

## **BACK TO THE FUTURE**

**Week #2 of a 3-Week Series, "Metaphysical Movie Fun"**

**Rev. Stacy Macris Ros**

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Today I'm covering the 1985 classic movie, "Back to the Future." Here's the movie poster. Oh, we've got some people! Wow, okay. Yeah, "Back to the Future" one. There we go. There's Michael J. Fox.

What's really fun about this is: if you go back and watch this movie, I recommend you do it with someone under the age of 35, because they don't understand why Marty McFly in 1985 can't just pull out his cell phone or jump on his laptop. The past is already 1985 to them. Forget 1955!

But this film: in 1985, it was the highest grossing film worldwide. It received multiple award nominations, including an Academy Award. The movie is set in 1985; stars Michael J. Fox as Marty McFly. He's a teenager who is very worried that he's destined to follow in the footsteps of his nerdy, unsuccessful, very unhappy father, George -- George McFly.

And then we have one of our favorite characters, which is Christopher Lloyd playing this eccentric scientist friend, Doc Brown. And so there they are. Here on your screen, they're getting ready to take off. Because one night, Doc invites Marty to meet him at a mall to see his newest invention, which is a modified DeLorean. Does anyone remember the DeLorean cars? Yeah. So he's modified this DeLorean that can travel through time.

And there's just one problem. The problem is that the car runs on plutonium, which Doc has stolen from a group of Libyans. So sure enough, the Libyans have shown up at the mall. They shoot Doc. At the same time, Marty jumps in the DeLorean, and suddenly the car hits 88 miles per hour, and Marty finds himself transported back in time to 1955, when his parents were in high school. Can you imagine showing up at your parents' high school? [Congregants laugh]

So now Marty has two big problems. First, he has to figure out how to get back to 1985 from 1955. And then he also has to make sure his parents fall in love, or else he and his siblings will not exist anymore. They'll never be born.

There's another complication here. Because at first, his mother Lorraine -- not knowing this is her future son -- develops a crush on Marty. Apparently Marty is being a little bit too charming for his own good. So, Marty comes up with a plan to get his dad, George, to stand up to the school bully named Biff. Such a bully name, right? So, he's helping him to stand up to the school bully, Biff, so that he can become the hero and win Lorraine's heart. It works. George finds the courage to stand up for himself, and he and Lorraine fall in love. Here they are at the school dance.

But Marty still has to get home, and it's not easy because there's no plutonium in 1955. So, Doc comes up with another plan, which is to harness the power of a lightning strike to send the DeLorean and Marty back to the future. There's the car with the lightning strike to get them back home.

Well, Marty makes it back to 1985 and discovers that the future has changed. His parents are now confident, successful; they're healthy; they're happily married. His siblings are happy and successful. And Biff, our bully; he intimidated everyone before. Well, now he's working for and intimidated by George and Lorraine.

And there's one more surprise. So, cover your ears if you haven't watched this movie. This is a spoiler. So, we also discover that Doc Brown is alive in this version of 1985. Marty had warned him in 1955 about this attack at the mall in 1985. And so, Doc ultimately changes his mind about listening to Marty's warning about the future. And that small change ends up saving his life.

So, Marty didn't just travel in time; he changed the future. And what changed in the future? Small influences on the way that people thought about themselves; the actions they are now willing to take;

what they believed was possible ... all while he was now in 1955 with them. So, the new past created a new future.

So, we find quite a few ... I love this movie for the metaphysical themes. This is a great metaphysical teacher, this movie. I found three spiritual truths for us today. The first one is that your thoughts, your beliefs, your actions of today create your future. It's the power of conscious creation. How you think about yourself, what you believe about yourself, and the actions that you take (or don't take) affect your future.

The second spiritual truth we get is that we can't go back in time -- we don't have DeLoreans -- but we can start right now, in the present moment, to create our future. Today was created from yesterday. So, we want to harness the power of the present moment to shape our future. Don't focus on the past. Focus on the right now and what you can do now for tomorrow.

And then the third spiritual truth in this movie: love, once again, is the driving force of life. We all want to be loved. We all want to feel loved. Ultimately, it's because we want to remember what we really are, which is love. Our divine essence is love. And so, even more importantly: as Marty discovers, without love, we don't exist.

