

Surrender Is What Is

Written by Nirmala
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Q: I experience a looming hopelessness in ever truly fulfilling this yearning of totally surrendering to the Beloved. There is a resignation or a sense of, "What's the use?" Since I am not this body, what's the use of taking care of it?

A: Everything is unfolding naturally and normally. Within this unfolding, hopelessness is a valid perspective. However, I invite you to check if there is truly an absence of any hope or expectation, or if there is a negative expectation or negative hope that things will not unfold completely. True hopelessness is a recognition that there is no need for hope or expectation of any sort, since life itself brings every experience just as it is needed. It is hopeless for you to surrender only because you have already lost the struggle; life is already surrendering to itself. Everything is happening perfectly whether you struggle or not. At most, struggling delays things a bit and causes you to suffer, but it all works out anyway. So there's nothing you can do, nothing you need to do, and nothing you need to not do in order for surrender to happen. Surrender is not a prescription for you to follow, but a description of your true situation.

As for taking care of your body, while it ultimately doesn't matter if you don't take care of your body, it also doesn't matter if you take very good care of it. If you are meant to experience health and well-being, then life will bring these experiences to you. And if your soul chooses to experience physical challenges or diseases in this lifetime, then these will arise. Whatever experience is needed will naturally arise. Part of this natural arising is all that you do or don't do to take care of your body. If it truly doesn't matter, then it doesn't matter if you eat well, exercise, and get healing support for your body or if you don't. Holding the question this lightly allows deeper impulses and intuitions to guide you. It will simply feel truer in each and every moment to take care of the body or not to take care of the body. And this will change moment to moment as life unfolds. Sometimes you will be moved to take very good care of your body, and sometimes you will be moved to just let it be.

Sometimes, when we experience hopelessness and the depths of knowing that there is nothing we can do to fully surrender to Being, we fall into the trap of thinking that therefore we should do nothing. But there is also no non-doing that we can do to make surrender happen. It turns out that all of our doings and all of our non-doings are actually a part of the natural unfolding of life that already is coming from the surrendered depth of our soul.

In a scene in a Woody Allen movie, a UFO suddenly lands in front of him and little green men come out. Woody's character runs up to them and says, "Thank God you're here! What is the meaning of life? Is there a God? Why are we here?" And the little green men reply, "These are

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the wrong questions” and fly away again in their UFO, as Woody runs after them yelling, “Wait! What are the right questions?”

Sometimes the right question is not so much what should I do, but what is happening right now? What is this like? How do I know what I am thinking, feeling, or experiencing right now?” For instance, you might ask: “What’s it like to have no hope or expectation either way? How do I know I am hopeless? What’s it like to have a body right now? How do I know that this is my body? What is true right now? What am I spontaneously doing already? What is already surrendered to Being right now?”

This kind of inquiry is in between doing and non-doing. It isn’t totally passive, but it isn’t very active or effortful. It is giving space and curiosity to the unfolding of life that is already happening through you, around you, and within you. You can do this as hope comes and goes and as taking care of your body comes and goes. The real gift of this kind of questioning is not that it answers the more practical questions, but rather that it means you are paying attention when a bigger truth arises. If you are always asking, “What is happening right now?” then when a deep experience of Being arises, you’ll notice. What a treasure it is to be home when the Beloved comes for a visit! Such questions don’t make surrender happen, but they can show you that surrender is always here. Surrender is what is.