

SOULSHIFT

Path to Enlightenment



Gary Summers

Note from Gary

What you hold in your hand is the cumulative result of twenty five years of education and research. This journey has taken me through seven years of university resulting in two under graduate degrees and a master's degree in physiology including a master's thesis. Along the way there were several certifications. All this was done because I had a thirst for knowledge.

The trilogy of books I have written (there is information on the others in the appendix on the last page) deal with the three areas of wellness, **MINDSHIFT** (the mental side), **BODYSHIFT** (the physical side) and **SOULSHIFT** (the spiritual side).

My intent is to provide you, the reader, with a concise and easy to comprehend manuscript that will supply you with the proper information that assists you in making informed decisions about your mental, physical and spiritual well-being.

The information contained in this book comes not only from my own knowledge but also from the research I have done through books and investigation on the Internet. In the appendix you will find a number of recommended books along with suggested web sites that contain incredible amounts of information.

This book is not the end of your journey for knowledge but a new beginning. What took me

twenty five years to acquire, you now have the opportunity to obtain by reading three books.

Use this book and the others as a stepping stone and a springboard to get you to a new level of understanding about how life really works.

These books are a synopsis of how I live my life. I am no special person. I just figured out how life works and if I can do it, so can you.

These books do not contain everything there is to know about life but it sure provides a good starting point.

Use the information well as it can truly change your life as it has mine. I wish you all the best and my desire is that you find suggestions, strategies and ideas in this book and say, "Wow, I never really thought about life like that."

Most of us have the ability to make a difference yet we choose not to. My dream is to leave the world a better place; to have a positive impact because I was in it.

I would like all of your dreams to come true and for you to achieve your true potential.

Gary Summers

FOREWORD

There are few things in life that are as meaningful to me as a wonderful person who is doing the best that they can to give their best to the world. In this time on Earth when we need all the help that we can get, Gary Summers is certainly contributing his fair share, and then some.

What comes to mind when I read this book is Mother Teresa's prayer. She asks that despite the fact that "although people may forget the good you do, do good anyway". With this in mind I know that Gary's heart is in this book for the greater good of all sentient beings, regardless of what praise and thanks he ever receives for it. It would be a noble challenge for all of us reading this book to rise to that same commitment to ourselves, humankind and Mother Earth.

If you are on the path in this life of waking up and realizing that there is more to life than our physical reality, material goods and our need to be "right", then you have the right book in your hands. The insights Gary presents will help you along your path to realizing a greater love, presence and awareness in your life. When you seek your own enlightenment, it is for the greater good of all. So as you begin to change and allow your joy to flow forth, expect changes all around you. As has been clearly shown several times with the "Maharishi Effect", the peace that you seek is inside of you. It reflects out from you to the world.

There is no separation between Spirit and physical reality. Everything IS Spirit in one form or another, including you. This is what Gary is challenging you to awaken to. The power is inside of you, the wisdom is inside of you and all the love that you'll ever need is already inside of you. It's just a matter of letting go of the thoughts and feelings that keep us in the illusion of separation from each other and the Universe, the Divine, God, whatever you perceive that to be. Our calling is to let go of are our attachments, our anger, our fears and our hatred. When these are released, the true essence of who we really are will naturally shine through. You don't need to find anything, or be anything more that you are now. It's just a matter of uncovering your true loving self. This is the true essence in every human being. We are called to see this in everyone we meet.

It has been a privilege for me to know Gary and his wife Bonnie since the fall of 2009 when I stayed with them in their home for a weekend. I distinctly remember calling home and telling my husband that the kindness and welcome I had received in their home was completely beyond my ability to describe in words. We have kept in contact since then and I have come to know Gary as a man of huge integrity. His wisdom, skills, and volunteer work are a testament to what motivates him.

In this book you'll find great wisdom, explanations, stories and all kinds of wonderful information to help you on your path to a more joyful and meaningful life. If this is what you are looking for, you are certainly holding the right book in your hands. I invite you then, to read this book with hope and joy, and accept Gary's insights and encouragement to live your life to its fullest. May you be the peace you seek in the world. Namaste,

Maureen Koropeski, PSYCH-K®
Instructor/Facilitator

THE BASICS

Imagine if life just worked exactly the way you envisioned it would. Just picture having everything in place. You would think to yourself, "Life is perfect, isn't it." Well life will never work out exactly the way you want all the time but you can operate on a plane that resembles perfection so you can get as close to ideal as you want to. The key to making this happen is to look for the beautiful in everyone you meet and everything that happens to you. This is the secret to all the Spiritual Masters; they understand that everything is already in its rightful place although you may not be able to see yet. Just because you can't see it does not mean it does not exist. Look for the good and you will find it. The opportunity I present to you in this book is to open your mind to endless possibilities of traveling down a path to freedom, freedom from judgment, from fear, from making assumptions. When you choose this path, you are free to believe what you want, think what you want, do what you want and go where you want. You can also choose your doubts instead of believing everything you hear and see.

Now this path can be very narrow and it is easy to slip off and back on the other path. That is because it may seem different but different does not mean anything only different. As humans, we like life to be consistent, without change, and as a result, we attempt to think differently only to fall back into our old way of thinking because we did not give ourselves enough time to adapt and form new patterns. This is where persistence becomes so important because as

we continue on this upper road, it teaches us proper habits which keep us on the right course.

The right path will lead to a place of enlightenment or mindfulness or awareness, whichever concept works for you. Once you are there you will find an overwhelming sense of self-satisfaction because you are in control of your own destiny. As a child, I was never bored because I constantly found ways to entertain myself. Today I hear too many people say they are bored. These people are looking outward instead of inward for happiness. They are saying, "Someone or something makes me happy because I don't know how." These people already have the resources within themselves to achieve ultimate happiness yet they just don't know it.

There are a number of ideals that will help you get on the right track. The first ideal is **TRUTH**. There are inner truths and outer truths. Outer truths are continually changing while your inner truths remain constant. Your inner truths have been carved from outer truths because many times we tend to believe much of what we see and what people tell us about ourselves. Our outer truths are carved from our environment, our family and those we grew up with. Some times truth changes based on new information you receive. You have a success and then realize a new skill. Your inner voice now says, "I can do that." Real inner truth never changes because it is based on your core being and not on what you see or hear. This inner truth requires no defense. You don't have to defend your beliefs because those are at your core. You don't have to defend or justify where you work because that is where you are right now and that is okay.

The second ideal is **SACRIFICE**. In other words we must give up some things in exchange for other things for our betterment. When you give up your

right to learn you refuse to allow for personal growth. You have allowed your ego to get in the way of truth. Maybe it is a good idea to give up fatty foods in favor of a healthier body. Maybe it is better to give up some personal time and volunteer. There are many ways to sacrifice and they all make us better. It is what I call delayed gratification. This means holding off on the normal and searching for a higher good.

The third ideal is **TRUST**. This means having the faith in yourself and realizing that anything is possible within your realm of ability. Trust means allowing yourself to experiment with new ideas or to seek a better way. Too many people are stuck in a particular lifestyle afraid to step outside their comfort zone because of a fear of failure. Remember there is no failure, only learning, and when we learn, we grow; therefore, cannot fail. Others continue to do the same things over and over again expecting a different result yet their reality remains the same. They are stuck in some false reality hoping to make it work. The EGO is usually the cause of this problem. When we drop our EGO, we allow ourselves to listen and learn, growth soon follows.

The fourth ideal is **IMAGINATION**. When you allow your creativity to take hold, you learn to trust your super conscious mind which is your higher self. It resides one level above your subconscious. Your subconscious runs your programming. It is your auto pilot and belief system. It contains all your habitual urges. Many people live vicariously through their subconscious. However it is in your super conscious that resides all the information you need to achieve enlightenment. When you begin to listen to your super conscious, you begin to experience life as you never have. Once you trust yourself and allow your super conscious to lead, you see endless possibilities from life; you begin to tap into your true

genius. You begin to go with the flow without exercising judgment.

The fifth ideal is **INTELLIGENCE**. Here you use your internal resources to decide what is best for you. You know your truth and you refuse to be influenced by others. You understand that it is okay for others to have different truths than yours because you know that their truths are just as important to them as your truths are to you. It is your intelligence that helps you get past prejudice, lies, judgments or anything that would give you personal gain at the expense of others. When your intuition says, "I get it," that is your Soul talking. This thinking allows you to see $1 + 1$ not as 2 but as 3. This means you now get more from your existence because you are using what you have to create a better result.

The sixth ideal is **WILLPOWER**. This allows you to start talking yourself into doing something. Your will or conscious mind puts things into action, but unless it is supported by your subconscious nothing actually happens. When both the conscious and subconscious are in alignment you begin to say, "I can" or "I will" as opposed to saying, "I will try." Notice the difference? Saying the word "try" denotes struggle. "I see Bob is trying to start his lawnmower again" or "Bob is trying to start his car." When you see someone "trying to" do something, they are not actually succeeding. When you say, "I will try" you are painting a picture of someone not succeeding. When you say "I will" or "I can", you are now seeing the task being completed.

The seventh ideal is **DISCIPLINE**. This allows you to focus on the things that are most important in your life. Discipline helps you understand the difference between needs and wants so you become self-directed and move towards a better life. Many people buy things, not because they need them, but

only because they want them. These people tend to look outward for approval by acquiring material things or they want to satisfy a negative self-image by feeling that the acquisition of possessions will help them feel better. Sometimes it is out of boredom and these people look outward for self-satisfaction not realizing that they already have it. They are just not looking in the right place. Discipline helps you remove the negative pleasures that are problems in your life, behaviors like smoking, drinking or eating to excess. Discipline allows you to take your time with a decision until you have enough information.

The eighth ideal is **GRATITUDE**. When we are grateful for what we have, we focus on what is good in our lives and we all have good. We just need to look in that direction.

The final ideal is **LOVE**. Here you do everything based on this ideal. You have the following mindsets: In relationship to your job, you love what you are doing until you are doing what you love. In relationship to forgiveness, you let things go out of love but not love in the traditional sense. This love means you don't wish any ill on anyone and you hope they do well. This love means you treat people the way you would like to be treated but you don't look down on those who don't live life with your ideals. You understand that this is their truth and they just don't see it any other way.

You will know when you are off this path because you sense something is wrong. In a relationship, the first sign is resentment because the LOVE is gone. Instead of respecting our partner, the togetherness dissolves and we feel no sense of SERVICE to them. Our caring nature begins to disappear and we have no GRATITUDE for all that is good in our relationship. We begin to look elsewhere and we see

our DISCIPLINE decline and we enter into affairs because we do not know what our TRUTH is anymore. We then exercise our WILL and we take a different path in life. Our imagination becomes a destructive force which then guides our INTELLIGENCE to do strange things. We want to break our partners FAITH because you are willing to SACRIFICE anything to get what you want.

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who figured out how life worked
much sooner than I did.

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SECTION I

THE ESSENCE

OF LIVING

Chapter I

WHAT WE ARE

Bruce Lipton in his book, *“The Biology of Belief,”* states that we are all energy or photons floating in an electromagnetic field. It is a fact of Physics that energy cannot be created or destroyed so what happens to your energy when you die? Where does it go? What happens to your personality? How do you explain déjà vu? These are very difficult questions to answer yet they hold the key to awareness and enlightenment.

Is it possible that our existing energy remains alive but on a different dimension waiting to inhabit another human form? If this is so, then we are not individual beings, separate from one another but we are all unified by that same energy. When we look at ourselves as separate from others, we seek personal gain many times at the expense of other people. We win and they lose. Once we realize that we become better when everyone becomes better, we then see the way life was meant to be lived.

The problem is that we think too much. This thinking gives us the attitude of, “It is all about me,” and we forget how to respect others. Our thoughts create problems because we believe that we are our thoughts. We are not our thoughts. We can become aware of our thoughts just as we can become aware of things, so awareness is the unchanging, unmoving

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space of the present moment. Eckhart Tolle in his book, *"The Power of Now,"* speaks about being in the now.

Awareness is just allowing things to be. These things can be a thought, an emotion or a feeling. It can be physical like rain or snow. When we attach a meaning to it, problems can occur. When we find an answer, we say, "I got it." Awareness is realizing that there are other answers out there somewhere that may yield a better result. When we say, "I got it," we focus on the "me" and forget to look elsewhere.

It is helpful to recognize and understand non-conceptual awareness. It means to drop all labels about yourself, other people and life. You begin to realize that all objects are concepts.

Let's look at a simple idea like opposition. Opposition is a pattern or habit of the mind, conceptually based with emotion to back it up. It is a kind of survival tactic. The key thing to notice is that it is a concept. What are concepts?

Our mind has a job and that is to find ways to make sense of the world around us. That's what it does and does it very well. So well, in fact, we take the concept, like a rock, to be what the mind says it is. But have you ever been hit with a concept of rock? Of course not! Concepts are not real. They are just mental images.

So let's take the concept "Idiot." If someone called you an idiot, there may be an automatic mind and emotional reaction to defend yourself. But why? "Idiot" is just a concept no different than "rock." It's not real! Your mind has a story in place about who you are. The comment is interpreted as an insult because it contradicts the story your mind has

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created. Remember, the mind is a story creator using symbols, ideas, beliefs and all sorts of magic to create the illusion of a self in order to survive.

Awareness allows you to understand and appreciate the vast diversity life has to offer including religious, political, personal and cultural views. Everyone has a unique lens from which they see the world. They rationalize the results they get from that lens by comparing these results to their core beliefs. The outcomes derived from the questions and statements regarding issues of truth and reality are carved out within these core beliefs. But what is truth or reality? It can be different depending on the lens you are using. For this reason, it seems useless to ask questions like, "What is the ultimate truth?" or "What is definitely reality?" It is much better to ask questions like, "What is beneficial and helpful?" or "What is my truth?" or "What can I do to develop a sense of freedom and wisdom and an unconditional sense of love, compassion, and peace?"

As we become aware, we no longer identify with a particular idea as right and we exercise wisdom. This wisdom assists us with our decisions and judgments. We step past our limiting views, we drop the "It's all about me" attitude and we focus on making the world a better place because we happened to be in it. People have been fighting for thousands of years about which philosophy is right and there is no end in sight. Awareness can teach us to look at all these concepts and work together to find a solution.

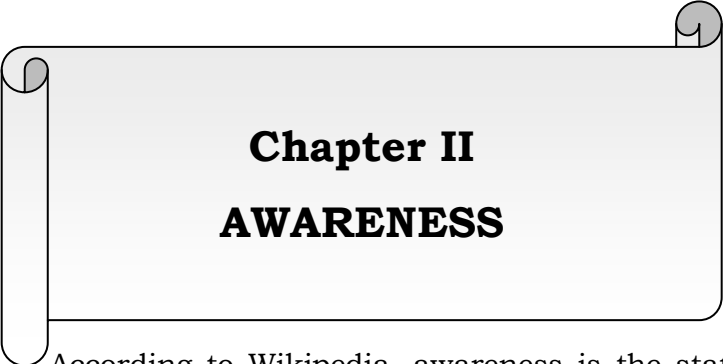
We all have ideas about the type of person we are. Some feel like victims, others give the impression that they know everything, while there are those who continually want to learn.

