



EUDAEMONIA **Surrender, with Kute Blackson**

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Kim Forrester 0:00

If you knew unequivocally that everything in life was going to work out in your favour, how readily would you release control, let go, and slip into a blissful state of allowance? I'm Kim Forrester, you're listening to the Eudaemonia podcast and today we're going to shine a spotlight on surrender.

Intro 0:25

Welcome to Eudaemonia, the podcast that is all about flourishing. Plug in, relax and get ready for the goodness as we explore the traits and practices that can help you thrive in life ... with your host Kim Forrester.

Kim Forrester 0:44

Kute Blackson is a beloved inspirational speaker and transformational teacher. He is author of the national best-selling book, *You. Are. The. One* and the newly released title, *The Magic of Surrender*. Kute is host of the *Soul Talk* podcast and he's widely considered to be the next generation leader in the field of personal development. It's my absolute pleasure to be chatting with Kute today about the profound power of surrender, and to learn how we can live more flourishing lives by learning to let go. Kute, welcome to the Eudaemonia podcast. It's such a delight to have you here. The word freedom, Kute, appears a lot in your new book. When we learn to live in surrender, what is it that we're actually liberating ourselves from? And how has it changed your life - how can it change our lives - being able to enjoy the sort of profound form of freedom?

Kute Blackson 1:45

Yeah, you know, I say that surrender is really the password to freedom. And so often, as human beings, we are constantly in a paradigm or a pattern of control. We're constantly trying to control every single thing in our lives. We control ... try to control ourselves, try to control our friends, try to control our spouse, try to control our pets, try to control our children, try to control the weather, try to control God. I mean, we're constantly trying to control every single thing. And, you know, all it tends to lead us to is stress and anxiety and fear. And, you know, if there's anything 2020 showed us in certain ways is, we really aren't in control of so many things. You know, I think the pandemic and last year is just the universe reminding us, "Hey, you guys thought you're in control human beings? Here though." As children, you know, if you look at it, when we were children, as children, when we were born into this human experience, we were free. We were free, we were alive, we weren't trying to control everything. We would cry, we would shout, we would fall, we would poop, we would ... You know, we were just curious about life, we were open to the possibilities, we were open to what life was unfolding. We were available. That curiosity allowed us to let life ... allow the moment to lead us. But then a couple of things start happening. Firstly, we meet our parents, and we're often born into a certain environment that might be painful or challenging or dysfunctional. So the first thing is, we start to just kind of learn a certain survival mechanism to shut down, disconnect, not feel as a way to control the level of pain we experience. And so that's when the survival mechanism of

control begins. But then we also learn a certain way of being in the world. The sense of, you know, "Who do I need to be in order to get love from my parents? Who do I need to be?" And so we start to control again, and tried to engineer and manipulate unconsciously, how people perceive us so that we can fit in get love be approved. And we start developing a personality - a certain kind of personality or some persona - we start developing all sorts of masks to fit in; to get love; to be validated. And then we hold tightly to this way of being - avoiding pain and getting love. We hold tightly to this way of being. And we think that's us. And so, from a very young age, we start learning to control to function and survive. So the surrender is to your soul. The surrender is to life. The surrender is to let go and really allow this intelligence of life - allow your soul - to guide you and lead you, and allow yourself to be led by life. And so that's the invitation.

Kim Forrester 4:23

What you're saying here is really profound and also very, very personal. So I am a recovering people pleaser. And I know in myself that I've spent my life trying to control the way others view me; trying to control how much other people like me; trying to control their level of happiness and enjoyment so that I would be liked. So I totally understand. And I'm currently going through this transition into surrender; into self worth. So I totally understand what you're saying. Here, I think is the big challenge. Most people integrate that way of being, most people integrate a controlling way of being so deeply into their identity, that we don't even know that we're doing it. My listeners will be hearing you now saying, "You know, oh, you're controlling this factor and this factor of your life" and they'll be going, "No, I'm not. I'm just making choices." How can we tell in a moment that we are functioning from a part of us that is trying to control? How can we tell in the moments of our lives that we are not in surrender?

