

repressed grief will unconsciously create sad events in life. The fearful person precipitates frightening experiences; the angry person becomes surrounded by infuriating circumstances; and the prideful person is constantly being insulted. As Jesus Christ said, "Why do you see the splinter which is in your brother's eye, and do not feel the beam which is in your own eye (Matthew 7:3)?" All the Great Masters point us *within*.

Everything in the universe emits a vibration. The higher the vibration, the more power it has. Emotions, also, because they are energy, emit vibrations. These emotional vibrations impact the body's energy fields and reveal effects that can be seen, felt, and measured. Motion pictures using Kirlian photography, such as those done by Dr. Thelma Moss, show rapid fluctuations of the color and size of the energy field with changes of emotions (Krippner, 1974). The energy field has traditionally been called an "aura" and can be seen by people who have been born with or learned the ability to see vibrations of that frequency. The aura changes color and size with emotions. Muscle-testing also demonstrates the energy changes that accompany emotions, as our body's muscles instantly respond to positive and negative stimuli. Thus, our basic emotional states transmit themselves to the universe.

The mind has no dimensions or size and is not limited in space; therefore, the mind transmits its basic state via vibrational energy over an unlimited distance. This means that we routinely and unwittingly affect others by our emotional state and thoughts. Emotional patterns and their associated thought forms, for instance, can be picked up and received consciously by psychics at a great distance. This can be demonstrated experi-

mentally, and the scientific basis for this has been a subject of great interest in advanced quantum physics.

Because emotions emit a vibrational energy field, they affect and determine the people who are in our lives. Life events become influenced by our repressed and suppressed emotions on the psychic level. Thus anger attracts angry thoughts. The basic rule of the psychic universe is that "like attracts like." Similarly, "love promotes love," so that the person who has let go of a lot of inner negativity is surrounded by loving thoughts, loving events, loving people, and loving pets. This phenomenon explains many scriptural quotations and common sayings that have puzzled the intellect, such as, "The rich get richer and the poor get poorer," and "Those who have, get." As a general rule, therefore, people who are carrying the consciousness of apathy bring poverty circumstances into their lives, and those with a prosperity consciousness bring abundance into their lives.

Because all living things are connected on vibrational energy levels, our basic emotional state is picked up and reacted to by all life forms around us. It is well known that animals can instantly read a person's basic emotional state. There are experiments demonstrating that even the growth of bacteria is affected by human emotions, and that plants register measurable reactions to our emotional state (Backster, 2003).

The Mechanism of Letting Go

Letting go involves being aware of a feeling, letting it come up, staying with it, and letting it run its course without wanting to make it different or do anything

about it. It means simply to let the feeling be there and to focus on letting out the energy behind it. The first step is to allow yourself to have the feeling without resisting it, venting it, fearing it, condemning it, or moralizing about it. It means to drop judgment and to see that it is *just* a feeling. The technique is to be with the feeling and surrender all efforts to modify it in any way. Let go of wanting to resist the feeling. *It is resistance that keeps the feeling going.* When you give up resisting or trying to modify the feeling, it will shift to the next feeling and be accompanied by a lighter sensation. A feeling that is not resisted will disappear as the energy behind it dissipates.

As you begin the process, you will notice that you have fear and guilt over having feelings; there will be resistance to feelings in general. To let feelings come up, it is easier to let go of the reaction to having the feelings in the first place. A fear of fear itself is a prime example of this. Let go of the fear or guilt that you have about the feeling first, and then get into the feeling itself.

When letting go, ignore all thoughts. Focus on the feeling itself, not on the thoughts. 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. The thoughts or external events are only an excuse made up by the mind.

As we become more familiar with letting go, it will be noticed that all negative feelings are associated with our basic fear related to survival and that all feelings are merely survival programs that the mind believes

are necessary. The letting go technique undoes the programs progressively. Through that process, the underlying motive behind the feelings becomes more and more apparent.

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." When we are free, there is a letting go of attachments. We can enjoy a thing, but we don't need it for our happiness. There is progressive diminishing of dependence on anything or anyone outside of ourselves. These principles are in accord with the basic teaching of the Buddha to avoid attachment to worldly phenomena, as well as the basic teaching of Jesus Christ to "be in the world but not of it."

