

ACCEPTANCE IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

(A Guide)

Daniel A. Miller



Acceptance in The Time of Covid-19

(A Guide)

Daniel A. Miller

Ebb and Flow Press
Sherman Oaks, California



ALSO BY DANIEL A. MILLER

*The Gifts of Acceptance:
Embracing People and Things as They Are*

*Losing Control, Finding Serenity:
How the Need to Control Hurts Us
and How to Let It Go*

How to Invest in Real Estate Syndicates



Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	5
<i>Chapter 1: Acceptance in The Time of Coronavirus</i>	7
<i>Chapter 2: How the Serenity Prayer Helps Deal with the Coronavirus</i>	10
<i>Chapter 3: Managing Expectations in The Time of Coronavirus</i>	14
<i>Chapter 4: Accepting Agitated People in The Time of Coronavirus</i>	17
<i>Chapter 5: Letting Go of Judgment in The Time of Coronavirus</i>	20
<i>Chapter 6: Overcoming Denial in The Time of Coronavirus</i>	24
<i>Chapter 7: Overcoming “Lulls” and “Lows” in The Time of Coronavirus</i>	27
<i>Chapter 8: Dealing With Fear in The Time of Coronavirus</i>	30
<i>Chapter 9: Taking Stock in The Time of Coronavirus</i>	33
<i>About the Author</i>	36
<i>Praise for The Gifts of Acceptance</i>	38

Introduction

“Serenity is not freedom from the storm, but peace amid the storm”
- Unknown Author

In writing the *[The Gifts of Acceptance](#)*, it was my desire (and hope) to assist others in accepting the often difficult and challenging “what is” in their lives. I offered practical tools and strategies for practicing acceptance that I had learned through personal experiences and the inspired stories and wisdom of others. I addressed the challenges and obstacles of accepting “what is” in terms of debilitating health and sickness, financial loss, personal failure, and acrimonious relationships with our loved ones, friends, co-workers, and foes.

Never once could I have imagined encountering such an all-consuming, fearful, and perplexing “what is” as coronavirus and the Covid-19 pandemic that continues to ravage through our lives. For me—and I know for others-- it was beyond the pale of what I could envision a widespread tragedy might be.

Early in the pandemic, my oldest daughter, Lora, suggested that I write some short articles about my personal experiences (and those of people I knew) about how to practice acceptance during this time. She said it might help others. The idea of being of service at a time when I was personally struggling with the impact of the pandemic resonated with me.

As I began to write, it quickly became apparent that the same tools and strategies that generally work so well in practicing acceptance—and the obstacles we need to overcome--were if anything, even more vital in The Time of Coronavirus.

What follows, then, is a compilation (with the help of my other daughter, Lana) of these articles into a short guide about practicing acceptance in The Time of Coronavirus. I hope you find it helpful, and please feel free to share it with your friends and loved ones.

*During Covid-19, I have lowered the price of the ebooks for [*The Gifts of Acceptance*](#) and [*Losing Control, Finding Serenity*](#) to \$2.99, so that more people will be given the opportunity to read and hopefully learn from them.



Chapter 1: Acceptance in The Time of Coronavirus

“Acceptance doesn’t mean resignation; it means understanding that something is what it is and that there’s got to be a way through it.”

- Michael J. Fox, American Actor

“These are Times that Try Men’s Souls”

In December 1776 General George Washington and his troops were facing imminent defeat, having been driven out of New York and chased across New Jersey by the British.

Washington had been deserted by Congress and his demoralized, hungry, and ill-equipped troops planned to go home in two weeks when their enlistments ran out.

In an inspired move, Washington rounded up his weary soldiers into ranks and had them listen to a stirring message written by Thomas Paine:

*“These are the times that try men’s souls. The summer soldier and sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country, but he that stands it now deserves the love and thanks of man and woman.”**

Thomas Paine’s words had a major impact on Washington’s beleaguered soldiers. A sense of renewed commitment and sacred mission returned to their souls.

