

Surrender

Why Would I Want to Do That?

Seeing opportunities instead of challenges

By Melanie DewBerry-Jones

In *The Wizard of Oz*, the Wicked Witch of the West (she deserves the capitals) wrote Dorothy a message while riding high on her broom above the Emerald City. Her message scared Dorothy but also called her forth, so much so that it later cost the witch her life.

Dorothy is on a mission to get herself and Toto back home. She arrives home safe and sound after learning to take a stand for herself, allowing others to help, letting the yellow brick road lead and finally facing her shadow selves, integrating them, and thus transforming herself and her companions. All this because she did exactly what the witch asked in that sky-written message, though not in the manner the witch intended.

What was that message? The one we all hear but fear to follow: “Surrender Dorothy.” It is true the Witch wanted Dorothy to give up. Dorothy didn’t listen to her ego, (ahem) I mean the Witch. Remember, the Witch didn’t simply want to be in control, she wanted to kill

us with money and promotions; others praise us and our ego feels stroked for all the effort. But the rewards are never enough. The rewards offered are not real, because ultimately they require us to compromise who we really are. The illusion we call reward requires us to do it all over again and again to sustain the feeling. Ironically, the average person fails to realize that surrender, in its negative definition, is exactly what we do each time we refuse to slow down so that we can be led. We habitually surrender to the domination of control. This is giving up on oneself!

How often have you witnessed your clients push, manipulate, and cajole situations, people, and organizations to get their desired results? The amount of effort one must exercise to exert control is the very definition of stress. We all know that stress is as exhausting as it is detrimental to our overall health and quality of life.

This doesn’t mean you sit on the cushion in a lotus

“There is no wizard, no silver bullet to gain what is wanted, but there is a way — it comes one yellow brick step at a time.”

Dorothy for her ruby shoes (her soul). The Witch represents your ego (and others) telling you to give up because there is nowhere for you to go. The real meaning of surrender has nothing to do with giving up or relinquishing personal power. True surrender is, however, relinquishing *control* in order to find your power.

Letting go of control

We are rewarded for how fast we can produce, solve problems and control the unknown. Our jobs reward

position chanting all day; fifteen minutes will do. Joking aside, of course action is necessary, but the frenetic pace that has become the norm in everyday life is anything but normal. Sure, it looks as if you’re getting somewhere, but what you’re really getting is tired.

Life was never meant to be hard. If it doesn’t feel hard you have designed it to be easier or you’ve become desensitized and therefore comfortable with the stress. It is an insane idea to think that one could manage time, for example. Where is time? How do you manage some-



thing that is nonexistent? The concept of time exists only because we all agree it does. How about managing other people, your children or your staff — how successful have you been? People do not want to be managed or controlled. They want to be appreciated, seen, related to, engaged and loved.

Let's not even start on controlling weight or managing money. (Put down the ice cream and step away from the catalog.) I'm not saying that you cannot or should not have a healthy relationship with your body and finances. I am saying that managing, which is a synonym for controlling, weight and money is akin to an alcoholic believing they could control their drinking. A better quality of life can be had while still achieving results — through the promise of surrender.

Story time – A tale of two people

I have stories of two friends; their names have been changed to protect me.

Hans was ready to fall in love and get married. He was very specific. By most accounts specificity is a good thing. There is, however, a difference between specific and demandingly narrow. Hans's specificity was in fact a statement: Only this will do. The 'only this' part of the equation constructed a desperate quality that permeated everything Hans touched. Have you ever heard the phrase "be careful of what you ask for"? He worked every angle he could think of to meet his woman. He refused to meet friends of friends unless they passed his list of expectations. Hans got exactly what he wanted — and he has never been more unhappy. Sometimes when we finagle life to get what we want, we miss getting what we need.

Claire found the perfect house but she couldn't afford it. Having just returned to the Bay Area, where houses sell for obscene amounts of money, this one was far from her financial reach. Claire asked the realtor to take her back to the house for one more look. Once there, she walked into each room and quietly said to herself, "I don't know how, but I will live here. One day I will own you, house." With that, she returned to her life. Two weeks later she received a call from the realtor; the owner hadn't received any decent bids and decided to take the house off the market and rent it instead. Two years, two promotions and a fat bank account later, Claire received another call from the realtor. The owner had relocated to the Netherlands and would Claire want to buy the house? I have Thanksgiving dinner there every year.

What is surrender?

Surrender is a bit like following the yellow brick road. It's allowing all that *is* to support all that you are. All paths will lead to a client's success. The question I ask is: How do you want to get there, the hard way or an easier path?

Slow down. Notice where finagling might be a part of your strategy for getting results.

Lean on me. You can't see who wants to support you if you're running past them. Allow others to support you. Interdependence is very healthy.

Be Einstein. You are a creative genius. You have creative expression that is capable of changing everything. As you let go of control (which is actually controlling you), you let your inner Einstein out. As the great man said, "No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it."

Tone up. Letting go strengthens your trust muscle. Practice, practice, practice!

Become a magician. Slowing down

gives you the power of time expansion. Suddenly synchronistic opportunities are visible for your taking. People tend to think that if they don't

act quickly opportunities will pass them by; in actuality, they cannot begin to see the multitude of opportunities when they're micro-focused to a set of outcomes.

Be brilliant (again). You will be led to *how* and *who*; ironically, this will make you a visionary leader. You will never have to ask the dreaded, "How do I (fill in the blank) . . . ?" to complete something marvelous.

Be completely whole. You may not get everything you ask for when you surrender, but you will definitely get what you need — and that, my friend, will make you very happy.

Whatever their goal or vision, clients come to coaching because they want something they don't currently have. Surrender is a path to lead them to what they desire. Surrender is sustainable. However, it is part of our human nature to forget who we are, what we are capable of, and what we have already accomplished the moment fear steps in.

You will know when your clients have left the Land of Oz because their lives are once again difficult (a sign that the Witch is directing the show). Make sure they have their A-team ready — people they can lean on, call on, people they can break down with and who can help them break through. Surrender teaches clients to relax into the power of trust. There is no wizard, no silver bullet to gain what is wanted, but there is a way — it comes one yellow brick step at a time. And so it is! •

Melanie DewBerry-Jones is a speaker, writer and coach. She is a twice-certified coach and a member of the National Speakers Association.

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