So let's do an even deeper dive now into each one of those. The first spiritual truth: **YOUR THOUGHTS, BELIEFS AND ACTIONS OF TODAY CREATE YOUR FUTURE.**

So, we have Biff, the bully. Now when we see him in 1985 at the beginning of the movie, he's bullying George, Marty's dad. And then when we first see him in 1955, he's bullying his dad. He's a big bully all the time. He hasn't changed. The jokes are the same. The attitude is the same. Cheating on a high school paper or cheating in his work is the same. His 1955 self is the same as his 1985 self.

And what a wonderful choice that reminds us that we have. We can stay the high school version of ourselves -- hold on to the high school beliefs that we have, or the 2006 us, or the 2016 us -- or we can choose to grow. We can choose to grow emotionally, mentally, spiritually; grow in our belief system, in our consciousness.

George McFly, Marty's dad -- in the first 1955, he doesn't believe in himself. And actually, he kind of seems like he feels like he deserves to be treated badly. And it isn't until Marty arrives to influence George in this 1955 that things change. Because Marty notices his dad's passion for writing comic books, and he encourages him to keep doing that. He encourages George to find the courage to talk to Lorraine, his future mother.

And these seemingly small moments of encouragement have a profound effect on George. He becomes more confident. He becomes happily married, successful in his writing. The new past created a new future.

You know, as a teenager, even a young adult, I loved weddings. And I thought one day I would love to be, it would be so much fun to be a wedding coordinator. And in my thirties, I was a wedding coordinator for four years at beautiful garden in California. In high school, I was interested in health and nutrition, and I became -- my first career -- a registered dietitian. When I was about 16 years old, I knew I wanted to be a Unity minister. Here I am, everyone. [Congregants laugh]

In about 2012, I remember as a youth director back in California, I just remember thinking how amazing it would be to be the youth director, part of the youth and family ministry program here at Unity of Phoenix -- one of our largest Unity churches. And, in fact, when I first arrived here two-and-a-half years ago, I was the associate minister of the youth and family ministry department. In my 40s, I remember thinking how amazing it would be to have the opportunity to speak here on the large Unity of Phoenix stage on a Sunday morning. And here I am!

I don't tell you this to give you my whole resume. I tell you this because my younger self planted a seed in my soul that created my current self at that moment in time. All the experiences I had. I had an idea, I planted that in my soul. And then cut forward to it happening.

Because how you think about yourself right now -- what you believe about yourself right now, the actions you take (or don't take) right now affect your future. It's the beliefs and the thoughts of the past that have created you right now today.

Therefore, to influence your future, we start now. Again, it's called conscious creation. The future is coming. So, you can create it on autopilot. Or you can be intentional in manifesting/creating what it is you want in your life and look forward to in the years to come.

So how are you going to think about yourself today? What are you going to believe about yourself today? Because right now you're creating what you want for when you go back to the future. The vibrations, the frequencies, the belief systems that you send out right now are moving forward and creating your life.

So, in one version of George McFly, he doesn't believe he's worthy of success. He's afraid to take actions towards any of his dreams. And as a result, that first version of him reflect those limiting beliefs. But in another version of George McFly, he changes his thinking about failure. He stretches beyond his comfort zone and discovers that he is capable of creating a successful, happy life. And it's that successful George McFly that tells his kids, *"I've always said, if you put your mind to it, you can accomplish anything."* That was very different than the first version of himself. He created, he changed his entire philosophy by changing his beliefs and -- with some encouragement -- into who he truly was.

And even our crazy scientist friend, Doc: he changes his thinking and belief too around one thing, which is about knowing the future. Because at first when Marty meets him in 1955, he doesn't want to know anything about the future, because he believes it could have dangerous consequences. But then something in him along the way shifts. And we learn that -- after ripping up the letter that Marty gave him, warning him about getting shot in the parking lot in 1985 -- Doc secretly tapes it back together and decides to listen to Marty's warning. And that change in opinion/in action in 1955 ultimately saves his life in 1985.