Two nights later they crossed the Delaware, caught the British mercenaries completely off guard on a groggy hangover

the morning after Christmas Day. Washington captured the whole British contingent of a thousand Hessians without a single American being killed.

The rest, as they say, is History!

We are now facing an equally precarious time in our “history”—one brought about by the unrelenting coronavirus and Covid-19 pandemic. And many, if not most, of us are equally dreary, beleaguered, demoralized—and fear driven.

I wish I had some stirring words like Thomas Paine to arouse and inspire you. I clearly don’t. I suffer the same unsettling range of emotions that you likely do.

However, I know that practicing acceptance In Time of Coronavirus has helped me cope with the current chaos and uncertainty. It lightens my spirit. It grounds me. It balances me. And it frees me. (See my last post “[*How The Serenity Prayer Helps Deal with the Coronavirus*](#)“)

From the tremendous response to that post, I am heartened to learn that it helps others as well. Daily blog visitors have increased more than tenfold. Facebook friends and fans have shared broadly.

I cannot tell you how deeply grateful I am for that. It makes me feel useful and being of service at a time when I so often feel helpless and powerless.

It also motivates me to do and share more about how to practice acceptance and enjoy the many “gifts” that surely follow.

I thus will be offering a short course on “Acceptance In The Time of Coronavirus” through weekly blog posts.

I will share what I know and have experienced first-hand, as well as things learned from others, about practicing acceptance--its benefits, keys, challenges, obstacles, catalysts and dynamics.

Although I have extensively written and [talked](#) about these subjects before, I will discuss them and others within the context of the coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic. I hope to do so in a personal, everyday sort of way.

*From [The Crisis](#) by Thomas Paine, December 23, 1776. His cogent essay is prescient about the politics, public panic, and other aspects of the coronavirus pandemic.



Chapter 2: How the Serenity Prayer Helps Deal with the Coronavirus

*“God grant me the serenity to accept
the things I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.”*

- The Serenity Prayer, attributed to
Reinhold Niebuhr, 1892-1971

The Serenity Prayer has really helped me in dealing with the severe impact of the coronavirus and I hope it can help you as well.

Every day it becomes clearer how powerless—and helpless--we are over so many aspects of the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on our lives. Jobs and financial losses, business closures, the heavy burdens on parents from school closures, food and supply shortages, and the strict physical and social constraints, including separation from our loved ones. The vast suffering by so many is heart wrenching and immense.

The Serenity Prayer teaches us that the more we are able to accept our “powerlessness” over (and inability to change) such tragic circumstances, the more serenity we will have in our lives. It is extremely difficult and challenging, to be sure. We feel helpless by our lack of power and control. However, even partial or intermittent acceptance is beneficial. (I explore these

subjects in depth in my books, [*The Gifts of Acceptance and Losing Control, Finding Serenity.*](#))

Yet, it is the very acceptance of “what is” that is key to mitigating the hardships and vast changes in our lives brought about by the coronavirus. Indeed,

Acceptance can transport us from despair to hope and even joy.

How?

As I have repeatedly expressed in my [speaking](#) and writings on the control and acceptance dynamics, with acceptance comes a *critical shift in focus*--from what we can't control or change to what we can.

This shift empowers us.

It does so by expanding our vision—substantially so. We become much more aware of things and areas in which we do have power and control, and that in turn reduces our stress, anxiety, and despair. We no longer feel so *stuck* and mired in negativity.

This is the very essence (and encouragement) of the second line of the Serenity Prayer: “The courage to change the things we can.”

Hence, just as we are unnerved by the things we are powerless over, we are empowered by the things we do have power to do and change—and there are many when we are *freed* to focus on them.

