

Discipline #1

A.C.C.E.P.T.A.N.C.E

A Cool Collected Eased Perspective Towards Any New Challenging Encounter

~ *“The quickest way to change your attitude toward pain is to accept the fact that everything that happens to us has been designed for our spiritual growth.”* ~

~ M. Scott Peck

In 1934, a theologian named Reinhold Niebuhr wrote the prayer known today as the Serenity Prayer. In short form, it says; *“God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.”* For the past 77 years, these words have been recited daily by members of 12-step groups and others all throughout the world.

Something divine occurs the moment you realize that life is unfolding in the exact way that it should even if you can't see the wisdom in its unfoldment. Back of every situation is a unique plan carrying out itself to perfection. And while it's often difficult to see what this plan actually is, this doesn't negate the fact that everything, absolutely everything, happens according to certain laws and principles. We call them, spiritual principles or universal laws and everything is governed in one way or the other by these laws and rules. Mohandas Ghandi said; *“There is an orderliness in the Universe, there is an unalterable law governing everything and every being that exists or lives. It is no blind law; for no blind law can govern the conduct of living beings.”* I believe the difficulty of living as a human being is that you have become so unaware of these laws and therefore fail to make the association whenever something occurs in your life that you are displeased with. Through what I like to call *“cognitive disassociation,”* which is merely another way of saying amnesia, you have forgotten how everything is related in one way or another by the intricate tapestry of cause and effect. This means that for every action there is an equal reaction and with each and every act you commit, you can most assuredly expect a complimentary result. But, unless you are able to trace all of your actions back to the moment of inception, it becomes virtually impossible for you to connect the dots and see the correlation of events in your life today. Be that as it may, the fact remains, how everything you've ever done up to this point in your life carries with it a residual energy. This means that nothing goes unaddressed and every occurrence has to be met with an outcome. There is no such thing as an unwarranted act or a senseless act because

everything contains within it a justification on some level. However, in most cases the reasoning eludes you and you fail to see the logic behind many of life's most important lessons. But, by knowing there is definitely a reason for everything which is mainly your own doing, you can learn to embrace each and every situation because even though you don't understand why you're experiencing a particular situation, you can rest assured that there is something yet to learn from every experience.

In the truest sense of acceptance, you come to a point where you know and understand that nothing can come into your awareness unless you summons it. This means that life; which is the process of coming to remember who you are as a spiritual being, is unfolding exactly as it should according to your individual and collective experiences. Your life is not some random, haphazard event in which you experience by default. No, no, no, consciously you know better than this. Deep within the recesses of your being, you know life to be a cleverly orchestrated unfurling of laws and principles at work on the highest level of order. By recognizing or *re-cognizing* and becoming aware once again of this truth, you begin to see how all situations that you experience both today and in the future are merely the outcroppings of past actions coming back to represent or *re-present* you with the results of your past deeds, thoughts or actions. In knowing this, two things should happen. Firstly; you should be more willing to accept any and everything you're presented with in life because you know again that it's somehow connected to you through your actions of the past. Secondly; you should become acutely more aware of your present deeds and thoughts by knowing that your actions and thoughts of today will be the results of your tomorrows.

As a spiritual being, you are solely responsible for everything that occurs in your life on a spiritual level. As an energetic being, you create and manifest your experiences through the power of allure and the principle of attraction. Whatever you put out comes back to you in some shape or form through the law of attraction. You attract what you are in the deepest sense but also on the energetic level because like attracts like. This principle is called *resonance* which says that things of a similar vibration will resonate at the same frequency. Many people have been taught that opposites attract and this is true in a strictly physical sense. But, on a much deeper level there are spiritual or energetic rules which supersede physical laws and have a great deal more to do with creation on the physical level. It is this level of existence of which I am speaking. On the energetic level, you bring into your awareness examples or depictions of what you are experiencing on the inside. Therefore, every situation whether you perceive it to be good, bad or indifferent is merely there to reflect back to you what it is you are sending out on a vibratory level. In this regard, you cannot blame any external event on anything

other than yourself. Knowing this can be both liberating and disappointing at the same time. Liberating because you can now begin to cultivate and create the life you've always desired and yet disappointing because you begin to realize that you have to take full responsibility for everything that ever comes into your awareness whether you like it or not. The responsibility you take is nothing more than learning to accept life as your own creation. If you are somehow displeased with the results of your manifestation then you should seek to change yourself starting on the inside and the physical outcroppings will then begin to reflect back this change.

