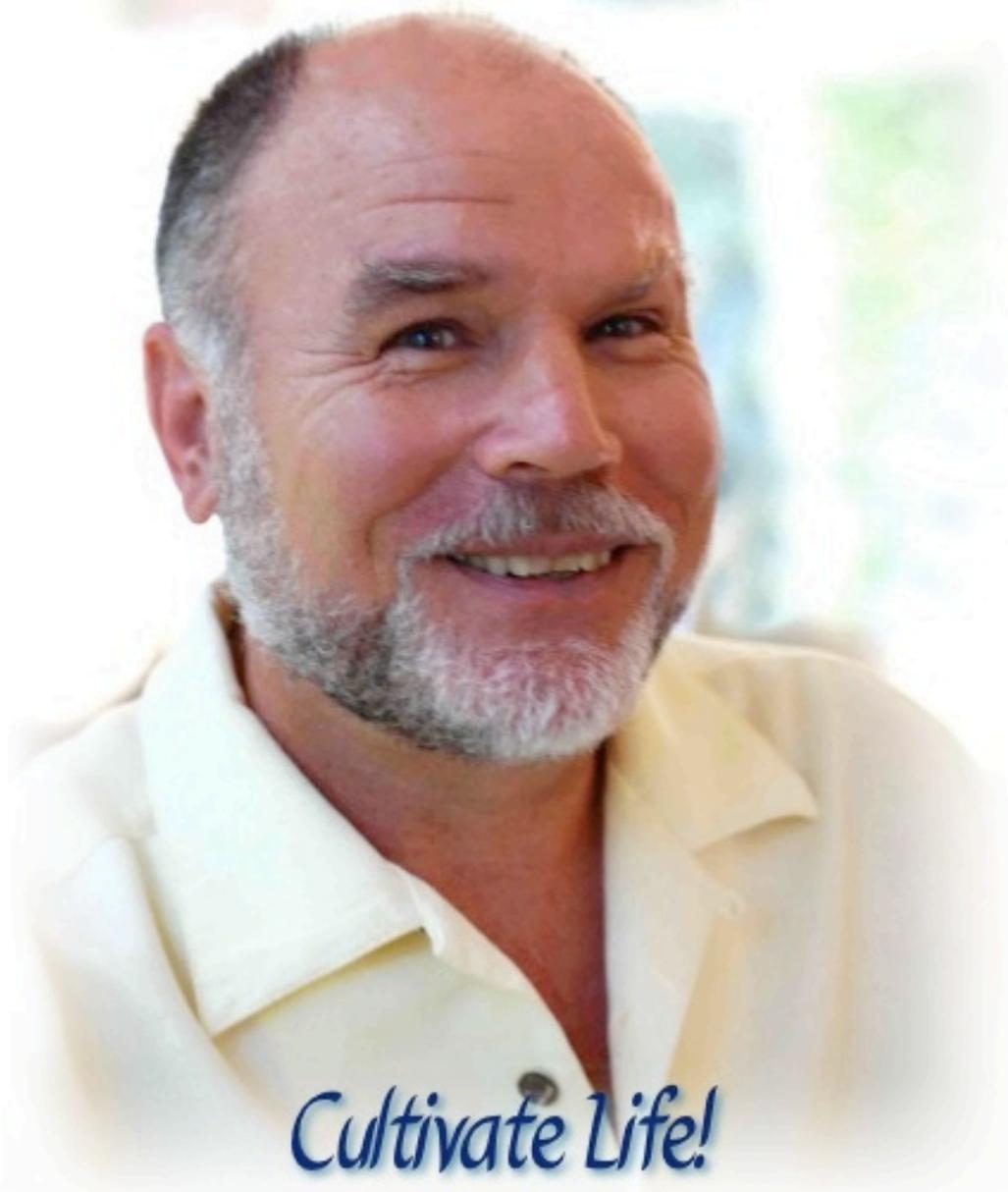


Guy Finley

Finding Peace of Mind



Cultivate Life!

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Finding Peace of Mind in the Here and Now

by Guy Finley

Our present nature believes that everything worthwhile, i.e., pleasurable, has to do with what we can extract from our relationships, business, money, powers, etc. We look into this world that we see as being outside of us, hoping to find something in it to complete us. What we don't see is that the nature that searches the world outside of itself -- to make itself feel whole and real -- has set itself apart from that which it hopes will heal it. It divides to conquer; but this level of self can never overcome the unhappiness that is born of its own divided state!

