

Surf's UP
10 Life Lessons from a Soul Surfer

The Ocean: Cosmic Liquid Dream Energy

The sea may be so primal a part of the human psyche because it is so remarkably similar to our blood.

A conscious connection to the ocean is instinctual for many. Profound wisdom may be gleaned from simply spending time in it, or near it. Its mysterious presence has intrigued and inspired philosophers, poets, artists and adventurers throughout the ages. The soul surfer of this text is a reference to a Conscious Connection to the Liquid Dream Energy of the ocean. Anyone who loves to observe and be immersed in the shape, the forming and breaking of a wave, seeing how light reflects on and through it, who loves to be moved by the spectacle, hearing it, feeling it in its awesome fluidity, knows this connection with the Soul of the Surf, the Spirit of the Ocean.

This expression of the greater Life Force resonates with those surfers who not only paddle out into the Big Blue because it is a source of tremendous fun, or a challenge to ride a wave. Soul surfers ride with the elegance of one who resonates with the greater pulse of Prana, aware that this Chi is a great keeper and teacher of Cosmic Wisdom.

This wisdom is beautiful in its practicality. The wave does what it does, you can either be part of it or not. If you paddle out feeling in any way unwilling to meet the ocean on its terms, your surfing just won't work. In the ocean you are impotent if you get impatient, close off from nature, or are in any kind of negative state. Head space doesn't work there. When you become one with the Great Cosmic Life Force that Just Is, you become One with your Potency. That is a Massive Great Big Life Lesson.

Out there behind the break, just taking the time to get into and be in the Zone, senses attuned to the motion of the liquid dream substance you are floating on as you perch on your little fibreglass craft, you are far away from the ordinary world and its stuff. Out there you are immersed in the practice of one of the most powerful states humans can achieve: to be in the Moment.

To be present, in the body, in the Now, is, in fact, inescapable, for how can we be anywhere else? Yet we spend so much of our time on earth, denying or escaping this reality. Most lives are lived chasing an unreal future, or trapped in an unreal past, often both. This is an effective route to oblivion, to spiritual demolition and planetary extinction. Evolution lies in Awakening our dormant Consciousness.

Negotiating a Way of Life in which we seek to be present rather than scattered all over the place, inclusive rather than exclusive, paranormal rather than paranoid, loving rather than cynical, can easily become grand idealism. It helps to keep it simple; to just keep on peeling away the veils of untruth that are held in place by mass unconsciousness, with all its firm beliefs and opinions, stuck in a bodies, trapped in delusion. The Conscious Ocean can show you how to be in the world, but not of the world.

Becoming Conscious is an Epic Process. For Soul Surfers it is obvious enough that the matrix of limitation cannot be breached by perpetuating the same madness that created it. This little text reminds us to engage in the processes to Dream and Dare, and keep on keeping on doing so. Drop out and Connect with Soul. Do it Now. Be Present in the BodyMind. Do whatever it takes. Just get in touch, and stay Connected to the Cosmic Magnificence and Significance of the wave.

NB. You don't have to acquire a surfboard or get a yoga mat to connect with the Magic. As a yoga teacher, musician and wave enthusiast, soul surfer philosophy flows effortlessly for me. But that is how it is for me; you have to find your own wave. You can dance, play, create, code, grow plants, work, anything, but you also have to move your body, breathe, and become still to be conscious in the way of the Light Body. It is easy, and not so easy, the Magic is there, it exists, always, when you celebrate your unique Aliveness. You are the Wave and the Rider. Zen mystery, like the Ocean of Life itself, is a practical life lesson.

When you're ready the Ocean will be there for you to dip into its Living Waters of Infinite Wisdom.

Betty's Bay,

31 December 2015 - 1 January 2016.

1. There is always another wave

It is a great comfort to know there is always another wave out there. You may not necessarily be there to get it, it may not always be there when you want it. This is just how it is, and the sooner you accept this, the sooner you learn that the Nature of the Universe is Opportunity and Abundance. Trust and Surrender are vital lessons. Opportunities come and go. At times they may rush at you with intensity, at times there is just nothing there. No need to curse when you miss a great wave, or wipe out. Be full on when an opportunity presents itself, but also know that if it doesn't work out there is no scarcity of opportunities in the greater picture. Scarcity itself is an opportunity (a lesson to learn). Herein resides Infinite Possibility: the Ocean of Life is far bigger than you, and its mysterious nature cannot be contrived or controlled. This is the Real Nature of the Universe.