Acceptance is an inside job. It starts with you and it ends with you. Acceptance is not about seeking to blame some outside source for the way your life is, it's about taking full responsibility as a co-creator with the Divine. Acceptance is about knowing (on a much deeper level) that you create your life as you go with the thoughts you cherish and the beliefs you hold. It's about coming to terms with yourself and facing the facts about why certain situations keep reappearing in your life.

In any given situation there are always two options; either you can accept the situation as being exactly as it should be knowing that nothing happens by chance and therefore be at peace with it. Or, find the courage to change whatever it is you don't like about a situation by looking within to see how you have played a part in bringing this into your awareness and what greater purpose it might serve. Ideally, it is suggested that you seek God (whatever you perceive that to be) for the wisdom to know the difference between these two. Oftentimes you mistake acceptance for complacency because you choose not to change a situation claiming it to be "God's will for you," when in truth this is nothing more than an excuse not to seek change. If you are truly aware of your connection with God then you understand that God's will for you *is* your will for yourself and therefore the two can never be separated. As carnal minded beings we have the tendency of confusing God with being an outside entity lording over us from the "outside in" when in truth God is the Higher Self contained within each individual seeking expression from the "inside out." In that regard, your will can never be apart from God's will in the highest sense of awareness. Quite naturally there are many that would argue this point when you look at all of the things that are happening in the world that you perceive to be "not of God," but from a much higher perspective, there is nothing that can exist without being God's will and to suggest otherwise would be declaring that God is not all powerful, all knowing or everywhere present.

RReal acceptance demands that you be courageous. It suggests that you embrace life's difficulties as lessons and your adversities as teachers. It calls you to change your perspective about who is to blame and turn your gaze inward. Acceptance is about finding the wherewithal to take responsibility for everything that is seemingly wrong in your life and seek to change those aspects of yourself that continually show up in your life. It's about coming face-to-face with your own creation in whatever form it takes knowing that you are both Picasso as well as Dr. Frankenstein. Acceptance on the spiritual plane is about knowing that you are a co-creator with the Divine architecture and that you are either consciously or unconsciously creating your life from the inside out with each stroke of your mental brush.

Did you know that the human experience is nothing more than a course on remembering who you are as a spiritual being? Oftentimes you feel as though you are here having these experiences in order to learn but the truth of the matter is; there is nothing for you to learn because you already have the answers. In fact, you *are* the answer and yet somehow, because of the way the system has been designed, you have chosen to forget. By forgetting, this allows you to incarnate into a physical being on the 3rd density called Earth where you can experience raw emotion as a means to expand your sense of awareness. So in truth, life is a mission of which you willingly volunteered. Prior to incarnating, you knew the life you would lead. You knew every single aspect of your life to come. You knew and you chose the parents you would have and the families you would come into, the cultures you would grow up in and the circumstances you would have to face in order to jolt yourself back into a state of remembrance. As your Higher Self, you continually choose the framework from which you are to learn and remember your truest essence. In this regard, there are no hardships only opportunities. Believe it or not, your greatest growth comes during your greatest adversities. Look back over your life and try to recall a situation that you thought was truly the end of the world for you. In reality, this situation probably turned out to be the best thing that could have ever happened to you on a spiritual level because it is through adversity that you grow stronger in spirit as well as in character. I'm sure you've heard the phrase; "If it doesn't kill you, it can only make you stronger." This is definitely one of life's greatest truisms.

By understanding what acceptance is on the deepest level, it can help you embrace each and every one of life's challenges. If you were able to know on a soulful level that nothing can come to you unless you summons it, then you probably wouldn't resist the things that come into your life as much. If you knew on an inherent level that your life and every nuance in it was chosen purposely by

your Higher Self, you probably wouldn't feel victimized by what you perceive as hardships. Chances are, if you knew beforehand what the spiritual rewards of your challenges would be, you would probably welcome them. I know this may sound like a difficult thing to do but it's the truth. This is not to say that you should always seek adversity in order to build upon your spiritual growth but rather you should know that everything that could ever possibly happen in your life is happening for a Divine purpose. Generally the purpose is not known until after you experience the growth at which time you can reflect back on your experience and be able to thank the Divine for every thing that has ever happened in your life.

