



Letting Go

By

David Hawkins

About Letting Go

Letting Go by David Hawkins is a how-to book on overcoming the most pernicious habits we all share: anger, guilt, and a small sense of self. Written in plain language with a few anecdotes for illustration, Letting Go goes through different stages of being, from Depression to Guilt and on to Courage and Love, in an easily understandable way.

Dr. Hawkins is a psychiatrist, researcher of consciousness, and author, and though I don't agree with everything the author states in this book, there are some really insightful lines and ideas in here. Worth a read for people interested in personal development who have struggled for a long time with anything from anger to shame, and want to be free. This book might help you quite a bit.

The author does have some quirks and also says some things that are not helpful or right, but it is up to each individual to discern. One of his quirks is that he speaks of his own experiences in the passive voice so that he can avoid

using the personal pronoun “I” (he uses “we” when a personal pronoun is absolutely unavoidable), which might be weird to some readers.

Personally I found his descriptions of the negative states of being (selfishness, anger) fairly accurate. I also agree that letting go and surrender is likely the best way to deal with these issues. His description of “higher levels of consciousness” and “love” are technically unimpeachable, but don’t dig too far, it gets more untenable as you read. I would advise skipping those. If you want to read about the negative consciousness section, it might be helpful to realize that you often feel those feelings and surrendering them is wise. Then you can skip reading the rest and just read this summary.

FOREWORD + PREFACE

It may sound counter-intuitive to get somewhere by “letting go,” but from Hawkins’ personal and clinical experience, it really works.

Letting go has physical benefits: letting go of suppressed emotions has a positive health benefit.

It also helps with behavior: progressive release of anxiety and negative emotions = less need for escapism (which is the cause of drug use, entertainment overuse, and sleep problems)

And it helps with relationships: increased positive feelings increases the capacity to love.

Finally, it helps open you up spiritually.

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

Hawkins notes that we used to be able to count on social institutions, but now we have more watchdogs than institutions.

We don't understand the problem. That's why we can't find the answer.

Feel free to be skeptical. Don't be over enthusiastic, just observe quietly.

CHAPTER 2: The Mechanism of Letting Go

Have you ever been in an argument when suddenly you find the whole thing funny and start laughing and all the pressure and discomfort goes away and you are free and happy?

Now think if you could do that anytime, anywhere, with anyone. That'd be awesome!

We all carry around with us a huge reservoir of accumulated negative feelings, attitudes, and beliefs. The accumulated pressure makes us miserable and is the basis of many of our illnesses and problems.

It is the accumulated pressure of feelings that causes thoughts. One feeling, for instance, can create literally thousands of thoughts.

We handle feelings in 3 ways:

Suppression and repression: The former is conscious, the latter unconscious. It's the most common way people have of dealing with issues. We choose feelings to suppress/repress based on conscious/unconscious programs we carry in us from social custom and family training. This pressure creates irritability, mood swings, physical aches, disorders, indigestion, hypertension, insomnia, etc.

Most famous types of suppression/repression: denial (results in “major emotional and maturational blocks”) and projection (projecting the bad feeling on others around us, turn them into the enemy, due to our own guilt/fear over having that feeling. Blame institutions, places, people, God, luck, etc)

Expression: The feeling is vented, verbalized, or acted out. Contrary to popular opinion, expressing a feeling doesn’t free you from it. It propagates the feeling and gives it more energy, and you may even end up suppressing the remainder of the feeling. People use expression for self-indulgence at the expense of others. Dumping negative emotions on others causes them to experience it as an attack and they now must suppress, express, or escape that bad feeling you gave them. This causes destruction in relationships.

Escape: Avoiding feelings through diversion. This spurs the alcohol and entertainment industries, and fuels workaholism.

Projection is the main mechanism in use by the world today. It accounts for all wars, strife, and civil disorder...We maintain our own self-esteem at the expense of others and, eventually, this results in social breakdown.

