

# LETTING GO

## THE PATHWAY OF SURRENDER

David R. Hawkins, M.D., Ph.D.

# LETTING GO

ALSO BY DAVID R. HAWKINS, M.D., PH.D.

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# LETTING GO

The Pathway of Surrender

David R. Hawkins, M.D., Ph.D.



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## [FOREWORD](#)

This book provides a mechanism by which to unlock our innate capacities for happiness, success, health, well-being, intuition, unconditional love, beauty, inner peace, and creativity. These states and capacities are within all of us. They do not depend on any outer circumstance or personal characteristic; they do not require belief in any religious system. No single group or system owns inner peace, as it belongs to the human spirit by virtue of our origin. This is the universal message of every great teacher, sage, and saint: “The kingdom of heaven is within you.” Dr. Hawkins says frequently, “What you are seeking is not different from your very own Self.”

How can something innate to us—part and parcel of our true being—be so difficult to attain? Why all the unhappiness if we were endowed with happiness? If the “kingdom of heaven” is within us, why do we often “feel like hell”? How can we get free of the sludge of non-peace that makes our journey to inner peace seem so arduous, like molasses running uphill on a freezing cold day? It’s nice to hear that peace, happiness, joy, love, and success are intrinsic to our human spirit. But what about all of the anger, sadness, despair, vanity, jealousy, anxieties, and daily little judgments that muffle the pristine sound of silence within us? Is there really a way to shake off the sludge and be free? Dance with unimpeded joy? Love all living things? Live in our greatness and fulfill our highest potential? Become a channel of grace and beauty in the world?

In this book, Dr. Hawkins offers a pathway to the freedom that we long for but find difficult to attain. It may sound counter-intuitive to get somewhere by “letting go”; however, he certifies from clinical and personal experience that surrender is the surest route to total fulfillment.

Many of us have been raised to correlate worldly and even spiritual accomplishment with “hard work,” “keeping our nose to the grindstone,”

“living by the sweat of our brow,” and other self-stringent axioms inherited from a culture steeped in the Protestant ethic. According to this view, success requires suffering, toil, and effort: “no pain, no gain.” But where has all the effort and pain gotten us? Are we truly, deeply at peace? No.

There is still the inner guilt, the vulnerability to someone’s criticism, the wanting to be assured, and the resentments that fester.

If you’re reading this book, you’ve probably already reached the end of your rope with the mechanism of effort. Perhaps you’ve seen that the more you pull on the rope to hitch yourself up to where you want to be, the more frazzled and frayed it becomes. Possibly, you might be wondering, “Isn’t there an easier, better way?” Are you willing to let go of the rope? What would it be like to utilize the mechanism of surrender instead of the mechanism of effort?

I can share what it was like for a highly educated person who had already tried many different methods of self-improvement. Despite professional success, there were physical and emotional problems that never seemed to improve and, eventually, reached a breaking point. The encounter with Dr. David R. Hawkins and his writings catalyzed a healing effect that was unexpected and dramatic.

At first, there was skepticism. Having explored various spiritual, philosophical, and religious avenues with unfulfilling or only temporary results, I approached my study of Hawkins with the thought, “It will probably turn out like the rest.” However, the conscientious seeker in me said, “I’ll check it out. What have I got to lose?” So, I read *Power vs.*

*Force: The Hidden Determinants of Human Behavior*. When the book was finished, there was the inner realization, “I’m a changed person from the one who picked up this book.” That was in 2003. Now, many years later, the catalytic effect is still operating in all areas of life.

What convinced me of the truth of his work, ultimately, were the transformations in my own physical and nonphysical consciousness. There were empirical facts that I could not deny: the healing of an addiction that had been previously impossible to overcome, despite many sincere

attempts; freedom from several allergies (pet dander, poison ivy, mold, hay fever); letting go of long-standing resentments, with a capacity to see the hidden gifts within the various life traumas I had been through; alleviation of several life-long fears and an anxiety disorder that had severely limited my career and personal life; resolution of several inner conflicts related to self-acceptance and life purpose. These major breakthroughs at the physical and nonphysical levels were concretely observable not only by myself but by those around me. They would ask, “How do you explain the transformation?” Now, if faced with that question, I will suggest that they

read this new book, *Letting Go: The Pathway of Surrender*. It lays out the pragmatics of the inner process of transformation that was experienced upon reading his earlier books.