Sometimes we surrender a feeling and we notice that it returns or continues. This is because there is more of it yet to be surrendered. We have stuffed these feelings all of our lives and there can be a lot of energy pushed down that needs to come up and be acknowledged. When surrender occurs, there is an immediate lighter, happier feeling, almost like a "high."

By continuously letting go, it is possible to stay in that state of freedom. Feelings come and go, and eventually you realize that you are not your feelings, but that the real "you" is merely witnessing them. You stop identifying with them. The "you" that is observing and is aware of what is happening always stays the same. As you become more and more aware of the changeless witness within, you begin to identify with that level of consciousness. You become progressively primarily the witness rather than the experiencer of phenomena. You get closer and closer to the real Self and begin to see that you had been duped by feelings

all along. You thought that you were the victim of your feelings. Now you see that they are not the truth about yourself; they are merely created by the ego, that collector of programs which the mind has mistakenly believed are necessary for survival.

The results of letting go are deceptively quick and subtle, but the effects are very powerful. Often we have let go but think that we haven't. It will be our friends who make us aware of the change. One reason for this phenomenon is that, when something is fully surrendered, it disappears from consciousness. Now, because we never think of it, we don't realize that it has gone. This is a common phenomenon among people who are growing in consciousness. We are not aware of all the coal that we have shoveled; we are always looking at the shovelful we are handling right now. We don't realize how much the pile has gone down. Often our friends and family are the first ones to notice.

To keep track of progress, many people keep a chart of their gains. This helps to overcome the resistance that usually takes the form, "This isn't working." It is common for people who have made enormous gains to claim, "It just isn't working." We have to remind ourselves sometimes what we were like before we started this process.

Resistance to Letting Go

Letting go of negative feelings is the undoing of the ego, which will be resistant at every turn. This may result in skepticism about the technique, "forgetting" to surrender, a sudden upsurge of escapism, or venting feelings by expressing and acting out. The solution is simply to keep on letting go of the feelings you have

about the whole process. Let the resistance be there but don't resist the resistance.

You are free. You don't *have* to let go. Nobody is forcing you. Look at the fear behind the resistance. What are you afraid of regarding this process? Are you willing to let go of that? Keep letting go of every fear as it arises, and the resistance will resolve.

Let's not forget that we are letting go of all the programs that have made us a slave and a victim for a long time. These programs have blinded us to the truth of our real identity. The ego is losing ground and will try tricks and bluffs. Once we start letting go, its days are numbered and its power is diminishing. One of its tricks is to go unconscious about the technique itself, for instance, to decide suddenly that the mechanism of surrender isn't working, things are still the same, it is confusing, and too hard to remember and do. This is a sign of real progress! It means that the ego knows we have a knife with which to cut ourselves free and it is losing ground. The ego is not our friend. Like "master control" in *Tron* (1982), it wants to keep us enslaved by its programs.

Letting go is a natural ability. It is not something new or foreign. It is not an esoteric teaching or somebody else's idea or a belief system. We are merely utilizing our own inner nature to get freer and happier. When letting go, it's not helpful to "think" about the technique. It's better, simply, just to do it. Eventually it will be seen that all thoughts are resistance. They are all images that the mind has made to prevent us from experiencing what actually *is*. When we have been letting go for a while and have begun experiencing what is really going on, we will laugh at our thoughts. Thoughts are fakes, absurd make-beliefs that obscure

the truth. Pursuing thoughts can keep us occupied endlessly. We will discover one day that we are right where we started. Thoughts are like gold fish in a bowl; the real Self is like the water. The real Self is the space between the thoughts, or more exactly, the field of silent awareness underneath all thoughts.

We have had the experience of being totally absorbed in what we were doing, when we scarcely noticed the passage of time. The mind was very quiet, and we were simply doing what we were doing without resistance or effort. We felt happy, maybe humming to ourselves. We functioned without stress. We were very relaxed, although busy. We suddenly realized that we never needed all those thoughts after all. Thoughts are like bait to a fish; if we bite at them, we get caught. It's best not to bite at the thoughts. We don't need them.

Inside of us, but out of awareness, is the truth that "I already know everything I need to know." This happens automatically.

