

Letting go! - by Vanessa Fleming

The following article written by Vanessa Fleming and it is very inspiring and logical but is logic was always this easy to do?

Letting go!

It's been said that the dharma teachings can be summarized in two words: let go.

Letting go is the ultimate zen habit we all must master, sooner or later. Letting go has also become somewhat of a cliché and is often misused in spiritual contexts. But it is the single most powerful, simple (not easy) skill we can cultivate in life. Let's take a deeper look at what letting go isn't and is—and some concrete ways to practice it.

What Letting Go Isn't.

Letting go isn't just cliché spiritual advice. Letting go isn't not caring. Letting go isn't passive.

Letting go isn't merely saying, "It's all good" or "whatever." Letting go isn't lazy. Letting go isn't giving up. Letting go isn't the easy way out. Letting go isn't always fun. Letting go is the most courageous thing you can do.

Letting go is wise.

Letting go enables life, energy, love and learning to flow freely. Letting go takes practice. How can we turn it into a revolutionary daily life practice? Here are 18 ideas for starters. May they be of benefit.

1. Let go of procrastination.

Raise your hand if you procrastinate a lot. I know I do. Procrastination is based in fear: of failure, of success, of sharing our stories, of what other people will think. Let go of these fears and take action. Just do it. All we have is now. Quit procrastinating.

2. Let go of going to extremes.

Walking the Middle Path isn't easy. Trust me; I know. In my twenties, I was a manic-depressive Gemini yoga-teaching partier who thrived on extremes. But as I've aged, I've gotten more in touch with my inner Libra, and I believe balance is a worthy intention for daily life. The middle way is balance. Pema Chodron writes, "The middle way is wide open, but it's tough going, because it goes against the grain of an ancient neurotic pattern that we all share. When we feel lonely, when we feel hopeless, what we want to do is move to the right or the left. We don't want to sit and feel what we feel."

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3. Let go of clinging.

The opposite of letting go is clinging, grasping, clutching. See how softening your grip, opening your palms and relaxing brings peace and ease into your body and mind. As Buddha teaches, “You can only lose what you cling to.”

4. Let go of complaining.

And meditate on humility. “Remember you don’t meditate to get anything, but to get rid of things. We do it, not with desire, but with letting go. If you want anything, you won’t find it. You won’t be able to find it. But when your heart is ready, peace will come looking for you.” ~ Ajahn Chah

5. Let go of comparing yourself to others.

When judgment, superiority, inferiority, jealousy and envy arise, see them as poisonous and let them go. “Problems are rooted in ideals. Let go of the ideals. Not easy, but letting go of ideals, accepting reality and acting appropriately and with compassion can be practiced.” ~ Leo Babauta (whose free ebook on letting go is what inspired this post)

6. Let go of busyness and multitasking.

Take time to just drink a cup of tea and be. The world will go on. Meditate. Make letting go a practice in itself.

Set aside some time every day to sit and focus on letting go—of thoughts, feelings, ideas, memories, plans, physical sensations—simply letting go of whatever arises in the consciousness and returning to the breath, over and over, each time the mind wanders away. “Just go into the room, sit in the center of the room, open the doors and windows, and see who comes to visit. You will witness all kinds of scenes and actors, all kinds of temptations and stories, everything imaginable. Your only job is to stay in your seat. You will see it all arise and pass, and out of this, wisdom and understanding will come.” ~ Ajahn Chah

7. Let go of clutter and excess.

Get rid of excess stuff. The process of letting go of material things can be both painful and joyous, because lots of our things have both sentimental value. Giving stuff away is a simple yet intense process involving both loss and liberation. “Look at your own mind. The one who carries things thinks he’s got things, but the one who looks on sees only the heaviness. Throw away things, lose them, and find lightness.” ~ Ajahn Chah

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8. Let go of trying to control others.

Recognize the difference between influencing someone and changing them. You can do the former; the latter is impossible. “Let go of wanting to control people, of wanting to change them. Instead, focus on yourself and be the shining example. Be the compassionate center.” ~ Leo Babauta

9. Let go of illusion and delusion.

See the damage done by hanging on (and being dragged). “Seeing the harm (of not letting go) allows us to let go, because we have a choice: hold on to the idea of the past and suffer, or let go and accept reality as it is, and suffer less.” ~ Leo Babauta

10. Let go of negativity.

Notice signals of clinging such as irritation, anger or fear. Notice the ideal or expectation to which you are clinging. See the harm in holding onto this negativity. Let go, with love and compassion.

11. Let go of the guru.

“Wisdom is in yourself, just like a sweet ripe mango is already in a young green one. You are your own teacher. Investigate yourself to find the truth—inside, not outside. Knowing yourself is most important.” ~ Ajahn Chah

12. Let go of who you think you are.

“When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be. When I let go of what I have, I receive what I need.” ~ Tao Te Ching

13. Let go of attachment to the plan.

“We must let go of the life we have planned, so as to accept the one that is waiting for us.” ~ Joseph Campbell

14. Let go of the demons from your past and the worries about your future.

Breathe. Let go. And remind yourself that this very moment is the only one you know you have for sure. ~ Oprah Winfrey

15. Let go of certainty.

Because we just don't know. And that is a beautiful thing. “Creativity requires the courage to let go of certainties.” ~ Erich Fromm

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16. Let go of the illusion of control.

“But the attitude of faith is to let go, and become open to truth, whatever it might turn out to be.” ~ Alan Watts

17. Let go of what’s gone to let in the now.

“Let come what comes, let go what goes. See what remains.” ~ Ramana Maharshi

18. Let go of trying to let go.

Just let it happen. “Letting go” can’t be taught or explained, only experienced. It is not a numbered list or a step-by-step process like the stages of grief. Life is not neat and tidy. Things get emotional, dramatic, messy. “Letting go” is an awesome intention and a beneficial practice. But it isn’t easy. Take it moment to moment, day by day. “If you let go a little, you will have a little peace. If you let go a lot, you will have a lot of peace. If you let go completely, you will discover complete peace.” ~ Ajahn Chah

~ The Constant Practice of Letting Go. ~ Vanessa Fleming