Acceptance gives us that freedom

I encourage you to explore and embrace your “powers.” Be creative, open—and courageous. Here are a few I have personally enjoyed during this time:

- Tending to the “little” things that I didn’t have time for before: gardening, organizing my closet, drawers, and files; cleansing and ridding the house of unneeded and unused “extras”; strolling in the neighborhood, admiring the natural beauty all around me, and saying “hello” to neighbors on different streets I hadn’t yet met; reconnecting with friends I hadn’t talked to in a long time; and drawing and painting.
- Enjoying my wife’s healthy home cooked meals.
- Listening to informative and humorous podcasts and participating in online virtual meetings and get togethers through Zoom.
- Re-reading some favorite books and enjoying them even more.
- Face timing with my 96-year-old mom, whom I am unable to visit because of the mandated lock down in her assisted living home.
- Being more aware of, and grateful for, the many blessings I have in my life, including a loving family, good friends, blue skies and sunny days, good health, and much more.

- Learning more about what's truly important to me and what changes and additions I would like to make once the crisis subsides and hopefully passes.

These powers have brought me unexpected pleasure, comfort, and balance during this trying time. Most were inspired by my daily reciting and applying the tenets of The Serenity Prayer. (See my post, "[*Optimizing the Benefits of the Serenity Prayer.*](#)")



Chapter 3: Managing Expectations in The Time of Coronavirus

“Peace begins when expectations end.”

- Sri Chinoy, Spiritual Teacher

I’ve often talked and written about the importance of moderating our expectations if we wish to control less and accept more. High expectations can hurt us in a lot of ways. (See my post, [“5 Ways High Expectations Hurt You”](#))

A recent occurrence made me realize that it’s even more important to manage our expectations in The Time of Coronavirus, given all the uncertainty and unknowns, and the emotional tolls it has taken on people.

A few days ago, I visited my local pharmacy to pick up two prescriptions I had phoned in the week before. Although the only customer in the store, I waited (with mask on) for what felt like an eternity while the pharmacist was speaking with another customer on the phone.

Truth be told, the wait was actually only about 5 minutes, but I found myself getting anxious and impatient. I had wanted to get in and out of there.

When the pharmacist finally got off the phone, she informed me that only one of the prescriptions was ready, because the other one had expired.

Oh brother, I told myself. I would now have to come back again when the other prescription was filled. Fortunately, I “cooled off.” After all, the pharmacist was a sweet, kind person, who was doing her best during The Time of Coronavirus!

When I later reflected on the incident, I realized my expectations created my angst. Specifically, I expected that

- It would be a quick and easy pick-up since I came several days after the pharmacist told me the prescriptions would be ready.
- That she would have called my doctor for a renewal, as she had done in the past.
- She would tell the phone caller that she would call back after taking care of her store customer—me. (Pretty presumptuous of me!)

And the all-inclusive expectation:

That everything would be (and operate) the same as it had before coronavirus. (Really?)

I know this is a silly little story, but these everyday types of occurrences can easily affect our serenity, if we let them, because of our expectations.

As I've said before, we need to cut people some slack!

So, bottom line, we need to manage our expectations better, lest we become agitated ourselves. (See “[Accepting Agitated People in The Time of Coronavirus](#)”)

These are not normal times, and our so-called “normal” expectations don’t serve us well now, if they ever did!

Simply put, they aren’t healthy for us.

So I encourage you to moderate, manage, and lower your expectations during The Time of Coronavirus. My post “[Let Go of Control by Moderating Your Expectations](#)” will help you do that.



Chapter 4: Accepting Agitated People in The Time of Coronavirus

“Always be mindful of the kindness and not the faults of others.”
- Attributed to the Buddha

If you’re like me, your tolerance of others has been strained in this Time of Coronavirus, be it with loved ones you are “confined” at home with or just people who get on your nerves.

No question about it, most people are on edge these days and it doesn’t take much for them to go off.

Patience is in short supply, and anger is in abundance.

If I were to tell you that you would likely be much better off—and have greater [serenity](#)—if you were to accept these people as they are, you might think I have contacted the virus!

Fortunately, I haven’t—and hope not to!

But I will also tell you that accepting others, as ornery as they may be, does not mean what you might think it means.