There is a universal law of opposites. This means that every concept does not exist by itself, it has an

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opposite. There cannot be right unless there is wrong. The same principle applies to the following concepts: good or bad, up or down, cold or hot, less or more and black or white just to name a few.. Everything works in relationship to something else. If we take that relationship out of the equation, there is nothing to compare and therefore nothing to cause problems.

This shows us that change is possible because of the concept of opposites. Our awareness allows us to see life as possibility including the opposite of what we presently think, allowing us to create any story we wish.



Chapter II

AWARENESS

According to Wikipedia, awareness is the state or ability to perceive, to feel, or to be conscious of events, objects or sensory patterns. In this level of consciousness, sense data can be confirmed by an observer without necessarily implying understanding.

Who are you? Do you really know the answer to that question? If you're like most people, you will say, "My name is Jane Doe and I work at the restaurant down the street." Although that is your physical being, there is much more to you than a name and what you do.

Your EGO is what you are. It is your identity that includes your name, your beliefs and emotions, your job, where you live. It also includes your personality which is based on your past experiences. This is evident when two different people see the same event and have different feelings about their experience. Your feelings would be based on the assumptions you make which are determined by how the event fits into your model of how the world is supposed to be. It also includes all your habits, both good and bad, and all the traps set by your ego centered mind. Some of us have big egos while others have smaller

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egos but we all have one. Your ego, however, is not you. During your life you have changed. Maybe you moved to another residence, changed jobs, are now eating differently or you have changed how you think about life. Even though all these things have changed, you are still you.

Suffering is created when your ego identifies with physical things like money and possessions. Many people constantly strive to get more material things thinking that this is what will make them happy. Material things are great but when we over identify with them and constantly pursue them, we set ourselves up for heartache. Tom and Bob both have the same job and they both lose their job. Tom was brought up with a good self-image and rebounds back by quickly getting a new job. Bob, on the other hand, was raised to believe that good jobs are hard to find and you lose everything when you lose your job. Two similar events yielding different results.

It is the difference between being objective or subjective. Many times it is important for us to be objective as we need to see all the facts and learn from other people's experience whether that is when buying a car or house. When dealing with our true selves, it is much more empowering to be subjective and make important decisions based on your own internal true self. It is the difference between being ego centered and being awareness centered. Awareness centered means being aware of your ego and all its trappings and faults. We all get trapped by our thinking. The key here is to be aware of these traps, see how they are built and then figure out how to take them apart. When they are dismantled, they cannot hurt you. These traps will continue to enslave you as long as you are unaware they exist.

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The problem with your ego is it will never be satisfied and you will always want something else, a bigger house, fancier car or any material item that satisfies your thirst for success.

Many times our ego identifies with specific roles. As a loving mother you see your children mature and have difficulty letting go. This could be due to you having a similar upbringing or the total opposite. You felt neglected as a child and decided not to bring up your children in the same manner. We see this in the boss who feels his role is to manage by fear or the parent who does the same thing with their children.

Can you identify with any of these scenarios? Do you recognize your ego when it is directing your thoughts, your feelings and your actions? Can you look back and trace the origin of each result? This can be difficult because your habits have been around for a long time. The good news is that with each section of ego you uncover and recognize, you raise your consciousness and therefore your joy and peacefulness.

The real issue is when you are not aware of these ego traps you feel as though there is only one way to respond, the way you have always responded. This is your habitual behavior taking over.

All thoughts enter consciousness for our benefit. Yes, even negative thoughts. A past mistake reminds us of what we have learned so we do not make the same mistake again. It is not the thought that is the problem but the handling of the thought. Looking back at that same mistake and beating yourself up over it is just not productive. A thought is nothing until you attach a feeling or emotion to it. Then it can empower you or enslave you.

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We have all focused on a particular thought in our past and have allowed it to control us completely. That is because we did not recognize that it was just a thought, we attached an emotion to it and the longer we dwell on the thought the bigger it gets. We've managed to identify so much with the thought that we've become it.

Think back to any of your unhappy times in your life. Depending on how large you've magnified the thought and how long you held it, you might get upset, have difficulty sleeping, lash out at someone or even pick a fight. And the worst part of this process is that the result stays with you long after you stop. It is as though it has left an indelible mark on your mind.

Some pain is guaranteed. No one is exempt. Although pain is a guarantee, suffering is optional. Your habits can create unnecessary suffering. When we accept the fact that pain is inevitable at some point in our lives, we can take the necessary steps to learn how to effectively deal with it.

Our ego would rather be right than be at peace. That is why we argue, justify, gossip and ridicule others so we can feel superior. Oddly enough, these actions also make us inferior because of their very nature.

The insanity has to stop, so how do we stop it? When you recognize the ego's need to magnify the thought and can understand the self-inflicted suffering caused by this behavior, you can let go. The insanity happens when you continue to fight over something in the past because it is gone or worry about a possible future problem that does not exist. The best option is to be aware of your ego, especially how it magnifies and holds onto feelings and emotions.

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Your ego is involved with identification with things. This identity can be material possessions, including money. These things are great but don't identify with them because they are not you.

Awareness is the recognition and understanding that it does not have to be like this. You do have choices.

All this insanity begins with a thought. There are two types of thoughts, random and conscious. Random thoughts just pop into your head and are usually triggered by something you heard or saw. Conscious thoughts allow you to direct your body to do something or think about something.

If you can only see what is physical in your life and you feel that there is so much more to know, then becoming self-aware will be an eye opening experience for you.

If you're totally happy and completely satisfied with all aspects of your life, then attaining knowledge of self awareness is not something you may want to discover but you bought this book. This means you are searching for something more meaningful and that puts you in the majority. Most people are searching for a better life, a more meaningful existence and an opportunity to explore new frontiers as they journey through life.

Unfortunately by belonging to the majority, you have managed to pick up bad habits by listening to and attempting to follow this majority. Their thinking believes that if everyone is doing it, it must be right. Yet it does not feel right, does it?

Self-Awareness is developing and understanding exactly who you are including what you can become.

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When you understand the reasons why people continue to struggle and see pain, suffering and anxiety, you will get the initiative to think about your life differently. This will lead you to become someone better than you are right now, a rejuvenated you.

This is not a difficult process and the rewards will give you a more conscious and purposeful life with control over your beliefs and outcomes. This will set you apart from the majority who feel they will always be victims.

As the creator of your own reality, you will have total control as opposed to a creature of circumstances. You will realize that by making things happen instead of letting things happen you carve your own destiny. You will come to understand that you can choose the beliefs that work for you and not just accept self-limiting beliefs.

This book is about digging deep into your soul far beyond your physical presence. You will begin to understand the reasons for self-sabotage and clearly understand how you got to where you are today. Once you come to terms with where you are and how you got there, you begin to experience a new awakening that will lead you to self-awareness. This self-awareness will lead you to infinite possibilities as you discover your true spiritual potential which is much greater than your mental or physical potential.

As humans we are comprised of energy. Quantum Physicists have shown that different thoughts, emotions and beliefs vibrate at different frequencies. So you attract into your life similar vibrational patterns to the ones you are emitting. Becoming aware of this fact provides you the freedom to choose your thoughts and beliefs.

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While growing up, maybe you were taught that “You have to work hard to make a living.” or “Life is tough.” You will carry this burden with you throughout your life and you will look for evidence to prove your theory correct all the while attracting the circumstances you don’t want and making life much more difficult. Once you develop self-awareness and realize that there are options you begin to realize that there are different choices. True happiness can then exist not only in fairytales but also in your life as well.

Most people are limited because of ignorance. By that I mean they have no idea that something else exists, something better and more rewarding. If these people could only see that life does not have to be this way, they will continue to be stuck in no man’s land, victims of mass thinking. Unfortunately, this is a sad reality for many people. They are stuck in a traditional way of thinking and unawareness.

Cognitive Behaviour Therapists call this hopelessness vs. helplessness. Hopeless equates to no answer but helpless means you have not found the answer. Victims of a limited mindset are hopeless because they have given up, thinking that an answer to their problems does not exist. The truth is that all of us are merely helpless because we are not looking in the right place and therefore have not discovered a way out of the situation. Many people are just ashamed or too proud to ask for help because of the stigma attach to weakness.

Many of us do not know how to use our conscious and subconscious minds properly. We continue to experience negative thought after negative thought, laying awake at night in constant worry about the future, then wondering why we are so mentally

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drained. Once you learn to turn off the endless babbling that occurs in your head and just become aware and mindful of what is happening, you begin to experience the true essence of who you are. When you learn to quiet your mind, you start to get the answers that have eluded you.

Life holds abundance for everyone. There is no need to suffer endlessly. As you become self-aware make sure you put your new found wisdom to good use by acting on your newly acquired knowledge so that you can contribute to a better world. Develop a pragmatic approach to life so everyone benefits from your beliefs and actions.

The pure definition of the word awareness or mindfulness or enlightenment, as some people refer to it as, is a sense of just being without any judgment, manipulation or opinion. In other words, it is our true identity because it exists before any story, thought, belief, position, opinion, viewpoint, idea, feeling or emotion. Awareness is not an appearance or a thing. It is the space through which all experiences come and go.

An example of awareness would be this empty page while the experience would be the printed word on this page. As you read the words, you formulate some sort of judgment or opinion about these words. This judgment would depend on your views on the subject matter which are determined by the way you experienced your past events.

If certain words evoked a negative thought based on a past event, you would respond differently than if the same words evoked a positive memory of a past experience. In this manner we create our future based on our past lives and we bring forward

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baggage in the form of negative attitudes, physical ailments and mental discomfort because we are not able to separate ourselves from this past event. We will spend more time on emotions and how past links cause negative emotions like fear and apprehension.

This definition appears to be very simple on the surface yet many times we see people who are totally unaware of how they are jeopardizing their lives by engaging in behavior that does not work.

A good example of this is professional athletes continually searching for excellence. Baseball teams change coaches, golfers look to improve their swing, and hockey players look at new and improved equipment that has better protection, or helps them shoot harder and more accurately. They are aware that there can always be improvements.

On the other hand there are individuals like some Hollywood stars that are also never satisfied but for different reasons. They feel they don't have to work at relationships and continually seek betterment elsewhere. They fail to realize that they don't have to take a bite out of every apple to find out which one is the best because they are all the same.

Awareness in the highest and purest sense is the ability to remove everything including ideas, thoughts, emotions or feelings within our space and focus on the nothingness that exists. See what it is about yourself that has never moved, changed, grown, or come and gone. Awareness is just being. This is a very esoteric view of awareness and very difficult to grasp.

On the other hand awareness for me is the ability to see and understand, without judging, exactly what is happening both to myself and others. It is the ability

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to recognize differences in opinions without judging. Problems occur when someone has a different opinion than yours and you begin to judge. The reason for that judgment is because their terms of reference do not fit into your view of the world. In other words, the lens out of which you look sees the world vastly different from the way the other person sees the world.

Awareness is simply allowing yourself to recognize the fact that another person has a varying viewpoint and that it is okay for this person to express this difference. What usually occurs is we answer the thought by thinking that this person is wrong and we are right. This of course leads to a difference of opinion and, depending on how strongly the difference is, there could be an ensuing argument. If we do not do anything with the thought and just merely let it pass, the thought disappears and we are left in peace.

I am not suggesting that thought is bad. I am merely saying that it is the interpretation of the thought that causes the problem. As we engage in counter arguments, the original thought gains energy and discussions deteriorate. If we remove judgment from the thought, it quickly loses its energy, fades and no longer becomes a problem.

Think of a new born baby. They live in awareness. They have no thoughts or emotions. As this baby grows it develops ideas and concepts but these ideas and concepts are not the baby, they are only thoughts formulated by what this baby has seen, heard or experienced. It is from these sensory experiences that this baby forms judgments and habits which determine this baby's destiny.

Chapter III

MINDFULNESS

We all get caught up in the struggles of everyday life. Many of us just get by. We suppress our feelings hoping life will change but we wake up each day to the same reality. Many people lack compassion. They live only for themselves. Others are on an emotional roller coaster with pent up feelings ready to explode. We have monsters living within us that force us to do better by acquiring more stuff. We only have to look at the news to see negativity, watch baseball games and see aggressive fans booing their home team. Even when their team wins, these fans spill into the streets and wreck havoc by overturning cars and setting fires. We pursue the good in life, evade the negative and ignore the neutral. We practice the never ending tradition of saying, "If only." "If only I had a better job." "If only we had the mortgage paid off." Just notice all the angry drivers or some store clerks at a department store and you will see unhappy people.

We do a good job of hiding our dislikes for our situation but seem resigned that this is our lot in life. We wonder if this is all we get or is there a better way. Welcome to the world of human reality.

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There are not many guarantees in this world but one is that there will always be change. In five minutes from now things will be different. Change is inevitable and that is perfectly fine. How do we remain consistent? Society changes us from the outside but mindfulness softens us on the inside. Life is about having wants but not letting them control you.

Mindfulness involves an attitude of acceptance. In most cases, people either wish to push an experience away from them or wish they had something better. We label things as good, bad or neutral. When we are mindful, we accept where we are without wanting to achieve anything. When you allow yourself to pause long enough to register what is happening, feel the emotion, understand it, you learn patience. This patience can be applied to all aspects of your life. When you understand the problems inherent in cause and effect thinking, you begin to exercise wisdom by looking inside as opposed to pointing fingers.

Mindfulness is not concentration. Concentration is like a laser beam of thought, whereas mindfulness sees the total picture around that thought. It does not react to what it sees but merely sees and understands. It is pure patience at work.

There are different levels of morality. 1) The lower level involves obeying a set of rules. When they are not obeyed, you get punished. 2) The middle level also involves a set of rules but does not require any outside judgment as any variance from these rules involves self-punishment. 3) The highest level is one of integrity where you impose your own set of values and you become mindful of every situation so it is handled properly and pragmatically.

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Parenting can be especially difficult if we are not mindful and sometimes this morality can be skewed by ignoring what is happening or refusing to see the reality of a situation. Sometimes we forget our moral obligations. Many times we miss a teachable moment because we have our own agenda or we refuse to do the right thing because it is too difficult. We have difficulty with tough love and take the easy way out. When we think of our children as teachers, we realize that we can learn a great deal from their innocence and we can also be wonderful mentors by being mindful of a simple rule, "It is not what you do for your children but it is what you teach them that makes them successful," Our job as parents is to guide, not to force. It is to walk beside them and not drag. Their path is not yours and neither is their interests.

Many people are so caught up in the pursuit of happiness that life passes them by and before they know it, life has passed them by. They forgot to enjoy the experience of just living. Change is inevitable and recognizing this fact is vital to mindfulness. If you could go back in time, what age would you choose? For me it is now because life has been a series of learning and growth experiences that have brought me to a happy place.

Just think of a recent negative experience and decide if it was worthy of your attention. Where was your attention? Was it on the good or bad, right or wrong, or opportunity vs. challenge? Remember, you always have a choice.

In most cases, what you are was determined by what you were, and what you will become is determined by what you are. As a baby you have limited experiences of the world. You form no judgments. You just

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accepted what was happening. As you began to mature, you realized that there are other options and that you have viewpoints. As an adult, you choose your own beliefs and opinions. You begin to learn and grow and part of your growth experience is your ability to let go of immature beliefs and re-focus on ideas and concepts that are useful to you. Outdated beliefs keep you immature. Resentments blur your vision and fears prevent you from a full life experience. Doubts impede your progress. Only when you are mindful of this can you truly have a full life adventure.

