

Allow!

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By Louise Morganti Kaelin

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Life reminds me a lot of high school, where we went to different rooms with different teachers to learn different subjects. And then there was homeroom, that place where we gathered every morning to 'check in', get the miscellaneous non-'technical' information we needed to go through the day, greet our friends and, if we were lucky, get our homework done.

I think life is exactly like that. The classrooms don't have seats lined up in neat columns and rows, however. They're just wherever we happen to be. The teachers are whomever we happen to be with. And the subjects are as varied as we are. Luckily, we weren't given a 'schedule' on that first day of life. Most of us would have opted for permanent truancy, finding an 'alternative' school somewhere on some distant and simpler planet.

The homeroom of life? That inner space where we check in with ourselves, assimilating all the varied lessons, sifting through the monumental stack of incoming data, incorporating that which 'feels right' into our daily lives, relegating that which doesn't to some archived file, hopefully never to be seen again. How do we get to our homeroom? By meditation, breathing, sitting with nature, running, dancing — whatever it is that puts us in perfect peace and harmony with ourselves.

And in life, as in school, there are home-room teachers. Not really teachers, of course, but administrators and

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facilitators. In our calm and centered place, we find objects or individuals who represent our highest wisdom. They may be faceless and nameless or may have form, substance and history. They may be a synthesis of all wise people we have come across or they may be individuals who lived and breathed and represent the pinnacle of some quality we value.

These teachers may play different roles in our life. For example, there are four separate energies I connect to when I meditate. Although I often think of them collectively, they each represent one of the four major divisions of

life: Mental, Emotional, Spiritual, and Physical. One, representing the Mental sphere, helped me open doors I didn't know where there, allowing me to learn that oneness with all creation is possible. Another, representing the Spiritual realm and through his teaching of unconditional love, has helped me experience that oneness. A third, representing the Emotional, well, he has given me practical advice for living that oneness.

And yet the main lessons I've learned from this third teacher are very simple, so simple that I almost missed them: the first is to allow and the second is to live in the moment. Sounds easy, doesn't it? That's what I thought, too.

After being exposed to the teachings of an Eastern philosopher, I found that I could remember only one phrase: 'All we need do is allow'. Allow what? He didn't say, so I concluded that I had to figure out that part by myself (we all know how contrary some teachers can be -- they want us to do all the work!).

I started by trying to finish the sentence. Allow others to be who they are? Of course, but that seemed limiting. Allow others to be? Better, but not quite right. Allow others. Allow them what? And that brought me back to allow, just allow. The same thing happened with 'Allow me to be who I am'.

No matter how I tried to finish the sentence, I kept coming back to that simple word, all by itself, no qualifiers.

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No qualifiers? Just allow everything and everyone? But some of those people and things are a little crazy. Do I allow them to be crazy? Well, why not? For some reason that I can't understand, they have chosen to be crazy. It needn't affect me, not if I can understand there is a lesson in craziness for them. I have my own lessons and I know I would like others to allow me to learn those lessons the way I need to learn them, the way that I will learn them.

Allowing includes allowing me to be me. And by allowing myself the full range of human emotions, by being a person who loves, gets angry, knows joy, feels resentment, cries, feels tired, experiences satisfaction, in fact by feeling every emotion and admitting (and therefore owning) that emotion, then I can be a 'perfect' human being. For that whole range of emotions is part of the human experience,

and keeping those 'unacceptable' (by whom?) feelings bottled up, I'm only short-changing myself.

And I've noticed that people who never allow themselves to get angry are really always angry, the proverbial fire keg ready to explode. Yet how many times have I noticed that 'getting it out of my system', through yelling or tears, does actually that, it gets that feeling out of my system! Experiencing the feeling isn't bad, it's living it, staying in that negative mood that's unhealthy.

And allowing ourselves to feel, really feel, the emotion we're experiencing is what living in the moment is all about. Yet there's a big difference between living in the moment and living for the moment. There's no sense of purpose in living for, while living in allows us to take all the information we need from this moment, whether it be joyful or sad, and bring it into our next moment.

I found myself worrying about staying in the moment, worrying that I wouldn't 'move on' with my life. But the more experience I get at living in the moment, I find that I make better, more informed decisions about what the next moment will be. Better decisions than when I spend all of this moment worrying about what happened yesterday or what's going to happen in the future.

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And moments are controllable! When I live in the moment, the decision to stay, or move on, is definitely something that is in my hands — and moments I can handle. Yet each moment is a forever, when we are truly in it. Learning to allow and to live in the moment is, I'm finding, anything but simple. Or perhaps I should say it's incredibly simple, just not easy!

It's hard to break the old habits of fear and guilt, but the more I can do that, the more assured I am that that's the way I want to live. How do you start? By noticing where your attention is at any given moment. For example, this moment, right now, is about reading this article. If you can remember what I've written, the essence of it, then you're living in the moment. If you can't, then take a deep breath and read it again. Then check in. Do you remember the gist now? Congratulations! And welcome to the moment!

(c) Louise Morganti Kaelin. Louise is a Life Success Coach who partners with individuals who are

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