It has *nothing* to do with excusing, condoning, or otherwise approving of their words or behavior. (See, ["Three Misconceptions About Acceptance"](#))

It *does* have a lot to do with “staying on your side of the street” and focusing on taking good care of yourself.

Take my friend Jen, for example. On many days, her husband is stressed and agitated, particularly over being cooped up at home day and night.

As Jen puts it, “I truly don’t know what side of the bed he will be getting up on each day.”

She further explains,

“But I also know I can’t fix him or make him feel better. I’ve learned that’s well beyond my power to accomplish. And when I do focus on his woes too much, I soon find myself down the rabbit’s hole as well, and that clearly doesn’t help him any.

“So I just try to love and accept him as he is, pray for his well being, and be careful not to get wrapped up in it all. That allows me to stay more emotionally balanced and focus on what I can do to take better care of myself during these difficult times.”

Here are four suggestions that will make it easier to accept others in The Time of Coronavirus:

- Cut them some slack. These are trying times for everyone. A lot of people are really struggling in coping with things. Their fears, frustrations, and “demons” consume them. These are not normal times and many people are not acting as they normally do.
- Don’t take things too personally. What someone says or does that offends most often has more to do with where they are in their life or what’s happening to them. In other

words, it's not about *us*. Hence, when the “stings” come, try to take some time to consider what their real sources may be and not take the matters too personally.

- Detach with love. This mainstay of the 12 Step programs is particularly helpful now. It simply means to emotionally (and if necessary, physically) separate or remove yourself from the “drama” or unnerving ways of others, but to do so in a kind, caring manner. Jen’s story is a good example of detaching with love.
- Consider whether you had a role in another’s behavior. Let’s not lose sight of the fact that we, too, have been impacted by what’s going on. We also may not be our “normal” selves and may have contributed to another’s offensive or irritable ways. It’s therefore important to at least ask yourself such questions as:

“Did I play a part in the matter?” “Have I been curt or impatient with the person?” “Have I been on edge lately?”, and the like.

I am confident that these tools will help you better accept others in The Time of Coronavirus and concurrently bring you greater calm and serenity.

I welcome your thoughts and experiences on accepting people who bother you. How do you, for example, react or respond when someone upsets or irritates you? What acceptance tools have helped you in dealing with such people?



Chapter 5: Letting Go of Judgment in The Time of Coronavirus

“Every criticism, judgment, diagnosis, and expression of anger is the tragic expression of an unmet need.”

- Marshall Rosenberg, American Psychologist

I’ve always struggled with being too judgmental of others. I’ve worked a lot on being less so, but it takes constant awareness—not only that I’m judging, but also how it impacts my overall well-being and serenity. (More on that later)

I’ve noticed that my inclination to judge others has risen in The Time of Coronavirus. It is likely due to my having greater “dis-ease” and impatience these days—and sometimes getting agitated over little things. (See my post, [“Accepting Agitated People in The Time of Coronavirus”](#))

As a result, I’m more likely to judge or question why people are doing or acting the way they do. I forget that these are not normal times, and most people are often not acting “normally.”

A recent example is when I reacted strongly when a good friend asked me to share a video with my friends in which a disgruntled scientist made some disparaging remarks about a well-known scientist who has played a prominent public role in combating the COVID 19 Pandemic.

After viewing the video, I had doubts about the veracity of some of its accusatory statements. I found several articles that provided evidence disputing the scientist's main claims and admonished my friend about promoting the video to his friends without first fact checking the claims.

I sent him the articles, but that didn't defray him. He was convinced about the merits--and adamant--about what he was doing.

The truth of the matter is that I judged my friend harshly for his beliefs and actions. I felt the video was untruthful and wanted him to stop—signs of a true controller and judger!

When I later thought about my actions, certain things about judging became clearer to me.

- Most judgments serve no real purpose or benefit. It's unlikely to change the way people are or act. If anything, it puts them on the defensive and they are likely to resist and dig in harder.