People are desperate to stay unconscious.[See how they turn on the TV] then walk around in a dream-like state, constantly being programmed by the data poured into them. People are terrified of facing themselves. They dread even a moment of aloneness.

In contrast to repressing feelings, if we let them go, the energy behind the feeling is surrendered, there is decompression. We feel better.

Where does stress come from?

Stress is not external, it comes from inside. “The readiness to react with fear depends on how much fear is already present within to be triggered by a stimulus.” To the fearful person, the world is terrifying. To the guilty person, it is full of temptation and sin.

The basic rule is that we focus on what we have repressed.

External events just trigger what we’ve been holding down.

Many stress-treatment programs deal with trying to relieve after-effects of stress rather than remove the cause itself. This is like trying to reduce a fever without healing the infection.

True love is free of fear and characterized by non-attachment. Fear of loss energizes undue attachment and possessiveness.

People with repressed grief create more sad events in life.

Remember that psychologically, like attracts like. Letting go of inner negativity creates love. Even animals can read a person’s emotional state, and bacteria growth is affected by human emotions.

The Mechanism of Letting Go

Allow yourself to have a feeling without resistance, venting, fearing, condemning, or moralizing

Don’t try to modify it and don’t resist it: resistance keeps it going.

When you start, you may feel fear or guilt. Let go of that, then let go of the feeling itself. Ignore all thoughts. Focus on the feeling.

Thoughts are endless and self-reinforcing, and they only breed more thoughts. Thoughts are merely rationalizations of the mind to try and explain the presence of the feeling. The real reason for the feeling is the accumulated pressure behind the feeling that is forcing it to come up in the moment.

Feelings are merely survival programs that the mind believes are necessary.

To be surrendered means to have no strong emotion about a thing. "It's okay if it happens, and it's okay if it doesn't." ...[like the] basic teaching of Jesus Christ to "be in the world but not of it."

If you surrender a feeling and it returns, that just means there's more of it to surrender. We've stuffed these feelings away for years and there's a lot of stuff to come up and be acknowledged.

Continuously letting go creates a feeling of freedom. Because fully surrendered feelings disappear from consciousness.

Feelings are false, created by the ego, tricking the brain into thinking it is for survival.

As you practice letting go, keep track of progress, use a chart. Remind yourself of how you were before you started.

Resistance to Letting Go

Letting go of negative feelings undoes the ego. Let the resistance be there. Don't resist the resistance.

What are you afraid of regarding this process? Are you willing to let go of it?

NtS: Reminds me of that song that goes "even if we never find heaven, I'll walk through hell with you"

When the ego starts to lose ground it will try tricks and bluffs.

NtS: Reminds me of The Old Man

When letting go, don't think about it, just do it.

The real Self is the space between the thoughts, or more exactly, the field of silent awareness underneath all thoughts.

You'll realize you never needed all those thoughts at all.

NtS: Is this like Flow?

If you feel stuck with a particular feeling, surrender to the feeling of being stuck.

Let go of common beliefs like

We only deserve things through struggle and sacrifice

Suffering is good for us

We don't get anything for nothing

Things that are simple aren't worth much

CHAPTER 3: The Anatomy of Emotions

Simplicity is one of the earmarks of truth.

One of the main human goals is survival, especially survival of the body because people believe they ARE their body. And emotions help ensure survival.

If the underlying emotion is ignored or not experienced, people don't know why they are doing what they are doing. Underlying emotions are more basic/primitive than thoughts and are out of awareness.

To figure out an underlying emotional goal, ask "what for" until you uncover the basic feeling.

The goal of every activity is to achieve a certain feeling.

Hawkins claims there are levels of consciousness, from shame to love. In his framework, the levels go from lowest to highest:

Shame

Guilt

Apathy

Grief

Fear

Desire

Anger

Pride

Courage

Neutrality

Willingness

Acceptance

Reason

Love

Joy

Peace

Below the level of courage, people “avoid us because we take energy from them.”

