

A Life of Peacefulness

Most of us want a greater sense of peace and ease in our lives — life can be stressful, chaotic, overwhelming, full of distractions, exhausting.

We want to get away from all of that, exit the madness, and get to a place of greater peace.

I'm going to share how to find that life of peacefulness in one simple method. In a minute.

First let's look at the biggest mistake we make: **trying to escape the stress and chaos.**

To escape the chaos, we do a lot of things:

- Try to get our world in order, trying to control everything
- Distract ourselves, because it's all too much
- Comfort ourselves from the stress, with TV, food, drink, drugs, social media
- Hide from all the things we do, try not to think about it all
- Complain about it, about the burden of it all
- End a relationship, an arrangement, a commitment, because you don't want to feel bad anymore
- Stress out, rush, constantly feel busy

You might recognize some of your reactions to stress and chaos in this list, or maybe you have other strategies. But in the end, it's all about trying to escape, to exit, **a desire to get away from it all and get a sense of peace.**

There is nothing wrong with wanting to get away from difficulty or pain. If you're in true danger or abuse, get out. But most of the time, it might be a path of growth to not exit. To stay, to face the stress and chaos with a sense of bravery. **And then to find peace in the middle of the chaos.**

You can create a life of peacefulness in the middle of this overwhelming, stressful, busy, chaotic world. If you don't run, but instead find the fearlessness to be with it fully.

Let's look at how, with one simple method.

A Method for Creating a Life of Peacefulness

So you're stressed, feeling overwhelmed — how can you *use* this difficulty to create peace?

It's a simple method, but it takes practice.

It's just three steps:

1. **Face the difficulty.** You're feeling stressed, rushed, overwhelmed, frustrated? Instead of trying to exit from that feeling or situation, *turn toward the feeling*. Notice how it feels. Allow yourself to fully feel it. It's not about the *story* about what's going on, or your story about the feeling ... these stories are actually causing the feeling. Instead, turn toward the physical sensation of the feeling itself. With curiosity: what is it like? What color, temperature, energy, texture does it have? Does it change? Find the courage to fully face this feeling, and fully experience it.
2. **Open & relax.** After a moment of that (it can take a minute or two of facing the feeling, or often just a few seconds) ... allow yourself to open up to your present experience. Opening is about relaxing into it, opening your heart so that you aren't closed to the experience but actually fully feeling it with rawness and tenderness, being present with gentleness, even finding love for this moment of stress. Even, possibly, falling in love with this beautiful moment, that includes the discomfort but isn't limited to it, is so much more than that. In the end, the key is relaxing and letting go of whatever you need to let go of, in order to feel peace.
3. **Take the next step, in peace.** Finding a sense of peace in this moment, take the next step. Do what's needed next — start writing that report or email, have the conversation, get moving with the project, make a list — but do it with this sense of peace. It's a shift in the way we normally do things, which is with a sense of tension, rushing, tightness. Instead, do it with a relaxed sense of peace, smiling at the joy of doing.

OK, I said it's simple, but in fact this can take a lot of practice. Just the first step is a huge shift for most people, but I promise, it can be done. Facing the difficulty is just turning your attention to it, and feeling it, with a sense of allowing it to be there rather than needing it to go away. This turning toward is a transformative practice, and if you only do this one step, it'll be a powerful thing.

But the second step is powerful too: this is where a life of peacefulness comes from. It's a recognition that peace is available to us at any time, that we don't need to exit to find it, that we can stay, and love the place where we are, and at the same time, relax into peace. Ease into peace. Smile and find love for our life, just as it is.

The third step is about taking action from that place. We can sit and meditate and that's great, but at some point we have to act. We can't do a whole project at once, so we just focus on taking that first step. And we do it with peace in our hearts.

Then we repeat this whole process, over and over, until it becomes ingrained in us. That doesn't mean the stress goes away forever, or that you'll never know chaos again. On the contrary: you'll know chaos better than you ever have before. Because you'll learn to face

it fully, and be with it, and smile with acceptance, gentleness, friendliness and gratitude.

In the end, this is a training in being fully present with whatever we're facing. And finding peace with that — because a life of peacefulness isn't one that's absent of difficulty, but one that isn't struggling so hard to run from it.