Think about how big your world is. How much have you grown? How much more growth are you interested in achieving?

We naturally assume that pain and suffering is going to be a part of our lives. It seems that many people are only alive when they are facing adversity. They are not satisfied unless they are in the middle of some sort of controversy whether that is among friends, neighbours or family. Life is all about the battle. Companies and unions alike look for adversity with neither wanting to give an inch.

Take a look at how you struggle through life. What causes this strife? Is it internal or external? Many of us play the blame game and get stuck in a never ending cycle of misery. I have no need to change because it was not my fault.

Take some time to look at one of your pet peeves, something that annoys you. Allow this pet peeve to surface and become quite clear in your mind. Let it grow and make it as vivid as you can. Notice how you talk to yourself about this issue. What are you saying? How are you feeling about this and what

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kind of negative emotions are stirring in you right now? Make sure you let every sensation become real and do not overlook or push anything aside. The totality of this experience is critical to how you can positively deal with it. Especially notice the parts of your body where you feel the most pain.

Now stop and take a mental picture of what just happened. How you dealt with this instance usually overflows into other areas of your life. Once you identify the problem and you want to change the outcome, you can change the automatic pattern that has become your habit.

A mindfulness trigger is either a visual, auditory or kinaesthetic reminder that will break the conditioned automatic response so that you will become calm as opposed to tense.

Simple actions like walking into the door of your work can be used as a trigger to have you smile. You can do the same thing when arriving home after work. A good example is to set a trigger when the phone rings to remind you to take two or three deep breaths before you answer. Jumping impulsively to the phone causes stress and a mindful trigger will help you to slow down and realize that you are in control of your life. Other examples are placing a smiley face on your phone or computer.

These triggers help us let go of our past and allow us to choose more positive responses. We can reprogram our autopilot for a new direction and we can remove the problems associated with past behaviours.

Mindfulness is as simple as seeing the complete picture or story as it unfolds, without judgment, and

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making a conscious effort to decide an outcome that is right for everyone. This means being aware of both sides of the event including both outcomes and understanding that choice and not chance determines the end result. It means that thoughts lead to words, which in turn leads to results and a simple comment about the obvious can have drastic consequences. Nobody needs or wants to be reminded of a negative trait so it is prudent to point your focus in the direction of doing good.

Faith is not only something you believe in because it was written in a book. It is a set of guiding principles and practices you trust will work because you have seen the positive results.

Life will always be unpredictable and seem unfair. It will continue to offer challenges and obstacles. When faced with such a problem, mindfulness allows us to see ourselves as we are and we discover things we don't particularly like such as greed, jealousy and anger. Once we allow these problems to be discovered they can be released.

There are many things we don't like. We don't like to be told we are wrong. Our ego gets hurt and we see our flaws. We don't like it when we notice wrinkles as it is a sign we are getting older and we hate that as well. We especially don't like having anyone point out our flaws whether they are physical or mental.

When we see flaws like jealousy, anger or greed, mindfulness allows us to source the root of this problem. When we do this, we accept ourselves and become better human beings.

Chapter IV

THE LAW OF POLARITY

There is an important law of the universe that states everything exists in duality. In a nutshell, the law of opposites states that nothing can exist in our world without its direct opposite.

- There would be no darkness without light.
- Without sorrow there is no happiness.
- Without scarcity there is no abundance.

The Law of Polarity or opposites exists so that we are able to explore and experience life to the fullest. If there was no Law of Polarity, we could not experience the fullness of life.

Everything has a contrary in this world so we can live in the fullest. Although this is never acknowledged, without the opposite, and many times this is negative, we would never be able to experience our wants and desires.

Every time you want to have something really bad but you are getting the opposite, just leave it and it will pass. It is all part of the process. If you fight the process it becomes worse. Accept it as a part of the universal plan.

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Just imagine if bad did not exist, how would you know if you are having a good time? If you never experienced failure, you would never feel the exuberance of success. If death did not exist, we would never fully appreciate our life.

If you are receiving the polar opposite of what you are expecting, just let it go. The energy from that experience will soon disappear and you will have your wish.

If you focus your attention on the opposite, it gains power and gets bigger. We all know that what we resist persists, so ignore it and watch it disappear.

The Law of Polarity contains the full spectrum of everything that is possible in the world ranging from full light to full darkness. Once you understand and fully accept and most importantly fully surrender to the experiences that you have in your life, you will realize that everything, including both good and bad, are designed for your ultimate wellness.

Whether you are experiencing a high or low at this moment in your life, you have the potential and ability to experience the opposite.

This has great power because now we can begin to fully appreciate the abundance we have in our lives because we have either been through the worst or we can realize that at any moment it can be taken away.

The Law of Polarity helps you realize that in every problem lies a solution and in every perceived failure there lies success. It means that in every experience you find yourself living, there exists a polar opposite. If you find yourself financially strapped, you realize that there is financial freedom. If your relationship is

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suffering, it can also prosper. How often do we hear stories of near death experiences or health scares and the people have revelations about life that are astounding. There are many ex-drug addicts who now want to help people.

The key to life itself is to place your energy on the things that will help you become stronger and ignore those things that make you weak. When you can fully understand how this works you are well on your way to self-mastery and living in total awareness.

Anything that you experience gives you the opportunity to create the opposite. A critical determining factor is your choice on where you want to be in relation to the spectrum of results and that choice is determined by what you believe you can achieve.

Your thoughts set in motion a series of events that lead to a pre-determined conclusion based on your original thinking. You bring about what you think about.

You have a choice to experience whichever end of the spectrum of polarity that you choose to experience. If you are experiencing what you perceive as unpleasant circumstances, you only need to change what is causing those circumstances within yourself.

When something negative happens to some people, they only look on the gloomy side and say, "This is terrible for this to happen. I will never get over this." The next time something bad happens to you just remember to look for the good because it is there and that good will help you through the terrible time in your life. That is how to use the Law of Polarity.

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When you can understand this concept, you soon realize and begin to understand that all our life experiences can teach us something. The opposite represents an opportunity for us to experience something good from something bad.

When you make a conscious effort to change your thoughts and feelings about a situation by looking for the good in any bad, the success in any failure and the answer to any problem, you shift your conscious awareness to a higher level. You then attract answers and solutions.

So how do you begin to develop the opposite of what you are currently experiencing? How can you start to believe in this process? You understand that you were born with limitless potential for change.

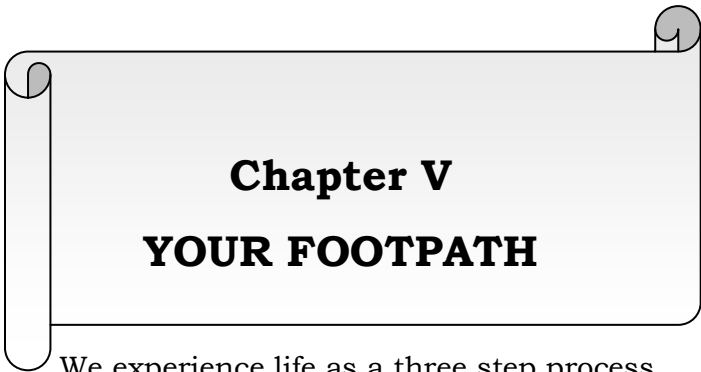
The easiest way is to practice acceptance. Acceptance is the polar opposite of resistance and allows you to receive more of what you desire, peace and joy. What you resist persists because you are putting energy into the very thing you do not want. When you learn to accept these negative events and express thankfulness for this terrible experience, you soon realize that it has been removed.

When you realize that just as pain and suffering can exist, so can peace and joy and you begin to create a better life.

Like all laws, you can choose to ignore it or decide you do not want to understand it or dismiss it as something foolish. You can also choose to ignore the laws of gravity but you would have drastic consequences. The Law of Polarity still exists and will continue to exist until the end of time. It is your choice to make it work for you or against you.

SECTION II

YOUR ULTIMATE DESTINY



Chapter V

YOUR FOOTPATH

We experience life as a three step process.

Step 1) Our thoughts, which are our beliefs, ideas, interpretations, concepts, opinions, judgments and the stories we tell, are the starting point of how we carve our destiny.

Step 2) These thoughts then get assigned a meaning through the feelings or emotions we attach to this thought. These feelings and emotions can include fear, anxiety, worry, happiness, resentment, anger, grief, disgust, shame, guilt, sadness and love.

Step 3) After we judge the thought and wrap a meaning around it, we create a response to the emotion. This reaction can be positive or negative depending on the meaning we have assigned to the event.

We are all governed by the law of three. This law encompasses our past, our future and our present and each can influence the other if we let it. The key here is to handle situations independently from others and base our decisions on what is currently happening. Too often we let our past define our future and this sets us up for failure. We have a

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negative result and automatically assume that this behavior will be perpetuated throughout the remainder of our lives. It can happen that way but it does not have to be that way.

You are defined by the concept of three: the past, present and future you. Because everything begins with a thought, let's look at how these thoughts define our very existence.

OUR THOUGHTS

The past would be considered “who you are.” This group of thoughts includes all your ideas and concepts about who you are and your understanding of life. To get more specific, your past would include everything that you would be identified with including your name and family. It would also include the school or schools you attended, your religious and political affiliation as well as any education you may have. It also includes your beliefs, opinions and ideas about yourself and the world. Simply put, it would include everything that has occurred in your lifetime. It represents everything about you that identifies you as a person yet it is not you. It is only a reflection or image of what you represent. It is merely a thought and we all know that thoughts can be changed. When we identify with our past thoughts and see these thoughts as ourselves, we use the thoughts to define our being and we are so much more than our thoughts.

The future is considered “who you are going to be or want to become.” This group of thoughts includes everything you know or think you know about what is going to happen to you in the future. Your future thoughts include anything you need to have happen

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for you to consider yourself successful as well as any thoughts that can cause you to be unsuccessful. These thoughts can include future jobs, living arrangements, relationships and material things. It includes all your dreams and aspirations. What is important to recognize here is that these are only thoughts and like the interpretation of past thoughts they can be changed. By merely noticing a thought about the future without judging, you allow it to disappear and not become a problem, the same way you allowed a different viewpoint not to become a problem.

The present group of thoughts includes any ideas or notions that occur now. These can include blaming, complaining, judging or comparing and any other thought that makes you wish it was not happening. These present thoughts cause problems for obvious reasons. There are also the opposite thoughts that include gratitude, thankfulness, courage or success, just to name a few.

When we focus our present moment on negative thoughts, they always refer either to a past experience which can cause anger if you perceive someone did something negatively to you or fear because you had failed at a task you are now expected to do. You now let your past influence your present and define yourself based on this past experience. Again, remember these are only thoughts and they can be changed.

OUR EMOTIONS

We have a tendency to embrace the emotions we perceive as good and suppress those that we see as being negative or disruptive. We also want to spend huge amounts of energy attempting to recreate the

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emotions we want and making every effort to get rid of the ones we don't want. This constant striving for good and comfortable feelings and wanting to move away from bad and uncomfortable feelings is a common practice for most people. This continual resistance to what is now actually happening is what makes us believe that our salvation or freedom is at some time in the future rather than in the present.

Feelings and emotions occur through either our past, present or future thoughts. For example, our past group of thoughts may carry corresponding emotions of resentment, shame or guilt depending on our recollection of a particular event. Our present group of thoughts may carry anger or frustration and our thoughts about the future may carry fear or anxiety.

If we understand that all emotions arise in conjunction with thoughts no further analysis or manipulation is needed. If the thought brings about a negative emotion, change the thought to one that gets a positive emotion.

Negative thoughts usually involve a past issue or perceived future problem. A good example usually involves the weather. We look backwards and tend to say things like, "Wasn't the weather this past weekend terrible." Today may be a wonderful sunny day but we are focused on the past. We can also cause undo headaches when we worry about the storm that may be coming tomorrow and we forget to enjoy today.

To know a sunny day is to experience the heat and the light of the sun rather than through the label, "This is a sunny day." The actual warmth and sunlight is real but the thought about yesterday and tomorrow is not. Look at the concept of water. We

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cannot feel the sensation of water until we drink it and the same goes for your favorite food. It is not the thought that satisfies you but the eating experience. It is the doing not the thinking that is real.

Thoughts are merely mental projections that mean nothing. A problem was never solved by just thinking about it and conversely some problems can be solved by just stopping to think about them. Sometimes we can create problems by thinking too much and making assumptions based on these thoughts. There has to be an action associated with the thought or nothing gets done. Thoughts without action are merely wishful thinking or dreaming.

OUR RESPONSES

We continually dwell on our past experiences while we suffer and seek through the consequences of our decisions. We label these events as bad or terrible and look toward the future for redemption so we can feel at peace with ourselves.

Webster's Dictionary definition states that an "experience" is any event "personally encountered, undergone, or lived through." The word to focus on here is "personally." Thought continually refers back and identifies with experiences from our past. In some cases the past events are positive "I graduated with a degree in Education in 1974." "I married the love of my life in 1993." Or, "I attended the most enlightening retreat last year and it changed my life for the better." As we refer back to a particular positive experience, the associated label is also positive. As we do this, we ignore what is happening now and many times we compare these past events to the present and this may cause problems because

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we see our lives as something less than what is was in the past.

In other cases the events are negative. "He has no right to speak to me in that condescending voice." "I am sick and tired of this same old job and getting no recognition for my work," or, "This person is really boring. All he wants to do is talk about himself." Again, as we assign meaning to and judge our present circumstances, we attempt to look to the future for solace and comfort by saying things like, "I can't wait for the weekend to come." "I hope I get a raise because I deserve it," or, "Life will be better when I retire."

Memories are great as long as we don't chase them to escape from our present reality. All too often we say things like, "If only the company was the same as it was years ago," or "I remember how exciting our lives were when we first got married."

We also miss a learning opportunity while in the present moment because we expend too much energy and time hoping for something better in the future. Life always presents us with these learning moments.

When we continue to look into the past, it tends to define our present which in turn carves our future. If what happens now defines our future, then it makes sense to pay attention to the present.

CORE BELIEFS

Our destiny is defined by our core beliefs. These are what make us individuals. In all cases they are based on the input we receive from our five senses. What makes us different is how we process that

information. So the input becomes the structure and can be the same but the content is usually different for each of us. It would be like comparing two similarly built houses. They are alike on the outside which is their structure but their contents or furnishings are quite different.

What winds up happening when we dislike our labels, we attempt to change them by finding better ones. If we can just open our eyes and see the structure and not the labels, we can allow ourselves to see the true self, one without these assigned labels. We are not just our experiences or our emotions, we are much more than that. When we identify with a bad experience, we feel bad and sometimes label ourselves beneath others leading to low self esteem. My hair cut is bad so I look bad and feel bad. Likewise, when we identify with a good experience, sometimes we may look down on others as though we are better than them.

