

# 7 STEPS OF SPIRITUAL SURRENDER

## *How to Do Spiritual Surrender*

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*This process can help you make peace with people or circumstances you can't change, make peace with trials you are having, or compulsive behaviors in yourself over which you feel powerless. It's how you can be okay when you're not okay.*

### WHY SURRENDER?

- To practice letting go and letting God.
- To let go of things you can't control anyway.
- To free yourself from your fears
- To develop greater faith and trust in the Lord, His will, His timing and His gift of agency to all.

### HERE'S THE GIST

1. **CONTROL/POWERLESSNESS** -- *Identify where you have control and where you don't.*
2. **WORST CASE SCENARIO** -- *Make friends with your worst fear/worst case scenario.*
3. **LET GO** -- *Let go of attachment to a specific outcome.*
4. **GRIEVE** -- *You may need to grieve the loss of it, in order to let go of needing a certain outcome.*
5. **ACCEPT WHAT IS & TRUST GOD** -- *Accept what is and trust God to have an even better plan for your life than you do.*
6. **BELIEVE** -- *Continue to absolutely believe in your desired outcome--just let go of attachment to it.*
7. **SURRENDER** -- *Surrender the situation to God and let Him do His divine work with you!*

### HOW TO SURRENDER

1. **Identify Sphere of Control.** Identify where you have power to influence and where you don't--whether regarding other people, or circumstances, or over your own "thorns of the flesh." You can't violate another person's agency or force your will upon God. You can't force or control others without being manipulative. Acknowledge where your agency ends and someone else's agency exceeds yours. Can you make peace with your powerlessness and recognize your utter dependence on God. Accepting your powerlessness sends you directly into the arms of God -- "I cannot, but God can." Don't spend your time and energy where you have no power. Practice the "Serenity Prayer" -- *God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.*
2. **Make Friends with Worst Case Scenario.** Figure out your greatest fear or worst-case scenario of the situation and mentally figure out how to be okay with that possibility and make friends with it--no matter how terrible or wrong it may seem. It's the "But if not" principle (see [Daniel 3:18](#)) of determining to be okay no matter what! You accomplish this by partnering with the Lord in a more personal and profound way than you ever have before. When you make peace with your fears they are then less likely to show up. When you become okay with your worst-case scenario, you are no longer enslaved by a particular outcome or fear because you truly are okay with any outcome. This releases you from inadvertently helping to create the undesirable outcome because you no longer have negative emotion going towards it, which feeds it. Making friends with your worst-case scenario is how you get rid of fear in your life.
3. **Let Go of Attachment.** Letting go of emotional attachment is letting go of unhealthy control. When you are emotionally attached to an outcome or need a certain outcome, you actually contribute to keeping it from showing up. In relationships, you can become a distraction for the other person and their issues. It is human nature to resist pressure or persuasion. So, trying to control things or needing a certain outcome generally makes others resistant or defensive, and invites them to simply put blame on you for something (like pressuring them) -- keeping them from fully owning and experiencing their own issues. Letting go of

attachment to a certain outcome, letting go of certain expectations, letting go of resistance, or letting go of the need to direct or control things not only reduces relationship disturbances, but also increases the chances of ultimately bringing about the very outcome you desire. Letting go of your attachment is akin to putting yourself in a state of surrender and unconditional love. If you want another to truly give freely from their heart, you must let go or they can't give freely...they will only be able to give out of duty or guilt because they can feel you need it so badly.