Kute Blackson 5:28

Yeah, I think that the ... I think you have a very good point. The degree to which we are conditioned, is the degree to which we're not free. Many times we think we're free, like, "I'm a free being", but we're really not in many ways. Many times we are actually living without being conscious; without being aware, as you're talking about. We're not necessarily conscious or aware, we're actually living and playing out some of the patterns of conditioning from our childhood, from our parents. And so I think the first step is to realise, just realise, "Am I really free?" Just realise that. "Is who I am, who I really am? Or is it a conditioned version of me?" And I think we have to be willing to have the courage to question ourselves. And then we have to start becoming aware to cultivate awareness. And I think one of the ways we can do that is, moment to moment, once we acknowledge "Yes, I've been conditioned in some way. It's just the process of being human", then I think that we have the opportunity to get into relationship with ourselves, a relationship with the moment, to begin to, shall we say, question ourselves. To begin to observe ourselves, witness ourselves, look at ourselves. And as we act, and as we react, and as we live our life, kind of check in and question, "Is this action authentic? Is what I'm saying true? What would I really say if I didn't need to say what I thought other people needed me to say? Is this, what I would say? Is this what I believe?" And I think the more we can begin to question ourselves, the more we can begin getting in touch with our truth.

Kim Forrester 7:08

You touched on this in your book. Because, for me certainly, the awareness came through discomfort; through emotional discomfort and an understanding that what I was playing out in my life was no longer serving me emotionally. And you actually write in your book that it is vitally important for us to surrender to our own emotions; to allow everything in our emotional bodies to be

revealed and acknowledged. And my experience is certainly true that, when we surrender to how we truly feel, there are all sorts of incredible messages and wisdoms and teachings and signposts hidden within our emotions. How does surrendering to our emotions help us flourish in life, Kute?

Kute Blackson 7:53

Here's what I would say. One of the things that tend to keep us stuck, are the ways that we suppress our feelings, suppress our emotions. Surrendering to your emotions does not mean wallowing in your emotions. Surrendering to your emotions does not mean being a victim; does not mean being weak. We have to realise that all feelings remain present until we acknowledge them; until we feel them; until we process them; until we allow ourselves to experience them and feel them so that they can dissolve. And when we don't feel them fully - even though we have learned to suppress them - when we don't feel them fully, because they stay stuck inside of us over time, that layer of energy will just build up, and build up, and build up, and build up, and build up and begin to block and cloud over full, free, radiant expression of our authenticity in our heart. And who we are will tend to get buried underneath all of the unprocessed, unfelt, incomplete pain, hurt, shame, guilt, trauma, sadness, etc, etc. heartbreak that we have not allowed ourselves to feel. And so I think it's so important if we want to be free to, yes, we could say surrender to our humanity, surrender to the process of being human, surrender to allowing ourselves to intentionally, consciously feel our feelings fully. One of the ways that I see a lot of folks in the spiritual field - and this is something I used to be guilty of - is we'll call it a hyper-toxic positivity. You know, so cool. "I don't want to feel that negative feeling because it's bad." It's wrong to me. There's no good feelings and there's no bad feelings. There's just energy moving; energy in motion. And one of the mistakes I see people doing is a spiritual bypass and it goes something like all that, "I want to be in a high vibe. I want to be in a high state and that sadness, that grieving, that pain, that's not positive. That's not high vibe. So let me not ... it's not spiritual so let me not feel it. The challenge is when we suppress that, and we don't feel it, it stays stored in our body. Then we end up carrying that inside of us. We will feel more tired, we will feel more lethargic, we'll feel maybe more depressed over time. When we carry that with us vibrationally, we are resonating in that sort of lower vibration - that heavy vibration - and unintentionally, what I found is we will tend to create situations that attract the like energy to the unprocessed feeling. And so to me, in life, the quickest way to manifest the next level is to feel complete, release the old energies of the past. And that's a really important piece to surrender.

Kim Forrester 10:49

Let's go back to that toxic positivity. Because I truly understand that that is one example of people trying to do what they believe to be right. I've done this in the past. "I want to be a good spiritual person. So therefore, the right thing to do is to feel positive all the time", or in my case, to be nice and pleasant to everybody all of the time, to my own detriment. Kute, you write about the importance of surrendering our need to be right. How do we do that and why does it matter that we do so?

