Effortless Action, by

What is effort? Is it when we try to do something or is it when we have to fight with ourselves? If there were no internal conflicts, would there be effort in any action? If we imagine an activity like being honest at all times, most of us would agree that it requires quite a bit of effort. On the face of it, there is nothing hard about it; presumably, we are the masters of our wills and if we are rationally convinced about any idea, we should be able to act accordingly. In practice, though, it doesn't seem to be so easy; hidden in the cause of that difficulty is the essence of effort.

Conflict between what we want and what *is* gives birth to effort. When we can't accept the present, we add fuel to the internal conflict and as a result, we start "trying". If we lose a loved one, whether it be breaking up with a significant other or ending a long time friendship or death of family member, we will grieve and wonder why we were so unfortunate and what could've changed the outcome. We think of
how things could've been different and how we could return to the "good old days". Constantly plagued by such thoughts, we find that we have to exert a lot of effort to stay composed and serene; soon enough, the conflict with the inability to accept the present makes us tired, stressed, and depressed.

To exert effort in accepting the present is defeating the purpose; we are suppressing the conflicts and unnecessarily increasing the burden on our every action. It is not that we should just sit there and not act because we have to exert effort but rather that we should put emphasis in understanding why we have to "try" in the first place. We will continue to act but when the internal conflicts subside, we remove the excess baggage of every action and start to enjoy reality in its purity, without any stress or worries. When we unravel our conflicts and observe them during meditation, they lose their grasp over us and eventually wither away, to bring us back to enjoying effortless action.