So, there's some great reminders here for all of us. First, be open to changing your mind. Be flexible in your beliefs. Charles Fillmore, Unity's co-founder, at the end of his life -- when he was about 93 years old -- he'd created the Unity Movement. And here's what he said. He said, *"This is where I am now, but I reserve the right to change my mind."*

And the second thing we learned from this first piece here is that we can't let our fears hold us back. You know, that first version of George -- he was so afraid of rejection from the girl, from anything about his comic books, anyone liking his comic books. But if you never try, you have a 0% chance of obtaining the goal. If you do try, you have a higher percentage than 0% of obtaining the goal.

Even Marty, he's ... At the end, he's ready to leave 1955, and his car won't start. He's so close to obtaining this goal of getting back home. And he tries again and again to start the car, and he's just so frustrated. And finally, he's so frustrated, he hits his head on the steering wheel, and it starts.

And sometimes It takes multiple attempts to get our dreams to come true. Sometimes it feels like we're hitting our head on the steering wheel. Situations occur. Challenges occur. But it's our thoughts about the challenges that decide how we're going to experience them. Are we going to experience them with fear and feeling unworthy or I'm a failure? Or are we going to approach it with a growth mindset, which says, *"I can do this. I won't give up."* Because notice: both thoughts -- I can't and I can -- both carry us to the future.

So, our first spiritual truth from back to the future is that our thoughts, our beliefs, our actions of today create our future. So, choose to be conscious and awake.

Which bridges us right into our second spiritual truth: that we can't go back in time, but **WE CAN START RIGHT NOW TO CREATE THE FUTURE THAT WE WANT.** Today is created from yesterday.

Sometimes we really would like to go back, but we can't go back. This is where acceptance comes in. This is where forgiveness -- usually towards oneself -- comes in. We aren't living in the present moment if we keep ruminating about the past. We can't be open to new insights, new information, and gifts of the present moment if we're still looking behind us.

So, we can free ourselves by accepting what is. Forgive yourself for what you didn't know at the time that you know now. You made the best decision based on the information you had then.

George: in the movie, he makes decisions differently when Marty planted new ideas and encouraged him in a new direction. George had different information and support in that second 1955 than he did in the first 1955.

We're creating all the time. So where do you want to place your focus? Because what we put our focus on grows. Where our energy goes, our life flows in that direction.

There's a great quote by Charles Kettering. Follow along on your screens here. He said, *"You can't have a better tomorrow if you're always thinking about yesterday all the time."* If you're thinking about yesterday all the time, you're creating more yesterday.

This is where we use our creative energy. It's divine order. Divine order is how we manifest. And we use it all the time, consciously or not. Which means that, although the process is divine, the outcome may not be. And that's due to our limited human thinking that we've applied to a divine process.

And also to be noted is that our family, our peers, our society also influence our thoughts and our beliefs. Biff is a bully. He surrounds himself with bullies. When George in 1955 2.0 has a new friend -- his son Marty from the future -- who positively influences him, Marty gives him a new belief. George goes on to believe that new belief and to create a healthy, successful 1985 2.0.

There's been studies on this, too. So, several studies have been looked at how certain neighborhoods affect us. One study found that in a neighborhood where there were more college graduates, you are more likely to become a college graduate. Who you surround yourself with matters.

So, in the beginning of the movie, the vice principal says to Marty, *"You're too much like your old man. No McFly ever amounted to anything in the history of Hill Valley."* Now, Marty could have taken that to heart and made that his future. But instead, he responds, *"Yeah, well, history's going to change."* And that's what happens. He refuses to accept a limited belief that's being imposed on him and, instead, declares history can change.

Later, interesting enough, when Marty's trying out for the school talent show, he gets rejected and he says to his girlfriend, *"I'm not good enough. Oh, no!"* Then all of a sudden he's aware, *"I'm sounding like my dad!"* Anyone have that experience? *"I'm sounding like my dad or my mom."*

So, if growing up you heard something like, *"Money doesn't grow on trees; we can't afford that,"* you might now struggle with prosperity or abundance consciousness. If you're told as a child kids are meant to be seen but not heard, maybe you struggle with getting your own needs met or having your own voice or opinions heard by others. Not to blame, but just to become more aware of, *"Huh. Interesting. Here's an old belief or idea that had been planted in me."*

These are called inherited beliefs, and we receive them from family and community; from the people we surround ourselves with. So, choose individuals who are willing to cheer you on. Choose individuals who give you support; who are also working on a growth mindset; who want to see the best in you. Don't inherit the limited thoughts and beliefs of your family or your culture.