4. **Grieve the Loss.** Sometimes before you can fully let go of something and turn it over to God, you have to give yourself permission to grieve the loss. (The five basic stages of grief include: 1) Denial/Shock, 2) Anger, 3) Bargaining, 4) Depression/Withdrawal, and 5) Acceptance/Reorganization.) Sometimes it's a physical loss, like losing a spouse, or a family member to death, or it can be grieving the loss of an expectation of your hopes and dreams (i.e. expecting a certain kind of marriage relationship, or a particular answer to your prayers, or to overcome a particular challenge or weakness). To grieve something, you must work to truly make peace with NOT having the thing you had wanted. To help with the grieving process review "The Loss Cycle" diagram on the next page and do some free writing/"process writing" on anything that comes to mind with each part of the cycle: Disbelief/Denial, Shock, Anger, Guilt, Resentment, Remorse, Self-Pity, Self-Anger, Grief/Sorrow, Helplessness, Hopelessness, Depression, Despair, Bargaining, Faith, Hope, Admitting/Acknowledging, Remembering, Sharing/Talking, Accepting, Saying Good-Bye, Peace/Serenity, Planning, Action, Strength. You will likely cycle through these states multiple times and not in a linear fashion. You are primarily watching for movement through the phases so that you don't get stuck in the negative phases.
5. **Accept and Trust God.** When you truly let go and trust in God you stop fighting and begin to relax into a state of peace and acceptance of what is. Surrender is being okay with "what is." You might think of "leaning into" the pain instead of resisting or fighting it. To truly let go, you must trust God, and know that He is aware, in charge, and has a plan or purpose for ALL things, and that everything will work out somehow. God's wisdom is greater than ours and His timing is better than ours as well. I like to remember that God always has something better in store for us than we could even create for ourselves. We can also trust in God's timing. It's better than our timing. Know that God can turn even "bad" things into good (see [Genesis 50:20](#)). Are you willing to submit to all things the Lord may see fit to "inflict" upon you or allow to happen to you? God is the "backup plan" that you can count on--no matter what! Consider the additional two concepts:

**Divine Purposes.** Trust God's divine purposes -- His refining process. What if in God's wisdom He wants you to go through whatever you're experiencing, so that you can put off the "natural man" and develop vital Christ-like characteristics, such as: 1) patience, 2) faith, 3) humility, 4) compassion, or 5) submission to Him? When we surrender to Him, we can know that He can do more with us and make more of our lives than we could make of ourselves. Know that He loves you and any other people involved, and will somehow make something good out of even the worst of situations and circumstances (see [D&C 122:7](#); [2 Nephi 2:2](#); [D&C 105:40](#); [Romans 8:28](#)). Know that even in the midst of your challenges, God has an eternal compensating reward, and that His grace is sufficient (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Remember this quote by Orson F. Whitney: *"No pain that we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted. It ministers to our education, to the development of such qualities as patience, faith, fortitude and humility. All that we suffer and all that we endure, especially when we endure it patiently, builds up our character, purifies our heart, expands our soul, and makes us more tender and charitable, more worthy to be called the children of God ... and it is through sorrow and suffering, toil and tribulation, that we gain the education that we come here to acquire and which will make us more like our Father and Mother in heaven."*

**Gift of Crisis** -- Sometimes the challenges you are facing are actually a "rock bottom" or a "gift of crisis" for you to finally have the will, desire or motivation to learn important lessons, develop new skills, or make important changes in your life that you may not have been willing to do without this "gift of crisis."

6. **Believe.** Rather than *Surrender* feeling "hopeless" it is very hopeful. Continue to absolutely believe in your desired outcome but let go of any emotional attachment to it. Totally believe but be totally okay if it doesn't happen. Your faith needs to out-endure the circumstances... for as long as it takes! Hope and faith is believing you'll receive your desired outcome--OR SOMETHING EVEN BETTER! It is your faith alone that may

be the "assurance" to support your desired belief (see [Hebrews 11:1](#)). *Faith* is the "evidence" or "proof" even when you may have a bunch of evidence to the contrary. This step of believing and even "assuming awesomeness" is vital to the surrender process and keeps you in a hopeful/faith-filled state rather than the easier hopeless state of "giving up." The objective here is to THRIVE regardless of the outcome!

7. **Formally Surrender to God.** Using the Surrender Prayer below go through each item or issue you want to let go of and verbally turn it over to God for Him to take care of it from here.

## **SURRENDER PRAYER**

*Dear God,*

- *I humbly acknowledge my utter powerlessness over \_\_\_\_\_.*
- *I surrender this to Thee and let it go.*
- *I am choosing to forgive myself 'cuz I know I'm doing the best I can given my human weakness and imperfection.*
- *Dear God, please do for me what I do not have the power to do for myself. . . according to Thy will and timing.*

## **WHAT SURRENDER LOOKS LIKE**

People often think they've "done" surrender and it didn't work when they actually haven't. You'll know you are truly in "surrender" because you will feel hopeful not hopeless. You'll feel a measure of peace despite potentially difficult circumstances.

Surrender is about increasing your conscious contact and communion with God. Surrender is a state of God-will vs. self-will. You will feel the shift from "my will be done" to "Thy will be done." You will choose to believe He is ever present sustaining you despite your difficulties.

There is also a softening of the heart that occurs in true surrender. There is less defendedness when surrender has truly found a home in your heart.