*Letting Go: The Pathway of Surrender* provides the roadmap to a freer life for anyone who is willing to make the trip. Your life will be changed for the better if you apply the principles described in this book. They are not difficult to understand or to implement. They do not cost anything. They do not require special attire or travel to an exotic country. The major requirement for the journey is a willingness to let go of the attachment to your current experience of life.

As Dr. Hawkins explains, the “small” part of ourselves is attached to the familiar, no matter how painful or inefficient it is. It may seem bizarre, but our self with a small “s” actually enjoys an impoverished life and all the negativity that goes with it: feeling unworthy, being invalidated, judging others and ourselves, being inflated, always “winning” and being “right,”

grieving the past, fearing the future, nursing our wounds, craving assurance, and seeking love instead of giving it.

Are we willing to imagine a new life for ourselves, characterized by effortless success, freedom from resentment, gratitude for all that’s happened to us, inspiration, love, joy, win-win resolutions, happiness, and creative expression? One of the biggest hurdles to happiness, he tells us, is the belief that it isn’t possible: “There’s got to be a catch”; “It’s too good to be true”; “It can happen for others but not for me.”

The gift of a person and teacher like Dr. Hawkins is that we see and experience a being who IS that happiness; who IS that boundless joy; who IS that unassailable peace. The book was written because he himself experienced the power of the mechanism it describes. To read about and be in the presence of such a liberated being gives us the catalyst, the hope, and the launch for our own inward trek. And so, despite the cynicism of the small self, there is the Self that beckons us on. We may first hear its call as coming from an advanced consciousness such as Dr. Hawkins, a teacher, a guide, or a sage who has realized the Self. Then, as we have our own experiences of truth, healing, and expansion, we hear the call as coming from an inner place. "The Self of the teacher and that of the student are one and the same," says Dr. Hawkins.

He radiates the truths of this book. As a serious seeker who saw much of contemporary spiritual writing as shallow, I wanted to verify the

authenticity of this work. It was all-important to know: does this author speak from a true inner Realization? The answer is "Yes!" Close observations made during several years of interviews and visits confirmed the advanced state. In this book, he reminds us of the law of consciousness that says: We are all connected at the energetic level, and a higher vibration (such as love) has a powerful effect on a lower vibration (such as fear). I feel the truth of this law whenever I am with him; his energy field transmits healing love and profound peace. As he explains in this book, these higher states are available to all of us at any time.

No matter where we are in life, this book will illumine a "next step."

The mechanism of surrender that Dr. Hawkins describes is applicable to the entire inner journey: from the letting go of childhood resentments to the final surrender of the ego itself. Thus, the book is equally useful for the professional interested in worldly success, the client in therapy seeking to heal emotional issues, the patient diagnosed with an illness, and the spiritual seeker devoted to Enlightenment. The important step for all of us, he advises, is to acknowledge that we have negative feelings as a consequence of our human condition, and to be willing to look at them without judgment.

The high state of non-dual awareness may be our goal. But how do we handle the persistently dualistic “small self” that wants us to see ourselves as “better than” or “worse than” another?

In his previous ten books, Dr. Hawkins has described the non-dual state of Enlightenment with rare pristine awareness. As he says humorously at the start of many lectures, “We begin with the end.” Indeed, in his lectures and books, he has thoroughly illuminated the highest states of consciousness that are the culmination of human inner evolution.

Now, in this book published in the latter part of his life, he is taking us back to our common starting point: acknowledging the existence of the small self. We must start where we are to get to where we want to go! If we want to go from here to there, we don’t get there faster if we fool ourselves and say we are starting from nearby. By thinking we’re closer than we are to the goal, we actually make the trip longer. As he explains in the book, it takes courage and self-honesty to see negativity and smallness in ourselves.

Only when we can acknowledge the negativity that we’ve inherited from the human condition will we have the possibility to surrender and be free of it. We simply need to be willing to acknowledge and accept that part of our

.....

human experience. By accepting it, we can transcend it—and Dr. Hawkins shows us the way.

In this highly pragmatic book, he illumines a technique by which we can transcend the small self and break through to the freedom for which we long. This state of inner freedom and unalloyed happiness is our

“birthright,” he says. As we read, we draw encouragement and inspiration from the real-life clinical examples that he shares from his decades of psychiatric practice. In case after case, we see the power of surrender applied to nearly every area of life: relationships, physical health, work environments, recreational activities, spiritual process, family life, sexuality, emotional healing, and addiction recovery.



We learn that the answer to the problems we face is *within* us. By letting go of the inner blocks to it, the truth of our inner Self shines forth and the path to peace is revealed. Other spiritual teachers have emphasized the cultivation of inner peace as the only real solution to personal difficulties, as well as collective conflicts: “Inner disarmament first, then outer disarmament” (The Dalai Lama); “Be the change you want to see in the world” (Gandhi). The implication is clear. Because we are all part of the whole, when we heal something in ourselves, we heal it for the world. Each individual consciousness is connected to the collective consciousness at the energetic level; therefore, personal healing emerges collective healing. Dr.

Hawkins may be the first to attempt to understand this principle in light of scientific and clinical applications. The crucial point is: by changing ourselves, we change the world. As we become more loving on the inside, healing occurs on the outside. Much like the rising of the sea level lifts all ships, so the radiance of unconditional love within a human heart lifts all of life.

Dr. David R. Hawkins is a world-renowned author, psychiatrist, clinician, spiritual teacher, and researcher of consciousness. Details of his extraordinary life are given in the “About the Author” section at the back of the book. His unique work effulges from a wellspring of universal compassion and is dedicated to the alleviation of suffering in all dimensions of life. The gift of Dr. Hawkins’ work to human evolvment is beyond what can be said about it.

The state of Enlightenment is totally complete in its bliss, such that one would never leave it except out of a total surrender of love to God and to one’s fellow human beings, to share the gift that was given. This book on letting go, and all of his work in the world, is the result of that surrender. As you will read in one of the chapters, there was a very deep surrender that allowed the resumption of his personal consciousness in order to fulfill certain commitments in the world. The state of oneness was not lost or left, but extraordinary love had to be directed toward the challenge of verbalizing the ineffable. You will notice that some of his pronouns do not fit grammatical convention—for example, “our life”—yet they are true to the experience of a spiritual state that knows the impersonal oneness of all

life. That Dr. Hawkins would re-enter the world of logic and language in order to share a “Map of Consciousness” with us—so that we might also complete our destiny—speaks volumes of his selfless love for humanity. By showing us the way to liberation, Dr. Hawkins gives us the chance of reaching it.

Thank you, Dr. Hawkins, for the gift of total surrender.

Fran Grace, Ph.D., editor.

*Professor of Religious Studies and*

*Steward of the Meditation Room*

*University of Redlands, California*

*Founding Director, Institute for*

*Contemplative Life*

*Sedona, Arizona*

*June 2012*

## **PREFACE**

During many years of clinical psychiatric practice, the primary aim was to seek the most effective ways to relieve human suffering in all of its many forms. To this end, numerous disciplines of medicine, psychology, psychiatry, psychoanalysis, behavioral techniques, bio-feedback, acupuncture, nutrition, and brain chemistry were explored. Beyond these clinical modalities were philosophical systems, metaphysics, a multitude of holistic health techniques, self-improvement courses, spiritual pathways, meditative techniques, and other ways to expand one’s awareness.

In all of these explorations, the mechanism of surrender was found to be of great practical benefit. Its importance necessitated the writing of this book to share with others what was clinically observed and personally experienced.

The previous ten books focused on advanced states of awareness and Enlightenment. Over the years, thousands of students at our lectures and Satsangs have asked questions that reveal the everyday obstacles to Enlightenment. It is pragmatic and helpful to share a technique that will facilitate their success in overcoming such obstacles: How to handle the vicissitudes of ordinary life, with its losses, disappointments, stresses, and crises? How to be free of negative emotions and their impact on health, relationships, and work? How to handle all of the unwanted feelings? The present work describes a simple and effective means by which to let go of negative feelings and become free.

The letting go technique is a pragmatic system of eliminating obstacles and attachments. It can also be called a mechanism of surrender. There is scientific proof of its efficacy, an explanation of which is included in one of the chapters. Research has shown the technique to be more effective than many other approaches currently available in relieving the physiologic responses to stress.

After researching most of the various stress-reduction and consciousness methods, this approach stands out for its sheer simplicity, efficiency, clinical efficacy, absence of questionable concepts, and rapidity of observable results. Its simplicity is deceptive and almost disguises the

real benefit of the technique. Simply stated, it sets us free from emotional attachments. It verifies the observation made by every sage, that attachments are the primary cause of suffering.

The mind, with its thoughts, is driven by feelings. Each feeling is the cumulative derivative of many thousands of thoughts. Because most people throughout their lives repress, suppress, and try to escape from their feelings, the suppressed energy accumulates and seeks expression through psychosomatic distress, bodily disorders, emotional illnesses, and disordered behavior in interpersonal relationships. The accumulated feelings block spiritual growth and awareness, as well as success in many areas of life.

The benefits of this technique can, therefore, be described on various levels:

**Physical:**

The elimination of suppressed emotions has a positive health benefit. It decreases the overflow of energy into the body's autonomic nervous system, and it unblocks the acupuncture energy system (demonstrable by a simple muscle test). Therefore, as a person constantly surrenders, physical and psychosomatic disorders improve and frequently disappear altogether.

There is a general reversal of pathologic processes in the body and a return to optimal functioning.

**Behavioral:**

Because there is a progressive decrease of anxiety and negative emotions, there is less and less need for escapism via drugs, alcohol, entertainment, and excessive sleep. Consequently, there is an increase in vitality, energy, presence, and well-being, with more efficient and effortless functioning in all areas.

**Interpersonal Relationships:**

As negative feelings are surrendered, there is a progressive increase of positive feelings that results in quickly observable improvement in all relationships. There is an increase in the capacity to love. Conflicts with others decrease progressively, so that job performance improves. The elimination of negative blocks allows vocational goals to be more easily accomplished, and self-sabotaging behavior based on guilt progressively

diminishes. There is less and less dependence on intellectualism and a greater use of intuitive knowingness. With the resumption of personality growth and development, there is often the uncovering of previously unsuspected creative and psychic abilities, which are thwarted in all people by suppressed negative emotions. Of great importance is the progressive diminution of dependency, the bane of all human relationships. Dependency underlies so much pain and suffering; it includes even violence and suicide as its ultimate expression. As dependency diminishes, there is also a diminution of aggressiveness and hostile behavior. These negative feelings are replaced by feelings of acceptance and lovingness toward others.

## **Consciousness/ Awareness/ Spirituality:**

This is an area that opens up by continuous use of the mechanism of surrender. The letting go of negative emotions means that the person experiences ever-increasing happiness, contentment, peace, and joy. There is an expansion of awareness, progressive realization, and experiencing of the real inner Self. The teachings of the Great Masters unfold from within as one's own personal experience. The progressive letting go of limitations allows the realization at last of one's true identity. Letting go is one of the most efficacious tools by which to reach spiritual goals.

Anyone can accomplish all of these ends, with gentleness and subtlety, as one silently surrenders throughout daily life. The progressive disappearance of negativity and its replacement by positive feelings and experiences is pleasurable both to watch and to experience. It is the purpose of this information to assist the reader in having those rewarding experiences.

David R. Hawkins, M.D., Ph.D.

*Founding President,*

*Institute for Spiritual Research*

*Sedona, Arizona*

*June 2012*

## **CHAPTER**

### **1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

While in contemplation one day, the mind said:

“What in the world is wrong with us?”

“Why doesn't happiness stay put?”

“Where are the answers?”

“How do we address the human dilemma?”

“Have I gone nuts or has the world gone crazy?”

The solution to any problem seems to bring only brief relief, for it is the very basis of the next problem.

“Is the human mind a hopeless squirrel cage?”

“Is everybody confused?”

“Does God know what He’s doing?”

“Is God dead?”

The mind just kept chattering along:

“Does anybody have the secret?”

Don’t worry—everybody’s desperate. Some seem cool about it. “I can’t see what all the fuss is about,” they say. “Life seems simple to me.” They are so scared they can’t even look at it!