That doesn't mean we shouldn't express our views and beliefs on matters that are important to us, but rather to not dismiss or disparage others' views without first making an effort to listen and hear them out. (See my post, "[Acceptance Conversations as Peacemakers](#)")

- We are not accepting others for who and how they are. I didn't have to approve or condone what my friend was saying or doing, but I should have accepted he had the right to express his own views and make his own choices, provided they didn't harm me or those I care about.

The short of it is,

When we judge, we can't accept.

- We are often being righteous and arrogant. There is a certain “know-it-all-ness” when we judge. We believe we know better than others and what the “real” truth is. However, we easily disregard our own personal biases. I certainly was that way with my friend.

Indeed, I don't think

A judge has ever been accused of having too much humility!

Even when we wish to judge less, we are often unaware that we are in fact judging. Judging takes many forms. Criticism, curtness, [withdrawal](#), smugness, and having unreasonable expectations are just a few of the ways we voice our judgments.

In many ways, judging is a counterproductive diversionary tactic. It diverts us from taking stock of those parts of us, especially our shortcomings, that don't serve us well. It further diverts us from making an effort to improve upon them.

At its core, judging is a controlling mechanism that harms primarily ourselves.

I thus encourage you to temper your judgments and try to be more understanding and tolerant of others. In doing so, you will control less and accept more, and thereby enjoy greater

peace and serenity in The Time of Coronavirus—and afterwards, as well!



Chapter 6: Overcoming Denial in The Time of Coronavirus

“The worst lies are the lies we tell ourselves”

- Richard Bach, American writer

Overcoming denial is a prerequisite to acceptance. You can't accept “what is” when you are unaware, can't, or refuse to “see” the underlying reality of the situation.

This is perhaps even more true in The Time of Coronavirus.

Denial is not just denying or rejecting a certain state of affairs. Its subtler forms include wishful thinking, kidding ourselves, underestimating things, avoidance, or simply choosing to turn a blind eye.

I feel much of our responses to Covid-19 are of that nature. At the beginning, it was all too easy for me to discount or minimize its spread and impact on our lives. And I am quite sure that I was not alone in believing that.

I frequently heard (and still do) what I consider denial-based comments about Covid-19, such as the following:

“It's not that harmful—the flu kills more people each year”

“They will soon find a vaccine”

“The virus will soon run its course”

“I’m young and in good health”

“Only old people are at risk”

“People are just running scared”

“It’s all politically based”

And the highly optimistic denial: “Things are getting much better now”

The problem is that when you are in denial of the underlying issue or problem,

You can’t make the choices and pursue the paths that can alleviate the very problems you are denying.

Indeed, you risk making them worse!

A prime example is the early opening of restaurants, bars, gyms, and other gathering places by many states and local governments. In almost every instance, there has been a huge spike in cases, deaths, and shortage of hospital and ICU beds.

I’ve previously offered ways to let go of denial in other contexts. (See my post, “[Letting Go of Denial](#)”). One vital key is worth repeating:

We must be able to dispassionately see the “truth” and then have the courage and wherewithal to act upon it.

I understand that people will see different versions of the truth and/or may choose to act in different ways upon it, especially in these highly divisive times.

Nonetheless, I encourage you to at least be willing to **reexamine** your deeply ingrained beliefs in order to gain a greater awareness of when, how, and what you may be denying in The Time of Coronavirus. Remember, too, that when you deny less, you accept more, and will have greater serenity even during turbulent times.



Chapter 7: Overcoming “Lulls” and “Lows” in The Time of Coronavirus

“Against boredom the gods themselves fight in vain.”
- Friedrich Nietzsche

I don't know about you, but it's easy for me to fall into a “lull” and “low” during The Time of Coronavirus.

Every day seems the same, yet I feel different almost every day.

Same in the sense I have a lot of time on my hands most days and am restricted in movement, engagement, and enjoyment of what I like to do, especially playing tennis.

