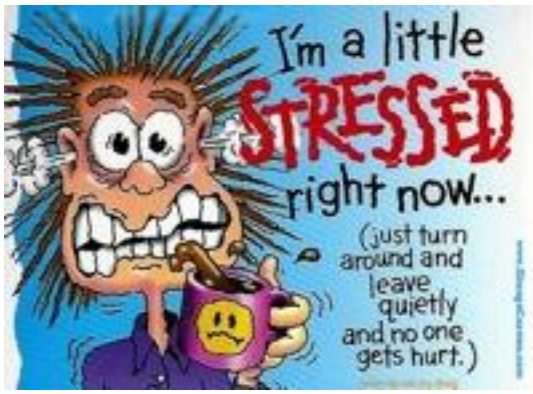
Had a rough go of it one day last week. Between packing and unpacking to go to the Chicago clinic, jet lag, Bill's non-existent sleep schedule, and overall fatigue, we both had meltdowns. We are getting treatment-weary, that is for sure. Bill is bearing the brunt of it but funnily enough he thinks I am!

The strange thing to contemplate post-meltdown is my internal dialogue in the midst of it: "I have the right," and "Anyone would melt down under these circumstances." Both are true. The one that truly fascinated me was: "I've *earned* this!" Fully played out that particular conversation would be," I've earned the right to be in a bad mood and to feel horrible and to be mad at the world!"

Who in their right mind would even want any of that? And to say I've *earned* it?

All of the internal dialogue I've catalogued here falls under the category of "justification." I was looking for justification for being in a bad mood—AS IF BEING IN A BAD MOOD WERE SOME KIND OF REWARD!

What?!?



I understand that everyone needs to blow off steam from time to time and I certainly don't believe in ignoring one's feelings. But what I do believe (and what is

sometimes difficult to remember and put into practice) is that feelings are a barometer of where you are versus where you want to be. At the most basic level, negative feelings tell us, "I want to be happy and I am definitely not." The next step would be to do something to reverse the spiral so you are moving toward feeling better, not worse.

Have I earned a bad mood? Of course not. What I've earned is a *good* mood and that is a gift only I can give myself. Fortunately, my tolerance for being in a bad mood has decreased over the years. Where once I was in a bad mood for 30+ years (i.e., clinical depression), I can now tolerate it for *maybe* a day. The day after my meltdown was a much better day and they've been getting better ever since.

Dialogue matters, whether it is internal or external. Whether you say, "I've earned the right to be in a really bad mood," OR "I'm feeling great and I deserve it!" you will be right.

What have you earned?