Here are some core beliefs:

1. **VICTIM** – Your life is terrible and everyone else's life is good. You feel trapped in your life.
2. **CAREGIVER** – You focus on everyone else, sometimes to the detriment of your health.
3. **FREE SPIRIT** – You have a carefree existence with no goals and no ambitions.
4. **KNOW IT ALL** – You tend to be a loud talker and a very bad listener. You constantly engage your EGO. You are right and they are wrong.
5. **FIXER** – You continually want to fix situations even though you were not asked. When faced

with a problem, you are the first to volunteer.

6. **DOER** – You are an action-oriented person who sometimes acts without thinking. You have a tendency to be a little impulsive.

When we identify with these stories and understand how they have affected our lives, we can decide how they are working for us instead of feeling we have no choice.

We all co-exist together on this planet. Each of us was born equal. However, when we define people as different, we tend to put labels on them based on the law of opposites. Bob is smart but Jim is stupid. Betty is beautiful and Helen is homely. When we label, we view the person as the label and ignore their core being. Words have no meaning until you compare them with other words. We tend to think that the meaning of life is external to us so we compare. The truth is that everything is internal because of our thought process.

From the viewpoint of being a separate self, outwardly judging “another” is the way in which you separate yourself from others. If the outward judgment is that people are controlling, this implicitly means that you see yourself as not controlling. The list is endless. If my spouse is wrong, I’m right. If my boss is a jerk, I’m a good guy. If I’m a victim, others are perpetrators. If I’m unfortunate, others appear fortunate. In order to be rich, others have to be poor.

By simply realizing that these are all labels we use to justify differences and when we can understand that we are all equal, the need to compare disappears and so do the associated problems.



Chapter VI

YOUR DESTINY

An old Cherokee Indian Chief was teaching his grandson about life. "A fight is going on inside of me," he said to his grandson. "It is a terrible fight between two wolves," he continued.

"One is evil, angry, envious, sorrowful, regretful, greedy, arrogant, self-pitying, guilt-ridden, resentful, lying, full of false pride, superiority and ego driven," the Chief continued to say.

Then the Chief pause and said, "The other wolf is good, joyful, peaceful, loving, hopeful, serene, humble, kind, empathetic, generous, truthful, compassionate, and faithful."

"The same fight is going on inside of you, grandson, and in every other person," said the Chief.

The grandson thought about this for a moment, turned to the Chief and said, "But, grandfather, which wolf will win?"

The old Cherokee replied, "The one that you feed."

How many of us have asked the questions, "Who am I?" or "What are my values?" "What do I stand for?" or "What is my being?"

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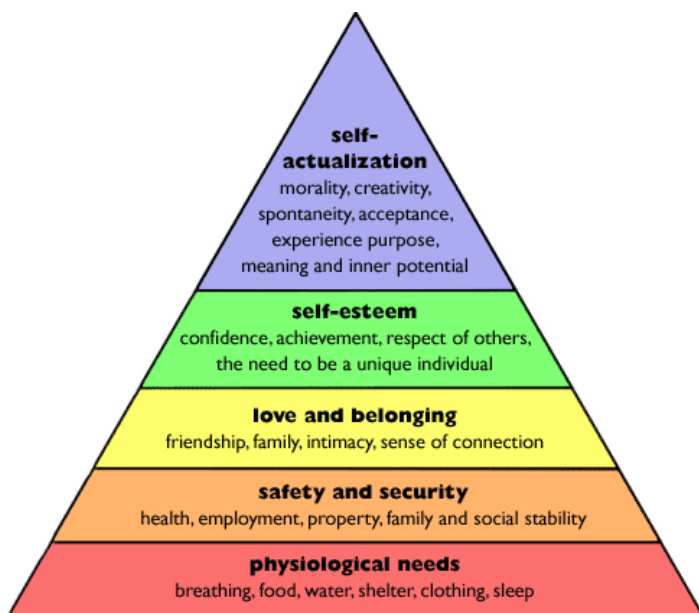
You define yourself using three methods:

1. You **model** or mimic the behavior that you like. You see someone you admire so you decide you want to be just like that person.
2. You **resist** a behavior that you dislike and choose something that is its opposite. This is the opposite of modeling because the trait you see does not fit into how you wish to behave.
3. You **obey** a behavior because of your expectation or because you are forced into that behavior. Society makes some of us conform because we want to belong. We do not want to be singled out as odd or different. People like those who are like themselves. Other times we are forced into a certain behavior because of a certain situation. Our boss dictates what he wants done or our parents make us dress a certain way.

Descartes once said, "I think therefore I am." The operative word here is "I." What is important to remember is to focus on yourself and identify the traits that are causing problems instead of blaming your past or present circumstances for the problems in your life.

The following diagram illustrates Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Let's take a closer look at the diagram. You will see that there are five very different levels.

Your attention will only be placed on a higher level if the lower levels have been successfully met. The levels include the very basic needs at the bottom of the triangle and then go to self-actualization at the top.



1. **Physiological needs** – These are the basic human needs that include food, water and shelter.
2. **Safety and Security** – Once your basic needs are met you can move up a level and begin to look at things like your health, your job and other social things that define you.
3. **Love and Belonging** – As your social needs are met, you start to value friendships and intimacy.
4. **Self-Esteem** – This follows friendships and as you become more comfortable with yourself and begin to experience closeness, as your self-worth grows.
5. **Self-Actualization** – This occurs when we experience our life purpose and we begin to understand our true selves.

There are four different types of selves.

1. ***The Actual Self*** – This is the real you. How you perceive yourself and how others perceive you. It is the true you with all your gifts and faults.
2. ***The Ought to be Self*** – This is the image that society has deemed acceptable or what others think you ought to be like.
3. ***The Ideal Self*** – This is the way you would like to be. It encompasses all your dreams and aspirations.
4. ***The Hidden Self*** – This is the area we don't like anyone to see because it contains all the traits we do not like about ourselves.

We tend to spend too much time focusing on how society wants us to be or how we would like our lives to become. What is normal? I believe it is different for everybody. When we spend too much time worrying about how to change, adapt or fit into a cookie cutter mould, we forget how to be and just live. We deny and suppress our faults or we blame others for our position in life.

A shadow is a term coined by Carl Jung that is some aspect of the actual self that is repressed because it is unacceptable. These shadows are the denied aspects of your inner self. We then tend to project this negative trait outward onto someone else. This person is usually your “ought to be” or “ideal self” and this becomes a reflection of your true self.

We either ***contain*** or ***embrace*** shadows because they are parts of ourselves we either dislike or are uncomfortable with.

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When we **contain** a particular shadow, we repress this negative trait and then show very strong negative feelings towards people who possess that trait. We don't like loud people and show a dislike when around them.

When we embrace a particular shadow, we repress some positive trait and then have a very strong attraction towards people who portray that trait. We wish we could be more confident and admire people who are this way.

Shadows are the beliefs and values that we don't like about ourselves, therefore we keep them hidden. Although they are buried deep within our hidden self, they still exert a powerful influence over our lives. Everyone around us can see them yet we do not see them ourselves. They are like cars in the blind spot of our rear view mirror. They are there but we cannot see them. This is why these shadows have been referred to as "the disowned self." These inner problems belong to someone else yet they are hauntingly familiar. You dislike alcoholics because you are a reformed one or you hate cigarette smoke because you are an ex-smoker.

What is so fascinating is that no amount of observation of these negative traits will bring these repressed shadows to the surface. It appears as though the subconscious mind uses memory loss as a protection mechanism because the ownership of these traits is too painful. These are the traits we do not like about ourselves or are too embarrassed to portray. You can deny the existence of these traits for an entire lifetime yet they continue to co-exist with the ones you accept.

John Elwood provides a good definition of the shadow in his book, *Toward a Psychology of Awakening*. "Focal attention selectively emphasizes

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certain aspects of the experiential field while ignoring others, thereby casting into the shadows these unattended parts of the field. The shadow is the mirror reversal of what focal attention has emphasized. Overemphasizing any part at the expense of the whole sets an opposite tendency in motion, as part of a larger equilibrium process.”

I believe it is human nature to focus our attention on our positive traits and deny our negative ones. You keep telling yourself that you are a kind and considerate person so you have to deny your mean streak. You may say you are a gentle person yet you suppress your quick temper or you explain it by blaming someone else for your outburst. You say you are not a control freak yet you ignore the fact that you have to have things your way all the time. You say you are not a greedy person yet you justify your greedy nature. When you choose one side of an opposite and give that your full attention, the other side still exists but it has been pushed below consciousness.

Probably the greatest story is the individual who is a consistent church goer, portrays a holy image yet fails to show forgiveness. As Elwood states, “The shadow is the mirror reversal of what focal attention has emphasized . . . overemphasizing any part at the expense of the whole sets an opposite tendency in motion.” What you see as a problem in someone else is really your own shadow, following you around everywhere you go and in all of your relationship.

When you become mindful of these inner shadows, two things happen: 1) your perception of life becomes much clearer as you realize the source of the negative response is within you and, 2) you decide to use your inner self to help people and not blame

them. It also allows your inner voice to provide inner compassion so you treat yourself with kindness.

I prefer to look at the “I” and focus on what can be done internally to circumvent a potential problem. Here is a simple four step plan that allows us to internalize a perceived external issue:

Step 1 – Identify the concern by determining your overreaction to the judgment. Too often we tend to fixate on the story and blame enters the picture and we feel okay with owning the shadow. Not all judgments are shadows. Maybe your co-worker is lazy; that is just an observation. Look at how strong your emotion is to the judgment. If you border on despise, then that is probably a shadow.

Step 2 – Isolate the problem to ensure that it is dealt with individually and not as part of another problem.

Step 3 - Interact with the problem through internal dialogue to determine the true nature and origin of the problem. Talk to yourself about the problem and identify it with yourself.

Step 4 – Incorporate the problem with your core being through acceptance as a part of who you are but does not define who you are. Once you have interacted with the shadow, you can accept it. This self-acceptance can be very liberating because you can now stop pretending that the negative trait does not exist and you can accept other people for what they are, the same as yourself. This can be very liberating to accept what you have been constantly denying. What you resist persists but what you accept becomes your true identity.

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When you follow this process, you realize that you are no different than anyone else and you gain a quiet understanding and awareness of yourself.

Just like shadow containment, you can use the same four step process with shadow embracing, which is the opposite of containment. Not only can we deny a negative trait by attempting to contain it, we can also repress positive aspects of ourselves. In Cognitive Behavior terms shadow containment is referred to as Mental Filtering or Discounting the Positive. This happens when we deny something positive about ourselves and project them onto others. We then feel a strong attraction to these people because they exhibit the traits we hold precious but do not think we have. A good example is a person who seems to be too perfect. They never get upset, always say the right things, have the perfect marriage and perfect children. These positive aspects seem to be impossible to have ourselves and it becomes easier to project them onto others. We remain victims of our own mindset because we continue to put people like these on a pedestal continually wishing we could be like them but thinking that this way of life is impossible for us. When you identify with the shadow, you realize that it is just an opposite. Good examples of shadow embracing are envy and jealousy.

You can apply the same technique to emotions and beliefs. All viewpoints are equal and deserve the same consideration. Problems can occur when we have a different opinion from someone else. Their outlook about life does not fit our view of the world. A good example is the belief in the existence of God.

The reality of life is that all external pressure or pressure exerted by someone else is really internal

pressure that you somehow have repressed or ignored. Let me illustrate this with an example:

George has always had good intentions to finish painting his house. He managed to start but made the mistake of beginning at the front. Once he had the front and sides completed, he lost interest as other projects took priority like golf or his recent interest in flying model planes. He justified the work stoppage by saying to his neighbor that no one sees the back anyway. He continues by saying that he will make sure it is finished by the end of the summer. George still wanted to finish painting the house but the drive or incentive got pushed aside and was replaced with other priorities. He no longer was excited about the painting. The following summer, George's neighbor says, "I thought you were going to finish painting the house last year. You are getting lazy! Are you ever going to do that?" George automatically gets defensive. He responds, "You are a good one to talk. What about your broken lawnmower. If you had it fixed you would not have to borrow mine." This is a shadow but George is not able to see it. He feels that his neighbor is more worried about the painting than he is and becomes defensive and resentful. George says to himself, "What is his problem? I wish he would just mind his own business and leave me alone. I will get to the painting when I am good and ready." George does not realize that his defensiveness tells the true story. The external prodding from his neighbor is really an internal drive to get the job done. The external magnification of the problem brought to light by his neighbor is bringing back into his own awareness the internal drive to finish painting the house. His eagerness to finish painting went away. His neighbor is simply reminding George of his own desire to finish the job he started.

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Because George does not recognize this prodding as a shadow, he sees it as coming from the outside. As opposed to him saying, “I think it would be a good idea to finish the house,” he sees it as a nosey neighbor who should mind his own business. This is how conflict begins because of the lack of recognition of what is really going on.

Just keep this in mind: ***all external pressure is internal drive***. There are no exceptions and defensiveness is the tell tale sign. This statement is true because George would never have gotten upset if his neighbor had a house half painted and then asked George if he would finish painting his house. There is no defensiveness because George never had any interest or drive to finish painting his neighbor’s house. It was never a priority in the past.

As with priorities, this concept also applies to external criticism. If someone calls you fat and you get defensive, you feel that the person is being mean and offensive when in fact what is happening is an ignition of an internal drive to lose weight. Your defensiveness supports the criticism. It applies to negative comments like, “You are greedy.” Or, “You are self-centered.”

If you did not identify or internalize the negative comment, you would not get defensive because the comment would hold no weight. So the next time someone criticizes you, thank them for revealing your internal story. Once you can identify the shadow, isolate it, interact with it, and really see how it makes you feel. You can truly see it as internal criticism brought into the open.

If you are truly at peace there is no need to justify yourself to anyone. When you act out thinking that

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this is a show of strength, in reality it is a sign of weakness.

There are numerous examples of people not at peace with themselves. They struggle with their own identity constantly looking outward for approval.

Some competitors in a fitness competition take the ECA stack. It is a combination of Ephedrine, caffeine and Aspirin taken together. The result is a boost in metabolism which causes the heart to race at an alarming rate. This drug has been banned in North America because it has been linked to heart attack and stroke yet people are so focused on losing weight that they do it at all costs even to the detriment of their own health.

Other examples see people so self absorbed that their idea of listening is what they do while they are waiting to speak. They hear you but do not comprehend. They appear to be consumed with their own self interest that they ignore what is going on outside their world and are just interested in what they have to say. These are the people who finish your sentences so they can continue talking. They don't ask questions because they are not interested in what you have to say.

Some people go to extremes to fit into their definition of success. They continually acquire material things equating success with stuff. If they have a bigger house, more expensive car, dress their children in brand name clothes and take two vacations a year they feel they are successful. They miss the true meaning of inward peace

We see other examples of people not at peace as models are becoming thinner and thinner forced by society to be that way. Study after study has shown

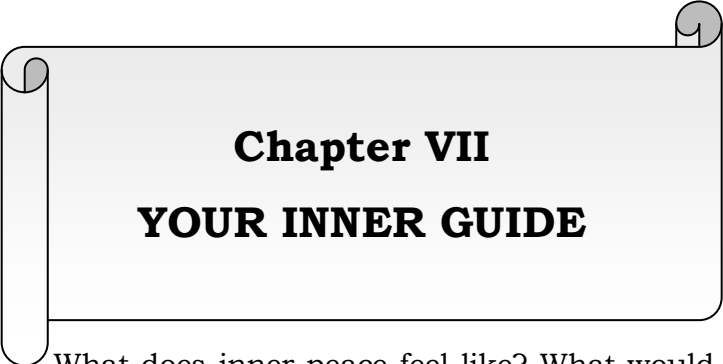
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that good looks and a slim build will get you farther than average looks and a bigger frame. I believe in looking after ones self and doing it for you in a healthy way. Life was never meant to be lived by looking outward and adapting your world to fit into someone else's.