Kute Blackson 11:25

What we think is right is not necessarily reality, or the right reality. It's simply what we think is right based on our level of consciousness. It's what we think is right based on our identity. It's what we think is right based on how we perceive the world, which is determined by the state of our nervous system, our physiology, our consciousness, and which is programmed from our conditioning. And so I think we have to be willing to question ourselves. Like, what is 'right'? Right is simply our perception that we've developed from our experiences from our life - from our childhood, from our

past - that we've learned to develop in this moment as a way of perceiving the world, that we project onto the world. So our perception of right is simply a projection. When we can sort of step back and acknowledge right is not real, right is just our perception, then I think that can open to some humility. I say, everybody is right. Let me repeat, everybody is right from their current perspective, and from their current position is their 'right'. But what they believe may not be right for you. You know, there's people that I don't agree with, necessarily, but when I really am willing to step outside of myself ... When we're stuck in a rightness, we're so stuck in our own limited perception and identity, that we can't step outside of ourselves. And this is where suffering comes, and disconnection comes, and frustration comes, and lack of communication comes, and the end of relationships come. And so when we are able to step outside of ourselves and put ourselves in another person's shoes - when we're able to step out of ourselves and rather than seek to being right, I say, seek to truly understand - because if I grew up how that person grew up, if you grew up how that person grew up, if you lived what they live, if you had their parents, if you had their childhood, if you grew up in that country, if you had those experiences, if you were abused and experienced and heartbreak, and whenever that person went through, you probably would believe what they would believe.

Kim Forrester 13:33

What you're saying there is so vitally important for us to understand and I want to bring it back to a really intimate level. Now, I'm the mother of two adult children. So this particular question is very personal, very pertinent for me. But you were saying there that everybody is right, and our 'right' is not necessarily what is best, or what serves other people. How important is it that we surrender our loved ones, particularly our children, to their own path, and let go of the need to advise, to meddle, to offer our expert advice, or to fix others perceived mistakes?

Kute Blackson 14:18

Yeah, I think, look, as a mother, as a parent, there is a level of responsibility that you have to provide a loving space, to do the best you can to guide these beautiful souls that have incarnated in your life, and through you, and into your care. And so there is a level of responsibility, for sure, to guide and bless and love them, and teach them the best that you can about ... What I will say, and what I do feel, is every single human being, I think we all are our souls. And our souls ... we all have our own unique journey. We all have have our own unique evolutionary process. We all have our own soul. If life is a school, we all have our own soul's curriculum. And sometimes we don't always understand the journey that someone's on. Sometimes we don't always understand the lessons that another person needs to learn, even if they're our children, and so on. So when we realise that every single person is a soul with their own journey- that ultimately, yes, they're your kids, they are your kids on one level, but they are also a soul on their own journey with their own lessons to learn - that your job is not necessarily to impose your ideas. Your job is to invite, to share, to impart, to challenge, to question, to offer, but not to make them into an idea of what you think they should be. They have their own journeys. So in that sense, they don't really belong to you. People don't belong to you. Your brother and your sister, and your husband, and your wife, and your girlfriend. We have this idea that, "You're mine". Ultimately, they belong to life. The best way I feel, to change people, is to stop trying to change people. The best way to influence and impact people is - rather than trying to force them and tell them what to be what to do, you know, based on all of the ideas that we think are right - I find is to live your life at the highest level of your own potential; to live your life with love, with kindness, with grace. To live your life as a demonstration of what you believe. Not just you, but me, but all of us. When you live your life as a demonstration, as a living example, as a living testament, as living teachings, as a living possibility of your ideas, of your beliefs, of your truth, then your life becomes the fruit of your own internal belief. And that shows up in, let's say, you're happier,

you're joyful, you're blissful, you're radiant, you're kind, you're loving all of these amazing things. Your life starts flourishing and working. I guarantee you, over time people, your kids, people, will come to you - come to you without you going to them - they will come to you and say, "Hey, Kim. Hey, Kute. What's going on? Something's working in your life. You seem so blissful. Like, what's happening?" When people come to you, and when people come to you, then they are ready and they are more open to listening.

Kim Forrester 17:38

We are so determined, though, I think to make projects out of not just our children, right. But also there's a seriousness around the planning of our future. Particularly, anyone who has dabbled in personal development has heard about, you know, the two year plan and the five year plan. And you have to have a very specific idea of what it is that you're working towards, and you know, and know down to every detail, and work towards that plan. Now, what is your view on building and following these long term plans - on having such specific projects that we are undertaking? How can we hold a vision for ourselves that is meaningful, and yet still live in surrender?