The sooner you are able to arrive at a level of acceptance in any given situation, that much faster are you able to settle into the experience for what it has to offer you. When I start to look back over my life, I can honestly see where everything I've ever experienced was for the greater good of my spiritual growth and evolution. Although at the time, I couldn't see the wisdom behind the events that were occurring in my life. Today, I am the sum total of all my life experiences and I am all the more better as a result of them not in spite of them. You become stronger as a result of your willingness to embrace life's lessons with humility and acceptance. Through wisdom, you learn that life strengthens you. You come to understand how the universe is always orchestrating life in a way that serves the greater good of all concerned and it becomes evident how everything is so intricately connected for the sole purpose of carrying out a Divine plan.

Ten years ago, I came across this writing which talks about this plan:

“God has a plan for me. It is hidden within me, just as the oak is hidden within a acorn, or as the rose within a bud. As I yield myself more fully to God, It's plan expresses itself more perfectly through me. I can tell when I am in tune with it, for then my mind and heart are filled with a deep inner peace. This peace fills me with a sense of security, with joy, and a desire to take the steps that are a part of the plan.

God's plan for me is a perfect part of a larger plan. It is designed for the good of all and not for me alone. It is a many-sided plan and reaches out through all people I meet. All the events and people who come into my life are instruments of the unfolding of this plan.

God has chosen the people it wants me to know, to love and to serve. We are continually being drawn to one another in ways that are not coincidental. I pray that I may become a better instrument to love and to serve and that I may become more worthy to receive the love and service of others.

I ask the Great Spirit within me for only those things which it wants me to have. I know that these benefits will come to me at the right time and in the right way. This inner knowing frees my mind and heart from all fear, greed, jealousy, anger and resentment. It gives me courage and faith to do those things which I feel are mines to do. I no longer look with envy at what others

are receiving. Therefore, I do not cut myself off from God, the giver of all good things.

God's gifts to me can be many times greater than I am now receiving. I pray that I may increase my capacity to give for I can give only as I receive, and receive only as I give.

I believe that when I cannot do those things I desire to do, it is because God has closed one door only to leave ajar a better and larger door. If I do not see the door just ahead, it is because I have not seen, heard, or obeyed God's guidance, it is then that God uses the trouble of seeming failure which may result to help me face myself, and see the new opportunity before me.

The real purpose of my life is to find God within my own mind and heart and to help my fellowman. I thank God for each experience which helps me to surrender my will to God's will, for only as I lose myself in the consciousness of God's great presence can that plan for my life be fulfilled..."—unknown.

I find there to be quite a bit of truth in this writing because here again, it reminds me of the fact that there is a greater and more elaborate system at work which sees to it that I only experience those things which are necessary for my own individual growth. Incidentally, I came across this writing while in prison and it was in that moment that I realized how everything would be okay and how my circumstances were there to reveal a greater truth to me and not necessarily to punish me. In that brief instant, I went from playing the victim to being the victor and I immediately became at peace with my situation. This is the meaning of acceptance. Whenever you can find gratitude in the midst of adversity, you've found acceptance. Whenever you're faced with a situation that you can't possibly see your way out of, just know that the problem is always the solution in reverse and it's just a matter of time before you get to the other side. Troubles don't last always and this too shall pass.

There really are no problems in life only opportunities. In the Chinese language they use symbols instead of phonics like the English language. It is composed of hundreds of characters each representing an idea or concept. Often, it is necessary to combine characters in order to reveal the full meaning of a concept in another language. So it is with the English word—Crisis. The first character literally translated means—Problem or Danger. The second character literally translated means—Opportunity. This means that in every situation which appears to be a crisis for you, there is not only danger but also an opportunity. Although you may not know what the opportunity is, so long as you have faith in its existence, eventually it will be revealed to you. True contentment in life comes from an acceptance of reality and from embracing a perspective of gratitude in all things.

Acceptance alone is not always easy. Generally, in order to find a sense of peace in any given situation, you will have to cultivate other disciplines such as faith, courage and trust all of which I will discuss in greater detail in the up coming chapters. But, suffice it to say, acceptance is typically the best practice whenever you are dealing with circumstances which cause you a great deal of discomfort or uneasiness. Someone once wrote: “When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing, or situation—some fact of my life—unacceptable to me, and I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this particular moment. Nothing, absolutely nothing happens by mistake.” In time you will come to discover how your serenity level is directly proportional to your level of acceptance. The more you readily accept the things you are faced with by knowing they are designed for you to grow, the more at peace you will be with yourself and the world around you. This in turn will allow you to live a life of peace and contentment no matter what is going on in your life. When you accept, you embrace and when you embrace, you hold your life experiences close to you in knowing that they are strengthening your character. Acceptance is truly the key to total and complete contentment.

Dr. Peter C. Rogers

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