Paradoxically, one resistance to surrendering is due to the effectiveness of the technique. What happens is that we keep letting go when life is not going too well and we are beset by unpleasant emotions. As we finally surrender our way out of it and all is well, then we stop letting go. This is a mistake because, as good as we may feel, there is usually more to it. Take advantage of the higher states and the momentum of letting go. Keep on going because it will get better and better all the time. Letting go gains a certain momentum. It is easy to keep it going once it is started. The higher we feel, the easier it is to let go. That's a good time to reach down and let go of some things (suppressed and repressed "garbage") that we wouldn't

want to tackle if we were in the dumps. There is always a feeling to be let up and surrendered. When we are feeling good, the emotions are merely subtler.

Sometimes you will feel stuck with a particular feeling. Simply surrender to the feeling of being stuck. Just let it be there and don't resist it. If it doesn't disappear, see if you can let go of the feeling in bits and pieces.

Another block that may occur is the fear that if we let go of a desire for something, we won't get it. It is often beneficial to look at some commonly held beliefs and let go of them right in the beginning, such as: (1) We only deserve things through hard work, struggle, sacrifice, and effort; (2) Suffering is beneficial and good for us; (3) We don't get anything for nothing; (4) Things that are very simple aren't worth much. Letting go of some of these psychological barriers to the technique itself will allow an enjoyment of its effortlessness and ease.

COURAGE

The hallmark of courage is the knowledge and feeling, "I can." It is a positive state in which we feel assured, skillful, adequate, capable, alive, loving and giving, with an overall zest for life. We are capable of humor, activity, confidence, and clarity. In this state, we feel centered, balanced, flexible, happy, independent, and self-sufficient. We can be inventive, creative, and open. In courage, there is a lot of energy, action, letting go, capacity to "be there," to be spontaneous, resilient, resourceful, and cheerful. In this state, we can be very effective in the world.

The Courage to Let Go

The level of courage is very helpful in the mechanism of surrender. In courage, we know: "I can look at my feelings"; "I don't have to be afraid of my feelings anymore"; "I can handle them"; "I can take responsibility for them"; "I can learn how to accept them and be free from them"; "I am willing to take risks, to let go of old points of view and to explore new ones"; "I am willing to be joyous and share my experience with others"; "I experience myself as willing and able."

It is often easy to jump from any of the lower feelings up to courage merely by affirming our courage to look at and handle our feelings. The mere willingness to look at and begin to handle them increases our self-esteem. If, for instance, we have a fear and are unwilling to look at it, then we feel diminished and our self-esteem is lowered. If we are willing to look at that fear, examine it, acknowledge its presence, see how it has inhibited our life, and begin to surrender it, then our self-esteem increases, whether the fear disappears or not.

We all know that it takes courage to face fear. We champion the people who face their fear and attempt to do something about it. Such courage is one of the characteristics of nobility and makes a person truly great. Despite all of their negative programming and despite all of their fear, courageous people go forward in life, with no guarantee and not even the knowledge that things are going to get better. So courage increases our self-respect and brings to us the respect of others. We no longer need to feel ashamed.

Let's look at the example of a man who suffered from a lifelong terror of heights. He had worked on being free of the fear for several years and it had gotten much better, but there was still plenty of it left. This was evident when he went to the Grand Canyon with a friend. At first, he stood back about six feet from the ledge. In previous years, he wouldn't have gone within a block of it. Now he stood there, hesitantly. The friend took his hand, saying, "Come on over to the edge with me." And so he did. He kept surrendering on the fear as he walked forward and found that he could actually stand right next to the edge, although admittedly, not without still feeling



considerable discomfort. When they left the edge of the canyon, the friend looked at him approvingly and said, "Well, at least you did it! I know how much courage that took." Even though he had not totally overcome the fear, by transcending an inner barrier, he had earned his own self-respect and the respect of others.

When we have these breakthrough experiences, we begin to perceive our fear differently and we stop being ashamed of it. We stop allowing it to invalidate our true worth. It increases our inner strength and our self-approval. In due time, the underlying fears which require courage to overcome diminish to the point that we move on to acceptance.