Dealing with emotions through suppression/repression, expression, and escape are bad only when done unconsciously. If we deal with emotions consciously through these methods when we are overwhelmed, that’s okay. Use expression to lessen the emotion, then let it go piece by piece.

Every strong emotion is a composite of a number of subsidiary emotions and the total complex can be disassembled.

The dark night of the soul frequently precedes heightened awareness. People often experience peace after a period of crisis. So every crisis holds a kernel of reversal/renewal. Letting go of the old and birthing the new.

Most people spend their lives regretting the past and fearing the future.

How to handle the past — give it a different context, different meaning, see it with a different attitude. Every life experience, even tragic ones, have a hidden lesson/gift. When we acknowledge that gift, there is healing.

Every person has a shadow within — repressed thoughts and feelings about ourselves we don’t want to face. Crises force us to face our shadow, makes us more human, causes the shadow to lose power. When we recognize our

forbidden thoughts and feelings, we can handle them with “so what?” It gives more self-awareness.

Fear of life is really fear of emotions. It is not the facts we fear but our feelings about them. Once we have mastery over our feelings, our fear of life diminishes.

The question is, “How long do we want to go on suffering? When are we willing to give it up? When is enough enough?”

The world can only see us as we see ourselves. Are we willing to pay those consequences?

Enhancing Positive Emotions

Look for positive feelings like forgiveness inside and stop resisting it.

CHAPTER 4: Apathy and Depression

Apathy is the feeling that we can't do anything about our situation and no one else can either. Hopelessness + helplessness.

To get out of apathy, remind yourself of your intention to get higher and freer, be more effective and happy, etc.

“I Can't” vs. “I Won't.”

In reality we are very capable, so most “I Can'ts” are really “I Won't” And behind that is usually a fear. When we let fear go, we realize we have a desire to do that which we fear.

Anger: it includes more energy to act. Sometimes we get angry about being held back by our fear, and we do something about it.

Apathy and depression are the prices we pay for having bought into negativity.

To get out we have to be more conscious. How? By starting to look for the truth ourselves. Start questioning everything, and stop labeling your thoughts as “mine” (and thus “sacrosanct”)

Thanks to the nature of the mind, we become the composite of all the negative trash in the world. We must let go of pride and be willing to become a beginner.

Blame

Blame is a big barrier to getting out of depression/apathy.

Blame has lots of payoffs: we get to be innocent and enjoy self-pity and receive sympathy. It lets us stay small without guilt. But the cost is our freedom.

To get out: see that you are choosing to blame. We don't have to. Move up from victim to chooser. Acknowledge, observe, disassemble emotions and surrender component parts.

When you see bad news about X, tell yourself “X does not apply to me.” (Eg: unemployment rates, etc)

Choosing the Positive

Let go of resisting the positive.

The mind projects on to the future with the expectation that the past will be repeated.

Because in the unconscious mind there is no such thing as time, we can choose at any time in the present to heal the past event.

Bitterness is an unhealed area in our emotional makeup. Healing it will bring great rewards. Just ask yourself “How long am I willing to pay the cost?” Choose to be with people who have resolved the problem with which we struggle. Just being in their presence is helpful.

Another trick: Ask ourselves what we’re trying to prove with our negativity — that the world sucks? That it’s hopeless? That it’s not our fault? That one can’t find love? Then ask: how much am I willing to pay to be “right”?

CHAPTER 5: Grief

Grief = we feel things are too difficult; we’ll never make it, we are unloving/unlovable.

Allow the grief. Suppressing it leads to psychosomatic problems. Persistent feelings come from inability to relinquish. If we let go, we will suffer through it for 10–20 minutes, then it will stop. It will come back now and then, but eventually it will run out.

But suppressed grief can last years.

Grief comes from attachment. When we see an object or person as “mine,” loss of it means loss of self and an important part of our “emotional economy.”