I end some of my workshops by saying, "Discover the magic within you." We all have something truly special to offer the world. If we would just stop, take a deep breath and find that special magic, we can all make a difference in this world.

One way to make a significant difference is finding that magic and working hard to make it the best. You do that by focusing on the one thing you have total control over and that is yourself. We were all born with the ability to make the world a better place.

But there is a big difference between ability and motivation. We all have the capability to do something special yet many just choose to do nothing.



Chapter VII

YOUR INNER GUIDE

What does inner peace feel like? What would it look like to you? Here is your guide to use as you develop your own sense of inner peace.

The most important aspect of living is to decide your intention. How do you want to live? What values do you hold dear and never compromise. Use your head to handle yourself and your heart to handle others. In other words, use logic with yourself and love with others.

Listen to your inner thoughts as they are messages from your higher self. Trust yourself and go with your gut feelings.

As humans we possess a vast amount of information yet we have difficulty making decisions during critical areas of our lives. We pause and refrain from making a decision afraid it may be wrong.

There is a part of us called our higher self which knows everything. Yet we believe that we are just merely flesh and bones and this belief can be an obstacle in the pursuit of our dreams.

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If you want to get deep insight, you only have to look inside and tap into your higher self or inner guide. Many people fail to master insight because they are more focused on oversight, meaning they believe the answers are out there. There are several ways to do this. One way is to quiet the mind through meditation. There is a chapter dedicated to this art later in the book.

For many of us our minds race and become filled with fear and anxiety. It becomes much easier to just ask for help.

When we slow down and calm our mind, ideas and solutions come to our consciousness much more easily and quickly. Taking a step back from the confusion of life can be very rewarding yet many of us just don't do it. The excuse, "I don't have the time."

Each of us control our own destiny. You drive your own car of life. Looking for advice can lead you down the wrong path of life and cause untold problems. Learn to trust yourself and see the rewards. As William Shakespeare said, "To thine own self be true."

True success is an internal feeling of self-fulfillment. It is about being at peace with yourself and the world. It comes from being who you are and doing what you want to do.

Your intuition is an area of your mind that requires practice to perfect. We don't get to practice this because we never get past self-trust. When we trust ourselves we usually can make decisions without relying too heavily on the opinions of others or allowing someone to sway our judgement. Many

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times we hear that inner voice telling us what to do but we don't act. We soon realize that another opportunity was lost. We all do this as it takes practice and time to perfect our intuition. When you trust it and act on it, you get better.

Think back to a time when you had a gut feeling or a hunch about something and it later came true. Did you do anything about it? How did you feel about it? Did you just dismiss your feelings? Did you regret doing nothing? These are some things to think about that will get you moving in the direction of using your inner guide.

Whenever you have a tough decision, there is no need to look outside as your intuition knows what is best for you. When you start using this skill, it may seem awkward at first but we all know that every skill gets better with practice. The best advice is just take that first step and see what happens. Start with something small and build from there. Don't discount your feelings as most times they are more real than outside advice. As you begin to trust yourself more, you will begin to see small successes and your confidence and self-esteem will grow.

Do you know anyone who seems to be really intuitive? Ask them to share their experiences with you? Have them explain their thought process and how they come to their correct conclusions. Great knowledge comes from those who do things really well. You can build on what others know.

Trusting changes your thoughts which leads to a different set of results and this sets you apart from others. Here are some basic guidelines:

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1. Become aware of your feelings. Bedtime is a great time for this.
2. Learn to trust your inner guide.
3. Start small and keep a journal.
4. Meditate, listen and act.

Practice and you will develop the confidence to act on your inner guide.

The other area of your inner guide is your willpower. Do you exercise your willpower or do you act as a robot easily swayed by the media or other external influences?

When you stop focusing inward and begin to look outward, you begin a series of events and circumstances that include proving and ego building. If you don't get the attention you are seeking, you either imagine it or demand it by acting out.

The key here again is to focus your attention inward. If you can shift your attention inward and you experience a change in one of your beliefs and this change continues, your perception also changes as you realize that the change happened from within and not due to outside forces. Once this happens the change becomes a habit and thus permanent.

Here are some helpful suggestions to assist you in maintaining focus.

1. When a task begins to feel exhausting break it down into smaller pieces and re-focus on each smaller piece.
2. When your attention begins to falter and you start to get distracted from your goal, ask

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yourself the following questions, “What is important about this task.”

3. When your task becomes surrounded by self-doubt and you begin to have misgivings about your ability, re-focus on the result you want to create and the doubt will disappear.

Balance all aspects of your life including the four basic parts: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual.

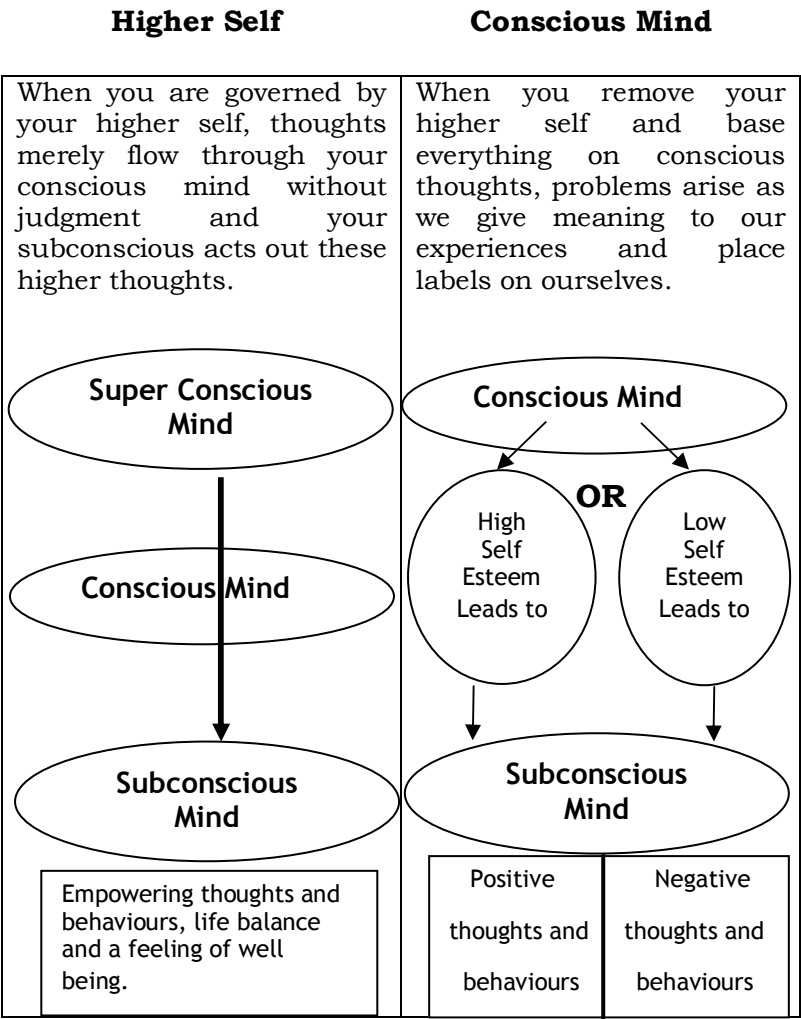
Make sure you slow down and breathe. Deep breathing is a natural relaxation technique. When you find your blood pressure starting to rise, take ten deep breaths, pausing after each one and repeat, “I am calm and relaxed.” You will find that the stress just melts away.

Here are some creative suggestions to help you master your inner guide.

1. When you continue to see mistakes in others, you have refused to correct similar ones in yourself. These errors are merely mirror images of your flawed self.
2. When you continue to have negative results, you have refused to learn from your past mistakes. Open your eyes and realize that life is a learning experience. As you learn you grow and become a better person.
3. When you find yourself working really hard to persuade people, you have serious doubts about your ability. People agree with you only when they truly see the benefit of your wisdom.
4. If your beliefs are shaped by what you have experienced, you will continue to find yourself in

survival mode. Instead choose beliefs that help determine the results you want from life.

We have two ways to approach life; either being governed by our higher self (super conscious) or by our conscious mind.



Chapter VIII

HAVING IS BEING

It is a fact that everything in the entire universe is pure energy, differing only in the rate of vibration. The Law of Attraction works on this principle. Vibration is energy and everything vibrates. Things that vibrate at a similar rate are attracted to each other. In other words, energy attracts like energy which gives way to the common statement, "All is energy and the energy you give out is the result you get." The Law of Attraction states that you attract into your life whatever you give energy, attention and focus to. You attract into your life everything and anything that you picture in your mind whether that is a positive or a negative image. By simply thinking and focusing you create your own reality.

When you focus on something, you give it energy and the object, thought or image begins to grow and gain power. The more you give it your attention, the bigger and more powerful it gets. Mental energy is just as important as physical energy for one basic reason. Your mind does not know whether something is happening inside or outside its structure. It cannot tell the difference and reacts the same way. That is why the more you pay attention to something the longer it will live inside your mind and will influence what happens outside your mind. If you

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accept the thought, it weakens, gets smaller and unimportant and eventually disappears.

Appreciation is a good example. When you appreciate something, it grows in value. When you are thankful for just the little things in life, they become more valuable. When you embrace the negative aspects of your life, these things become more valuable. That is why it is so important to maintain concentration on what is positive and just accept what is negative.

Let's say there are two girlfriends wanting to take ballet lessons. Both attend classes and listen attentively but one has the greater desire to learn. One feels the great ballet dancer inside them and can visualize dancing on a great stage in front of thousands. She sees the audience giving her a standing ovation. She gets into the flow and the learning comes quickly and naturally because she became a success inside. She experiences this feeling as first person meaning their internal dialogue is saying, "I am." The success happens inside first. The other friend is not so sure. She is not convinced of her ability to become good at ballet. Her journey becomes difficult and before long she just quits. Both friends started out even but one succeeded because she identified with becoming a great dancer while the other did not.

NLP (neuro linguistic programming) calls this modelling or conditioning your mental and emotional state to fit what you want to achieve. Re-modelling is much harder because you have to re-wire your internal mechanism as opposed to start with a new slate. What happens is that your inner world becomes your outer world. The friend who became a great dancer already knew she was a great dancer and she was able to communicate it externally.

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Whenever I use hypnotherapy, I create a positive emotional awareness in the client and have them really feel that emotion. The more powerful the emotion, the greater energy it has and the greater your chances of creating what you want. It is the emotional attachment to the experience that provides the incentive to act.

All of our emotions work the same way because they all have energy. Happiness, contentment, joy and peace to name a few have positive energy attached to them. The people who express these feelings are the ones who expand their lives by providing more of the same.

Be thankful and express joy as much as possible. Albert Einstein said, "You can go through life as though everything is a miracle or as though nothing is a miracle." When you feel the joy of having what you want, you will attract it into your life because your mind will believe you already have it. For you to experience something you must be in the proper state to receive it. If you are full of anger, you will never receive joy. If you have hatred in your heart, you will never experience love. Whenever I have a magic or hypnosis show, I always rehearse the show in my mind. I see myself performing flawlessly and I visualize the audience giving me a standing ovation.

So you need to decide what is important in your life and that includes family and friends. Cultivate these relationships and cherish them. Feel the closeness of those strong family ties and the joy of those special friendships. It is those emotions that will give you the strength to maintain these relationships throughout your lifetime.

Your thoughts and beliefs create a force that can break something apart even when all other forces are

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working to keep it together and can keep something together even when all other forces are trying to pull it apart. You can never lose something on the outside if you never lose it within you. Even if it's taken from you, you have the ability to recreate it over and over again. Just like the spider that has his web destroyed. He simply starts over.

Low self-esteem is caused because some people measure themselves by what they have instead of by what they are. They continue to escape by changing jobs, spouses, and houses not realizing that the answer is not out there. The answer lies within. We cannot escape ourselves so the real true teacher is life.

When we look outward comparison is inevitable. We naturally feel out of balance and vulnerable so we seek approval through outside rewards like material possessions, money or fishing for compliments. It becomes a never ending battle which can never be won. By stopping to make yourself more than you are because you feel less than you are, you discover your true identity and you develop a sense of peace and tranquility. You stop fighting with yourself, stop taking things personally and life so seriously.

Two people become prisoners in a marriage because each blames the other. Inmates are prisoners behind bars because they blame life for their circumstances. One thing leads to another as though they have no control. Life then becomes a prison because of unawareness of what is actually happening. When we experience wholeness and completeness, we have no desire to look elsewhere or place blame elsewhere and we begin to understand self-awareness.

Life is all about being. It does not matter how beautiful you dress if you believe you are poor

looking inside. The clothes will not help you. No amount of external change will change your inner self. If you feel unattractive, you will be an unappealing image. What you are inside says so much more than what you are outside and that inner image can never be disguised.

The people who truly believe they are beautiful see that from the inside. They have no need to fake their beauty by attempting to be someone else. They have a good self-image and high self-esteem. What you see inside is what you are. It is as I said, "Having is about being." If you want to have confidence, be confident. If you want to have patience, be patient. What you have inside expresses what you are. It does not define who you are. You define what you are. What you express may not be the real you because of your inner beliefs. Once you change those inner thoughts your exterior changes as well. Change your inner energy and you change your results.

Being is conscious awareness. To make what you want a reality you have to allow yourself to experience life as though you already have it. You will then tune into the proper energy pattern to attract the proper results. The simple conscious thought of having will get you the results you want. Your inner world creates your outer world.

I think therefore I am. I am therefore I have.

This is a very simple concept that too many people dismiss. Be what you want in your life but first you have to answer one question, "What do I want to be?"

If you want to be the best parent you can be, feel that experience inside and get in touch with how that feels. Work on yourself first and everything else will follow. Everything flows from the inside to the

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outside. You have to fix what is wrong inside before you can fix what is wrong outside. Once it is fixed on the inside, the outside is automatically fixed. No work is required. Keep your eye on where you want to go and not on where you are.

I always say, “Don’t think about what you don’t want to do,” and “Don’t look where you don’t want to go.”

It is about getting perspective on what we value instead of focusing on what bothers us. How often do we complain about a particular bad habit exhibited by our partner? Snoring is an example. I believe we would all cherish listening to that snoring after our partner is no longer with us.

We judge too quickly sometimes by having a critical comment about what someone may be wearing. That person is comfortable with their choice of wardrobe yet we criticize because it does not fit with our view of being in style.

I make a point of stepping back from all this idle nonsense and focusing on a more productive point of view, only saying something that can add to a conversation and move in a positive direction. Think about the direction you want to go and make sure you say things that support your philosophy. People will respect you more for adopting this way of thinking and speaking.

