

## **Chapter 13. Practical Advice for Difficult Days**

<https://doi.org/10.33989/pnpu.1095.c3935>

### **How to keep stability in unstable environments?**

Morita therapy emphasizes that one should behave according to 1) our goals ('do things we need do'), 2) the environment ('Summer is hot and winter is cold, we don't deny and just do proper things in summer or winter'). But not according to our mood or emotions.

### **The best way to keep stability during the war**

The best way to keep stability is not to control the emotions to be stable, but try to behave according to 1) the goals and 2) the environment. When evening comes, you begin to feel fear. But you concentrate on your goals, work, helping others or relaxations (relaxations are essential goals too, to calm the sympathetic nervous system and enhance the parasympathetic nervous system). And suddenly the siren rings (environment changes), you go to the shelter or some places safe. These periods of time are full of fear, irritation and may be boring too, but you behave according to the environment, and you should praise yourself in the meantime or after. Then when this is over, you go back to continue things you were doing or go to sleep.

### **How to and can we control emotions?**

Morita therapy's thinking is that we cannot control our emotions, because they are natural, but we can use "the rule of emotions" to deal with them. The rule is that, if we don't do anything about the emotions, don't deny or avoid them, just feel them and do things we should do, they will disappear naturally. The emotions are fluid, they move freely, come to you and then leave you. But if we want to control them, they will be intensified and stay longer. You may wonder how long it will take for the emotions to disappear. It may be a few minutes, a few hours, depending on personalities and events, as well as our acceptance of the emotions. The last one is

the only thing we can control. So keep practicing letting the emotions be fluid is important.

### **About “the freezing emotions”**

It is said to be not good in normal ways of psychology. Because it stops the fluid of emotions and may cause other emotions. But when you don't have the energy and strength to feel the emotions, you can use it. It's like an emergency treatment, which is effective but not normal. We should deal with things flexibly.

The "freezing emotions" is one of the ways to reduce the negative impact of negative emotions. For example, if a surgeon is very excited about bad news, he will not be able to perform a good operation. If a pilot is under stress, he will not be able to fly an airplane. It's very important to learn how to sort of move away from negative emotions in a different direction during war. "Freeze emotions" means avoiding negativity and not producing negativity. To try to forget, to withdraw, to abstract, to switch to something else.

### **What should we do if we can't stop the world from changing?**

We need to learn to live in an ever-changing, dangerous world. We need to learn to measure our physical and mental strength and act accordingly. We may have to act decisively at times. We must think through and have several options for the development of events, so that in the moment of danger we can realize the one that will fit the situation. Of course, it is impossible to foresee everything. But it is still better to think through different options. This is a safety cushion.

### **We have to be flexible**

It is very important in time of war to be flexible in an unstable situation. In wartime there is no absolute right and wrong. We cannot clearly assess our actions during

war, but we act as we get (sometimes spontaneously, spontaneously, even emotionally), as the specific situation suggests. This can be compared to the actions of soldiers at the front. After all, they cannot always act according to a clear plan. To survive, they have to adapt to the situation.

### **Any action is always better than inaction**

Movement is very important in war. If you stop, the enemy will kill you. And if you move, you have at least some chance to save yourself. In hybrid warfare, this "rule of motion" is important not only for soldiers, but also for those in the rear. If a person sits in one place, does nothing but worry about bad news, he will die, if not from a missile, then from deteriorating health.

### **As for controlling emotions**

Normal life is not worth controlling them. But in an abnormal, absurd world, one cannot survive without it. During a war, a large flow of negative emotions falls on a person. And if this flow is not controlled, you will not be able to work, or live, or even breathe. At a minimum, you need to reduce the amount of news, do not think that something bad will happen (because it has not happened yet), do not increase conflicts (because there are already a lot of bad things around), fill your inner world with positive impressions and emotions (e.g. nature, animals, art, etc.) and so on.

### **About emotional control**

When the emotional flow is too big and dangerous, it needs to be frozen. (Like you stop bleeding in an emergency medical setting). If you can tolerate it to some extent, it is better to let it flow. The criterion may be whether you can continue to work or perform activities while feeling emotions.

