



## Letting go: A creative initiative towards freedom

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### Abstract:

The notion and process of 'letting go' are examined as explicated in the Asian world view. It is discussed that 'letting go' is an ingenious move for freeing the self from disquieting emotions and negativity in consciousness. Islam recommends 'unconditional acceptance,' of what comes, and 'let be,' of what exists. Accepting the inevitable without self demeaning grudge and full conviction that cosmic will' is meant for making things behtar (better), is the way to 'let be.' Buddhism considers attachment as the root cause of all the suffering and recommends 'letting go' attachment with the ephemeral objects of desire. Hinduism shares such insights with added intensity. Some confining factors against 'letting go' are attachment and desire to hold; wish to have control over aspects of life; fear of the unknown; negative emotions; concern for the outcome of one's actions, and absence of alternative perspectives for freedom. Accordingly, we consider holding on and attachment to our possessions as important for psychological security. However, experts argue that holding on to anything (including our past), is like "holding on one's breath" which will ultimately suffocate. Ironically, 'letting go' ends the outwardly search for 'psychological security' and frees the self from resisting against fear, upset, and tunnel vision. Similarly, desire to have control and power over aspects of life robs the possibility to see that we are forcing outcomes, and resisting the way things are. 'Letting go' ends the efforts to force outcome and controlling things, we cannot. Thinkers point out that we fear losing all that is known and familiar and hence decide against 'letting them go.' Further, as of negativity in our thoughts and feelings, we fail to forcefully suppress them and they do exist. Holding on to sadness doesn't make bearing the loss any easier, and patiently enduring pain does not free us from the suffering. Alternatively, 'let go' is a creative decision against clinging to pain and holding on to the very thing which keeps us away from hope and positivity. 'Let go' liberates the psyche from the negativity in emotions that it holds and reveals the reassuring stance of being placed in the present. Lastly, the Hindu world view prominently notes that unless we 'let go' the concern for the results of our action and focus only on the process, the 'self' would continue to be rattled by pain and tossed by excitement that are tagged with the outcome. Some helpful freeing options from the Asian perspective are surrender, renunciation, detachment and drusta



bhav (being the witness). In surrender one chooses to become the medium of a higher cause and thereafter gets instant immunity from experiencing the impact of negative and positive outcomes of one's actions. Renunciation is a unique proposition which does not ask to 'eliminate' the objects of desire but to 'let go' its 'craving.' The ingenuity of drashta bhav lies in 'letting go' involvement in the happenings by adopting a nonchalant, laid back, detached witness attitude.

### Biography:

Jyoti Verma, Graduated from Benaras Hindu University with First Class Honours and a Gold Medal. She completed her Master's degree with Gold Medal in Psychology from Patna University and was awarded Ph. D. from Patna University in the field of Social Psychology. She joined Patna University as lecturer during her doctoral scholar days and became University Professor in the year 1995. Dr. Verma has held the positions of Member of the High Level Expert Committee on Education of Government of Bihar, Member Academic Council of the Nalanda Open University, Member of the Expert Committee for the review of Fourth Survey of the ICSSR, and later as expert in the Research Proposal Selection Committee. Her international assignments include position of the Regional Representative for South East Asia for the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology, Consulting Editor of the international journal the Asian Journal of Social Psychology, and Editorial Board member of the Journal Culture and Psycholog. Dr. Verma has received several awards and distinctions at national and international levels.

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