Kute Blackson 18:25

Really great question. I would say that it's okay to have a goal, it's okay to have a plan. But the challenge becomes when we hold so tightly to that plan, or that vision - that we're white knuckling to that plan and that vision - that we're then not really open to the infinite possibilities of life. And many times, we set a goal - this is the kind of side point - but many times we set a goal that we think is what we want. In the moment, we're sure that's what we want. And maybe you achieve it and you realise, "Oh, this is not really what I wanted." And many times we set a goal that we think is what we want, based on who we think we are. But if we're not really in touch with our authentic nature, who we really are, many times our goals can be a drive to get some unfulfilled need met that wasn't met as a child. For instance, you know, "I wasn't enough and no one thought I was beautiful and creative", what have you. And then the reaction from pain becomes, "I'm going to be a star, I'm going to make so much money. I'm going to prove them wrong." And then the drive for that goal that we think we want, that we're setting, is not necessarily an authentic drive. And so I think we first have to be willing to question our goals and get clear, "Who am I really?" and really get clear, "Is this goal authentic?" So nothing wrong with a goal. But I think it's important to - even when we align with the most authentic goal that we're able to tune into in this moment, because it's never perfect aligned - with the most authentic goal, honest goal that you're able to tune into in this moment. And when you feel that authenticity, yes, you can get clear. You can make a plan. You can start getting specific about that. If it's authentic. But what I'm saying is, don't get too attached to it. Because when we get so attached to it, we begin to limit life. We begin to think, "It is going to happen this way, it has to happen that way, it's going to manifest this way, it's going to look like this." And the truth is, we don't know.

Kim Forrester 20:39

The way you describe it there is so powerful. And you touch on this in your book as well. Because for you, surrender is not passive, right? It's not some airy, fairy spiritual concept whereby we transcend reality and float around in some blissful state of Zen while our life unfolds for us. You say that personal responsibility and accountability to others is also a part of this concept of surrender. How so?

Yeah, I mean, look. So when we think it's weak, but surrender is to me, spirituality needs to be lived in life. To me real spirituality - and surrender is to me spirituality, you know. Living in a state of surrender, living in partnership with, and in flow with, this infinite expression of life itself. But real spirituality has to be lived in daily life. Real spirituality is not just praying and meditating, and woo-woo. Real spirituality to me, is showing up on time. Real spirituality is the willingness to be compassionate when someone wasn't so kind to you. To me, real spirituality is doing what you say. Real spirituality is the willingness to take responsibility, and make amends, and ownership for maybe hurting someone you know. This, to me, this is spiritual. And so sometimes surrender is not passive. Surrender might mean, the need to tell the truth to yourself that you're in a relationship that, you know, is not aligned. It's not right. It's not aligned. It's not for your highest good. It's complete. And it's the courage to have the hard conversation and let go/ True surrender might mean, you're in a job, you're in a job that's safe, and maybe you're successful, and maybe nothing's wrong. But you know, deep down that if you died today, your heart would be full of regrets. And real surrender is the willingness to say, "You know, what. I'm going to be honest about what I feel. This is safe, it's comfortable, it's the known, but I'm not happy." That is surrender. The willingness to be honest with yourself in that moment, to surrender to the truth of your heart, the truth of your soul and say, "I need to leave my job." And maybe don't leave your job today. But but the honesty to say, "I need to leave my job and I now need to make a plan." Because maybe you have responsibilities and the kids. So, okay, within two years, within a year. But it's the willingness to know to stop lying to yourself. Sometimes one of the ways we keep ourselves stuck, is we lie to ourselves. "This relationship is fine. This job is okay." You know, sometimes we are constantly negotiating with our destiny, negotiating with our soul, negotiating with life, in terms of what we're here to do. And so one of the ways we do that is, we play this game of confusion. "I'm not sure Kim. I'm not sure what my purpose is. I don't ..." We know what our purpose is deep down. There's a part of us that knows. "But I'm confused. I'm not sure." That's just a way to avoid really surrendering to putting ourselves on the line and going for it. Real surrender is showing up. Life is always happening for your highest good. Life is always seeking to express for your highest good. So even if you can't see why certain things are happening right now, if life is happening for your highest good, that means if a relationship ends, something better, something higher is seeking to express. And also the open hearted participation in the state of surrender is where you are willing, we are willing, to roll our sleeves up and fully engage and participate with the process of life as it's happening. Because we understand that life is an evolutionary process. We are souls here to learn, grow, and evolve. So rather than focus on the what and the which, and the when, and the how on the surface of what's happening in the experience - even though life can be challenging and painful - the surrender is to learning the evolutionary lesson that that relationship, that that situation is bringing us. And when we learn the lesson, in a moment, we always win. To truly surrender - which we spoke a bit about this - we have to allow those emotions, we have to allow the grieving. Because most people don't allow the grieving for the reasons we said. But the grieving is what allows us to let the past go, to release the past, so we can open to surrender. So we can open our hearts to the future. So we can open to more love. Then we move into flow, Kim. That's when life starts happening. That's when magic starts happening. And that's really what I intend and desire for every person listening right now - to remember that surrender is the password to freedom.