So the next time you meet someone quiet, instead of assuming they are aloof believe that they choose to be this way because they understand that they will learn more by observing and listening as opposed to talking. Abraham Lincoln said it best when he said. “It is better to remain silent and thought a fool, than to speak up and remove all doubt.”

Chapter IX

STEPS TO ENLIGHTENMENT

This chapter is dedicated to ten simple steps you can do to create a path to inner peace and tranquility.

1. Be Kind to Yourself

Many times we set different standards for ourselves which sets us up for failure. Be gentle with yourself and give yourself permission to make mistakes.

2. Live for the Moment

Just imagine if you were given \$86,400.00 everyday of your life with three conditions: 1) you had to spend all of it everyday, 2) you could not give it away or spend it on anyone else, 3) this gift could stop at any time. What would you do with the money? Well everyday we have 86,400 seconds of time to spend. We cannot accumulate it because at the end of the day what is not spent is taken away from us. Value your time and spend it wisely because you never know when it will end.

3. Loosen Up

We spend too much time worrying about trivial matters. We get anxious about what may happen and we forget to just let life unfold. Make

everything in life a learning experience instead of a proving one. In other words stop wanting to prove yourself right all the time.

4. *Count Your Blessings*

We all have things we can be thankful for yet sometimes we lose sight of what is truly important. Take the time to cherish what you have because it could be lost in a moment.

5. *Hug the People You Love*

Showing people how much you appreciate them being in your life is very uplifting not only for yourself but for everyone involved. Cherish the important people in your life. You won't have them forever.

6. *Keep it Simple*

Life is simple yet we seem to complicate it by making questionable decisions. One way is to lighten your load and stop extending yourself beyond your limits. Another way is to be a creature of habit. Put your keys in the same place, take your vitamins at the same time and go to bed and rise from bed at the same time each day.

7. *Have Good Intentions*

Decide to be pragmatic. That is the practice of making sure you keep the welfare of everyone utmost in your mind. So ask yourself, what do I want to accomplish by doing this? Who is going to benefit from my actions? When you have the welfare of everyone at heart, we all win.

8. *Cultivate Your Relationships*

Spend time with the people you love because they could be taken away in an instant. Continue to develop friendships and value the existing ones.

9. Establish Your Priorities

There are many people who have figured out how life works and they are benefiting from it. Make sure you do the things that work for you instead of the things that work against you.

10. See the Truth

We all have limitless potential within our own capability. Once you understand that, you can feed it and become the person you have always wanted to become.

If we are going to create a better life, it is important to move in a positive direction. Many people get stuck in the same pattern because of their auto-pilot. It needs to be reset. One way to do that is to be aware of your conscious thinking. If we are to function properly, we need to spend more time in the present moment. Regrets caused by thinking about the past, and worry caused by thinking about the future consume us. Here are a number of practical ideas to get you out of the past or future and concentrating on the present:

1. Make a to-do list.
2. Break down a large project into smaller chunks.
3. Forgive someone who hurt you and move on.
4. Invest in an appointment book.

What you are doing is getting rid of junk that is taking thought space in your awareness. This preoccupation of useless thought gets in the way of productivity and as a result, we remain stagnant in the past or paralyzed by the future.

A key ingredient in getting past this excess baggage is the power of the will. Many times it appears as though we have no control over our will. We get

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caught up in instinctive urges or charges of emotion. Sometimes our morals fail us and we do something stupid. Other times we allow our thinking and behavior to be governed by external sources.

We make decisions based on past experiences. In other words, we are predisposed to having the same result if faced with a particular circumstance simply by our thinking. It is our auto-pilot. So how do we control all these factors? One way to change this is to become aware of these cause and effect scenarios and exercise the power of your will to change your reaction. The best way to do this is to be mindful of these experiences and allow the occurrence to come and go and just watch what happens. By remaining calm you allow yourself to analyze the problem without the attached emotion and feeling. Another way is to think back to a situation that caused you grief. Allow yourself to fully experience the past moment including all the emotion and feeling. Remain calm and allow your thoughts to analyze the situation without judging. By remaining calm and controlling your will you do two things: 1) you develop patience, and 2) you uncover the root of the problem or a core belief about yourself.

Once you gain control of your will you automatically get a new perspective on life. You can now decide if your beliefs carve your experience or you have experiences based on your beliefs. As you drill down to your core beliefs, you can consciously decide to create your own life or allow it to be inherited from your past. You do this using your imagination, then bringing the concept into consciousness and then applying action.

Perspective can help you distinguish between a label and identifying with that label. Problems begin to happen when we take a label and claim it as you.

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Someone calls you stupid when you drop something when in fact it was only a careless moment that caused you to drop it. That moment was not you so don't identify with it.

We can identify with someone who has taken ownership of a problem when they say 'this' problem. The mere use of the word 'this' creates the issue of ownership. A much better way to deal with the issue is to label it as 'that' problem. This way you become detached and are able to more effectively handle it.

Perspective can also involve compassion once we understand that all people want the same things from life: to be happy, comfortable and loved. Once we understand that no one can avoid pain and suffering, we begin to see the less fortunate like ourselves and we not only feel compassion but we want to do something about it. Without action, thought is merely mental energy that accomplishes nothing.

Along with compassion comes forgiveness. An unforgiving person denies responsibility, freely accepts pity and needs to be owed. Not a great list to add to a resume. The process here is three fold:

1) accept, 2) forgive, and 3) move on. Letting go has numerous side effects including: 1) living longer, 2) having less stress, 3) sleeping better and 4) being happier just to name a few. The choice appears obvious doesn't it?

If someone offers you an "I am sorry" and you refuse and turn your back, who is the better person? By extending the conflict you become a part of the problem and not the solution. Many people decide that the incident "should not have happened to me" and as a result of that thought process, the feeling of

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unfairness or wanting control over the victimizer's emotions can be a hindrance to moving on.

On the other hand, if you are the originator of the problem, here are the steps to follow. 1) **admit** the transgression, 2) **apologize** for it, 3) **accept** the consequences of your action by taking responsibility and not offering excuses, 4) **address** the issue and seek to fix the problem and 5) **adopt** a new philosophy by aspiring to uphold integrity and morality in your life.

Make the most of all that comes and the least of all that goes. In other words cherish what you have and be prepared to let it go when the time comes. So is your focus on what is coming into your life or what is leaving? If your focus is on what is entering your life you create happiness and if the focus is on what is leaving you create suffering.

A giant step towards enlightenment is to understand the word integrity. Here is my definition. "Integrity is what you do when no one else is watching." Integrity is about being honest with yourself first. It is about letting go of your ego and stop wanting to be right. It is about looking inside instead of defending your position. It is all about the courage required to face the facts. How often do we hear, "Everyone does it." Seems like a justification as opposed to a reflective moment of truth. So your motto is, "Do what I think." This way your awareness becomes reality and you have no self-serving hidden agenda.

If we are going to release our self-defeating beliefs it is important to pay close attention to our inner voice. The more we repeat positive empowering ideas, the quicker they become a part of your being and the closer you get to enlightenment.

SECTION III

THE ALTERNATIVES

Chapter X

HOLISTIC HEALING OPTIONS

Holistic healing means taking a more natural approach when seeking treatment for physical problems. The distinguishing factor is the focus on the mental part of the problem. The idea is that all physical problems are manifested from mental issues and when you clear the negative energy, the physical problem also goes away.

Pain is real and while a holistic approach can be beneficial, conventional treatment options must never be totally dismissed. A holistic approach is not an alternative to a more conventional approach, it is more a compliment. Natural approaches are good options, especially with your diet.

Holistic healing looks at not only the physical manifestation of the problem but every aspect of the individual. Holistic healing is not a quick fix but rather a journey to wellness. Its intention is to provide a more balanced and healthier well being.

Holistic healing is all about lifestyle. It includes all aspects of your well being including physical and mental healing and health, emotional well-being as well as spiritual beliefs and values. It is the natural convergence of mind, body and soul. This approach

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provides you with the necessary tools and techniques that empower you to be your best.

A holistic healer understands that our physical ailments are symptoms of some sort of imbalance. This imbalance could be a physical problem due to an unhealthy diet, lack of exercise, or possibly not enough sleep. It could be that the person is not experiencing the proper mental, emotional, or spiritual needs. Every aspect (mind, body and spirit) of a person is scrutinized through this treatment.

A holistic healer looks and evaluates the complete person so they can make an accurate evaluation. They will use every bit of information they have and only then do they decide on an appropriate treatment option. Their goal is to determine the root cause of the problem

Make sure you understand that not all holistic healers are the same. Each has a particular set of skills, a speciality and expertise to offer.

It is a good practice to see which offers the best fit for your particular problem. It is the same when you choose between a physiotherapist and a massage therapist. Each has a unique skill to handle different problems.

What I want to cover here is the variety of options available to you if you are looking at some sort of alternative solution.

The types of holistic therapies available are extensive. Here are the most common:

Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy is the practice of using volatile plant oils, including essential oils, for both psychological and physical wellness.

Essential oils are the pure essence of a plant and have been found to provide both psychological and physical benefits but they have to be used safely and correctly.

The Essential Oils include over ninety essential oils. Absolutes, CO₂s and Hydrosols are also commonly utilized in aromatherapy. Although essential oils, CO₂ extracts and absolutes are distilled differently, essential oil is usually used as a catch all to include all natural, aromatic, volatile and plant oils including CO₂s and absolutes.

Anything that is synthetic is not used. Perfume oils or fragrance oils are not the same as essential oils. Fragrance and perfume oils have synthetic chemicals and do not provide the therapeutic benefits of essential oils.

Essential oils are inhaled into the nostrils and lungs. They not only stimulate brain activity but offer other benefits. A good example is inhaling eucalyptus essential oil to help break up the congestion caused by the flu.

If not done correctly and safely, however, the use of essential oils can have severe consequences.

Some essential oils are applied to the skin where they are absorbed into the blood stream. There they help in health, beauty and hygiene conditions. These

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essential oils are very powerful and concentrated and should only be used only when diluted.

These oils also have other benefits as some can be used as household and laundry cleaners. Some oils can be used as insect repellent and pesticide. As an example citronella candles help keep mosquitoes away.

When looking to purchase these products, read the label to see if they contain any fragrance oils or unpure chemical components. A general rule-of-thumb is to stay away from any product that does not list ingredients and always look for the word “pure.”

Some suppliers refrain from listing ingredients to deter people from copying their recipe. Ask appropriate questions and any reputable retailer will be honest. Before you purchase take the ingredients to your doctor to make sure you don't have a negative reaction.

Ayurvedic Medicine

Ayurveda is considered the most ancient existing medical system. It is a four thousand year old Indian healing method that includes diet, natural therapies and herbs that vary depending on your body type. Ayurvedic medicine places equal emphasis on your body, mind, and spirit with the goal of restoring the natural balance of the person. Deepak Chopra, an endocrinologist and spiritual teacher, authored *In Perfect Health; The Complete Mind/Body Guide* and talks about Ayurveda.

According to ayurvedic medicine, there are seven major factors that can disrupt physiological balance.

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These are genetic, congenital, internal, external trauma, seasonal, natural tendencies or habits, and magnetic and electrical influences.

Ayurvedic medicine is different than most other types because it takes into account how the seasons and time of day influence health. Ayurvedic treatment usually includes music, herbs, massage, steams, facials, and aromatherapy.

Particularly close attention is paid to the sensory organs which include the eyes, ears, mouth, skin and tongue. The ayurvedic doctor attempts to manipulate not only the patient's life but also his or her behaviour and lifestyle.

Herbal Remedies

Herbal remedies are a type of alternative medicine that originates from plants and plant extracts. They are used to heal both physical and psychological illnesses and diseases. These remedies have been around for hundreds of years and were the precursor to modern medicine. Herbal medicines are all natural and come from a wide variety of sources including plant leaves, roots, bark, berries and flowers. Herbal medicine is still quite popular in China and the Far East, and is gaining popularity in the United States. Research has shown that this type of treatment is viable for many ailments.

"Herbs won't replace pharmaceuticals, but the research shows that--for many conditions--herbs work well, are cheaper than drugs and cause fewer side effects," says Mary Hardy, M.D., medical director of the integrative medicine program at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles. "Herbs aren't quite main stream, but they're moving in that direction."

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Patients are interested in them, and doctors are increasingly familiar with herb research.

"Twenty years ago, there was no integrative program at Cedars-Sinai" she adds. "Now there is." That says something for this option. Make sure you mention this to your physician as he knows your medical condition best especially if you are pregnant, breast feeding, have a chronic medical problem or regularly take medication.

Homeopathy

Homeopathic remedies are a system of medicine based on three principles:

Like cures like

This is the method of treating a disease with the materials derived from the toxic and injurious agents causing similar signs and symptoms.

Minimal Dose

The remedy is taken in an extremely dilute form. (Normally one part of the remedy to around 1,000,000,000,000 parts of water.)

The Single Remedy

Even if you experience multiple symptoms, there is only one remedy and that one option takes care of all the symptoms. This is similar to conventional allergy treatment or to vaccines where a small dose of the virus is injected to boost the immune system.

Homeopathy is the second most popular system of medicine in the world. It has steadily grown by

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twenty five to fifty per cent a year in the United States for the past decade and here are the reasons:

- It is very effective when taken correctly and the results are usually rapid, complete and permanent.
 - Homeopathy is totally safe. Even babies and pregnant women can use this option with no side effects. They can even be taken with other medications.
 - It is all natural as they are based on all natural ingredients.
 - Homeopathy works differently than some medicines as it works in harmony with your immune system. Cough medicines, for example, suppress the cough reflex, which is your body's attempt to clear the lungs. Homeopathy helps strengthen the circulatory and immune systems so the body can stop the cold on its own.
 - These remedies are not addictive. When the symptoms are gone, stop the medication. If the symptoms persist, maybe a different remedy is required.
 - Homeopathy is holistic and it treats all the symptoms at the same time because it is strengthening the “essence” of the body which, in turn, helps the body find a healthy balance once again. Many other options take care of the symptoms but the cause is still active. Homeopathy works in the reverse and cures the cause. There are two main problems:
1. The remedy can be a hit and miss situation as there is no standard remedy for any particular symptom. What works for one may not work for another. This can be frustrating and time consuming.

2. There are immense options and many pharmacies may have difficulty finding the proper option if it is not a common ingredient normally stocked.

Naturopathic Medicine

Naturopathic medicine has a distinction all its own because it combines both modern scientific knowledge with traditional and natural forms of medicine. The naturopathic philosophy is to stimulate the natural healing power of the body and treat the underlying cause of disease. Symptoms of disease are seen as warning signals that the body is not functioning properly. There may also be several bad habits involved as well. This option looks at disease as a process and not an entity to itself.

There is a wide variety of treatment options using this form of therapy. The particular option is based on the patients physiology, psychological, spiritual, social, environmental and lifestyle factors. Changes are usually recommended in diet and lifestyle but also natural therapies are used which can include botanical medicine, hydrotherapy, naturopathic manipulation and traditional Chinese medicine, acupuncture and homeopathy.

Energy Based Therapies

Energy Medicine uses the manipulating of life force to provide balance and wellness. Some therapies include direct hands on manipulation while others involve no touch which is called absentia. The specific areas that are treated are the aura, human energy field, chakras, and the meridian system.