How about the experts? Their confusion is more sophisticated, wrapped in impressive jargon and elaborate mental construction. They have predetermined belief systems into which they try to squeeze you. It seems to work for a while and, then, it is just back to one’s original state again.

It used to be that we could count on social institutions, but they have had their day; nobody trusts them any more. We now have more watchdogs than institutions. The hospitals are monitored by multiple agencies. Nobody has time for the patients, who get lost in the shuffle. Look down the corridors. There are no doctors or nurses. They are in the offices doing paperwork. The whole scene is dehumanized.

“Well,” you say, “there have to be some experts who have the answers.” When upset, you go to a doctor or psychiatrist, an analyst, a social worker,

or an astrologer. You take up religion, get philosophy, take the Erhard Seminars Training (est), tap yourself with EFT. You get your chakras balanced, try some reflexology, go for ear acupuncture, do iridology, get healed with lights and crystals.

You meditate, chant a mantra, drink green tea, try the Pentecostals, breathe in fire, and speak in tongues. You get centered, learn NLP, try actualizations, work on visualizations, study psychology, join a Jungian group. You get Rolfed, try psychedelics, get a psychic reading, jog, jazzercise, have colonics, get into nutrition and aerobics, hang upside down, wear psychic jewelry. Get more insight, bio-feedback, Gestalt therapy.

You see your homeopath, chiropractor, naturopath. You try kinesiology, discover your Enneagram type, get your meridians balanced, join a consciousness-raising group, take tranquilizers. You get some hormone shots, try cell salts, have your minerals balanced, pray, implore, and beseech. You learn astral projection. Become a vegetarian. Eat only cabbage. Try macrobiotics, go organic, eat no GMO. Meet up with Native American medicine men, do a sweat lodge. Try Chinese herbs, moxibustion, shiatsu, acupressure, feng shui. You go to India. Find a new guru. Take off your clothes. Swim in the Ganges. Stare at the sun.

Shave your head. Eat with your fingers, get really messy, shower in cold water.

Sing tribal chants. Relive past lives. Try hypnotic regression. Scream a primal scream. Punch pillows. Get Feldenkraised. Join a marriage encounter group. Go to Unity. Write affirmations. Make a vision board. Get re-birthing. Cast the I Ching. Do the Tarot cards. Study Zen. Take more

courses and workshops. Read lots of books. Do transactional analysis. Get yoga lessons. Get into the occult. Study magic. Work with a kahuna. Take a shamanic journey. Sit under a pyramid. Read Nostradamus. Prepare for the worst.

Go on a retreat. Try fasting. Take amino acids. Get a negative ion generator. Join a mystery school. Learn a secret handshake. Try toning. Try color therapy. Try subliminal tapes. Take brain enzymes, antidepressants, flower

remedies. Go to health spas. Cook with exotic ingredients. Look into strange fermented oddities from faraway places. Go to Tibet. Hunt up holy men. Hold hands in a circle and get high. Renounce sex and going to the movies. Wear some yellow robes. Join a cult.

Try the endless varieties of psychotherapy. Take wonder drugs.

Subscribe to lots of journals. Try the Pritikin diet. Eat just grapefruit. Get your palm read. Think New Age thought. Improve the ecology. Save the planet. Get an aura reading. Carry a crystal. Get a Hindu sidereal astrological interpretation. Visit a transmedium. Go for sex therapy. Try Tantric sex. Get blessed by Baba Somebody. Join an anonymous group.

Travel to Lourdes. Soak in the hot springs. Join Arica. Wear therapeutic sandals. Get grounded. Get more prana and breathe out that stale black negativity. Try golden needle acupuncture. Check out snake gallbladders.

Try chakra breathing. Get your aura cleaned. Meditate in Cheops, the great pyramid in Egypt.

You and your friends have tried all of the above, you say? Oh, the human! You wonderful creature! Tragic, comic and yet so noble! Such courage to keep on searching! What drives us to keep looking for an answer? Suffering? Oh, yes. Hope? Certainly. But there is something more than that.

