

Letting Go

*I realize there is something incredibly honest about trees
in winter, how they're experts at letting things go.*
(Jeffrey McDaniel)

Is autumn your favourite season? I know a lot of people love the vibrant colours of autumn and the freshness in the air, but I always feel a little sad as autumn rushes in because I have some difficulty letting go of the warmer, longer, greener days of summer. So this month, I thought I would share with you some thoughts about the importance of learning to let go of the past so that we can become much more alive and joyful in the present – the only real place to be!

It has taken me a long, long time to learn the core life lesson of letting go. For example, I spent over a decade in my 20s and early 30s clinging to the fantasy that my first love would come back into my life one day – reader he didn't!

Even now, I do not really embrace change with much equilibrium. Even on the subconscious level, I seem to find difficulty moving on, and I know this because I still have nightmares of being sacked from my job as a lecturer at Manchester University, even though I voluntarily gave up my academic career many years ago.

However, despite being such a slow learner of the art of letting go, I can now really appreciate the many benefits of this often challenging practice. First of all, as I keep reminding myself and others, all life on this Planet is, at heart, flowing energy, and when the energy of life gets stuck, life stagnates. Unfortunately, if you do not keep letting go of stale energy in your life you will become energetically constipated - which as you might imagine is a really uncomfortable state in which to find yourself.

It is the same with your home. If you never spend a day or two each year decluttering and clearing out your cupboards, the energy in your house will become heavy and stale and you will have no space for all the lovely new gifts from the universe that are just waiting for you to find some space for them in your life. So now, I love clearing clutter out of our house from time to time, and after a good clear out, I always feel a lightening of the air around us.

If letting go of some old, unused stuff from our home from time to time is life-enhancing, I am convinced that letting go of hanging on emotionally to old relationships that may no longer be serving our highest interests is even more important for our long-term well-being.

Now this aspect of letting go can be *extremely* challenging. When we are finally ready to face the fact that a relationship that brought us so much love and joy in the past is dead and gone, it can feel like our heart will break so much that it will never come back together again. But heartbreak is actually really good for the soul because it can open us up to receive unconditional, divine love that is always waiting for just a crack to appear in our egoic defences so that it can flood into the core of our being.

Even if you are not into the idea of receiving divine love, you still need to let go of any old relationships that are no longer serving you if you want to attract new love and support into your life. Our egoic-self loves to hang on resentfully to the pain of old hurtful relationships in order to reinforce its identity as an innocent victim of a cruel world. But if we are ever to live lives filled with love, ease and joy, we definitely need to commit to a difficult letting go and forgiveness process. We also have to set everyone we meet free to follow their own unique path through life, rather than insisting that they stay with us on our path to the bitter end whether they want to or not!

The best way I know to let go of a past relationship that no longer serves anyone's best interests is to let those individuals go with deep gratitude in my heart for their company on part of my challenging journey through life.

Even if a particular individual has hurt you or harmed you in some way in the past, can you still find some gratitude in your heart for the fact that they showed you that you had some self-healing to do? Can you give thanks to them because the pain they seemed to inflict on you against your will actually pushed you to go on a wonderful self-healing or spiritual journey of some kind or another?

Maybe this month as the longer days begin to draw in, you could spend just a little time looking back over some of the more significant relationships in your life from your early childhood onwards? Maybe you could make a really life-supporting decision to give thanks for all of these relationships, even the painful ones? Finally, maybe you could decide that it is now time to let go of any

emotional strings – positive or negative – that may be attaching you energetically to someone in your past who is still taking up so much space in your mind that there is very little room for someone new to come into your life?

One way to do this is to sit in meditation for a while and then to use your imagination to see or feel the cords that are still attaching you emotionally to someone from your past. Then you can just imagine cutting these cords and seeing you and the other person float free from one another.

If you do this, please remember to take as much time as you need to let go of the trapping emotional ties to old friends or loved ones or even old enemies. Please support yourself with utmost loving kindness and compassion through this challenging letting go process. Finally, please keep reminding yourself that you are only letting go of any stale emotional attachments that no longer serve you. You are definitely not letting go of any love that you may have shared with someone in your past, because whilst personality selves in bodies are always coming and going, true love never dies!

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