Nine Ways to Find Peace Of Mind
by Susan Jeffers, Ph.D.

There is no question that uncertainty...and worry...seem to have increased dramatically as we all try to cope with such concerns as mounting violence and the effects of the global economic crisis. Yet, there is no question in my mind that, with the right tools, all of us can rise above any situation that life hands us. With this in mind, Susan wrote Embracing Uncertainty to give you those "right tools" which will help you see all that confronts you in a more life-affirming and powerful way. Here are just a few of these tools to get you started...

1. "UN-SET" YOUR HEART. With your heart set on something, upset is often the result. When you "un-set" your heart, by definition, you are letting go of trying to control things over which you have no control. In all things, you do your best, but then it is important to "let go" of the outcome. As you let go, you are able to breathe a sigh of relief and open the door to a much more powerful way of living. Always remember this...

There is great adventure in the unknown that propels us to discover powerful parts of ourselves that we didn't know were there.

It's true...you are more powerful than you could ever have imagined. And it is by pushing through your fears that you discover and use this incredible power.

2. CREATE A "WONDERING" LIFE INSTEAD OF A "HOPING" LIFE. It helps to un-set our hearts by substituting the words "I hope" with the words "I wonder". Instead of "I hope I keep my job", say "I wonder if I'll keep my job." Repeat these two sentences out loud and notice the subtle relief in this simple shift. Instead of placing yourself in the middle of the drama, you have placed yourself in the role of "observer"...as if you were watching a good movie unfold. "How interesting. I wonder what comes next." Even with very difficult situations in our lives, substituting "I wonder" for "I hope" keeps our hopes from being dashed and opens up the possibility of our learning and growing from whatever happens.

3. CHOOSE THE PATH OF TRUST. When you fully understand that you have little control in the external world, you then have two choices: 1) You can choose to see yourself as a "poor-me" victim at the mercy of circumstances...or... 2) You can choose to develop the trust that, no matter what happens in your life, you will
have the inner strength to create something good from it all. You can see why it is important to choose the latter!

4. INCREASE YOUR INNER SENSE OF POWER. One way to develop trust in yourself is to cut off the negativity in the mind by saying over and over again, "Whatever happens in my life, I'll handle it!" If you say it often enough, you will ultimately believe it! And...

If you really believe that you can handle anything that happens in your life, what could you possibly have to fear? The answer is, "Nothing!"

So when the "what-if's" are driving you mad, simply cut them off by saying over and over again, "Whatever happens, I'll handle it!" You'll feel a sense of confidence wash over you. Powerful...and peaceful... indeed!

5. COLLECT "HEROES" WHO HAVE LEARNED TO HANDLE IT ALL. Heroes are people who have created much good in this world as a result of horrible experiences in their lives...for example, Viktor Frankl, who created so much good out of his experience in a concentration camp and Ram Dass, who created so much good as a result of his debilitating stroke. As you collect heroes, you realize that..."If they can learn and grow from their experiences, I certainly can learn and grow from mine!" Truer words were never spoken.

6. FOCUS ON THE LEARNING THAT CAN COME FROM ANY SITUATION IN YOUR LIFE. You can learn and find strength from ANYTHING that happens to you. For example, Susan certainly learned from and found strength as a result of her own experience with breast cancer. If you see ALL situations in life as a way of learning and growing, it helps you let go of your need for things to be a certain way. So despite what is happening, constantly remind yourself,

"I CAN LEARN FROM THIS."

When you can see the opportunities inherent in ALL situations...GOOD OR BAD...it truly helps you embrace all the uncertainty in your life.

7. EMBRACE THE THOUGHT "IT'S ALL HAPPENING PERFECTLY." You may be asking, "How can things be happening perfectly when there is the possibility of so much bad all around us?" Susan's answer to that is we cannot know the "Grand Design," the great mystery of it all. Therefore, as we embrace the thought, "It's all
happening perfectly”, we begin looking for the “good” in any situation that life hands us. And when we look for the good, WE ALWAYS FIND IT! Yes, so much good can come from so much that is bad. In that, it truly is happening perfectly.

8. FOCUS ON THE RICHES. As we go about our daily lives, we take so many wonderful things for granted. It's now time to notice. Notice the little things...that wonderful hot shower, that kiss from a loved one, the fact that your car started, that great food you are eating, the warm rays of the sun, the sunset, a candy bar...and on and on. Why is this so important? It is so important because...

As we focus on the good, the bad is so much easier to handle.

It is in the noticing of the little things that you truly get the feeling of a life well-lived. Your noticing is enhanced as you learn to say, while still in the glory of the moment, "I HAVE HAD THIS." And to take this exercise a step further, write all your I HAVE HAD THIS moments on little slips of paper. Then, at the end of the day, put them into a special I HAVE HAD THIS jar. You will soon have to get a bigger jar! It stands to reason that you worry less and less about the future as you appreciate life to its fullest NOW!

9. GET INVOLVED. Positive action has an amazing effect on our psyche. As we take action, we begin to feel more powerful and our fear about the future decreases considerably. Keep repeating to yourself...

"My life has meaning and I will do whatever I can to make this a better world."

Then: 1) Say to yourself, "What am I asked to do?"; 2) Make a list of what comes to mind; 3) Begin taking action.

When you remember that your life has meaning, it makes it so much easier to push through the fear and live a life that matters.

Just as importantly, you will have found the secret to creating a joyous and fulfilling life.