### **Can teachers work during wartime?**

The work and activities are important. Some require effort, while some are relaxing. Both are needed. When you give a lecture, it is a joyful but labor-intensive experience for you, and for the audience it is a relaxation that satisfies their intellectual curiosity. And your interactions warm each other up. Such work and activities are wonderful!

### **In times of war, it is important not to be alone**

Loneliness increases anxiety and nervousness. Therefore, it is very important for a person not to be alone with his problems and danger, but to seek space for communication and joint activities.

When people are together doing something valuable, everyone's fear decreases. That's like a phenomenon in social psychology, that when people are in their group, they make more risky decisions. It is the power of a group. and that's why Morita Therapy uses groups a lot (such as Hakkenkai). When you support students, you are calm. That's "being oriented toward the objective", not "being oriented toward the feelings". It's the most essential treatment of Morita therapy.

### **When you don't have the strength to smile during a war**

If you haven't enough energy to smile, please don't do that. We cannot control our emotions. We can just let them come and they will go away soon, if you keep concentrating on the NOW moment. Trying to smile while you're not comfortable is a kind of emotional labor.

Many people need you, and you need to be positive to convey strength to them. But everyone has limitations, we can't do everything perfectly. And other people can understand you when you're not smiling. Don't be too hard on yourself. We are not only professionals, but also human beings. Our weakness sometimes evokes a feeling of humanity, which also encourages and helps others.

### **Even in dangerous situations, we need things that make us happy**

In times of war, it is not only important to save our lives, but we also need things that make us happy and give us hope. It can be nature, creative activities, improving the home space. It is very helpful that despite the difficulties, people do not lose their desire for beauty and order. It is very important to do something every day that improves life.

### **If you feel physically tired, find three things you can be thankful for**

During dangerous and difficult situations, all people get tired and feel fatigued. Sometimes it feels like there is no strength at all. However, you still need to find the strength to restore your inner balance, you need to find inner energy. One effective way is to find things for which you can thank God. This technique allows us to learn to appreciate what we have.

### **Clean the space around you**

In times of chaos in the world, thoughts and emotions become confused, and a person gets lost and can't find a foothold. When you do not understand what is happening in the world, and do not know what to do and where to go, you need to start by clearing the space around you. The simplest actions - mop the floor, clean the room, put the kitchen in order, wash the dishes - will give us the power to think. A clean space helps make thoughts and feelings clearer. Even if you don't find a solution in a particular moment, you will still feel better.

### **Doing good things and not reacting to a bad situation**

In a difficult situation, it is important to learn not to react emotionally to events, but to focus on a specific goal, on what needs to be done in that particular situation. This is goal-oriented behavior. When you do something by focusing on it, you feel much better about yourself. Don't think about the future, just do what you can. Live in the HERE and NOW. Have faith in God and in yourself.

### **It is important to remember the rule of "HERE and NOW"**

"HERE and NOW" is a good way to accept and let go of negative emotions. In this moment, here, no one can hurt us, nothing bad is happening, unless we get caught up in the pain of the past or the fear of the future.

### **Everything that doesn't kill us makes us stronger**

Dangerous situations, strange as it may sound, have a certain positive effect. They make a person stronger and wiser. A person constantly learns something even in a dangerous situation, gains experience and then uses this experience to survive physically and emotionally. Of course, it is a difficult experience. But it gives one the strength to live in the future. This is evidence of growth, post-traumatic growth of a person.

### **Why is it important to engage in creativity always, even in times of war?**

The absurdity that occurs during war is dangerous not only for the physical existence of the personality, but also for its inner state. In order for the personality not to be destroyed, it is important to engage in any creative activity. Anything can become creativity - creating poems, growing flowers, embroidery, drawing, etc. During creativity, one focuses on the purpose and also creates beauty as opposed to absurdity and chaos. Also creativity allows one to maintain personal integrity and the ability to remain in the zone of normality in an abnormal world.

Much of the advice presented in this chapter may appear familiar, as similar points were introduced in Study Guide Part 1. What has changed in this book is not the content itself, but the context in which it is read. After examining fear, loss, energy, relationships, and self-care through real experiences and discussions, this advice is no longer simply guidance to follow, but support to return to when needed. In times of uncertainty, these words are not meant to reduce fear or resolve difficulties, but to accompany teachers as they continue living and educating as life is.