Different because I don't know how I will feel until I get out of bed and begin my day. Some days I feel calm, relaxed and productive. Others anxious and antsy. And unfortunately, a good night's sleep isn't necessarily a harbinger of positive thoughts, feelings, and energy.

And some days, like today, I feel a “lull” and “low”--and lethargic. My body didn't feel right this morning. I wasn't sure if I was coming down with something. Who Knows? Maybe even the dreaded Covid-19. Fear is at the forefront these days. (See my post, [“Dealing with Fear in The Time of Coronavirus”](#))

You may relate to what I'm talking about. If so, I would like to share some simple things that helped me feel much better as the day progressed. I hope they will help you, as well.

- I reached out to a friend to see how he was doing. That wasn't easy for me because I really didn't feel like speaking to anyone. But I knew from past experience that the best way for me to get out of my head's "negative" thinking was to see how others are doing and lend a good ear. My friend greeted me warmly and we shared some insights and "what we were doings" during The Time of Coronavirus. We even had a few good laughs. The conversation lightened my spirits, and then,

- I took a "nature walk" around my neighborhood. It's wonderful springtime here in California. Why not enjoy "the beauty all around me." The blooming roses and irises. The bright blue sky. And the cheerful music of birds. Have you noticed lately that the birds seem happier than ever? The doves even more peaceful? And the ground squirrels playfully scampering around?

Is it possible they know something that we don't?

Or, maybe it's that they know "less" than we do--and are happier because of it?

Whatever the reason, it was a real blessing to be able to share their space with them.

I've heard it said that we are only a guest of nature, and I welcomed the invitation.

I felt so much lighter, and then

- I decided to write this post. I thought that others—maybe even you—have experienced similar lulls and lows during The Time of Coronavirus and my sharing today’s experiences might ease their discomfort.

Quite honestly, just that thought lifted my spirits considerably. And the actual writing—this very writing—helps me a lot.

I gain needed awareness, clarity—and acceptance.

I encourage you try these things when you feel a lull or low. (The writing part can be some basic journaling.) Please also share your experiences and ideas about dealing with lulls and lows in The Time of Coronavirus. It would be helpful to me and I know others.

(You can read my earlier post, “[Accepting “Lulls” and “Lows”](#)” for some other suggestions on this subject.)



Chapter 8: Dealing With Fear in The Time of Coronavirus

“Fear is Fiction’s Best Seller”

– Daniel A. Miller

The many uncertainties and unknowns of the coronavirus pandemic have heightened our [fears](#). So many of us are engulfed in never ending “what ifs” and “what might happens”-- be it our (and our loved ones’) physical and mental health, job losses, finances, or overall well-being.

These fears are formidable obstacles in being able to accept the all-encompassing “what is” of the pandemic that is necessary in order to act in our best—and safest—interests. (See my post, [“How the Serenity Prayer Helps Deal with Coronavirus”](#))

Particularly in my business dealings, I’ve been challenged to confront the tendency in my thinking to overly focus on **“Future Events Already Ruined.”** (FEAR)

Hence, I worry about whether my tenants (who were mandated to cease operations) will be able to pay their rent, or at least a portion of it? Whether some will have to close shop and vacate? And so on.

While these are realistic concerns, my obsessive dwelling over them not only results in the loss of needed sleep, but to my detriment, prevents me from recognizing what steps I can take to minimize the “damage.”

That’s what fear so easily does: Freezes you in your tracks!

To avoid such paralysis, first and foremost, I have learned that I must confront and process my fears. By that, I mean address them directly, and not avoid, procrastinate or deny. (For more on these subjects, see my posts “[Avoiding Avoidance](#)” and “[Letting Go of Denial](#)”).

Here are three interrelated tools that can help process fears in The Time of Coronavirus:

- **Identify the Fears.** In order to process your fears, you must know what they are. Many times they are known only generally because they are a master of disguise.

One of the best ways to identify this most tricky of emotions is to do a fear inquiry.

Thus, when you feel unsettled or anxious—or have shortness of breath or other physical reactions--take a moment and think about what you may be afraid of.

