

# *Droppin' Like Leaves*

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**Leaves in Fall can be beautiful - very colorful, catching your attention - as long as you're not worried about raking them, bagging them, dragging the bags of leaves around and figuring out how the heck to get rid of them.**

## **Introduction**

Leaves in Fall can be beautiful - very colorful and attention grabbing - *unless* you're worried about raking them, bagging them, dragging them around and figuring out how the heck to get rid of them.

"Shoulds" (our self-imposed obligations) can be beautiful, too. They can point to your passions, needs and desires - your dreams. But they won't seem beautiful if you're worried about raking them, bagging them - oops, I mean: if you have loads of worries about organizing them, listing them, deciding which is more important and figuring out how the heck to get rid of them.

Seeing leaves (and "shoulds") as big problems that need to be disposed of can drain our energy. We can't get rid of our obligations, but we can get rid of the "shoulds". *Appreciating* our leaves (and "shoulds") - looking at them with a fresh perspective - can be energy producing. And, ironically, can even help get more done!

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In the *Droppin' Like Leaves* guide we'll be using the metaphor of Autumn's falling leaves to help shift perspective - visualizing our lives as trees and our "shoulds" as leaves. We'll be examining ways to appreciate our "shoulds" while taking the negative power out of them. This isn't about list making or organizing - there are plenty of books and courses that do that - this is about seeing "shoulds" in a different way.

Before we begin I want to share a little word play from Albert Ellis (the "father" of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy). Ellis talked about "shoulding on ourselves" (can you *hear* what that sounds like?). His twist on the words give us a different way of looking at "shoulds".

You might want to occasionally *speak* the words: "shoulding on ourselves" or "shoulding on myself" as you read the guide and think about your "shoulds". It might bring a smile to your face - and a tiny perspective shift. Doing so always makes me smile (of course I have a juvenile sense of humor). Thanks, Albert E!

**If you see a whole thing - it seems that it's always beautiful. Planets, lives... But up close a world's all dirt and rocks. And day to day, life's a hard job, you get tired, you lose the pattern.**

**Ursula Le Guin**

## Playing With Leaves

Have you ever raked up piles of leaves with a child? I've done this with my kids and more recently with my granddaughter. We bury each other in leaves, have leaf fights, fall into the leaves, race each other to see who can rake up the biggest pile. It becomes more than *just* raking leaves; it turns into play - fun and energizing!

But working alone, with the same amount of leaves - because they "should" be taken care of - left me tired. Why? What's the difference? Perspective!

Before we start perspective changing let's take a reading on the current condition of our "shoulds". Spend a minute directing your attention to how you've been *feeling* about your "shoulds". Do they feel overwhelming or scary?

What do you think about them? Do you spend a lot of time worrying about them or wondering how you'll ever finish all things you have to do? If you're like me and a direct question such as: "How have

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you been feeling about your “shoulds?” causes your brain to go into shock - all of a sudden drawing a complete blank - it might help to remember what feelings or thoughts drew you to the *Droppin' Like Leaves* guide.

You might notice that you've had so many things on your to-do list recently that your list is 3 pages long (and you've lost it a few times - Oh wait! I think that was me!). Maybe you're feeling overwhelmed or angry. You could find yourself bored and a bit depressed.

Whatever your feelings, consider jotting down a few lines about your current thoughts and feelings in a journal so that you can refer back to them later. It's encouraging to look back later and really see how you've altered your views!

OK, now let's get started on those perspective shifts!