Kute, that just sounds so inspiring and empowering. Thank you for that, that description there. My final question is one that I asked every guest on the Eudaemonia podcast. Can you offer my listeners a morning reminder - this might be an affirmation or mantra, perhaps a little practice - something that can help my listeners tap into surrender as they begin each day?

Kute Blackson 25:55

Here's what I want the listeners to really hear, from my heart to yours. Let's be real. Please hear this. You are going to die. Please feel that. Not as some negative morbid, scary thing. It's reality. You are going to die. There is no escaping that. Jesus Buddha, the great mystics, Mahatma Gandhi, Bob Marley, David Bowie, Bruce Lee, they all died. You and I, Bill Gates, Oprah, all gonna die. Beyonce. We're all going to die. There's no escaping. It's not a matter of if, it's a matter of when. And so, if you knew the date and time of your death, would that change how you're living your life right now? And if death came today, would you be ready to go with no regrets? What's ungiven, what's unexpressed, what's unloved, what's unsaid, what's uncommunicated? I'm saying, as a daily practice every morning, feel your death. Give thanks for being alive but feel your death. Don't run from death. As a culture, we're so busily running away from death. Feel your death, hold death close. Because through death ... without death, there is no life. And when we accept and feel the reality of death, we're reminded of the preciousness of life. Because when we die - and I hope we all live a long life - when we die, and we meet our maker, whatever we believe, we can't go to God and say, "God, I wasted about 10 years in that relationship that I knew wasn't quite right. Can I get a refund on those 10 years?" There's not ... there's not refunds in life. Once it's gone, it's gone. So everyday, ask yourself, "If today was the last day of my life, is this how I want to die? Doing what I'm doing now? Is there more?" Feel death and use the reality. It's real, it's not theory. It's real. Use the reality. Use that as a meditation; as a feeling practice in your heart to clear away the BS, to clear away the inauthenticity, to clear away the places that you're may be resisting, because you don't have time. The only time you have is right now. How would you need to live your life so that you have no regrets? Feel that every morning, welcome death every morning, then you will begin to become fully alive.

Kim Forrester 28:21

Oh, I hear you. Surrender to the reality of our own mortality. Kute, your brand new book is out just next week and it is just a fabulous, awesome little exploration into this concept of surrender and freedom. If people want to find out where to get the book, more about you and the messages that you have to share, where can people find you?

Kute Blackson 28:49

A couple of ways. They can get the book, go to www.themagicofsurrender.com to get the book. And then they can just enter their receipt and get a whole bunch of trainings, videos, free gifts. Me personally, my website www.kuteblackson.com. Find out more there. And I'm also on Instagram and Facebook, and feel free to connect anytime.

Kim Forrester 29:10

Kute, your desire to inspire, to lift others it is so palpable and really, really powerful. So I want to thank you so much for the passion that you bring to the work that you do, and for gifting your time and energy here today to share those messages with my listeners. Thank you for choosing to be a part of the Eudaemonia podcast.

Kute Blackson 29:31

Thanks so much

Kim Forrester 29:33

As the writer Anne Morrow Lindbergh once remarked, "If you surrender completely to the moments as they pass, you live more richly those moments." You've been listening to the Eudaemonia podcast. If you'd like to learn more about how to live a truly flourishing life, please subscribe, check out www.eudaemoniapod.com for more inspiring episodes, or come join me on Instagram @iamkimforrester. I'm Kim Forrester, until next time, be well, be kind to yourself, and surrender.