

# OPEN WILL

"The Lord will deliver you, and you have only to be still." -- Exodus 14:14

Meister Eckhart said, "The spiritual life has much more to do with subtraction than it does with addition." Here, at this place on the path we are called to let go. This is hard because our culture reminds us at almost every level that more is better, even though, some deeper intuition knows that, "less is more." We sense that the things that truly matter require significant leaps of surrender. Without letting go we cannot learn how to love. Without practicing opening up and letting down our defenses, to tolerate, forgive, and abide, no authentic relationship is possible. Imagination and creativity require this letting go, this surrender. We learn best when we practice letting go of egoic assumptions and "rightness". We are energized for activism when we let go of our need to be important and recognized. As we draw close to the 2nd threshold of Surrender we sense that no spiritual awakening is possible without us getting out of the way so that we can open into that which is deeper and wider than our thoughts or feelings. The Desert Fathers and Mothers gave birth to what we call the "apophatic tradition", knowing by silence, symbols, and not even needing to know with words.

This movement of opening the will is not giving up. Rather it is becoming awake and aware of the present moment, and what is right in front of you, fully and without resistance or attempts at control. It is practicing "going with the flow". In this sense, opening the will is almost the exact opposite of giving up. It is really opening to receive the gifts of the present.

Although we have been made to believe that if we let go we will end up with nothing, life reveals just the opposite: that letting go is the real path to freedom.  
Sogyal Rinpoche



## **Open Will in Context**

Interior:

Interpersonal:

Systemic:

Environmental:



## Exploring Open Will

Questions: What in my life is essential and what can be let go of? What, of that which is essential, can I hold with more lightness?

Posture:

Conversation:

Language:

Belief:

Challenge:

Practice: