

Mastering the Art of Letting Go

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Sometimes letting go is hard – like breaking an old, addictive habit. There are so many obstacles to overcome and negativity to rethink. Hanging on too long may be blocking your health, happiness, love, success and more.

Mastering the art of letting go of something holding you back takes courage and determination. Then, and only then, can healing occur and you can begin the recovery period and live again.

When you choose to hang on to negativity, it's like you're choosing to take poison every day and the stress. It's time to take action and take the steps necessary to bring positivity back into your life.

Refusing to Let Go Is Like Poisoning Yourself Slowly

When you're burdened by negativity in your life, it's like a chain around your neck weighing you down and keeping you from success and happiness. Refusing to let go of the negativity can bring stress of such magnitude that it is like slowly poisoning yourself.

Life is good about knocking you down and making you feel defeated. You could be disappointed in yourself or someone who has hurt you. You likely think about it every day – possibly every minute – and you're constantly giving momentum to that negativity.

It may seem impossible to let go of those feelings, but like everything else, there are ways to let go and focus on building your energy rather than letting it slowly seep away. Fear of letting go zaps your energy and keeps you from having the inner peace you need to move forward.

Letting go is like every other bad habit that you want to rectify. In the beginning, it seems impossible, but the more you practice, the easier it will get to let go of things like toxic relationships, negative thoughts and grudges.

It may be easier if you identify one thing to let go of in the beginning. Working on one issue at a time and focusing on letting go makes it easier to go on to the next issue when you're ready.

For example, you may be struggling with forgiving someone and still hold a grudge that's stressing you out. Forgiveness of a wrong done to you is one of the most difficult emotions to work through.

First, realize that forgiveness doesn't mean you're dismissing what was done to you. What it does mean is that you're proposing resolution for the negative thoughts and emotions you're having about the person.

There are many ways to forgive. Looking for the positive in a person who once hurt you is one way and journaling helps to find those good points. You may also try empathizing with the person.

Perhaps he or she has been going through trials in his or her life that caused the negativity toward you. Or, remember similar mistakes that you have made that hurt someone that you really didn't mean to hurt.

Remember that forgiveness is more about relieving your stress than benefiting the other person. Also remember that you need to protect yourself from more hurt from that person.

Forgiveness shouldn't manage to leave you open to more negativity, so if protecting yourself may mean spending less time with that person. Protecting yourself is part of the process of letting go.

Five Things You Should Let Go of for Stress Relief

Keeping things that bother you in the forefront of your mind can cause stress that never seems to go away. There are certain stressors that are more damaging than others and can make you feel so bad about yourself and other people in your life that you become paralyzed and unable to feel happiness.

There are five top stressors that people have the most trouble letting go of.

1. Anger – Feelings of resentment, revenge and bitterness may accompany anger in your life. Unless you can work your way through the anger – whether you're angry at a person or a situation, it can affect all areas of your life.

You can either hold on to that anger and face the many health and emotional consequences or learn how to forgive and move on with your life.

2. Grief – Loss of a loved one – either in death, divorce, estrangement or other way – can cause grief that is difficult to let go of. Grief is a normal response to a loss and there are five stages that you need to deal with.

First is denial. Then, anger, bargaining, depression and, last – acceptance. You may go through only one or two of these stages, but the important thing is the ending of grief by acceptance, then letting go.

3. Resentment – Resentment is similar to anger in that it can permeate every area of your life and keep you from enjoying people and experiences. Holding on to resentment zaps your happiness.

One popular quote about resentment likens it to taking poison and expecting the other person to die from it. With both anger and resentment, the cure involves acceptance, forgiveness and letting go.

4. Control – Those who have a need to control others are especially vulnerable to bringing unnecessary problems into their lives. When you let go of the need to control you're actually gaining.

You're gaining the ability to accept people as they really are rather than being disappointed over and over again because they're not conforming to your wishes or expectations and to appreciate and enjoy relationships without judgment.

5. Past – Issues that happened in the past can haunt you until you die unless you learn how to let go of all the negativity. It might be that you're clinging to the past because it was a happy time for you.

Because of situations you can't control, those happy times are gone. It could be a relationship, job or something else you cherished. Or, you could cling to unhappiness from the past. Developing a more positive attitude and/or forgiveness may help you move on.

The urge to hang on to anger, grief, resentment, control and the past can be overpowering, but learning how to let go of these debilitating feelings can open doors to happiness you never thought possible.

Allow Yourself to Go Through Emotions

It's difficult to let go of situations and people unless you go through an emotional process first – such as crying as much as you need to or expressing your thoughts or feelings in a way that gets it across to the other person(s).

Studies have shown that bottling up such emotions as anger can increase your cancer risk and chip many years away from your life. When you release the emotions, blood flow increases to the left, frontal area of the brain and helps you let more positive emotions in.

Negative and suppressed emotions play an enormous part in the future of your mental and physical health and well-being. Such emotions often lead to bad habits to try and relieve some of the pressure caused by bottling up emotions.

Turning to drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and junk food may all play a part in the research findings concerned with bottled up emotions, but it's clear that coping with these feelings is much better for you than holding them in.

You may be able to put on a very good act – both for others and yourself – and convince yourself that you don't have a thing in the world that's depressing you and stressing you out. Eventually, those bottled-up feelings

will explode, just like a bottle of soda that's been shaken and all of a sudden letting the cap off.

Rather than blowing up all at once and causing all types of consequences, it's best to vent your emotions a bit at a time – much like slowing turning the cap on a shaken up carbonated beverage and letting some of the fizz happen a little at a time.