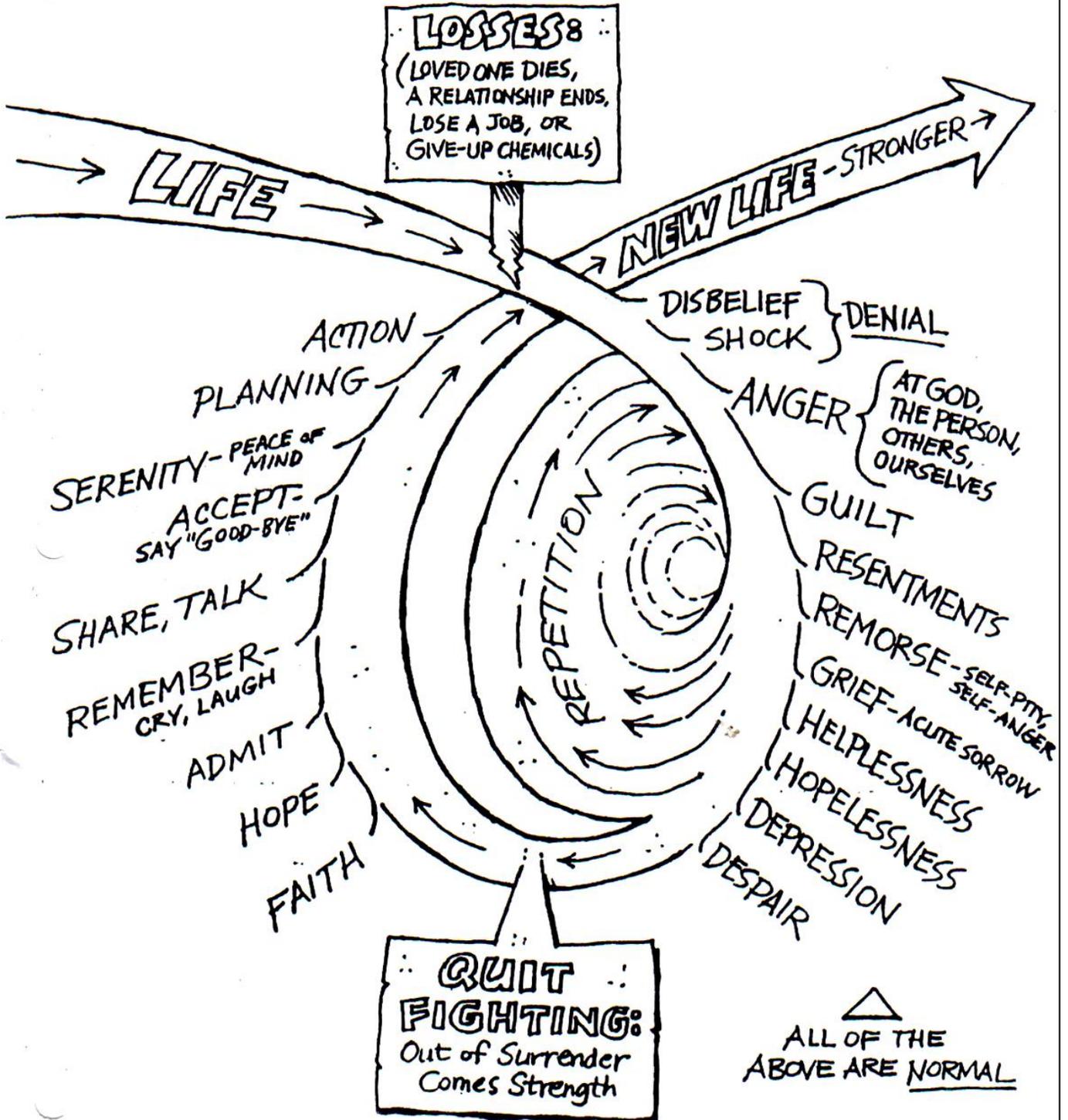
Submitting to the state of surrender continually brings you back to your powerlessness, your nothingness, and your utter dependence on God. It is precisely in this state of powerlessness that you find great power, strength and peace.

### **Related Resources:**

- *Loving What Is* by Byron Katie
- *Return to Love* by Marianne Williamson
- *Breathing Under Water* by Richard Rohr
- *He Did Deliver Me from Bondage* by Colleen C. Harrison

# The Loss Cycle

The Normal Cycle for All Losses...



DENIAL - ANGER - DEPRESSION - ACCEPTANCE - RECONSTRUCTION  
(BARGAINING TAKES PLACE ALL ALONG)