



Easy Matters

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It's summertime and the "livin' is easy"...or at least it's supposed to be. Now is the time to let up and let go a little while easing into the warmth and laid-back pace of summer. In an ideal stress-free world, there is a certain rhythm of alternating between productively doing and simply being.

So, how are you being these days?

To begin to answer that question, it helps to pay attention to where your attention and energy are directed. Are you buying into how hard life is? Are you attending to the day and its tasks, focusing on your never-ending to-do list with dread or a sense of drudgery? Or, are you able to find, somewhere in the midst of it all, a sense of ease, of joy, of flow.

It has been a tough time for many this last year or so. All that worrying about the economy, the environment and everything else has caused a certain stressful overload. The burdensome sense of "it is all too much" has cast a shadow across our capacity for lightness of being. But

both common sense and science tell us that too much stress without a reprieve is harmful to our health, our sense of happiness and our capacity to be creative and productive.

It's time to get easy.

Let's begin by developing an **Easy Mind**.

There is an interesting exercise that involves finding ways to reframe our thoughts in order to reclaim our best self and our best life. Draw a line down the middle of a page. On the left side, make a list of all the concerns, challenges and

supposedly negative events in your life right now. On the opposite side, do some reframing to shift your perspective by finding a blessing or positive possibility. For example, if money is an issue, what are creative ways you can spend less? Consider everything from connectivities, such as an inexpensive family cook-in to expanding your wardrobe by clothes-swapping with friends. Got a health issue? Could the blessing be that, as you seriously take time to take great care, you might just wind up healthier and in better shape?

Next, how about expanding your **Easy Heart**? Any anger lurking around in the dark corners of your heartfulness? Try shining a light on those negative feelings and find one thing you can do now to sweep them away. Perhaps it is time to have a healing conversation with someone or to write a *never-to-be-sent* letter to put the negativity to rest. What about resentments? We all harbor regrets for the roads not taken—the *woulda-coulda-shouldas* of life. What would it take to forgive yourself by focusing instead on appreciation for the choices that have made you who you are today?

Finally, give yourself a break by learning to have **Easy Eyes**. Instead of scrutinizing every flaw and imperfection, soften your gaze to take in the larger picture. When we learn to give up on perfection and practice loving ourselves whole, we give ourselves permission to blossom like summer flowers after a soft rain.

Summertime is calling you to ease into your aliveness. Make a choice today to find ways to drop the struggle and create more delight. **V**

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