2. Be in the moment

Visualise this: to have no expectations. Feel it's liberation? Focus on any one thing. Make that one thing Everything. Take in the whole - now you are in the Zone, able to access your greatest potency. You are alive when you are Sharp as a Blade, you're at once the Cutting Edge and soft and smooth as a huge tub of cream. Expansive and focussed. Meditation and visualisation is not always that easy. So just imagine a Glassy Liquid Dream day, nice big swell, and clean lines. But remember, out there on the water, when you're daydreaming, you might miss the signs of the Perfect Wave rising. You might get crushed if you're thinking of anything other than the ride. You might get flattened and held down if you feel fear and doubt, and if this results in miscalculation and wipe-out. In life we tend to wipe out at anything we attempt when thoughts or emotions interfere with our instinctual abilities. Razor sharp reflexes are required if we are to be in the moment, and regularly being in the moment sharpens our reflexes to a default Be Present Mode.

3. Try again

You will fall off whatever you get on to. That's just how it is. We are not always full on, in fact, untrained we are seldom truly in the moment. Life is a process of learning things like these. So we all know that when we want to succeed at

whatever we're trying, and come short, we just have to try again. And again and again. But cut yourself some slack, you don't always have to get right all the time - sometimes it is okay to try again later. Yes, develop Perseverance and Endurance, also unlearn less useful habits and drop ineffective practices, evolve, develop new techniques. There is great strength in any cross training; there are techniques for everything. Although combined, all-rounder skills take longer to acquire, and are often useful in the long run. Seek out Inspiration and Knowledge, and keep on trying until your practice becomes a Flowing Expression of Inner Wisdom.

4. Look after your body

Take care of your flesh and bones, and your chances of living and thriving increases massively. Even if you only want to keep on keeping on, learning how to maintain and optimise your physical vehicle is an excellent strategy. Beyond the practicalities of diet and exercise a greater transformation or evolution. Perhaps even the grand ideal of alchemy and immortality, which has, by the way, less to do with diet and other fads and more with how you look at things, and Connecting with Creation. But we're not talking about living forever or becoming bulletproof or a super hero. Transcending the ordinary evolves us to a higher frequency, where we understand the Light of the Ocean is a reflection of the light of the sky, which reflects the Light of All that Is. When that Light is Ignited in you, in your BodyMind, you are on a path to Self Realisation, and are activating your Light Body capacity. This is all very mystical on a deeper level, but begins with how you take care of yourself, other, and your environment on a practical, day-to-day basis.

5. Is it my ego, or self?

Nothing is ever about you. In this perspective Life is one big neutral Cosmic Ocean. It is Life, but has no agenda. When you polarise yourself by taking personal offence when someone or something affects you, you are in ego mode, and in trouble. Do everything in your power to unlearn this behaviour; it is a dysfunctional default setting for many. For example, a wave smacks you in your face; you don't get upset at it because you know it is not out to get you. It is only a wave. Likewise when you experience an awesome ride, fully realise that the

Joy and the Wave is a Cosmic Creation. You can be and should be chuffed that you made the effort to experience the experience, but be sure to remember that you don't own the forces at play. Likewise, life and death are objective: they happen and will continue happening long after you're gone. When you learn this and apply it to your life, you're just not that affected by what others say or do. You are your own person. You understand that Prana, the Life Force, is much bigger than than your body, even bigger than this planet, way more immense than ego. When you have a hard time with this remember to surrender to the greater Way of the Universe, to not be in self-will. Such Surrender is not defeat, but in Victory - Knowing over Ignorance. Remember that You Are Awesome when you Realise this. Practice to be humbly in touch with, and immersed in this aspect of yourself. Follow this Path of Surrender and the Magnificence of Who You Are will astound you.