The "healing" we need, the sense of wholeness for which we search, has nothing to do with adding anything to ourselves. This needed healing comes from recognizing that the pain we have -- along with the suffering inherent in being negative over this pain -- is born out of participating in a series of illusions that have been handed down from generation to generation!

Who in their right mind would educate anyone -- let alone their children -- that the answer to their heartache is to further stress themselves by struggling to control conditions outside of themselves -- especially when the only thing anyone "wins" for such effort is to become the inadvertent slave of what he hoped would free him? Or what about trying to distract ourselves from what "dogs" us in life -- as if running toward a pleasure changes the fact that something is barking at our heels, making us run away from its unwanted presence?

We are divided within. We serve two masters: what we don't want, and its opposite -- the desire of the moment produced by resisting what life has brought to our door. Being split this way keeps us from knowing the peace of mind and fullness of heart that is the same as being whole in the here and now. So this is the first illusion, and in a sense, the first and last lesson in true self-liberation: the real world *is not* what our thoughts and feelings would have us believe it is.

We must begin the necessary work of welcoming the Light that leads to letting go; our soul task is to release ourselves from an unconscious relationship with a false self whose imagined conclusions -- about how to find lasting peace and contentment -- are the secret source of conflict on this planet. Then, liberated by the light of understanding, we will enter and know -- as our own -- a brand new world in which happiness and wholeness are one and the same.

Excerpted from *The Essential Laws of Fearless Living* by Guy Finley

BONUS: Guy Finley interview

How to Use the Power of Inner Storms to Live Stress Free

A Dialogue between Letting Go author Guy Finley and psychologist Dr. Ellen Dickstein

Guy Finley is the founder and director of the non-profit Life of Learning Foundation. He is author of *The Essential Laws of Fearless Living* and *Let Go and Live in the Now* plus 30 other books and audio programs in the field of self-transformation. For more information on Guy Finley and to sign up for free weekly email Key Lessons visit www.guyfinley.org

Dr. Ellen Dickstein earned her PhD from Johns Hopkins University and was a tenured professor of psychology at Southern Methodist University. She is a leading authority on stress and anxiety in today's busy world and is the co-author with Guy Finley of *The Intimate Enemy*.

ED: Guy, it seems like there are many paradoxes in the spiritual path, and I think there is a lot of confusion because we don't understand our role in the grand universal scheme of Life. One of the paradoxes that you write about quite frequently is that we can learn to use the power concealed within inner storms — negative psychological states, like anger, worry, and fear — to free ourselves from the stress that fills our modern-day lives. To be able to use negativity to end negativity sounds like a skill that would be extremely helpful for most people. Can you explain how a person can use negative states to find the peaceful, successful, stress-free life that we all long for?

GF: We are presently unable to tap the power contained within interior storms for one primary reason: When we are enveloped in an interior storm, we mistakenly believe that there is no difference between ourselves and the negative thoughts and feelings surging inside of us. But the fact is, who we really are — our true Self — sits above the storms that pass through it.

Let me ask you a question: if you throw paint into the air, does the air get painted?

ED: Of course not.

GF: Right. Because air and paint have two totally different natures. Another example is light shining from a lighthouse on a dark, stormy night. The higher nature of the light allows it to pass right through rain and wind to ensure the safety of passing ships. In the same way, our true Self cannot be "made" stressful even through stressful thoughts and emotions may be passing through us.

Herein lies a powerful lesson: any time we feel angry, frightened, worried, or stressed, we can realize that we are not the negative thoughts and feelings passing through our minds and hearts. We can awaken to the understanding that our true Self has a different nature and exists in a higher world than those negative energies. And we can use this simple truth to begin to examine exactly how negativity justifies its existence within us.

ED: Can you explain that further?

GF: The first thing we need to understand about interior storms is that they are produced by what I will call "unnatural" opposing forces.

Natural storms are formed on Earth (and in space) when two opposing energies collide with one another. For instance when warm air from the tropics meets a chilly arctic air mass over the North Atlantic, a storm is formed as the two systems exchange hot and cold air and moisture creating wind, waves, clouds and rain. The storm is the evidence of an imbalance that is created as the two systems strive to find equilibrium. In nature, storms are always resolved in a relatively short time because the energies that cause the storm in the first place just plain wear themselves out.

The beauty of natural storms is that they are always positive. Everything that comes out of the natural reconciliation of their forces serves to produce something new — a new form, a new possibility, a new life.

Natural storms freshen the air. They nourish trees and polish mountaintops. They wipe clean and renew what was soiled and aged.

ED: So what does all of this have to do with interior storms?

GF: As above, so below.

ED: Can you explain?

