

## Letting Go...

*Every time you are tempted to react in the same old way, ask if you want to be a prisoner of the past or a pioneer of the future. The past is closed and limited, the future is open and free.*

— Dr. Deepak Chopra

**I**n practical terms surrender means letting go. Although you don't realize it, reality isn't a given. Each of us inhabits a separate reality. Your mind maintains your personal version of reality by buttressing it with beliefs, expectations, and interpretations. Your mind blocks the free flow of the life force by saying, "This is how things must and should be." Letting go releases you from the insistent grip, and when you let go, new forms of reality can enter.

You only have to take a ride on a roller coaster to see who gets more enjoyment out of the experience, those who clutch tight with white knuckles and clenched jaws or those who let go and allow themselves to be carried up and down without resistance.

Letting go is a process. You have to know when to apply it, what to let go of, and how to let go. Your mind is not going to show you any of these things; worst still, your ego is going to try to prevent you from making progress since it believes that you have to hold on in order to survive. Your only ally in letting go is spirit, which sees reality as a whole and therefore has no need to create partial realities based on limitation.

The whole path to love could be described as learning to let go, but letting go all at once isn't possible. This is a path of many small steps. At any given moment the steps are basically the same: awareness begins to substitute for reactions. A reaction is automatic; it draws upon fixed beliefs and expectations, images of past pain and pleasure residing in memory, waiting to guide you in future situations.

Overcoming any reaction requires an act of awareness. Awareness doesn't resist the imprint of memory. It goes into it and questions whether you need it now. In the face of a big dog, awareness tells you that you aren't a small child anymore and that not all big dogs bite. Being aware of this you can ask if you need to hold on to fear. Whether you wind up petting the dog, ignoring it, or withdrawing is now a matter of choice. Reactions result in a closed set of options: awareness results in an open set of options.

### **When to let go**

The critical times to let go are when you feel the strongest urge not to. We all hold on tightest when our fear, anger, pride, and distrust take over. Yet these forces have no spiritual validity. At those moments when you are afraid, angry, stubborn, or mistrustful, you are in the grip of unreality. Your ego is forcing you to react from the past, blinding you to new possibilities here and now.

Spirit has a good outcome for any situation, if you can open yourself to it.

### **What to let go of...**

If the right time to let go is when you don't want to, the thing to let go of is the thing you feel you must hold on to. Fear, anger, stubbornness, and distrust portray themselves as your rescuers. Actually those energies only make you more closed off. For example, panicky people tend to act that way because it is familiar; the same is true for angry and stubborn people. It is helpful to challenge familiar reactions by stating that you no longer believe in them. Here are a few examples:

Instead of saying "I have to have my way," say to yourself, "I don't know everything. I can accept an outcome I can't see right now." Instead of saying "I'm incredibly afraid," say to yourself "fear isn't me. Being more afraid doesn't make it any more real." (This technique is also applicable to feelings of overwhelming anger, distrust, rejection, anxiety, and so forth).

## How to let go...

Since letting go is a deeply personal choice you are going to have to be your own teacher. The process takes place on every level—physical, mental, emotional—where energy can be stuck or held and no two people have exactly the same issues. You may feel comfortable with a lot more physical release than I do; I may feel comfortable with a lot more emotional release than you do. It is important to find the balance between physical, mental, and emotional release that works for you.

I also suggest that you embrace the following ideas as appropriate:

- This is just an experience. I'm here on earth to have experiences. Nothing is wrong.
- My higher Self knows what is going on. This situation is for my benefit, even if I can't see that now.
- My fears may come true, but the outcome will not destroy me. It may even be good. I'll wait and see.
- I'm having a strong reaction now, but it isn't the real me. It will pass.
- Whatever I am afraid of losing is meant to go. I will be better off when new energies come in.
- Whatever fear says, nothing can destroy me.
- When people fall they don't break, they bounce.
- Change is inevitable. Resisting change doesn't work.
- There is something here for me, if I have the awareness to find it.
- The things I fear the most have already happened. I don't want to hold on anymore. My purpose is to let go and welcome what is to come.
- Life is on my side.
- I am loved, therefore I am safe.

I encourage you to embrace the coming season with a sense of openness, vitality, and a renewed sense of pure potentiality.