



Wanting Nothing, Receiving Everything

The Golden Rule

Here's another perspective of The Golden Rule. Be unto others as you would like them to be unto you, especially when they aren't being loving! Each of us is 100% responsible for our reactions to how we are being treated. We want people to express themselves in a loving way. Actually, this want is quite natural, because we all want to be happy and it's much easier to be happy when people are kind.(That Golden Rule again!) We want to be treated with respect, consideration and kindness.

"Be unto others as you would have them be unto you, especially when they aren't being loving!"

Feeling Hurt By Another?

When people are unable to be loving, we often feel hurt. We call this "being hurt" by "someone else". This "hurt" can be a physical sensation of pain in the body. James Redfield, in The Celestine Prophecy, explained that this experience is caused by the angry or confused person's neediness. Their wanting to be heard and understood and healed by another, is actually an energy suck. It's something that happens, even though many of us don't feel it. It's as if the other person has turned on their vacuum cleaner, wanting us to fill their sense of emptiness. And we are doing the same thing when we treat others poorly.

The Body's Role

First, there's the experience of someone being unkind. The "negative energy" is directed towards us, and experienced by the body initially. We may feel tightening in the chest area, shoulders, or belly. We may also feel nauseous, a headache, or dizziness.

When we are able to be fully present with whatever's happening, the body's experience is fully embraced in awareness. There's nothing more to "do".

Please don't just take my word for all this. Be curious for yourself!

The Mind's Role

The mind's reaction to this interactive pain is based on the story we have made up about the other person's behavior. This happens because we believe the thoughts that come up from the experience. For example, "He shouldn't talk that way to me!" or "She has no right to treat me that way!" The truth is, "should or shouldn't", "right or wrong" are not really the issue. The issue is there needs to be a curiosity about what's true beyond our thoughts.

A confused, angry person unconsciously reacts with a lack of kindness, and sometimes meanness. If we are blindly reacting with anger and confusion, we continue the cycle of pain. When we are able to let the other's pain express itself, feel whatever feelings are aroused in us and not act on those feelings, our mind can remain clear and present.

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We need to be present with our thoughts, since we habitually go to blame and accusation, self-judgment and self-blame. Presence means we are aware of thoughts and can choose not to act on them.

A Body/Mind Story

A couple of years ago our son, Jason, was a sophomore in high school. He was having a difficult time with school and figuring out who he was. At times, his temper would flair and verbal abuse would spew all over my husband and/or me. Most of the time, I was OK mentally when this happened. I knew he was frustrated and understood he was saying things he'd regret later. I didn't take it personally. When I just stood still and stayed with what was happening in the body/mind, I felt pressure and stabbing pain in my heart area. I heard my thoughts wanting him to stop using "foul" language, wanting him to stop, period.

I finally understood what I had read in *The Celestine Prophecy*. There have been many times when I reacted to Jason's anger, and fell victim to the mind wanting to assign blame and self-judgment. I would get upset. Things would take longer to heal between Jason and me. When I allowed the energy of Jason's anger and my thoughts to pass through me, I felt much better afterwards. We would be fine together by bedtime.

Standing still, giving him my full attention, not feeding thoughts as they passed through the mind, I wanted nothing else. Jason was able to let all his verbal expression of anger run its course, and do no additional damage. I didn't feed the fire of his anger, and it burned out on its own. I felt loving when I said goodnight and he was able to receive the loving. My "wanting nothing" allowed the space for both of us to heal from a painful experience.

Feeding The Wanting

Noticing another person's unkind behavior, or thoughtlessness, is simply being aware. We usually see other people's mistakes and confusion easier than our own. We naturally wish them to behave differently, because we prefer loving kindness to confused, pain-producing behavior around us. Difficulties arise when we move from simply being aware of a desire for someone to change, to "feeding the wanting".

"The issue... there needs to be a curiosity about what's true beyond our thoughts."

Wanting others to behave differently, causes a particular expression of mental dis-ease. It is endlessly pain-producing, when we are wanting, wanting, wanting someone else to stop a pain-producing behavior, wanting to speak when we want (even when another person is speaking), wanting to be spoken to the way we want, or wanting someone else to make us happy and fix any holes we feel in our lives. Have you noticed this?

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Our “wanting” can get dramatic. We express this endless unconscious wanting in various ways. Sometimes we pout, yell, walk out slamming or not slamming a door, eat too much, or not enough, take drugs or drink too much. We overspend on our credit cards, ignore our physical health, or blame others for not filling our desires. Life gets very messy, when we have “our vacuum cleaner” on.

Think about a time recently when you’ve had your vacuum cleaner turned on. Notice, without judgment how the memory feels in the body. Now, imagine how that experience might have felt if your vacuum cleaner had not been on. Please don’t judge yourself, just be with whatever comes up.

“Wanting” In Relationships

In intimate relationships, this “wanting” gets messy. Our culture supplies us with so many ideas about what a healthy relationship should look like! We have unconsciously absorbed whatever felt good to us, from our own family history, books, popular music, movies, computers and television.

Some of us work very hard to mold our intimate relationships according to our beliefs. Ever get caught up in trying to convince someone to change their behavior by talking to them? Did it work?

I’ve been doing that on and off for most of my married life (nearly 30 years!). Even though I know it doesn’t work, I’ll still find myself telling my husband what I’d like him to say to me or how to behave to make me happier. I often start off pleasantly enough with “I” statements, like “I feel bad when you” or “I feel lonely when you”. He hears the care I’m taking and he listens. But I don’t always stop there.

Sometimes, I notice a familiar feeling, which tells me I’ve gone “over the line” again. It ends up messy, and I have to apologize again. No matter how hard I tried to be kind and careful, I got carried away with my “wanting him to be different”. The pain I notice in others, and myself tells me when I’ve gone too far. Have you noticed this for yourself?

The problem is not in the initial noticing something you wish to be different in another, and asking for the change with kindness. The problem is when we “feed” the wish for the other to change. It doesn’t work because we can’t ever change another.

We need to allow the person the space to find out if that’s what they want. We can only change our own painful feelings and behaviors- with our intention, compassion, courage, honesty, and awareness. That’s the work of awareness.

The Gift of Wanting Nothing

Wanting nothing from others, we receive everything! We are able to fully receive whatever gifts the moment has to offer. We are able to simply experience the sensations, and hear the thoughts.

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We are free to be more honest, compassionate, curious and present with whatever's happening. And we have noticed the continual endless cycle of wanting someone else to change "to make us happy"!

We have actually found a way to be happier. And we've made others happier because we are treating them the way we want to be treated.

The Golden Rule. Ah!



About Padme Livingstone

Padme Nina Livingstone is the Director of A Quieter Place: Practical Meditation for Living Your Life. She has a B.S. in Human Services and extensive experience with awareness meditation, self-inquiry, parenting, relationship skills, energy work, caregiving, and bereavement. As a meditation teacher and author, Padme has spent much of her life untangling her own confusion, while finding balance around her physical, mental, emotional and spiritual life. After more than 36 years of meditation and self-inquiry, and over 18 years of energy healing work, Padme discusses meditation, relationships, and energy healing using accessible, practical language with people who want to feel less stress, and enjoy more peace, clarity, compassion, curiosity, honesty, and gratitude. For more information, visit her website at www.aquieterplace.com