Intuitively, we know that somewhere there is an ultimate answer. We stumble down dark byways into cul-de-sacs and blind alleys; we get exploited and taken, disillusioned, fed up, and we keep on trying.

Where is our blind spot? Why can't we find the answer?

We don't understand the problem; that's why we can't find the answer.

Maybe it's ultra simple, and that's why we can't see it.

Maybe the solution is not "out there," and that's why we can't find it.

Maybe we have so many belief systems that we are blinded to the obvious.



Throughout history, a few individuals have reached great clarity and have experienced the ultimate solution to our human woes. How did they get there? What was their secret? Why can't we understand what they had to teach? Is it really next to impossible or nearly hopeless? What about the average person who is not a spiritual genius?

Multitudes follow spiritual pathways, but scarce are the ones who finally succeed and realize the ultimate truth. Why is that? We follow ritual and dogma and zealously practice spiritual discipline—and we crash once again! Even when it works, the ego quickly comes in and we are caught in pride and smugness, thinking we have the answers. Oh, Lord, save us from the ones who have the answers! Save us from the righteous! Save us from the do-gooders!

Confusion is our salvation. For the confused, there is still hope. Hang on to your confusion. In the end it is your best friend, your best defense against the deathliness of others' answers, against being raped by their ideas. If you are confused, you are still free. If you are confused, this book is for you.

What's in the book? It tells of a simple method to reach great clarity and transcend your problems along the way. It's not by finding the answers, but by undoing the basis of the problem. The state reached by the great sages of history is available; the solutions are within us and easy to find.

The mechanism of surrender is simple and the truth is self-evident. It works during daily life. There is no dogma or belief system. You verify everything for yourself, so you cannot be misled. There is no dependence on any teachings. It follows the dicta of "Know thyself"; "The truth shall set you free"; and "The kingdom of God is within you." It works for the cynic, the pragmatist, the religionist, and the atheist. It works for any age or cultural background. It works for the spiritual person and the non-spiritual person alike.

Because the mechanism is your own, nobody can take it away from you. You are safe from disillusionment. You will find out for yourself what is real and what are just the mind's programs and belief systems. While all of this is going on, you will become healthier, more successful with less effort, happier, and more capable of real love. Your friends will notice a

difference; the changes are permanent. You aren't going to go for a "high" and crash later. You will discover there is an automatic teacher within yourself.

Eventually you will discover your inner Self. You always unconsciously knew it was there. When you come upon it, you will understand what the great sages of history were trying to convey. You will understand it because Truth is self-evident and within your own Self.

This book is written with you, the reader, constantly in mind. It is easy, effortless, and enjoyable. There is nothing to learn or memorize. You will become lighter and happier as you read it. The material will automatically start bringing you the experience of freedom as you read through the pages.

You are going to feel the weights being removed. Everything you do will become more enjoyable. You are in for some happy surprises about your life! Things are going to get better and better!

It's okay to be skeptical. We've been taken down the primrose path before, so be as skeptical as you like. Indeed, it's advisable to avoid gushing enthusiasm. It is a setup for a letdown later. Therefore, rather than enthusiasm, quiet observation will serve you better.

Is there such a thing as something for nothing in the universe? Oh, yes, most certainly there is. It's your own freedom which you have forgotten and don't know how to experience. What is being offered to you is not something that has to be acquired. It is not something that is new or outside of yourself. It is already yours and merely has to be reawakened and rediscovered. It will emerge of its own nature.

The purpose of sharing this approach is merely to put you in touch with your own inner feelings and experiences. In addition, there is much helpful information that your mind will want to know. The process of surrender will begin automatically, for it is the nature of the mind to seek relief from pain and suffering and to experience greater happiness.

## CHAPTER

## 2

### THE MECHANISM OF LETTING GO

#### What is it?

Letting go is like the sudden cessation of an inner pressure or the dropping of a weight. It is accompanied by a sudden feeling of relief and lightness, with an increased happiness and freedom. It is an actual mechanism of the mind, and everyone has experienced it on occasion.

A good example is the following. You are in the midst of an intense argument; you are angry and upset, when suddenly the whole thing strikes you as absurd and ridiculous. You start to laugh. The pressure is relieved.

You come up from anger, fear, and feeling attacked to feeling suddenly free and happy.

