

## Control and Surrender - Surrender and Connection Series

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### Control and Surrender: Surrender & Connection Series

Recently, I heard a sermon based on the passage in Matthew where Jesus is talking about not pouring new wine into old wineskins. The scripture in Matthew 9:16-17 continues, "If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

Because we're unfamiliar with ancient practices, sometimes it's difficult for modern readers to understand Jesus's parables. In those days, people used animal skins-like goatskin-for storing liquids. Fermented drinks like wine expanded, and since an old wineskin would already be stretched to its limit, the new wine would tear the seams. Of course, Jesus wasn't just talking about wine and wineskins--he was making a very specific point. He was

here to do something completely new.

If his disciples or others tried to make sense of what he was speaking about through a lens of old expectations and regulations, they'd miss the amazing thing that was happening. Through Jesus, God was beginning the process of redeeming the world to Himself. And if people expected this to look familiar to what God had done before, they wouldn't understand.

Although this lesson was being taught about matters of faith, I believe that we can apply this to the many relationships in our lives--with our spouse, children, parents, siblings, co-workers, boss and ourselves. What kind of lens am I looking through to see the people that I care about and interact with? How do my preconceived ideas about how they will act/react or what they really think about a situation color my relationship with them? How much do I try to manage or control the outcome of a conversation? In addition, what concepts about myself limit my ability to care for and love myself and others?

**Surrendering** is an important step in beginning to change attitudes and concepts that no longer serve me. This starts with an awareness that maybe there is a different way for me to approach or think about things. Begin to identify attitudes and words that get a strong negative reaction from others. Recognize when I am taking things personally and consider that similar past experiences may color my perception. Strive to see situations, people, and myself from God's point of view. *Acknowledge that all that I can really control is my response to others, not their decisions.*

I'd like to ask you to do a small experiment. Make a tight fist while focusing on some part of yourself that you have difficulty accepting--your reactivity, anger, strong feelings, unworthiness. Let your other hand represent you wanting to work on/fix this issue. Try to force the first hand open by trying to pry it. It will likely be a battle. But stop for a minute, shake out the open hand. Now, approach your fist with empathy and gentle, loving energy.

Using compassion, encourage your fist to begin to open.

Let this love and compassion be your new approach to surrendering control and creating greater connection in your relationships. If you didn't have a chance to read the first post in this series, click the link below. Stay tuned for more on Surrender and Connection.

[www.coachmyrna.org/blog/discover-the-beauty-within-surrender-connection-series](http://www.coachmyrna.org/blog/discover-the-beauty-within-surrender-connection-series)

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