An anonymous person said, *"Spending today complaining about yesterday won't make tomorrow any better."*

Surround yourself with people who are going to say, *"Let's focus on the positive and what we can do now for a better tomorrow."* Surround yourself with people who inspire you, who believe in you. and encourage you to grow into the person you want to become.

Today was built from yesterday. You're creating tomorrow in this moment. So, harness the power of the present moment to shape your future. Don't focus on the past. Focus on what you can do right now.

And then our third takeaway from "Back to the Future": **WITHOUT LOVE, WE DON'T EXIST.**

Here's what Charles Fillmore, Unity's co-founder, wrote in the book, "Keep a True Lent." It's here on your screen to follow along. He wrote, *"Love is the power that joins and binds together the universe and everything in it. When it is made consciously active, it reconstructs, rebuilds, and restores everyone and his or her world."*

And that's the fabric of this story. If Marty doesn't actively get his parents to meet at the high school dance and fall in love, then he and his siblings don't exist. The family and the life they know don't exist.

The lesson then is this: that when we actively bring love into our interactions, we remind ourselves and those we encounter of our oneness, of our connection with one another.

What does it mean when I say actively bring love into our interactions? Wake up in the morning; go to your heart space; set that intention of, *"Today I'm leading with love."* And then express it in the little things. Make coffee for your partner. Help a neighbor. Let someone merge in front of you. Open a door for someone.

But kindness is love in expression. Be kind. Respect is love in expression. Be respectful. Honesty and authenticity are love in expression. Be honest. Be authentic.

Because love isn't just something we feel. It's actually something we choose to express. And every expression of love helps us create a different world. As we become love in action, we begin to see just how connected we all are to one another. So when I express kindness and respect to you, it allows both of us to feel kindness and respect towards one another, and our connection with each other. That's the power of love.

The power of love: it harmonizes with/attracts to us that which we want to be and feel. We all want to feel love. We all want to be loved. And that's because we want to remember that love is our divine essence. Our divine essence is love.

Ultimately, Marty saves the day because of love. He loves his parents. He wants to see them happy and together. He loves his family. He doesn't want himself and his siblings to disappear. And because of his love for them and the love he brings into 1955, his entire family is blessed in 1985. Again, his mom and dad have more confidence and positive outlooks. His siblings are more successful now. So it's his love for all of them ... It's also his love for our crazy scientist friend, Doc, that allows Mari to save him in the future, 1985.

Love blesses and heals us in ways that we may not immediately recognize. Sometimes it's only when we're looking back that we realize just how deeply love has nurtured our soul, healed us, transformed our lives. But love is the essence of life itself. We are loving awareness here to express divine love on earth.

So, "Back to the Future" is a fun, insightful movie. It reminds us that the future is not something we passively arrive at. It's something we participate in creating. We can't change the past, but we can choose differently in this moment. And through it all, love remains the thread that connects us to one another. and the divine.

The Dalai Lama said this here on your screen: *"There are only two days in the year that nothing can be done. One is called yesterday and the other is called tomorrow. So today is the right day to love, believe, do, and mostly live."*

When Marty ends up on Doc's doorstep in 1955, Doc tells him, *"You must stay here,"* meaning you have to stay in this house. Don't go anywhere because he doesn't want him, Marty, to alter the future.

Yet we are not meant to stay here. We are meant to grow, to stretch, to experience, to love, to consciously participate in creating what comes next. Because the future isn't simply something that happens to us. Every thought, every choice, every action is helping to shape the future we are moving towards.

So, here's your invitation, my friends. Don't just wait for the future. Step out. Stretch yourself. Go create the future that astounds you.

That's the spiritual messages from "Back to the Future." Blessings, everyone.

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