

How to Surrender and Get the Most out of Life

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How to Surrender and Get the Most out of Life

“When we know love matters more than anything, and we know that nothing else really matters, we move into the state of surrender. Surrender does not diminish our power, it enhances it.” – **Sara Paddison**

God provides the DNA that determines the color of our skin and the shape of our bodies. He pre-programs our height and weight and intellectual abilities. He also determines the purpose of our lives long before we are born. When we feel anxious or unhappy, we are probably living according to our terms - not His.

Anxiety can be replaced with peace and restlessness can be exchanged for clarity when we let go and surrender our lives to His plan. The control we think we need is actually the biggest obstacle to creating the life waiting for us.

Perhaps the greatest contradiction we face is realizing when we surrender control of our lives we are in a better position to gain what we want. Surrendering is not about giving up; it's about letting go.

Renewing our lease

Surrendering is hard to do and something most of us avoid. The uneasiness of not having direct control over what happens next in our life is frustrating. Even though the signs and warnings are abundantly clear around us, we continue to think if we keep trying harder, if we do everything right; if we can just get one step closer to perfection then we will realize our heart's desire.

This pushing only moves the target further away. Our ego trumps our soul and it continues to insist that it has all of the answers and knows the way. However, our ego becomes weakened when our soul begins to live again. For the resurgence to begin we need to remember we don't own our life; we rent it.

Everything we have in this world has been provided by God. Our families, our relationships, and our talents all belong to Him. Our responsibility is to care for these things and nurture them and to keep the place clean and free of damage to the best of our abilities.

When we understand that everything we have can be gone in the blink of an eye we are in a better position to see we don't

actually own anything in this world – it's all on loan from God

However, full surrendering does not contemplate the absence of self-responsibility or Free Will, it actually encourages it. To surrender is to accept our human roles and understand it is our job, our responsibility, to follow our personal destinies.

The sooner we realize pushing back against the inevitable only makes our souls more anxious; the sooner we can go about the business of living our lives according to His plan.

Learning to surrender

Surrendering our lives is a matter of paying attention to what He is telling us. When we stop and listen, we realize what we are doing may no longer be working. After all, we do know the truth when we hear it.

Surrendering takes faith and it takes spiritual maturity. It requires developing a deeper faith. Full surrendering is about closing our eyes and offering up our struggles and then getting out of the way.

I struggle with true surrendering, too. When I find myself stuck, unfulfilled or down, I rely on the following actions to remind me that my life will begin to change and improve once I relinquish my control over it.:

Be ready to love

It begins with trusting and loving God enough to follow His direction; even if it's really not where we want to go. Love is the cornerstone of our lives. It gives us hope and confidence. Love provides us with the energy to keep believing; to keep moving forward – especially when we are unsure of the destination.

God expects that we love ourselves, too. Self-love provides the courage needed to surrender our lives. To take that leap of faith is the ultimate in self-preservation. It says that we matter and we want something better. And in God's eyes, we are more than enough to receive it.

Look forward while looking at the past

Regret can keep us caught in the past. Life is meant to be lived in the here and now with a hopeful eye looking toward the future.

So, it becomes a matter of balance. History can be a good teacher. It provides an accurate context and definition of our present. The issue becomes when we are unable to let go of what happened. No one has the ability to go back in time and un-do any moment.

But we can learn from those situations and use the knowledge to deepen our faith and realize that whatever happened can only make our resolve stronger. And more importantly, whatever the mistakes or hardships were, God never turned his back.

Surrender in small bites at first

Full surrendering takes practice. To gain experience, try surrendering small things, first. Start by surrendering some bad habits.

One of my bad habits is interpreting feedback as criticism. Over the past few months when I hear a comment that feels critical to me, I have been practicing to hesitate before responding. I hear the comment, but I don't overreact to it; I surrender both the comment and my reaction and then ask for guidance. By doing so, the feedback has started to sound less negative and more productive.

It's a matter of choice

It's a daily choice to do His will. He wants to take what is causing us to struggle and put it on His back. Since everything belongs to Him, so does our pain and problems.

It's our choice to ask for help, or not. It's our choice if we allow these obstacles to keep standing in our way when we have the ability to ask for their removal at any time.

Trade shame for grace

Asking for grace can be difficult. Some of us learned from an early age we are not worthy of love or compassion. We have allowed shame to cover us until it has built up such a presence we begin to think it is a natural part of us.

Surrendering our shame allows grace to be restored to our conscious minds. God's grace is always there, we just have to learn how to receive it whenever shame is refusing to turn loose. We learn by asking – we learn by surrendering.

Close your eyes and just let go

There is no *right* way to surrender. Like the Nike © slogan suggests, we just have to do it. Faith is not tangible and it really is not

measureable. Meaning, faith just occurs when we are open to change.

A leap of faith happens when we let go and allow His work to begin. It may feel like chaos at first, but soon a soothing peace will begin to swell when our inner voice, His whispering, tells us we are going in the right direction.

What would life be like if we surrendered it?

Full surrendering makes us stronger and more peaceful. It allows us to focus on what we need to do in order to keep going where He is taking us. In addition to strengthening our faith and living a life more aligned with our true purpose, there are other life-changing benefits too:

Never alone again

When we surrender to God, we are asking Him to be an active part of our life. Even though He is always there, waiting, it is our acknowledgment of the relationship that makes it real and tangible to us.

You might just find what you are seeking

If what you are doing is not bringing the results you want, try surrendering to God. You might find what you have been looking for has been hiding in plain sight all along.

Peace and strength

His presence will certainly bring needed peace and by taking anxiety and fear from our lives will give us the strength to see deeper into our hearts and realize the care it needs.

Certainty of purpose

When we surrender we are telling God we want to live the life He has in mind for us. Although we may not know exactly what that life looks like at the point of our surrender, we can at least be certain it is a life created just for us. Our purpose will be revealed when the clutter is removed.

Deeper appreciation of the ordinary moments

Our determination to get to wherever we think we need to go can gloss over the beautiful life that is unfolding around us. Surrender offers freedom; not defeat. It frees us to see how special our children really are and it allows us to see the subtle beauty of our husbands and wives that only

we can see when we take the time to look for it.

Live a *want to* life, not a *have to* life

Surrendering our lives to God gives us the ability to live a life we want to live; not a life we have to live. Our *want to* lives are full of true joy and fulfillment because they are better connected to our heart's desire and God's plan for us.

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