

# Give Up Comfort

I was boarding an airplane today, and the woman ahead of me had a huge travel pillow, a blanket, and a few other items designed to give her maximum comfort on the flight.

Someone I know was about to go on a trip, and they spent a month worrying about whether they would have everything they could possibly need to be comfortable.

Most of us are like this: we spend a good amount of time and effort worrying about our comfort, and a good amount of money buying things (and carrying things) that will ensure we have a cocoon of comfort surrounding us at all times.

This is understandable, and I say it all without judgment. It's how we react to the insecurity of travel, of doing something we're not used to doing, of not knowing how to deal with a situation. The insecurity of everyday life. Myself, I go into research mode, trying to find out everything I can about an insecure situation. Then I might go into buying mode, getting the gear I need to make myself more secure. Then I might go into planning mode, trying to get control of the insecure situation.

This is how we are. We spend time researching, buying, planning, worrying, stressing about the insecure situation, trying to ensure our comfort.

But what if we could let go of concern for our comfort? What if we could dive fully into the insecurity of the situation, and stay in the insecurity without needing to change it?

It would transform our lives. It would transform us.

## A Thought Experiment

Imagine going on a trip with just the bare essentials: a change of clothes, a few toiletries (toothbrush, soap, deodorant), your passport, and your phone charging cord. Nothing to ensure your comfort.

You would feel insecurity about the situation. All the "what ifs" would come to mind. All the "what abouts" would come up. All the "but I might needs" would arise. Your comfort would not be guaranteed.

You go through the airport, without protection, just your passport and the digital boarding pass on your phone. Turns out, this uncertain, insecure situation wasn't so bad. You make it to your gate, sit at one of the chairs and read a book on your phone as it charges.

You feel the insecurity of the situation, and it's not a problem. You sit still for a moment, and allow yourself to fully feel the sensations of insecurity in your body. You open your

heart to the feelings of uncertainty, the stress. You relax into it, and it becomes peaceful shakiness. You drop your ego and are present with the pure experience of the moment. It's beautiful.

You get on the plane, and don't have a pillow or anything. It's actually completely fine, as you sit at your seat and read on your book some more. You feel like you should research the place where you're going, plan things out, know exactly what you're going to do and everything you need to know. You resist acting on those urges that stem from insecurity, and instead allow yourself to feel the fear, stress, and insecurity. You practice with it, feeling it fully in your heart, becoming friends with it, not shying away from it. You're fine, and everything is OK.

You get to your destination and figure out the train system, getting to your budget hotel just fine. You drop off your little bag and walk around, without a plan. You feel the insecurity of being in this place without all your comforts, and by now, you're good at practicing with this insecurity, and you've begun to welcome it. It becomes a feeling of freedom and excitement, of openness and curiosity.

You have none of your comforts from home, and yet it turns out you didn't need them. None of the discomfort is that bad — you've suffered much worse before. You don't have your nightly wine, nor your morning coffee (two of your favorite comforts), and guess what? Nothing falls apart. Or more accurately, things fall apart and you relax into it all, realizing that you can be fully open hearted when things are falling apart. And it is beautiful.

This trip, with its delicious discomforts, teaches you that all your efforts and stresses spent trying to build up your comfort and rid yourself of insecure situations are completely wasted.

## Everyday Insecurity

Back home, this same idea applies to our everyday lives — imagine going through the day without all the security and comforts we're used to.

You have only the clothes on your back, a notebook, a book. Some toiletries. A handful of real foods, barely prepared. Some water. Imagine this being all you had for the day.

You could go for a walk, perhaps barefoot if you felt like it. You don't need a gym, just do some pushups, You graze when you're hungry, swig some water when you're thirsty, but don't stress about having all your comfort foods and drinks. You read, you meditate, you lounge around in the sun, you do more pushups, you go for another walk, you write in your notebook.

When insecurity comes up, you practice as you did on your trip. You don't need to look

anything up, nor plan, nor buy things, nor be prepared. You have all you need, and the insecurity is absolutely fine, the ground of your life, lovely and everpresent.

You can try to give yourself all the comforts in the world, but discomfort still comes.

You can try to rid yourself of insecure situations, and yet insecurity will still be there.

You can give up your comfort, and relax into the discomfort, and in fact there is no problem. The discomfort becomes a friend of yours, just like the insecurity. You are free.