

Riding the Turbulence of Life Like a Wave

We're in the middle of a big move back to California from Guam, and things are in great flux. Saying goodbye to everyone, packing and shipping stuff, not having a home yet, traveling with kids on a couple long flights, moving our old stuff from storage in a U-Haul, finding our way in a new city.

Life is turbulent right now — though if we think about it, it almost always is.

I'm not a surfer, but I imagine that I can let myself be overwhelmed and crushed by the turbulence ... or I can ride it like a surfer might ride a wave. You don't control the wave or know how it will turn out, you just have to navigate it moment to moment.

If we can learn to ride the rolling uncertainty of our lives like a wave, staying open each moment to what unfolds, we can live without as much stress and anxiety, and just be present to what is happening. Maybe even enjoy ourselves in the middle of it.

So what would that be like?

For me, it seems to be staying present with the feelings of uncertainty that come up for me, instead of trying to ignore them or get away from them. That means allowing myself to feel the turbulence, not constantly staying distracted.

It seems to be trying to be curious about what is unfolding, about what this particular moment is like, without needing to know what comes next exactly. Without needing it to be any certain way. And if I do expect it to be a certain way, being present with my feelings of frustration or stress when it doesn't turn out to be that way.

It seems to be about surrendering, a bit, as I relax my constant need for control. I don't have all the information I need to perfectly plan out my life — there's so much uncertainty about everything, that I can't possibly know how things should go, what I should do exactly, what will come next. So should I try to plan for every possible outcome, be incredibly prepared for any possible scenario, when I can't know what might happen? Or can I relax and surrender, trusting that I can deal with whatever does come up. So far, that's always been true.

It seems to be about dealing with what's right in front of me, in the moment. I can't deal with every possible scenario that might come in the future, but I can be fully open to what's happening right now. I can be as present as I can with this situation, and figure out what needs to be done right now.

It also seems to be about learning to love this moment, as it unfolds, as it is. I don't know

what will come next, but what's happening now is completely new, a beautiful surprise. Instead of worrying so much about what is still to come, I can open my eyes to what's right here.

And then fall in love with it.

Walking into the unknown can be scary ... but at the same time, it can also be a time of discovering love for a fresh experience. It can be a time of walking into pure joy at the miracle of life that's just emerging in this moment.

It is breathtaking and lovely.