Is it your young children constantly getting too close to others? Your failure to wear a mask when you went to the drug store? Forgetting to wash your hands after bringing in the newspaper or mail? The possibility of being furloughed from work? Not being able to visit your elderly mother at her assisted living home? And so on. Next,

- **Objectify the Fears.** Take some time to separate the objective facts and truths of the underlying situations and circumstances from the hyper imagined ones. Which is to say, don't assume, speculate or react impulsively. Instead, pause, reflect, investigate, and consult when needed.

Thus, with respect to coronavirus concerns, don't jump to the "future events already ruined" syndrome that you or your loved ones are going to get ghastly ill, need hospitalization, not get a respirator, or ??? Instead, try to:

- **Stay in the Moment.** Deal with what is real now, not what might happen tomorrow. Any method or format you use is fine. Disregard all the "mights" and "could bes" that only stir up your fears. Trust that you will be able to handle whatever may happen tomorrow—just like you have in the past.

Through this process, your coronavirus fears will subside.

With respect to my tenants, my fears lessened as I more fully recognized that: a) only several thus far had not paid their rent; b) I had screened them carefully for their creditworthiness; c) legislation had been passed that would help them financially; and, d) I could be more pro-active by reaching out and offering rent deferrals to those who needed it.

Are my fears over? Not by any means. Do I have others? Certainly. But when I remember to use the above tools to process my fears, their impact on my well-being—and serenity—is much, much less.

I would love to hear about how you've dealt with your fears during this time.



Chapter 9: Taking Stock in The Time of Coronavirus

“The privilege of a lifetime is being who you are.”

--Joseph Campbell

The other day as I was sorting through some books that had accumulated on my small bedside table, I came across a “dream catcher” journal that someone had given me sixteen years ago for my 60th birthday.

Even though the journal had remained on a table shelf for all these years, I had only written a few entries. Most notable among them was a statement in which I desired to “live a whole, meaningful, free, and engaging life, and to share my wisdom with others.”

I felt heartened that I had made good progress toward achieving that goal.

Interestingly, the very next entry was a two-page assessment of things I liked about myself—my attributes, if you will—and those that I didn’t and wanted to change, improve upon, or remove. The latter included being less critical of others, dealing with my [anger](#) early on, and not rushing so much.

It thus occurred to me that to effectively strive toward a life that is more fulfilling and meaningful, it is essential to first “take stock” of where and how we are at the moment.

A silver lining of the Covid-19 pandemic is that it provides us with a unique opportunity to do that. There certainly is no shortage of time for most of us to try!

In fact, when you think about it, the immense challenges and hurdles we face in The Time of Coronavirus—emotionally, spiritually, physically and financially--compel us to take such action if we wish to avoid despair and the debilitating feelings of helplessness and hopelessness.

I thus encourage you to start by making a personal accounting of yourself and your life.

In doing so, consider where you feel you fall short. What things hold you back? What do you like about yourself and don't you like about yourself? What behavior makes you feel bad or guilty? What would you like to do better? What things no longer serve you well? And so on.

You will likely find certain recurring themes and impediments that consistently undermine your overall well-being. Try to hone in on them one at a time, asking yourself this very simple, but pertinent question:

“How’s that working for me?”

Your answer will bring the issue front and center and allow no room for convenient excuses or rationalizations. It can also motivate positive changes.

In your personal assessment, you will discover certain positive qualities and traits that you may not have been fully aware of, dismissed, or downplayed. It's important to remember

that they are vital parts of who you are and you should give them their just due. Your attributes play an important role in attaining the life you want.

It is also instructive to ponder the following question from the chapter “Discovering and Accepting Who We Are” in *The Gifts of Acceptance*:

“What do I need to change or ‘become’ in order to feel better about myself?”

I encourage you to envision, reflect, meditate and write about what these things may be and how doing them might make you feel. Then start doing them.

But do them without [expectations](#) or self-judgment. And be [grateful](#) for partial successes, viewing setbacks merely as opportunities for further growth.