You may hold in your true feelings in a relationship to keep feelings from being hurt or save the anger outburst until later and then let a whole barrage of anger and hurt surface. Or, you might take your hurt out on someone else.

Beating yourself up because you didn't speak up when something occurred to make you angry or upset also brings on toxic emotions than can stress you out and bring you down.

Rather than putting yourself at risk by bottling up your emotions, try healthy ways to vent such as exercise, talking to a therapist, anger management, journaling or another of the many ways to get out negative emotions rather than bottling them up and risking a blowup.

Learn That Forgiveness Doesn't Mean They Got Away with Anything

Learning how to forgive can release you from some negativity in your life that are weighing you down and keeping you from the happiness you desire. Forgiving has different connotations for different people.

Resentment, anger, resentment and thoughts of revenge are generally involved in situations where you want to forgive someone. That makes it more difficult to navigate than solutions to other types of problems.

If a person has hurt you seemingly beyond repair, that person has control over your feelings and emotions until you can forgive and let go. The hurt may always be there, but when you forgive, you'll lessen the grip of control and set yourself free.

The benefits of forgiving others are many. Your mental health and acuity will improve because you're not always thinking about negatives. That can cause a positive change in relationships and any hostility and anxiety you may feel toward people.

As for your health – letting go of anger and using the power of forgiveness can affect your blood pressure, immune system and heart. Depression is less likely to get you down and your self-esteem can be heightened.

When you forgive, a wonderful thing happens to your brain signals aren't trapped into letting in negative thoughts and emotions. You can choose what you want to think about and you're not always obsessed with getting even or hating the person who hurt you.

Think about it. It's the best revenge possible that the person who hurt you isn't controlling you any longer – and that's what the power of forgiveness can bring into your life.

Not forgiving can take away your joy in life and prevent you from moving on from paralyzed and hurt feelings to a happier and much more inspired life. Today, scientists and medical experts concur that holding on to a serious resentment can be toxic to your health – both mental and physical.

Rather than looking at forgiveness as a sign of weakness, it's a sign of strength – that you're in control of your own life and can adapt to life and all its trials and tribulations in a way that improves your odds of survival – and life-long happiness.

Channel Your Distress into Something Positive

Turning your hurt feelings and distress into a positive outcome is a challenge. But when you take action, everything changes. Remember the times when you had a work task that you kept procrastinating about.

If and when you took action to complete the task you gathered momentum and were successful. If you didn't take action, you may have

suffered consequences – maybe severe, such as losing your job or working on a relationship.

When you're focusing on the past and all the damage that you've incurred from others, you're not able to get to all the positive things that are going on your life. You're not able to create a positive life, either.

It's a spiraling downturn of energy and mental health that you may never get back if you don't take steps to make things happen that are positive in your life. Grudges, resentment and other types of pain limit what you can do and who you can be.

You may also be tolerating people or situations that you think you can't control. But that thinking can drain you of your energy and chip away at your health. Why not channel those tolerations in a positive way that will cut them from your life?

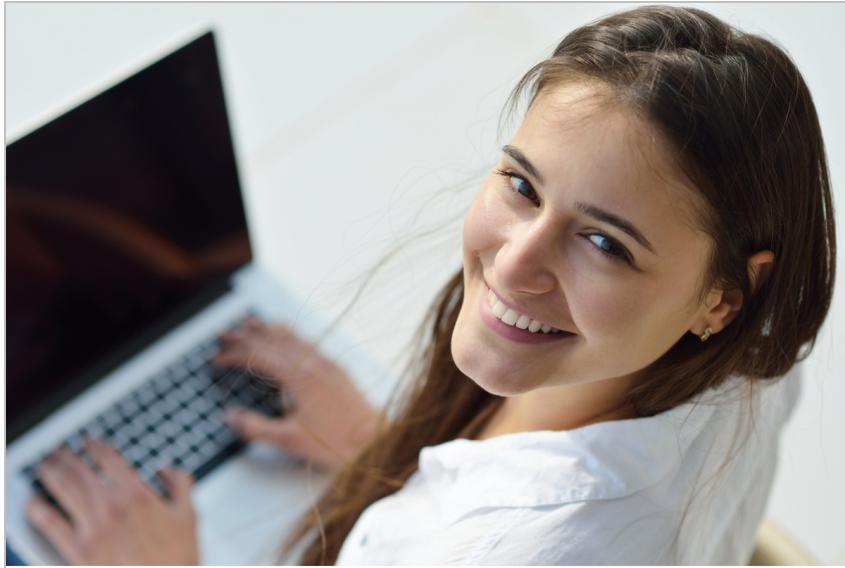
Tolerations or anything that drains your energy should be channeled in another direction. If that means out of your life, so be it. Making the effort can release an unimaginable amount of stress from your life.

Pursue greatness in your life rather than bend to controlling or distressful situations or people. When you're caught in a web of feelings of revenge, toleration, grief and resentment, you may not realize the toll it's taking.

The price you're paying could be toxic to your health and your future. Learning to channel the feelings or emotions out of your life or at least into a better place can open all sorts of positivity and light and get you closer to the place of true happiness.

Channeling your distress into something positive brings a peace into your life that you won't every find when you remain angry and upset and unforgiving. You have choices to make.

You can either live your life feeling bad about yourself and others or you can take your power back by taking action to rid yourself of negativity by doing what it takes to master the art of letting go.



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