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- Auras as like magnets and pick up vibrational energy. It is important to cleanse our auras of this negative energy.
- A Chakra is like a spiral of energy and each spiral relates to the other. Chakra (pronounced sha-kra) is the Sanskrit word for 'wheel'. The main chakras or energy centers (there are seven main areas) are a set of cogs and wheels which are like the workings of a clock. Each cog and wheel works best if it moves smoothly thus contributing to wellness.

Reiki

Reiki (pronounced Ray Key) involves laying-on touching that utilizes the life force energy to heal and balance the energies in our bodies. Reiki addresses the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual imbalances and can be very effective. The Reiki practitioner is looked upon as a vessel and provides the healing energies to the locations where they are needed. Reiki's energies flow out of the practitioner's body through the palms of their hands while they are touching the recipient's body.

Acupuncture

Meridians are the pathways of qi (chi) and blood flow through the body. Qi is constantly flowing from one meridian to another. Any indication of imbalance means a blockage in that flow. If your energy is low that is an indication that you are not functioning properly and your qi flow is inadequate. This can make you vulnerable to illness. Restoring the qi is what is required to get the person back to good health. The list includes acupuncturists, Chinese herbalists and massage therapists to name a few.

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These people help patients to repair blocked areas within their meridian systems so balance can be restored. There are twelve major meridians that correspond to specific human organs: kidneys, liver, spleen, hearth, lungs, heart, bladder, gall bladder, stomach, small and large intestines and the body temperature regulator.

Acupuncture is an ancient form of Chinese medicine involving the insertion of solid filiform needles into the skin at specific points to provide relief. There are no drugs involved. The needles alone accomplish the proper results.

Acupuncture encourages the natural healing process and improves mood and energy. It reduces or relieves pain. It is very safe and effective and is often used as an alternative to medications or even surgery. Acupuncture has succeeded when traditional therapy has failed.

Acupuncture needles are solid and usually stainless steel. They can be either silver or gold and usually measure from 13-70 mm but some can be longer. These needles are very fine, flexible and rounded but sharp at the tip. They are 'atraumatic', which means they do not have a cutting edge like a hypodermic needle. Their design allows for a smooth slide through tissues so there will be no bleeding or damage.

Acupuncture points are spots on the body that have a lower resistance to electricity than the surrounding skin. The Chinese mapped these points centuries ago. When the patient feels a dull, heavy, or aching feeling as the needle is inserted, that is a good indication of getting effective results.

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The needles are left in place for 15-30 minutes, and the practitioner may change the position of the needles by lifting, twisting or rotating them.

Touch Therapies (Massage)

The practice of massage is the assessment of the soft tissue and joints of the body and the treatment and prevention of physical dysfunction and pain by manipulation to develop, rehabilitate or augment physical function as well as to relieve pain.

It uses a variety of techniques including: Swedish, joint mobilization, hydrotherapy, trigger point therapy, myofascial release, craniofacial therapy and manual lymph drainage to name a few.

Swedish massage techniques are the basis for all massage taught in the west. These techniques are used in clinical massage therapy, spa massage, relaxation, pregnancy massage, aromatherapy massage, deep tissue and sports massage. Swedish massage begins with a superficial technique called effleurage which is long smooth strokes used to palpate and warm the tissue. Deeper strokes/kneading are called petrissage. These techniques can be gentle and relaxing, deep and painful or stimulating depending on pressure, rate and rhythm. Swedish massage increases circulation, releases metabolic waste stored in tissues, soothes and/or stimulates the skin and the central nervous system. It promotes relaxation. Touch therapies can remove tension and allow the body to heal itself.

Here are some of the most popular types:

CLINICAL MASSAGE

1. Swedish Massage uses long smooth strokes, kneading, and circular movements on superficial layers of muscle using massage lotion or oil and can be very gentle and relaxing.
2. Sports Massage is specifically designed for people who are involved in physical activity. But you don't have to be a professional athlete to have one as it's also used by people who are active and work out often. The focus isn't on relaxation but on preventing and treating injury and enhancing athletic performance. A combination of various techniques is used. A faster stroke rate is used to stimulate the muscle and used before an event while a slower rate with deep pressure would be used after the event to prevent or treat spasm or injury. The strokes are generally faster. Facilitated stretching is a common technique. It helps to loosen muscles and increase flexibility.
3. Pregnancy Massage is also called prenatal massage and is becoming increasingly popular with expectant mothers. Massage therapists who are certified in pregnancy massage know the proper way to position and support the woman's body during the massage and how to modify techniques. It is used to reduce stress, decrease swelling, relieve aches and pains, and reduce anxiety and depression. The massage is customized to a woman's individual needs.
4. Deep Tissue Massage targets the deeper layers of muscle and connective tissue. The therapist uses

slower strokes or friction techniques across the grain of the muscle. It is used for chronically tight or painful muscles, repetitive strain, postural problems, or recovery from injury and can leave you sore for several days.

OTHER MASSAGE

Aromatherapy Massage is massage therapy with added essential oils. One of the most common essential oils used in aromatherapy massage is lavender.

Heated Stone Massage utilizes heated, smooth stones placed on certain points on the body to warm and loosen tight muscles and balance energy centers in the body. The therapist may also hold the stones and apply gentle pressure with them. Hot stone massage is good for people who have muscle tension.

Shiatsu is a form of Japanese massage that uses finger pressure in a rhythmic sequence on acupuncture meridians points. Each point is held for two to eight seconds to improve the flow of energy and help the body regain balance. People are normally pleasantly surprised when they try shiatsu for the first time. It is relaxing yet the pressure is firm, and there is usually no soreness afterwards.

Thai Massage is similar to shiatsu as it aligns the energies of the body using gentle pressure on specific points. Thai massage also includes compressions and stretches. It's like yoga except the therapist does all the work. Thai massage is more energizing than other forms of massage and it reduces stress and improves flexibility and range of motion.

8) Reflexology is sometimes called foot massage but it is much more than simple foot massage. Reflexology is the practice of applying pressure to the feet and hands utilizing specific thumb, finger and hand techniques without the use of oil, cream or lotion. It is based on a system of zones and reflex areas that reflect an image of the body on the feet and hands with a premise that such work effects a physical change in the body. A reflexology chart mirrors a reflection of the body on the feet and hands, left foot or hand representing the body's left half and right foot or hand its right half. In reflexology practice, technique is applied to the relevant reflex area(s) to prompt a change in the related part of the body. It works as the pressure techniques applied to the feet or hands interact as a part of the body's nervous system creating: relaxation, improved circulation, exercise of the nervous system and the benefits of touch.

Reflexology sessions last from 30 minutes to an hour. The client sits in a reclining chair placing the feet in a convenient place. The reflexologist uses pressure, stretch and movement to work through the foot methodically. This pressure is applied to the whole foot or hand. You should feel relaxed at the end of a session. How long that relaxation lasts is a good indicator of the effectiveness of the session.

Reflexology assessments are done as stress is noticed during the session. This stress reflects stress in different parts of the body and allows the reflexologist to target specific areas of the body.

A reflexologist cannot diagnose a medical condition or prescribe medication. Reflexology is not a replacement to conventional medicine but an adjunct

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to it. It is a good idea to seek medical help if you have an urgent.

Crystals

Crystal healing is the use of crystals to bring about healing and positive changes in the mind and body. It is an alternative healing technique for strengthening the body and resolving issues and patterns. The theory is that gemstones carry vibrational rates and you can change your aura's vibrational rate by placing these gemstones within your aura.

The easiest way to do gemstone therapy is to wear high quality round beads around your neck. It is important that these beads be metal free as metal impedes the proper result.

When using these gemstones, make sure they are undyed, not irradiated and have very few inclusions and cracks. There are many fakes on the market so look to see if the cracks are darker than the bead. If so, then the bead is dyed.

EFT - Emotional Freedom Techniques

The Emotional Freedom Techniques concept was developed in the US in the 1990's by Gary Craig. Its roots are in acupuncture, kinesiology and psychology. It involves a do-it-yourself procedure that helps with issues concerning traumatic memories. It involves the tapping on acupressure points combined with thought about the event or person at the center of the trauma. There is also humming, counting and rolling your eyes around in your head. So you usually tap on your head and torso while you think about the problem.

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It helps by releasing stagnant or bad energy caught in the meridians. It balances the body by releasing emotional trauma that has not been dealt with. It has helped many people deal with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as well as many other emotional problems with lasting results. There are no needles, no surgery, no pills or chemicals and no pushing or pulling on the body.

It not only helps PTSD but issues involving negative emotions, self-doubt and grief, anger, negative memories from abuse, anxiety, fears and phobias.

EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques) helps to restore your mind, body and feelings to a state of balance and harmony by removing the negative emotions that are attached to a past event.

EFT helps balance the body's energy system for the feelings that you want to change. You don't have to believe in the theory just as you don't need to know how a car works. It simply works.

Typically you will notice a significant reduction in the intensity of the negative feeling. If it's not totally removed, the EFT practitioner repeats the process and by doing so gradually reduces the intensity of the emotion until it is eliminated. All this is done while you are sitting in a chair. You can also perform this treatment on yourself which makes it a very valuable tool.

You will still retain the memory of the problem but it will not have the ability to have such a negative affect on your mental capacity. There may be multiple emotions involved in a specific negative event and all these emotions have to be cleared. There may be anger towards the person who caused you the

trauma but also anger turned inward towards yourself. Both need to be cleared for you to move past the event.

The Alexander Technique

The Alexander Technique is a method that works to change habits in our everyday activities. It is a simple and practical method for improving ease and freedom of movement, balance, support and coordination. The technique teaches the use of the correct amount of effort for a particular activity. The result is more energy for your daily activities. There are no treatments but a re-education of the mind and body. It helps a person discover a new balance in their body by releasing tension. It can be applied to sitting, lying down, standing, walking, lifting, and other daily activities.

Color Therapy

Colour Therapy aims to balance and enhance our body's energy centres or chakras by using the seven colours of the light spectrum. This helps to stimulate our body's own healing process. It can be used for any problem whether it is physical, mental, emotional or spiritual, for specific problems or for relaxation therapy. It can be used safely and effectively, by itself or in conjunction with any other therapy. It can help our healing process and encourages normal and healthy workings of the body. It is not just about visiting a therapist but it also involves our everyday life. A professional Colour Therapist can explain and advise you on how you can use colour at home for health and wellbeing.

Feng Shui

Feng Shui is an ancient art and science developed over 3,000 years ago in China. It is a complex body of knowledge that reveals how to balance the energies of any given space to assure the health and good fortune for people. It is based on the Taoist vision and understanding of nature, particularly on the idea that the land is alive and filled with energy.

Flotation Therapy

Flotation therapy is a process of sensory isolation. Dr. John C. Lilly developed the sensory isolation tank in 1954. His experiments centered on how we react to sensory deprivation. He discovered that the mind becomes more active and increases its imaginative and problem solving abilities.

Flotation therapy is essentially a process of placing the body into a state of total relaxation. This usually occurs in a specially constructed bath. The water has salts and minerals dissolved into the bath so the person can float.

Here is the principle. Life causes stress and conflict that is incorporated into our daily routines and habitual patterns of activity. These habits become locked into neurotic and energy depriving actions. Some people use smoking, or drinking to cope.

The flotation tank breaks these habitual responses and reactions, and allows the mind and body to regenerate their natural energy in isolation and without interference from the outside world. The flotation sometimes takes place in complete darkness.

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The patient lies in a tank for up to two hours with no physical stimulation. The body has nothing to react to. Stress is reduced and chronic pain can also be controlled through the release of the endorphins that this therapy produces.

Flower Essence Therapy

Flower Essence Therapy is the transference of the energetic imprint of the plant to a person. It shifts the resonance within our energetic anatomy and restores balance. It adjusts the electrical circuitry in our bodies by creating new synapse connections to align with the conscious mind. It reprograms your subconscious mind and their associated negative mental and emotional reactive patterns. Spiritually, it clears the path for our soul to be the driving force in our life. This empowers us to be who we truly are and helps us reach our true potential. FET uncovers our innate ability to be cause in our life and consciously create reality

Healing Touch

Healing Touch is a bio-field therapy that is an energy based approach to health and healing. It uses touch to affect the human energy system, specifically the energy field that surrounds the body. It is non-evasive and uses the hands to clear, energize, and balance the human and environmental energy fields thus affecting physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health and healing. It is based on a heart-centered caring relationship between the practitioner and client as they come together to facilitate the client's health and healing. The goal is to restore harmony and balance in the energy system placing the client in a position to self heal. Healing Touch is used with other conventional health care.

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Scientific research continues to suggest that HT is helpful in promoting relaxation, reducing pain and managing stress. It can also be effective in speeding tissue and bone healing and strengthening the immune system. Many people describe an increased sense of well-being after treatment.

Healing Touch is used for surgery, pregnancy & labour, headaches, back and neck pain, bone fractures, cancer, grief, arthritis, depression, PMS, viral infections, high blood pressure, fibromyalgia, and many other situations. It is useful in combination with traditional medicine as part of an effective health care program.

Inversion Therapy

Inversion therapy involves hanging upside down to apply gentle traction to the spine. It helps to treat back pain and can be used to reverse the negative effects of aging on the spine.

Magnetic Therapy

Magnetic Therapy is used to relieve pain, restore energy and enhance sleep. It is a safe, effective, economical, and simple to use. It is thousands of years old. Magnets have been scientifically proven to enable the body to regain its self-healing electromagnetic balance naturally. Strong evidence suggests that magnetic therapy may help to: relieve pain, reduce inflammation, restore natural energy, increase blood circulation, prevent or reverse infection, promote metabolic processing of toxins and support the healing process. Magnetic therapy is a non-invasive treatment method with a very high success rate and has much to offer in both prevention and treatment of chronic ailments.

Quantum Touch

Quantum-Touch is a method of natural healing that works with the Life Force Energy (LFE) of the body to promote optimal wellness. Life Force Energy is the flow of energy that sustains all living beings. Quantum-Touch teaches us how to focus, amplify, and direct this energy, for a wide range of benefits with surprising and often extraordinary results. It uses life-force energy (known as “chi” in Chinese and “prana” in Sanskrit) to facilitate healing. The Quantum-Touch techniques teach us how to focus and amplify life-force energy by combining various breathing and body awareness exercises. It creates a high frequency of energy. If this field of high energy is laced around an area of pain, stress, inflammation, or disease, the body can adapt to this frequency and heal itself.

Besides these holistic methods there are also a number of belief changing modalities. Here is a partial list.

1. *PSYCH-K* (www.psych-k.com)

Your subconscious beliefs establish your boundaries and therefore the limits on what you can achieve. Learn how to re-write the software of your mind so you can change the printout of your life.

2. *HENDRICKS INSTITUTE* (www.hendricks.com)

Teaches core skills for conscious living. They assist people in opening up to more creativity, love and vitality through the power of conscious relationships and whole-person learning.

3. CORE HEALTH (www.corehealth.us)

Assists individuals in preparing their inner *terrain* of innate core health. Living from fertile ground enhances our effectiveness with *outside* and *inside* factors — in all areas of our lives. It leaps to the core of pure health, removing energy distortions for the free flow of positive energy.

