

LETTING GO TO GROW

Letting go of the past is often a lot easier said than done. All too often, we get stuck in the past and cannot move forward. Sometimes it is because we choose to stubbornly hold on to the past even if it is dragging us down and hurting us badly.

Like when we have been hurt badly by a cruel and insensitive parent who passed away. We are deeply angry and refuse to surrender our rage to the urgings of forgiveness. We seem to savor the opportunity to show our resentment for the pain that we have suffered. Our refusal to let go of our anger causes us more hurt as we try to deal with it. Long after our tormentor is gone from the face of the earth, he continues to haunt us because we refuse to bury our anger.

There are mothers who refuse to let go of their sons. Long after the wedding, they behave as if their boys have never left. They interfere in their married life and cause all hope that somehow the relationship will collapse so they can get back their boys. They just cannot let go.

Letting go is very difficult. We hate it and we resist for as long as we can. Often we let go only because holding on is just too painful.

The pain fact, however, is that, in letting go we actually grow. Letting go is part of life. We let go of this and grow into that. Letting go often marks the beginning of something even better. Today's pain is mysteriously transformed into a wonderful tomorrow.

How many times have the tears of loss become tears of joy! How often have we blessed our losses because they somehow gave rise to new and more exciting gains!

I believe that much of our happiness will be determined by how we deal with our losses. After all, so many of our unhappy moments are a result of our losses and our difficulties in dealing with them.

Our ability to bounce back from our losses will mark the difference between happiness and misery. It is truly amazing to watch how some people grow quickly while others sink into depression when they suffer losses. Amazing how one can thrive in the midst of losses that drive another to despair.

We are not born with the ability to let go. Letting go is a skill that has to be learned. It is, in effect, a survival skill that has to be mastered if one is to gain happiness in the midst of life's turmoil.

Those who cannot let go of their losses will be dragged down by them. They will, in effect, suffer those losses again and again precisely because they refuse to let go... like a water skier who falls but still holds on to the rope.

Those who have learned how to let go understand that when you let go of one thing, you find another to hold on to. They know that life is a continuous process of letting go and starting over again. Not starting over from scratch, but moving forward from one growth experience to another.