



The Four Relinquishments, by Peace Pilgrim

Once you've made the first relinquishment, you have found inner peace because it's the relinquishment of self-will. You can work on this by refraining from doing any not-good thing you may be motivated toward, but you never suppress it! If you are motivated to do or say a mean thing, you can always think of a good thing. You deliberately turn around and use that same energy to do or say a good thing instead. It works! The second relinquishment is the relinquishment of the feeling of separateness. We begin feeling very separate and judging everything as it relates to us, as though we were the center of the universe. Even after we know better intellectually, we still judge things that way. In reality, of course, we are all cells in the body of humanity. We are not separate from our fellow humans. The whole thing is a totality. It's only from that higher viewpoint that you can know what it is to love your neighbor as yourself. From that higher viewpoint there becomes just one realistic way to work, and that is for the good of the whole. As long as you work for your selfish little self, you're just one cell against all those other cells, and you're way out of harmony. But as soon as you begin working for the good of the whole, you find yourself in harmony with all of your fellow human beings. You see, it's the easy, harmonious way to live. Then there is the third relinquishment, and that is the relinquishment of all attachments. Material things must be put into their proper place. They are there for use. It's all right to use them; that's what they're there for. But when they've outlived their usefulness, be ready to relinquish them and perhaps pass them on to someone who does need them. Anything that you cannot relinquish when it has outlived its usefulness possesses you, and in this materialistic age a great many of us are possessed by our possessions. We are not free. [...] Now the last: the relinquishment of all negative feelings. I want to mention just one negative feeling which the nicest people still experience, and that negative feeling is worry. Worry is not concern which would motivate you to do everything possible in a situation. Worry is a useless mulling over of things we cannot change. Let me mention just one technique. Seldom do you worry about the present moment; it's usually all right. If you worry, you agonize over the past which you should have forgotten long ago, or you're apprehensive over the future which hasn't even come yet. We tend to skim right over the present time. Since this is the only moment that one can live, if you don't live it you never really get around to living at all. If you do live this present moment, you tend not to worry. For me, every moment is a new opportunity to be of service. --Peace Pilgrim