Think how great it would be if you could do that all of the time, in any place, and with any event. You could always feel free and happy and never be cornered by your feelings again. That's what this technique is all about: letting go consciously and frequently at will. You are then in charge of how you feel, and you are no longer at the mercy of the world and your reactions to it. You are no longer the victim. This is employing the basic teaching of the Buddha, which removes the pressure of involuntary reactivity.

We carry around with us a huge reservoir of accumulated negative feelings, attitudes, and beliefs. The accumulated pressure makes us miserable and is the basis of many of our illnesses and problems. We are resigned to it and explain it away as the "human condition." We seek to escape from it in myriad ways. The average human life is spent trying to avoid and run from the inner turmoil of fear and the threat of misery.

Everyone's self-esteem is constantly threatened both from within and without.

If we take a close look at human life, we see that it is essentially one long elaborate struggle to escape our inner fears and expectations that have been

projected upon the world. Interspersed are periods of celebration when we have momentarily escaped the inner fears, but the fears are still there waiting for us. We have become afraid of our inner feelings because they hold such a massive amount of negativity that we fear we would be overwhelmed by it if we were to take a deeper look. We have a fear of these feelings because we have no conscious mechanism by which to handle the feelings if we let them come up within ourselves. Because we are afraid to face them, they continue to accumulate and, finally, we secretly begin looking forward to death to bring all of the pain to an end. It is not thoughts or facts that are painful but the feelings that accompany them. Thoughts in and of themselves are painless, but not the feelings that underlie them!

*It is the accumulated pressure of feelings that causes thoughts.* One feeling, for instance, can create literally thousands of thoughts over a period of time. Think, for instance, of one painful memory from early life, one terrible regret that has been hidden. Look at all the years and years of thoughts associated with that single event. If we could surrender the underlying painful feeling, all of those thoughts would disappear instantly and we would forget the event.

This observation is in accord with scientific research. The Gray-LaViolette scientific theory integrates psychology and neurophysiology.

Their research demonstrated that feeling tones organize thoughts and memory (Gray-LaViolette, 1981). Thoughts are filed in the memory bank according to the various shades of feelings associated with those thoughts.

Therefore, when we relinquish or let go of a feeling, we are freeing ourselves from all of the associated thoughts.

The great value of knowing how to surrender is that any and all feelings can be let go of at any time and any place in an instant, and it can be done continuously and effortlessly.

What is the surrendered state? It means to be free of negative feelings in a given area so that creativity and spontaneity can manifest without opposition or the interference of inner conflicts. To be free of inner conflict

and expectations is to give others in our life the greatest freedom. It allows us to experience the basic nature of the universe, which, it will be

discovered, is to manifest the greatest good possible in a situation. This may sound philosophical, but, when done, it is experientially true.

### Feelings and Mental Mechanisms

We have three major ways of handling feelings: suppression, expression, and escape. We will discuss each in turn.

**1. Suppression and repression.** These are the most common ways in which we push feelings down and put them aside. In repression, this happens unconsciously; in suppression, it happens consciously. We don't want to be bothered by feelings and, besides, we don't know what else to do with them. We sort of suffer through them and try to keep functioning as best as we can. The feelings that we select to be suppressed or repressed are in accord with the conscious and unconscious programs that we carry within us from social custom and family training. The pressure of suppressed feelings is later felt as irritability, mood swings, tension in the muscles of the neck and back, headaches, cramps, menstrual disorders, colitis, indigestion, insomnia, hypertension, allergies, and other somatic conditions.

When we *repress* a feeling, it is because there is so much guilt and fear over the feeling that it is not even consciously felt at all. It becomes instantly thrust into the unconscious as soon as it threatens to emerge. The repressed feeling is then handled in a variety of ways to ensure that it stays repressed and out of awareness.

Of these mechanisms used by the mind to keep the feeling repressed, denial and projection are perhaps the best-known methods, as they tend to go together and reinforce each other. Denial results in major emotional and maturational blocks. It is usually accompanied by the mechanism of projection. Because of guilt and fear, we repress the impulse or feeling, and we deny its presence within us. Instead of feeling it, we project it onto the world and those around us. We experience the feeling as if it belonged to