Self-Empowerment

On the level of courage, the emphasis is on doing. We already know that we are capable of providing for our own needs and for those of others, and we know that, if we are willing to put forth the effort, we can obtain what we want. Thus, people on the level of courage are the doers of the world. Because we can only give away what we ourselves already have, people on the level of courage are able to be supportive and encouraging of others. This is because they are able to give as well as receive, and there is a balance between giving and receiving that occurs naturally.

The levels of consciousness up to this point are concerned primarily with gain. Now, on the level of courage, there is greater power and energy. We have the ability to give to others, because other people are no longer being looked at primarily as a means of help, survival, or support. When we are in the state of

courage, we sense our own inner power, strength, and self-worth. We know that we have the capacity to make a difference in the world, not just gain something from it for ourselves. Because of the inner self-confidence, we are much less concerned with security. The emphasis is no longer on what people have, but upon what they do, and have become.

With courage, there is the willingness to take chances and to let go of former securities. There is the willingness to grow and benefit from new experiences. This involves the capacity to admit mistakes without indulging in guilt and self-recrimination. Our sense of self-worth is not diminished by looking at areas that need improvement. We are able to admit the presence of problems without being diminished. As a result, energy, time, and effort are put into self-improvement.

On this level, statements of intention and purpose are much more powerful and envisioned results tend to manifest. We are much more enterprising and creative, because our energies are not drained by the constant preoccupation with emotional or physical survival. Because of greater flexibility, there is a willingness to examine issues with a view to changing overall meaning and context. There is a willingness to risk shifting paradigms.

A paradigm is a whole worldview, and it is only limited by what we view as possible. As old ways of looking at things are challenged, our worldview begins to stretch and expand. That which was previously considered to be impossible becomes possible and eventually is experienced as a new dimension of reality. There is the capacity to look within ourselves to examine our belief systems, ask questions, and seek new solutions. On the level of courage, we are willing

to take self-improvement courses, learn consciousness techniques, and risk the journey within to seek our own true Self, the inner reality. There is a willingness to experience uncertainty, periods of confusion, and temporary upset because, underneath the temporary discomfort, we have a long-term transcendent goal. The mind that is operating on the level of courage makes such statements as: "I can handle it"; "We'll make it"; "The job will get done"; "We can see this through"; "All things shall pass."

If we test a person's muscle strength with kinesiology when in the state of courage, the level of "I can handle it," they will test positive and remain strong to our challenge. Although there is still vulnerability to negative thoughts or energies—such as those that emanate from fluorescent lights or artificial sweeteners—the bio-energy field is more radiant than that of the lower, negative states. Because courage is a stronger, more resilient energy field, physical illnesses are less likely to be a predominant aspect of life. There may be chronic residuals of illnesses that originated from the lower levels of consciousness, but they are generally not stabilized. In courage, there is an overall sense of strength and well-being.

Awareness of Others

The lifestyle on this level shows a balance of work, enjoyment, and love. There is not the necessity for over-ambition or "workaholism," although people on the level of courage are capable of considerable energy output if the situation requires it. Because of the letting go of so much negativity, there is a desire and a capacity to love and to have loving relationships. These now

assume equal importance with efforts toward survival. There is vocational security, and in the work area there is concern for the welfare of others. People on this level characteristically state that they want jobs which will be of some benefit to the world. They want to feel that there is more meaning to their job than just a salary. Personal growth is important, and there is the awareness on this level that our life is either positively or negatively influencing those around us.

On the lower levels of consciousness, which are characterized by egotism, there is so much concern with self-gain that there is little energy or thought given to our effect on others. On the level of courage, we no longer identify solely with the small self. The world is no longer seen as the depriving or punishing bad parent. Instead, the world is seen as challenging and presenting opportunities for growth, development, and new experiences. Thus, this level is characterized by optimism and the feeling that with the correct facts, education, and orientation, sooner or later most problems can be worked out satisfactorily.

The lower levels limit our consciousness to personal concern, but on this level social issues become important, and energy is expended to help overcome social problems and to be helpful to those less fortunate. Therefore, generosity becomes possible, not just financially, but also in a generosity of attitude. Pleasure is derived from the championing of causes and from supporting the endeavors of others. This energy creates new jobs, businesses, industries, and political and scientific solutions. Education, although not always in the academic sense, becomes important.

On the level of courage, we really start becoming conscious. It dawns on us that we have the freedom