

The Right Use of Will... Beyond Willfulness

Deborah Jones

What is will? Do we possess it? Is it something to use? Does it govern me? Is it my ego? Is it a universal energy? Is it trainable? Can I harness my will power? Do I have free will?

Wisdom teachings of the ancient traditions tell us we have a storehouse of energy inside our solar plexus – energy that can be harnessed, trained and directed.

Many refer to this energy as our Center of Will. Within this storehouse, our will resides as potential waiting for us to shape it. However, also stored in our solar plexus is the complexity of our unexpressed emotions, our interpretations of life experiences, and the resulting limited views of self and other. Books we've carefully written about *how to protect myself at all cost* are shelved neatly in our solar plexus for easy access.



In our Center of Will, this pure potential meets our human life. And within this chaotic storehouse the shaping of our will happens, consciously or unconsciously.

Shining Light into the Darkness

Stuffing feelings straight into our solar plexus has become an extreme sport for many of us. We were taught that showing our feelings leaves impressions of weakness, instability or a sense that we are “just too emotional”. Because we can’t stop feeling, we simply detach from them imagining that our unexpressed feelings can’t harm us. All the while we are losing access to the strength and purity of our incorruptible essence... the Right Use of our Will.

Our solar plexus is also where we hold tight to emotional and psychological wounds that distort our ideas about ourselves and others. When allowed to fester, these untended ideas create elaborations or exaggerated “me-stories” that govern aspects of my personality and how I present myself to the world. From half-truths we craft our masks, almost instantaneously believing we are those distortions.

The Dualistic Interpretation of Will

Our culture values autonomy, individuation and a steel will capable of tackling anything. We've learned to use our will to determinedly accomplish tasks or to power through difficult situations. Skills worth cultivating, unless we over-identify with them. After all, the energy of your will can provide

clarity, purposefulness and a sense of direction. On the other hand, we've experienced being wounded by the willful action of others. In our personal lives, our relationships, our culture and our country, we know the harm caused in the name of personal power.

Do I gear up to match aggressive behavior? Or do I let my wounds teach me to shy away from using my will, developing low self-esteem and a passive attitude? Too much will... not enough will? A bungee cord jump we've become quite familiar with.

So is the energy of my will like a double edge sword, one I can use to manifest healing or cause harm? The answer is "Yes". However, in its purest nature our will is not the weapon. My unconscious wielding of it is the weapon. The Right Use of Will is an inner edge where I cultivate choice. I can live willful and self-oriented, or I can open in compassion. I can live in clarity manifesting benefit, or I can live from an insular, smaller version of myself. It is mine to shape. And in that shaping thus shape my life.

Mastery Within

Like the great spiritual Masters, we too can train. We can develop skills and practices that encourage us to turn toward our wounds and misgivings. And in that turning toward, we transform them and create a stable ground for the opening of our heart centers. We can become spiritual warriors accessing the Right Use of Will with no need to manipulate or project our untended emotions and willfulness onto another person or circumstance.

*To be a true spiritual warrior,
one must have (an open) heart;
without (an open) heart and a sense of
tenderness and vulnerability,
our warriorship is untrustworthy.*

Chogyam Trungpa

Accessing the Right Use of Will is alchemical. We take the base metal of our misshaped ideas (the shadow I want to hide at all costs from everyone, including myself) and through the fine art of self-examination, purification and transmutation we turn our willfulness into gold. Free of our wounded views and projections, the healing of self liberates the heart's compassion and we become useful as instruments for lessening the suffering in our world. In essence, our hearts come on line and through the Right Use of Will we learn to manifest more peace, kindness and wakefulness. We become the alchemist desperately needed on our Earth.

Training my will has been a life-long endeavor. One well worth persistence. When training with my black belt Ninjutsu teacher, we practiced board breaking as a way of honing the will. In Ninjutsu warrior training, there are two ways to break a board – the hard way, and the soft way. You likely know what the hard way looks like, as the individual practicing powers up her energy, focuses it with a shout, and breaks the board forcefully with her hand. Certainly one way of directing our will. Soft board breaking however, is quite a different way of working with the will. As a student, I would sit on the ground next to a board carefully positioned on cinderblocks. I would close my eyes, still my mind, balance my will and heart and repeat this mantra, “There’s nothing there. There’s nothing there.” And when I was in complete alignment inside the instructions were simple, “Move your hand through the thin air.” The board would break before my hand ever hit it.

Liberation

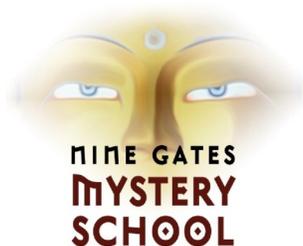
Developing the Right Use of Will is a journey of liberation. Freeing my will from obscurations. Allowing my will to come into heart balance. Courageously uncovering places where I am not free outwardly... and where I have imprisoned myself inwardly.

This journey of liberation includes surrendering; not admitting defeat, but rather courageously and willingly letting go of those old “me-stories” and the limiting views about myself and life. We learn to surrender into that will / heart balance, so our truer self becomes available. Today I offer you a Sufi meditation of letting go.

The Four Surrender’s Meditation Link

<https://www.ninegates.org/spirituality-health-article-will>

In the **Nine Gates Mystery School** students develop lucidity in the body, experiencing the felt-sense of will in both its underdeveloped and healthy states. Students explore the Right Use of Will and learn to stabilize that awareness. In the **Nine Gates Esoteric School**, initiates extensively train the subtle body in the Right Use of Will. They develop pliancy of the thinking mind – the mind’s ability to abide in stillness and shift perspectives at will thus reshaping what we perceive as “real”.



The Right Use of Will is not about forcefully willing into being. Rather it is more like soft board breaking, about willing from within a place of inner alignment and freedom. From this place, our spiritual warriorship and Right Use of Will become trustworthy! I become someone I can trust, allowing myself to trust others. My Right Use of Will can calm the inner and outer storms. I become a co-creative force of peace.

Deborah Jones bio:

Deborah Jones is the Executive Director of Nine Gates Programs, Inc., serving as the spiritual leader and primary teacher of the Mystery Schools and other Graduate Programs. She is also the Founder of Nine Gates Graduate program, the Esoteric School. Deborah has worked intensely with wisdom keepers from around the world, practicing the healing arts, shamanism, the integrative application of the Hindu and Buddhist tantric paths, tribal trance dance, the transpersonal psychology of spiritual awakening through the energy and emotional bodies, and other ancient arts of the wisdom tradition schools.

Deborah is dedicated to the awakening human will and encourages her students to turn toward the co-creation of a world where collective will serves the upliftment of all sentient beings... where human and nature and Divine Will are known as non-dual, as inseparable.

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