6. Life is a process

Surfers say they are stoked when they're feeling amped after an awesome session because they are - stoked. That fire in the belly is what steam engines were all about, and is also how our digestive fire functions. Both examples are kind of agents of passion. Having said that it is useful to remember there are also lulls and doldrums, up and down cycles. No Rome is built in a day and no one is amped all the time. Plus the searching for meaning, seeking understanding, and implementing and fermenting life lessons and knowledge into Wisdom is an Alchemical Process of epic proportions. Know that a questioning mind may encounter resistance and obstacles from its surroundings, not always a comfortable, uncomplicated life path. This process is the function of all the stuff that drives the motor behind the Magic Bullet of the Cutting Edge. All the years of making one's way to the beach, paddling out into the unknown, under adverse conditions, making great sacrifices to get Time on the Ocean serves the Soul Surfer when we face with our Long Dark Night of the Soul. And vice versa. And the emanating strength that results shows us how to make small fry of the little things we tend to sweat.

7. It can be intense

It never helps to panic. Don't hold your breath, ever, unless you are under the water. And then, learn to do so in a way that keeps you calm and relaxed. If you can do this you can buy the moment or minute you need to remain objective when the shit hits the fan, or is about to. Whether you are about to drop into a massive wall, or getting pushed down by tons of water, intense situations is defused or diffused by remaining present, impersonal and unemotional. For longer or ongoing periods of intensity, just adapt your game plan to include the other lessons above. Because evolution means pushing the envelope, it often is an uncomfortable place to find oneself in. Make sure you get a healthy dose of fun.

8. Have fun

Keep things light, for goodness sake :-). Avoid too much seriousness. Life is hard enough, in some ways, or at times, approaching the ideal conditions where you can get into the zone may mean rough going. Philosophically speaking we probably have to suffer to learn, and in the process we may learn that to be happy we don't have to avoid suffering at all costs. That great lessons can be learned when things go wrong. On the level of well-being it is also useful to understand that health is not solely the result of disciplined regimen. If you don't have a well developed sense of fun, you're kind of dead in the water. Laugh or learn to laugh, have fun. Practice. Sooner or later Joy will Arise, spontaneously. Here the real fun of life begins. So laugh your head off when you ride your best wave ever, and when you fall off what could have been your best wave ever. The great thing about being in the water is that it is sensational. It isn't a head thing. You feel the Ocean's Liquid Motion Energy with your whole body. Gliding gracefully on a wave or just sitting out there looking at the scenery, the ocean is a perfect medium to experience whole body joy. This joy is not the domain of the top surfers or for that matter surfers; anyone can have a lot of fun floating, swimming, bodysurfing, splashing in the whitewash, or just splashing ankle deep in the waters of life.

9. Application, not separation

Let the salt water and the exhilaration of a sunrise or sunset ride, the turquoise hues and blue skies, and the deep sea swells be your balm and your vigour. Surfing generally makes people who surf happier; doing anything holistic makes the people doing it happy. It's the simple math of applying "do what you love" as much as humanly possible. Follow your bliss makes for better human beings, and paying the happiness forward makes for a better, happier humanity. Let the water be your source of gratitude and kindness when you get back on land. Learn from and be energised by the ocean, so you can really just tap into life, everywhere. This is application of Ocean Wisdom. All is, indeed, One. Reality has many aspects and dimensions - the great yin and yang. Honour the Dance of Shiva with your attitude. Remember the Wave. Share and Care.

10. Letting it go

Getting to ride a wave means getting there, doing it. It has to be a full on commitment. We got to really want to do it. Yet we must not want it so badly that it burns our lives. Soul Surfers are passionately dedicated to the ride, but also know that it is not that important; nothing is. Ultimately nothing around here lasts forever, and we cannot, no matter how hard we try, make the ride every time. True, lasting inner peace is the result of complete freedom - of having no ties that bind us. Our mission is to arrive at a place where nothing controls us. While simultaneously understanding that we cannot control anything either, only regulate or choose our response. Surrender and embrace. This is a greater teaching and challenge: practice letting go without giving up, embrace every effort to live to the max. Then you add value without taking, you give without losing. Be kind to others and to yourself. This is focus and expansion, a Zen riddle of balance of the immortal mortal and forever now. It begins again and again within the wheels of trust and surrender, surrender and trust. Do this and the soul will guide the self to surf the very best wave: the realisation of the wisdom it already knows.

About the author

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