Handling Loss

People tend to handle loss in two ways:

1. Increase intensity of attachment
2. Denial: playing ostrich

To handle loss: figure out what purpose the person/object plays in our life. Another part of grief is anger — anger comes from refusal to believe that all relationships/possessions are transitory.

Guilt is another associated emotion, because we feel that the loss is a punishment.

Acceptance is different than resignation. In resignation, there are still residuals of the previous emotion left. There is reluctance and a delaying of the true recognition of the facts. Resignation says, “I don’t like it, but I have to put up with it.” With acceptance, resistance to the true nature of the facts has been relinquished; thus, one of the signs of acceptance is serenity.

Failure to work through any part of grief can lead to chronic stuckness. Ex: a 60-year-old woman with breathing problems lost her mom 22 years ago but had no reaction and did not buy a headstone. Turns out she was in massive denial related to guilt over her anger that her mom left her, leading to her psychosomatic illness.

Preventing Grief

The greater our attachment to what is outside ourselves, the greater our fear and vulnerability to loss. The more loving we are, the less vulnerable and less we need to seek attachments.

When the source of happiness is found within, we are immune to the losses of the world.

Love is unlimited and surrounds us at all times. It is automatically attracted to the person who is loving.

CHAPTER 6: Fear

Worry = chronic fear.

Paranoia = extreme fear.

Uneasiness = mild fear.

When we let go of fear we find anger behind it directed at the object of fear.

What one holds in mind tends to manifest.

The Healing Effect of Love

For most people, fear is so all-pervasive that their life really constitutes one giant set of compensatory devices to conquer their fears...fears tend to escalate

Hawkins speaks of a client who was so riddled with fears she could not come to his office. He focused on loving her, speaking to her lovingly, thought of her lovingly, and after a few months, she improved.

Very often we can calm another person's fears by our mere physical presence, and by the loving energy that we project to them and with which we surround them. It is not what we say, but the very fact of our presence that has the healing effect...Fear is healed by love.

Owning the Shadow

The shadow is what we hate about ourselves. We would rather project it on others and the world than acknowledge it in ourselves.

When facing fears, it helps to have a sense of humor. Because the unconscious is crude and comes up with crude images, that are comical if we really look at them. There's no need to get overdramatic about them.

It takes energy to keep the shadow buried and our fears suppressed.

TV is entertaining because it projects the hidden fantasies in our psyche on screen. When we are willing to look at these “movies” in our mind, then the TV stuff isn’t as attractive. When you acknowledge your own shadow, you aren’t interested in crime/disasters etc.

Everyone secretly harbors the fear that they are dumb, ugly, unlovable, and a failure.

Fear is part of our survival mechanism and we think letting go of it makes us vulnerable. But in reality, fear blinds us to the real dangers of life.

We can do things out of love rather than fear: care for bodies because we love them not fear their decay. Care for others out of love not desire for approval.

CHAPTER 7: Desire

Strong desires often block us from getting what we want. Because desire means “I don’t have,” and when we say we desire something, we say it isn’t ours.

We must give up the vanity and self-indulgence about the sacrifice and hard work we put into things and pain and suffering we go through to get our goals.

Having — Doing — Being

At the smallest, lowest levels, our worth is contained in what we have. Then we move up to self-worth being tied to what we do. Then we move higher to just who we ARE that counts.

Service, which is lovingly oriented toward others, automatically results in the fulfillment of our own needs. (Service is not sacrifice)

Recommended book: Glamour by Alice Bailey. Glamour is the attractive magnetic feeling around something we want. But it is all very superficial. Glamorization is living in a fantasy.

If you let go of the romanticization of the cowboy...then the cigarette he was handling in the commercial will lose its appeal.

Desire is attached to the glamour, not the actual reality. The world is constantly selling us dishonesty.

Being who you want to be: Picture who you want to be and surrender all the negative feelings and blocks that prevent us from being that.

The Power of the Inner Decision

Write down things you want to accomplish and then check them off and make follow up notes to prove to yourself that it really is doable, that you are doing it.

The mind tends to forget what you've done, and project your own power elsewhere in the world, making you feel helpless.

The majority of what happens in our lifetime is the result of some decision we have made somewhere in the past, either consciously or unconsciously.

We all feel guilty because in order to carry out what the world has taught us, we have to indulge in the very thing for which it condemns us: selfishness.

Instead of being motivated by desire and selfishness, envision what you want to happen: declare your intention, accept, decide, and consciously choose [what you want].

CHAPTER 8: Anger

Anger is energetic, so we feel energized when angry or irritated.

Most people feel guilty about anger and thus blame it on the object of our anger. Few are the persons who can take responsibility for their own anger and just say, "I am angry because I am full of anger."

Repressed anger is still anger. Instead, use it positively to fire ambitions and actions.

Sources of anger include:

- Fear
- Pride/vanity as related to self-sacrifice

Many people get angry when they "self-sacrifice" to do something for someone, and when that person does not notice = anger. This typically happens in American marriages.

That which we want, desire, and insist upon from another person is felt by them as pressure. They will, therefore, unconsciously resist...Pressure is always felt by us as a denial of our choice. It is felt as emotional blackmail.

Being motivated by self-sacrifice creates pressure for the other person. We need to surrender our desire for self-pity, acknowledge and release our pride, and see our efforts for others as GIFTS.

And when others treat us a certain way, remember: The behavior of others toward us always includes a hidden gift. Even if that behavior appears negative, there is something in it for us...everyone in our life is acting as a mirror.

Our “small self” likes to make ourselves and others as “wrong.” It is ignorant of better ways to accomplish goals.

With this in mind, also remember to acknowledge others. They resent us if we fail to appreciate them. Thank people for calling, recognize their effort to reach out. That acknowledges their value and makes them feel safe with us.

Robert Ringer’s boy/girl theory: boy wants girl, girl isn’t interested. Boy loses interest, now girl is interested.

We get what we want when we stop insisting on it!

Chronic Resentment

When anger is unrecognized and chronic, it becomes depression — anger directed at self. If pushed further, it becomes psychosomatic illness.

See: The Stanford University Forgiveness Project.

When we are resentful, part of us is happy at being right and the other person being wrong. Instead of seeing a loan as a loan, see it as a gift.

The internal view we hold about another person is forcing them to adopt a complementary defensive position.

Anger indicates weakness and vulnerability, it is a tool we give to our opponent. Stop going out of your way stockpiling resentments and negativity. Effort in converting people we considered enemies into friends brings gratification and reward.

Anger is binding. Until we let go of it, people will keep appearing in our lives, who will have the same quality that triggers anger and resentment.

CHAPTER 9: Pride

Pride is devoid of love. Consequently, it is destructive.

Intellectual pride → ignorance. Spiritual pride → block of spiritual maturation.

Releasing pride and self-inflation = inner security.

Basic law of consciousness:

Defensiveness invites attack

When you are truly self-aware of your true value, you won't be defensive.

Pride implies apology — as if whatever we are proud of isn't good enough to stand on its own.

That which is worthy of our love and respect hardly needs an apologist.

Humility

Attempting to suppress pride doesn't work. It just turns into spiritual pride.

To let go of pride, you need to see it as it is. Ask yourself: "What is the purpose of pride? What's the payoff?"

The truly humble cannot be humbled. They are immune to humiliation...There is no vulnerability [and they] do not experience critical attacks by others...There is nothing to be offended by and no need to react.

Let joy be the reward of successful achievement, not pride. Pride makes us easily exploitable and easily manipulated.

Pride, like other negative emotions, leads to guilt → fear → loss of peace of mind

Simplicity is a state of mind, not related to number of possessions.

Gratitude is an antidote to pride. Be grateful for what you have rather than take pride in it.

