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WELLBEING QUICKSTART

Surrender: Feeling Stressed? 3 Ways To Flip The Script!



Surrender is the 'lemonade' you can make when 'life gives you lemons' – a way to flip the script when you're feeling stressed. There is a stark difference between resisting or embracing challenges and adversity. Too many of us burn up energy trying to fight with our reality rather than fully embrace our reality. Surrendering does not make us weak or passive but rather creates a pathway to inner peace and increased agency. There are three forms of surrender you can use in your life:

1. Surrender as a response to Daily Hassles.

When we encounter routine Daily Hassles, we can recognise the tension and frustration we may feel as 'resistance' to the circumstances we are in. Instead of resisting the hassles we experience by cursing them and trying to wish them away (*i.e.*, *'I hate traffic jams... I hate being late... I don't want to be here stuck in this traffic'*) we can adopt the opposite perspective of full acceptance and surrender (*I love my life even as it is right now – stuck in this traffic... I accept that the universe does care for me and I am meant to be in this traffic jam right now even if I don't know why...*). To accompany this reframe of your thoughts, you can shift to a more intentionally calmer breathing pattern and do a quick body scan before actively relaxing the muscles in your body that are physically tense.

2. Surrender as a response to Major Stressful Life Events.

When we encounter Major Stressful Life Events, we also need to reflect on the deeper impact such events are having on our lives. Losing a job, relationship breakdown, major interpersonal conflicts, financial stress, major illnesses and injuries are just some examples on the long list of 'Major Stressful Life Events' which disrupt our lives and alter our bigger picture life strategy and goals. When surrendering to more significant Stressful Life Events I would recommend using 'The Upward Arrow' journaling technique. In this process you take whatever stressful life event happened to you and, using one or both Upward Arrow prompt questions: (i) *"...and if, in hindsight, this turns out to actually be a helpful experience in your life it means..."* OR (ii) *"...and if, despite this event, the universe loves me and intends to bless me more it means..."* to focus your thinking upwards, journaling as you work through the layers of thoughts and reflections that arise.

3. Surrender as a Daily Orientation.

Surrender is also a beautiful proactive way to engage in the start of each day during your morning reflection/meditation time. Begin by re-affirming your unconditional self-acceptance and faith in the abundance of the universe (separating the universe itself from the motives and behaviours of other people). Once this phase is done you shift your focus towards the day's goals and tasks and affirm your openness to accept any unforeseen challenges and/or blessings that may arise as the day progresses (believing that these will be a catalyst for your growth in some way).

Surrender allows you to flip the script on your stress. There are three forms of surrender you can use in your life: as a reactive response to Daily Hassles; as a compassionate inquiry in response to Major Stressful Life Events; or as proactive Daily Orientation. How could Surrender flip the script on stress in your life?

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