

# Letting Go Vs. Giving Up

Have you ever wondered what the difference is between 'letting go' and 'giving up'? There certainly seems to be a very fine line between the two. Intuitively, I know there is a different feeling between the two, but it's only recently that I was able to understand the essence of that difference.

For me, 'giving up' is like folding your cards in poker, throwing in the hand before all the cards are dealt. You stop investing energy into the project and concede failure at a point way before the finish line. Like in poker, we usually fold as a result of fear, uncertainty or a spot-on analysis of the situation and the likelihood of success. You can usually tell the difference by how you feel about the 'giving up' after you've done it. When you feel calm, confident and free, you can be pretty sure it was based on sound analysis. There are definitely times when moving on is the appropriate way to go.

On the surface, 'letting go' looks the same. What I now understand, however, is that what I'm actually letting go of is the attachment to the results, especially the results I decided the action would have before starting. This process allows me to play out the hand knowing 'Yes, I might win; Yes, I might lose' but either way I gain something from the experience". It also allows me to keep investing energy into whatever it is.

So often in life we judge ourselves not by the results of our actions, but by what we decided in advance the results 'should' be, our expectations.

We often speak of others' expectations of us and how deadly they can be, yet we forget that we develop expectations as well. In many ways, our own expectations can be more devastating than someone else's expectation of us. We may have an initial knee-jerk reaction to the idea of someone else having expectations, something inside us that shouts 'No!' even as we try to live up to them. Unfortunately, our own expectations seem normal and 'right' and we rarely question them.

A long time ago, I heard an expression that I must admit I don't remember as consistently as I'd like: Let go and let God. For me, it's the essence of letting go of my attachment to the results. I believe (and tell my clients) that it is our job to figure out what we want, to develop a clear picture of that and to start moving towards it. It's God's responsibility to figure out "how". Our actions send a strong message that we are truly committed to experiencing whatever our stated goal is. The process is definitely one of "co-creation".

Next time you are feeling disappointed in how things are turning out, here are some questions to help you determine if it's time to let go:

- How have I defined success in this area?
- Where did that definition/number come from?
- What is that result supposed to bring me? What feeling?
- What other definition/number can bring me that feeling?
- What am I learning in the process?
- Am I taking all the actions necessary to make this come true?
- Am I willing to let go of my attachment to the results?

*Louise Morganti Kaelin is a Life Success Coach who partners with individuals who are READY (to live their best life), WILLING (to explore all options) and ABLE (to accept total support. She publishes a free bi-monthly newsletter, The 3-Minute Coach, which offers tools, ideas, strategies and action plans to assist individuals in creating the life they truly want. In addition, she is the author of the ebooklet "Blueprint for Success: 101 Tips to Reclaim your Vital Energy & Get the Results You Want ". Copyright© 2003, Louise Morganti Kaelin. All rights reserved. For more information about Louise, contact the Frog Pond at 800.704.FROG(3764) or email susie@frog-pond.com; <http://www.frogpond.com>.*