We can have pride over the most ridiculous things, and once we see how funny that is, we can let go of pride. (NtS: Another reason why we should all learn about humor and practice it! Humor is a shift of perspective)

If someone eats [a certain way] because they enjoy it, there is nothing much we can say about it, is there? If, on the other hand, they infer that theirs is the right way of eating and, by inference, that ours is wrong, what they are really saying is that they are better than we are. That always arouses resentment.

Pride kills and isolates people. When we let go of pride, help comes into our lives.

Letting go of pride's pseudo-security and the feeling of superiority to others allows real security.

CHAPTER 10: Courage

The willingness to look at our negative emotions is a kind of courage. Be willing to look at it, examine it, acknowledge it, and begin to surrender it = increased self esteem. It takes courage to face fear.

Courage is about doing.

Courage is admitting mistakes without indulging guilt and self-recrimination.

Courage is: I can do it, We'll make it, The job will get done, All things shall pass.

Courage is no longer paying the cost of negativity.

Continual surrender will bring about constant, subtle changes, especially...our capacity for love.

CHAPTER 11: Acceptance

Acceptance: A feeling of nothing needs to be changed. The world is to be enjoyed. We see people as doing the best they can with what they have at the moment.

In the lower levels, we want to be loved. Love is something we get. On the level of acceptance, love radiates from us because we are unblocked.

In Acceptance, we:

Are able to forgive ourselves and others. Hence the meaning of “judge not, lest ye be judged.”

Let go of the inner guilt-monger

Focus less on doing and more on being.

Take responsibility for ourselves

CHAPTER 12: Love

Love is a way of being. When we are willing to give love, we realize we are surrounded by love we previously didn't know how to access.

Love facilitates healing. It transforms life.

Love transfigures people. Hawkins tells the story of a duck hunter who hit a duck. When it fell, injured, its mate flew down and spread her wings over him to protect him. Touched, the hunter never hunted again.

Some people are afraid and suspicious of love. You can love them without telling them. Lovingness is a way of being that transforms everything around you.

Forgiveness is an aspect of love that allows us to see life events from the viewpoint of grace.

We can see the ego/small part of ourselves as a “cute little animal” that doesn’t know any better.

We transcend the smaller aspects of ourselves by accepting and loving them. We see the ego as “limited,” not “bad.”

When we are surrounded by love, we are grateful. And over time, eventually we just become love.

The more we love the more we can love. That’s why having a dog is recommended by psychiatrists. Love prolongs life. A dog can extend life by 10 years.

The key to unconditional love is willingness to forgive. Forgiveness means recognizing that people are limited, not bad or unlovable.

CHAPTER 13: Peace

Hawkins claims that continual surrender leads to increasing peace.

CHAPTER 14: Reducing Stress and Physical Illness

Basic research on stress was done by Dr. Hans Selye and Dr. Walter Cannon.

When a stressful stimulus occurs, the body goes through alarm, resistance, and then exhaustion.

Alarm: cerebral cortex → hypothalamus → adrenal glands → blood stream.

Some people get addicted to the adrenalin high

Resistance is the stage when the body attempts to restore homeostatic balance. Then when the stress decreases, say on the weekend, symptoms that were ignored pop up — aches and pains, etc.

In the third stage, there is adrenal exhaustion, the immune system is suppressed, leading to disease and death. There are ulcers, and the cardio system is damaged.

Diamond recommends John Diamond's books on Behavioral Kinesiology and Life Energy.

CHAPTER 15: Relationship Between Mind and Body

The body obeys the mind. We are subject only to what we hold in our mind. Positive minds refuse to accept negative thoughts.

Some research has found that people with multiple personality disorder actually have different physical phenomenon corresponding to different personalities.

Sir John Eccles: the brain is not the origin of the mind, but the other way around. The brain is like a receiving set that receives thought forms and translates them into neurons and memory storage.