As you progress, the healing light of awareness will shine brightly on you during The Time of Coronavirus—and after, making it easier to choose what and who you want to become.



About the Author

I am the author of the best-selling, award winning books, *Losing Control*, *Finding Serenity* and *The Gifts of Acceptance*. Like most compulsive controllers, I was always driven to succeed. I graduated from UCLA with honors in business administration and finished in the top 5 percent of my class at the UCLA School of Law.

While still in my twenties, I became a real estate instructor in the UCLA Extension Program and in my thirties I published a critically acclaimed, best-selling professional book, *How to Invest in Real Estate Syndicates*.

Financial success came early as well. Celebrities and other wealthy people entrusted me with large sums to invest on their behalf. By my mid-thirties I could afford to live in the exclusive Old Bel Air section of Los Angeles.

But for all my achievements and success, I had no sense of inner peace and serenity. How could I? I was imprisoned by my fears, anger and anxieties—all bedfellows of controllers—and thus not open to the wonders all around me.

After suffering a series of traumatic events and financial setbacks that I could not control—no matter how hard I tried—I finally began a new life journey based on letting go of control and accepting people and things as they are. I learned to surrender to the ups and downs and twists and turns of life, instead of resisting them and trying to control people and events.

Over many years, I learned effective tools and strategies for letting go of control and accepting “what is” with my family and friends, as well as in sports, creative endeavors, and the workplace. In the process, I became an artist, a published poet, a successful businessman, a

champion senior tennis player, a happily married man, and a much wiser parent—all while cutting my work time by more than half.

I learned that acceptance is the best antidote for excessive control. But the benefits of acceptance go well beyond just removing the need to control. Acceptance is also instrumental in reducing stress and anxiety (and associated burdens), revealing meaningful life choices, bringing us greater freedom, forging stronger bonds in our close relationships—and much more.

Simply put, accepting “what is” let’s you discover “what might be.”

Thus, through letting go of control and accepting “what is,” I have found a different and more profound success—an internal, core sense of well-being. It is my hope and wish that you, too, can experience these blessings and it is my desire to be of assistance in that journey.

Please join with me in “Helping Make Acceptance Go Viral!”

Sincerely,
Danny



Praise for *The Gifts of Acceptance*

A *Library Journal* Best Wellness Book of 2018.

Benjamin Franklin 2018 Double Self-Help Award Winner –*Independent Book Publishers Association*

Foreword Reviews 2018 Book of the Year Award Finalist –Family & Relationships.

“Best-selling author Miller (*Losing Control, Finding Serenity*) learned the hard way that his control-driven lifestyle wasn’t working and that only by letting go of the reins would he find more tranquility...to accept life on life’s terms—to welcome what is instead of what one hopes the world would be. VERDICT: A solid reminder to enjoy the life we’ve been given. Highly Recommended.”–*Starred Review, Library Journal*

“The common challenges in acceptance, from one’s parents to setbacks and failure, are each profiled in chapters that use case histories and author experiences to illustrate the predicament and the contrast between controlling and accepting behavior patterns. The result is an information title packed with strategies, tools, and tips for negotiating ups and downs with a new paradigm for living a better life.”–D. Donovan, Senior Reviewer, *Midwest Book Review*

“Daniel A. Miller has written a masterpiece in this book...This is a must read for the entire family. Benefit from it and refer back to it often as life goes on.”—*Keys to Recovery Newspaper*

“Miller’s book is absolutely key to both the understanding of acceptance and how to flourish within the confines of relationships that snag our ego. I highly recommend this book to those who find they struggle to

simply ‘let people be.’”—Karen Casey, PhD, best-selling author of *Let Go Now* and other books.

“Danny has written a masterpiece on the art and science of acceptance, revealing the paradoxical relationship between true acceptance and transformation—the key to serenity, vitality, clarity, love, joy, and wisdom.” —Joseph Bailey, psychologist and best-selling author of *The Serenity Principle* and other books.