GF: Sure. When someone doesn't share our values or ideals related to a particular subject, isn't it our tendency to see that person as being a problem, meaning he or she obviously lacks our level of wisdom, i.e., he's an "idiot", or worse!

ED: Right.

GF: So the values I hold collide with the values they hold. Do you know these moments, Ellen?

ED: Yes. Quite well.

GF: Right, we call it an argument. But isn't an argument just a collision of forces? Isn't an argument a storm? And here's the amazing part: unlike storms in nature, storms inside of human beings aren't always positive — and don't always get reconciled.

Any form of resentment for example (which all of us harbor in some degree) is proof of an unnatural, unreconciled storm that serves nothing but negativity.

Another example would be getting stressed over living up to our own, or someone else's expectations. All stress does is make us hurt, and steals the creative energy we need to accomplish whatever it is we have set out to do. Yet, especially in today's world, everyone is stressed out. The inherent power contained in colliding energies — i.e. our wish for excellence and the forces that stand in our way — is wasted by our own minds resisting the storm.

This is where it gets exciting. When we see this action at work inside of ourselves, we begin to ask the question, "Why doesn't that storm inside

of me produce exactly the same outcome as does nature when she brings opposing forces together to produce new clarity, purity, freshness, and perfection?”

ED: So the answer to the question is that in nature, opposing forces aren't resisted, which allows them to be reconciled so that something positive and new can be created. But the human mind resists the healing energy of storms and continues in a cycle of negativity.

GF: Yes. Exactly. We are subject to these storms because there is a part of us — our lower nature — that defines who we are, and how life should go. This lower nature is the cause of our stress because it creates images, clings to them, and works to protect them in spite of how they cause harm to ourselves or to others.

ED: So the very things that we think are valuable and make life valuable — our dreams of how life should go — are the very things that are preventing us from living a true and valuable life.

GF: Yes and the "paradox" isn't that there is anything wrong with one's wish to achieve, to be excellent, to want to develop his or her mind. There is a natural upwelling inside of a human being to pursue excellence. It is natural to want to understand ourselves, deeply and through as many avenues as possible. But at a certain point in our lives we can start to see that there is an inherent limitation in wanting to know ourselves through the world outside of us. And this limitation begins to become clear when we see that all of the storms in our life are connected to our ideas of how we think life should go.

And then one day it dawns on us that these “storms” we experience aren't coming to take something from us; they are evidence of Life trying to show us where we are resisting Its infinite intelligence. You see, the storms of life and the immense creative energies contained within them, are always producing forms. After all, what is life but energy producing form after form — in an ever more perfect upward transformation?

ED: So, when we begin to see that we suffer from these storms because of all these ideas we hold of ourselves, and we realize that being in a storm — if we deal with it properly — can actually begin to wash away

these images and give us something new and beautiful, then we can actually begin to welcome storms.

GF: Yes. Most of us have heard the passage attributed to St. Paul: "I live and die daily." This statement speaks to an order of ourselves waiting to be realized that doesn't just "live" moment to moment, but that "uses" each and every event in life to die to what is old so that something new and better can be born. All of these ideas we are discussing point to the possibility of a completely different order of relationship with life — where instead of fighting with storms, we learn to use them to wake ourselves out of the dream that is the cause of our conflict with reality — which is the cause of all useless human suffering.

So, instead of allowing the lower self to justify its stress, to blame others, or to judge itself, all of which only accelerates the effect of the storm, we can do something all together new and different: we can expose the whole of our Self to the whole of the storm, and then let the natural, beautiful Intelligence that actually produces these storms, do what it will with us, which is to lead us through a process of transformation into a new and more perfect creature ... and that is quite literal!

ED: You've said that every storm passes, and it's true. Even in the unconscious person, eventually they get worn out and the anger, or worry, or resentment goes away (at least for awhile). The real issue seems to be, what am I doing in the moment of the storm to allow it to do its work of transformation?

GF: Yes, that's the whole thing. If we can learn to be storm watchers instead of storm fighters, we have a chance to let the stress in that storm do in our soul what it was always intended to do, which is to strengthen and renew us, to produce inside each of us a whole new Life. ###

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About Guy Finley

Best-selling “Letting Go” author Guy Finley’s encouraging and accessible message is one of the true bright lights in our world today. His ideas cut straight to the heart of our most important personal and social issues – relationships, success, addiction, stress, peace, happiness, freedom – and lead the way to a higher life.

Guy is the acclaimed author of *[The Secret of Letting Go](#)* and more than 37 other books and audio programs that have sold over a million copies in 16 languages worldwide.

For more information about Guy Finley and his life-changing work, visit www.guyfinley.org.