Movement does not originate in the motor cortex, but the desire to move is recorded by the supplemental motor areas of the brain next to the motor cortex. The brain is activated by the mind's intention, not the other way around.

Norman Cousins cured himself of serious illness through laughter. See Anatomy of an Illness.

Laughter is a way of letting go.

So the best way to change the body is to change thoughts and feelings.

Without a change of consciousness, there is no real reduction of stress. Aromatherapy or whatever doesn't help that much.

Surrender is when there is peace with what is and no longer a needing/wanting for physical healing to occur.

CHAPTER 16: The Benefits of Letting Go

Letting go can help with

Problem solving

Reduce unnecessary negative-emotion-motivated activities and attachments and improve our lifestyle

Love makes people do more than money can

Letting go is faster than psychotherapy, which elucidates underlying patterns

The goal of letting go is freedom, letting go of the ego

When you let go, things improve across the board

Letting go means eliminating the source of suffering and pain

If fear is constantly surrendered, it eventually runs out.

CHAPTER 17: Transformation

Transition between states is not difficult, it only seems so because of current perceptions.

Loss of self-consciousness that can lead to physical health. Healing can even be dramatic.

Hawkins mentions the book A Course in Miracles, on letting go of guilt.

With money, take time to write down what it means to us in different areas of life, and surrender negative feelings/attitudes on each part.

Why is our happiness so fragile that commonplace occurrences can “ruin” the whole day?

The more we let go, the more we de-glamorize the world.

CHAPTER 18: Relationships

Relationships bring up our innermost feelings, thus they are most valuable.

When we feel incomplete, we use other people.

Our thoughts and feelings always affect other people and relationships whether you express those thoughts or not.

Our angry feelings toward others don't punish them, really, it just gives them justification to hate us back.

If you love one who hates you, their hate won't affect you, and it will boomerang back on them.

Many people apply fear, anxiety, guilt, etc to their relationship with God. They think they can elicit a certain response from God — punishment, feeling sorry,

being pleased, favor, etc. But with sufficient self-esteem, we don't need people or God to stroke our egos.

When we stop trying to manipulate [others'] approval, we find that they do respect us.

All of the negative feelings are essentially forms of fear — fear of loss of esteem, loss of security, not surviving, etc.

Our innermost feelings aren't totally unknown to others, they can read our feelings.

Remember that negative inner feelings are not your true self, they are learned from others. It's the human condition.

We must know what's going on inside to let it go. To relinquish a feeling, allow ourselves to experience it and not try to change it.

No negative emotions are “necessary.”

As we surrender more, we may experience “synchronicity” where seemingly unrelated events occur together.

When we pressure others to get what we want, they automatically resist and even if they acquiesce, there's an inner resistance. (See Robert Ringer's Winning Through Intimidation “boy/girl theory”)

Look at how you are secretly feeling about a person in a given situation

Presume that the other person knows how you feel

Put yourself in their shoes and see how they would react

Let go of your feelings until you get to a positive thinking space

Now see how you'd react if you were that person

Whether they change or not, you are no longer upset about the situation

You reap what you sow, though sometimes there is a time delay.

We block receiving what we want by expectations or resentments.

One woman had relational issues. She started experiencing her feelings of "I don't deserve love, who could possibly love me?" and letting it go, and she got a date.

When we seek to give instead of get, all of our own needs are automatically fulfilled.

CHAPTER 19: Achievement of Vocational Goals

Feelings are either negative or positive, and they result in neg or pos thoughts.

Suppressed feelings come back out as negative thoughts.

Negativity comes from our reaction/perspective, not a situation. When we acknowledge and let go of negative feelings, the whole situation can change drastically in appearance from negative to even useful.

In the movie Chariots of Fire, the runner who won ran for the love of it. The guy who looked to see how he was doing compared to others, lost.

We must be willing to see the feelings that hold us back: insecurity, envy, competitiveness, self-doubt, etc. When we let go of feelings of inadequacy, we find envy of others disappears.

CHAPTER 20: Physician, Heal Thyself

Letting go is a paradigm shift (Thomas Kuhn)

Basic concepts:

Thoughts are things with energy

The mind controls the body through thoughts and feelings, so thoughts/feelings must be changed to heal the body

Whatever is held in the mind expresses itself in the body

The body is not the real Self

Unconscious beliefs can become illnesses

Suppressed/repressed negative feelings can cause illnesses...sometimes thoughts will select particular illnesses

Suppressed/repressed feelings cause thoughts

It's usually a waste of time to try to change thinking

Surrendering a feeling: allow it to be there without condemning, judging, resisting it. Observe it, let it be felt, don't modify it. It will run out in time.

Strong feelings that recur = there is more to recognize and surrender

You may have to first surrender the feeling of guilt that you are having a feeling before you can release the feeling

Feelings aren't the real Self

Ignore thoughts — they're rationalizations of feelings

Keep a steadfast intention to let go of negative feelings when they come

Decide that freedom is more desirable than negative feelings

Surrender instead of expressing your negative feelings

Surrender resistance, skepticism

Hang out with people who are good at surrendering

Don't give your physical disorder a name, don't label it, just surrender what is felt. Disease is an abstract concept, a program. Just observe the sensations...even the word "pain" is a program

Same with feelings. Don't give them labels, just feel them and let go.

Hawkins had over 50 diseases at one time. Only through reading A Course in Miracles did he learn to use surrendering and forgiveness to heal.

Anger doesn't come alone, it is paired with guilt. That's why most people need an enemy.

Chapter 21: Questions and Answers

Guilt is the most frequent reason people give up religion, because the goals seem unattainable. Letting go can help

Suppressed feelings constantly produce thoughts, which are the main distractions in meditation. Acknowledging and letting go of them can help quiet the mind.

Remember that feelings are transitory, but the intention to keep evolving is your constant. Don't feel bad/guilty when you have negative emotions, expecting yourself to be an angel. Have compassion toward your own humanness. Heavenly ambitions do not necessarily make us angels!

The difference between repression and letting go: Repression is when you refuse to acknowledge or deal with the unaccepted feelings. With letting go, you acknowledge and accept the feeling and then shift attention, maybe by rearranging furniture or doing some other little action.

If certain negative feelings keep recurring, you might need a period of contemplation about the patterns — perhaps you are following familial or cultural patterns. Look for patterns and let those patterns go.

Sometimes you have to surrender to “karmic patterns,” what comes around goes around and it’s your turn to taste the medicine. And none of us are saints. So we all have to accept that.

Dealing with annoyance: let yourself know it’s okay to be annoyed. Don’t make it personal or resist it. See that it is a negative energy and observe it until it is depersonalized. Then ask yourself if you’re willing to let it go.

Letting go helps with graceful aging. The limitations of age are getting you ready to leave the world without resentments.

How to practice surrendering: start the day by surrendering, let go of negative thoughts. Do the same at the end of the day. Write down your successes.

If stuck in a feeling, examine what you think it will get you (like someone else changing their behavior toward you). Once you let go of that “prize/expectation,” you can let go of the feeling.

Quotes:

“The person who suffers from inner poverty is relentlessly driven to accumulate on the material level.”

“The other person merely mirrors back what we are projecting onto them.”

“The world can only see us as we see ourselves.”

“we hang on to pain. It certainly satisfies our unconscious need for the alleviation of guilt through punishment. We get to feel miserable and rotten. The question then arises, “But for how long?”

“Desire, especially strong desire (e.g., cravingness), frequently blocks our getting what we want.”

“Greatness is the courage to overcome obstacles.”

“when we heal something in ourselves, we heal it for the world.”

“If we let go of guilt, we will see innocence; however, a guilt-ridden person will see only evil. The basic rule is that we focus on what we have repressed.”

Sources:

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