4. BODY TALK (www.thebodytalkcenter.com)

Body talk is a revolutionary new concept that resynchronizes your body so it can function the way nature intended. It embraces the power of your body's internal communications system to quickly allow for healing.

5. HOLOGRAPHIC REPATTERNING

(www.repatterning.org)

This is an energy process which can help you identify and clear the patterns of energy underlying a problem or pain. A session may help you gain greater awareness for your current underlying patterns, take greater personal action.

6. AVATAR (www.avatar.nl)

Avatar® is the most powerful, purest self-development program available. It is a series of experiential exercises that enables you to rediscover yourself and align your consciousness with what you want to achieve.

Chapter XI

ONE MAN'S JOURNEY

Several years ago while searching for a web developer to redesign my web site I met Jim. Since then we have become good friends and have learned a great deal from each other. Here is his story.

My story is not about success in the normal sense. There was no material gain or monetary expansion that society thrives on and conditions us to chase. This story is one of an inner journey that began when I was young as a result of losing my footing in a psychological sense.

Regardless of what happened to this person there are no hard feelings, no regrets, and I would not change a thing as a result of tripping over something extraordinary.

This "extraordinary knowing" has no prejudice and is available to everyone who wishes to understand its process.

Premature and weighing in at not much more than three pounds, I was the last born of eight children and therefore treated as the baby of the family. After months of being in an incubator I arrived home to an

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environment where material wealth was scarce but there seemed to be enough love to make up for that.

I have very few memories of my father when I was young because my parents had separated shortly after I was born. My mother, on the other hand, was always there along with my siblings. As far as I was concerned, I was living a good life.

Things changed when I was eleven years old due to events that occurred beyond my control. It was a time when Dana Bradley was murdered and the news coverage was all too apparent. As a childish eleven year old, I became very scared about the unsolved murder so close to home. That fear was elevated when my sister came home crying as a result of a verbal assault. Shortly after my sister explained what had happened, the phone rang and I picked it up. There was heavy breathing in the phone which left a scar of intense fear in my being. From that experience on I was never the same emotionally.

I remember thinking that it was the murderer and he was coming for me. The fear seemed to take over all areas of my existence. I began to hear the breathing in my head even when I was awake. This progressed into night terrors and seeing shadows on walls of the figure of a man coming up the stairs. Creaking of the steps, breathing and other sensory hallucinations became the norm. I did not know what was real anymore.

How do I fix myself? That was the question on my mind for twenty years. Through that time I married a wonderful, caring wife and had two precious boys. The starting of a family was a wonderful experience.

I began to face a lot of the inner conditioned fear in a new way. Taking on the role of fatherhood gave me

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inner strength. With my wife's encouragement and studying psychology at university, I began different kinds of therapy.

First there was talk therapy. Talk therapy for those who have never experienced it is when you sit with someone and discuss where problems began and how they may be creating a sad or depressed feeling. I found it to be helpful because I never did really understand what the triggers were for me in my childhood. Talk therapy for me was not a cure but rather a door opener.

From there I began medications for anxiety, depression and fatigue. Once more I found that in the beginning taking the drugs helped and appeared that I was responding. However most of what seemed like progress was really just the effects of taking action against what I thought was a problem. Years past and after trying about a dozen medications, I decided to stop trying so hard. It was like stepping back and allowing things to take their course. Little did I know that this surrendering has been written to be beneficial to effects of depression, fear and other ailments that aid suffering. Adding or taking away things, thoughts or behaviors from my mind eased the pain for a little while but the suffering always came to surface one way or another. It is as if the suffering was saying, "Look at me, I am not going anywhere till you finally see what it is that's been shown to you."

I was thirty eight years old when the truth began to reveal itself. One Christmas, as a gift, my wife gave me a spiritual book named "A New Earth - Awakening to Your Life's Purpose" written by Eckhart Tolle. It came with a twelve week online course with Oprah Winfrey. The title immediately drew me in because ever since the fearful events that

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started when I was eleven that was essentially what I had been trying to do, develop a new earth or in my case a new existence for myself. One without so much fear.

One of the things that left me in a state of freedom almost immediately with this book was the emphasis the author placed on who you are not. Never have I been told that I am not my mind. No conventional therapy could ever release me from that burden because those therapies strengthened my identity with my mind almost confirming that what went through my mind was who I was and that I had to change or make it better. From that moment on the steam of thinking happening in me was not as important. That one spiritual book led to another until I had the Eckhart Tolle collection along with all the audio tapes.

I began to immerse myself into the world of spirituality, the world of no mind. Its effects were indescribable. It was as though everything I had been previously taught was in a sense not real. All my problems, desires, judgments and any other ideas that the mind could come up with could no longer be validated. It was all thought just playing the game of self. So who or what am I?

Space, consciousness, now, awareness are some of the attempts to describe the indescribable. All I can come up with is a deep knowing that what ever happens around me and in my mind does not matter that much. The content in my mind has become secondary to the context in which all things occur. That context is the space in which all things appear and dissolve. The space always remains untouched and that is the space of you and I, *ONE*.

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I would like to say that it all ends here and that there will be no more pain as a result of knowing a deeper side of life but that is not the case. There is a large decrease of inner conflict, the kind of suffering that is placed on top of a situation or event. Basically, the negative self talk does not mean much or does not occur at all when something appears negative or bad. If someone close to you passes away, there will be thoughts and emotions arise but it will not be built up with other suffering thoughts revolving around should, shouldn't, could, couldn't, would, wouldn't, if only, why and so on.

There is a space of allowing what is without the minds excessive need to create more problems or fix things. Also, there is a deeper knowing or realization that all that is, really is your (awareness) in disguise. So a story of body and mind comes to an end through death but the space of who you are has not gone anywhere. How could it? You can't destroy space or awareness because it is formless. Only form dies. Whether that form is a person, animal, rock, mountain, tree, flower, universe or thought.

So how has spirituality helped? Spirituality was the missing link in a world of fearful chaos. It is a form of teaching that revealed the fluidity of life. The ever changing environment that we take to be so rigid turns into a playground of forms for which awareness can grow. It showed that regardless of what may or may not happen, there is a foundation to all things that can never be contaminated or destroyed. That foundation is ultimately the designer of life. Spirituality has not given hope or false promises. In actual fact it has taken away all I thought myself to be and left an inner knowing that is beyond any riches of this planet. It has revealed that the so called fearful, terrible or negative things

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in this world serve the great purpose of exposing that which is real from that which is unreal.

Chapter XII

STORIES OF

NATURAL HEALING

I met Amanda Maynard about a year ago. Here is Amanda's story and gift in her our words:

I did not start using my abilities as an energy healer professionally until I was in my 40's. I was very reluctant to open myself up to becoming what I perceived as someone who was a flake. Even though I was born with a gift that allowed me to see, feel and help release other people's pain and dis-ease, I was not ready to let the world know.

I was raised to be a successful, educated professional woman. To me that meant being in a traditional job and making a regular paycheque. I spent the first 25 years of my working life trying to fit into that image my parents had for me. In my mid 30's I was so miserable, I BEGGED the Universe for guidance and help. Despite constantly asking the Universe to show me what I was meant to be doing with my life, I was actually quite resistant to the answers.

The more I resisted, the more my body broke down; IBS (Irritable Bowel Syndrome), depression, hypothyroid, major weight gain, gall bladder removal, migraines, severe PMS pain, two major back surgeries and arthritis in my hands

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Finally, at one of the lowest points in my life, I let go of enough of the resistance to see what might be possible. I started a business called EnergyWorks, which was really a place I let go of my resistance one step at a time. Quite literally, people started showing up looking for services I did not advertise but were part of my gift. One by one, baby step by baby step, I started to embrace what I had been denying all my life.

When Susan first came to see, me she had been suffering from chronic constipation for five years. Even with medication she only had one or two bowel movements a week. She suffered from severe anxiety and was still in fear of her ex husband whom she had divorced five years previous. The link was obvious to me; however, we had to release the fear that was stored in her body to change anything. In a natural flow state the body's energy feels like a smoothly running stream – effortless. Of course, in my work, I rarely encounter that in my clients.

Susan's energy was as blocked as they come. There was no movement discernable. I started at her feet and slowly moved upward in an effort to encourage her body's energy field to remember movement and flow. Feet, hands, and tailbones are natural exit flow points for energy to move to. We take in energy through our heart and head.

As I worked, she could feel her body getting lighter. We also started to hear gurgling in her stomach as natural movement began; a sound that she never hears. She was surprised and curious. Energy began to flow in all areas, easing pain in her chest and head.

I usually tell clients they are going to feel woozy when they get up off the massage table. They usually

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laugh at me saying they feel great or nothing. So when Susan got up off the table, she was surprised she was very woozy. Imagine a damn of water being released; it takes a while for it to find its natural path and flow state. Our body's energy is no different.

The following week when she came in for a follow up session, she could not wait to tell me how different she felt and that she had had regular small bowel movements without having to take more medication. She could not believe an "energy treatment" had done that. She came back for a couple of more sessions and eventually reported having regular bowl movements without medication. Other problems of pain and tension also eased. As her fears eased, her body responded.

Our thoughts and emotions are part of the energy stream of our bodies. When we hold on to them, they create imbalance. They store in our bodies and become blocks. They become blocks because over time we have a tendency to keep repeating the same thought and emotional patterns. Until we decide to make changes, our bodies become more and more toxic, creating dis-ease.

I like to use the analogy of a beaver dam; the first log the beaver places is our first emotional experience where we lock in a belief about ourselves. Usually these beliefs are dis-empowering to say the least. They are often established at a time when we do not have the awareness or discernment to understand the circumstances that lead to our creating the belief. The belief then becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy and a pattern is created.

I am sure you can think of a pattern you have in your life right now. Do you remember how it started?

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Likely no; often it takes someone on the outside looking in to reflect that back to us, such as a Coach or professional counsellor.

We often do not realize that we can change the patterns in our life. Or, that those patterns are a result of our thinking and assessing of life situations.

Here is the formula:

Experience + Emotion + Dis-Empowering Decision (we judge ourselves lacking) = The Block Point™
(the first log in the dam)

Once ***The Block Point™*** is set our Reticular Activating System kicks in. In other words, we look for evidence of the truth of our decision. We create situations that reinforce that decision; more logs in the dam. It then becomes a self-fulfilling prophesy. We look for it, we see it, and it cements our belief that it is true.

This dam eventually blocks our energy to the point that each subsequent experience becomes stronger until we say – “ENOUGH!!” This is where we get the opportunity to have self-awareness and look within. Looking within takes an enormous amount of courage. It means taking responsibility and accepting the consequences. It means making changes about who we think we are and what is possible for us.

Gloria was referred by her sister. Even though her sister suffered from Chronic Fatigue, Gloria caused me more immediate concern when she first came into my office. Her energy was clearly depleted, her skin looked pasty; I got an immediate sense that she was about to become very very ill if she did not get herself back into some sort of flow state.

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Gloria is in her mid 50's. In her 20's her beloved husband died of cancer, leaving her with their baby son to raise. Emotionally she had never moved past his death. Anger, guilt at being alive, sadness and grief still emanated from her body and spirit. With Gloria, the healing took place in the form of a communication with her deceased husband. As soon as I put her on the table and asked for guidance in her healing, he appeared. He had clearly orchestrated her visit to see me.

She needed to know that he was ok, that he was looking after their son, and she needed to be told it was ok to move forward with her life. Of course, much like me, she had been ignoring every sign sent to her. He had even sent her an angel in the form of a new companion. He told her many ways in which he was still in their lives.

Some of this was a surprise, some of it confirmed suspicions she had; a lot of it relieved many of the feelings she had been storing for years. When she returned the following week, she was a changed woman. She no longer gave off the energy of someone sick. She still had many questions but she was on the mend.

Her life turned around 180 degrees. She had been in a relationship with a wonderful man for over twelve years, but unable to fully commit because of her lingering feelings. Six weeks after her initial visit to me they flew off to Vegas and eloped.

Tina was another person directed to me from someone on the other side. She had attended a workshop I was facilitating. I could sense her pain. She covered it with laughter and cheer but it was there, suffocating her. As it turned out, Tina's son had committed suicide when he was a teenager.

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Losing a child is unbearable; losing a child to suicide adds a whole new weight to that burden.

In our initial session together, Tina was able to connect with her son and get answers to many questions that had plagued her since his death. She came to understand that his death was part of a spiritual agreement they had made before either of them were born. Had he not died at that time and in that manner, she would not have had the experiences that she needed to fulfill her mission. For her the fog began to lift and she started to embrace life.

The day after our first session, Tina started a foundation to help others who have been touched by suicide. She is now sought after to work with other families and speak at events for professional support workers. Her son's legacy continues to help others.

Healing is about restoring balance to mind, body and spirit. You cannot hope to heal the body without addressing the underlying emotional/spiritual imbalance. Clearly, not all illness is due to this imbalance, some are part of the growth and learning the soul has embraced as part of its journey. That is a story for another day. Just know that you do have a lot of control over your own health and wellness; especially as it relates to your own Block Points TM.

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Chapter XIII

MEDITATION

So you have completed the book. You have been introduced to some wonderful new ideas and you want to put your new found knowledge to work.

Meditation allows you to focus on yourself and learn to let go and just relax. It helps you get to the very root of your consciousness. Experts in this field recommend we meditate at least twenty minutes every day because it revitalizes our spirit. In fact, the more you practice the better you become and the greater insight you will have about your true self.

It provides a state of tranquility free from guilt, judgment, greed and jealousy. Meditation clears your mind of all irritants and acts as a purification system that provides insight. It has been known as the “Great Teacher” because you learn tolerance and compassion. You learn to understand yourself and that extends to others.

What you get is personal transformation. It helps you deal with the peaks and valleys of our existence. It sharpens your thought process.

Look at the thought of anxiety. It is a process and the first part of this process is to push it away by

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denying it. Meditation allows you to notice the feeling before it gets out of control and helps you to constructively deal with the situation so that you get an acceptable outcome. It is about effectively managing your life.

Meditation removes the “I” and replaces it with “We”. As this happens, there is a shift in thinking and we realize that we have a choice and not a habitual impulse.

We will focus on a type of meditation called “Vipassana.” It has been around for over 2500 years and it focuses on gaining insight into the nature of our own reality and provides a good understanding of how things work. It explores the deepest recesses of your mind so you gain a clear picture of what is happening while it is happening. This method allows you to clear away the cloud of illusion that is preventing you from experiencing self-awareness. The end result is self-liberation and freedom from negativity. Vipassana meditation is the cultivation of self-awareness and mindfulness but it is not trance as experienced in hypnosis. Like trance though, it requires practice to perfect.

Another type of meditation is “Samatha” which deals more with concentration and provides an opportunity for peace and tranquility by focusing your attention on a single object like a candle, chant or prayer until the focus is broken.

The biggest part of Vipassana meditation is breathing. Take a deep breath and notice what part of the inside of your nose is most sensitive to the air. That becomes your reference point and will be where you focus your attention and allow your breathing to be natural just as though you are sleeping.

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Meditation takes discipline but the rewards are quite fulfilling. Being human, it is easy to do nothing. You can deny and suppress your unhappiness but eventually some trigger will bring it to your consciousness. Triggers still occur but will have no effect on your outcomes.

Meditation transforms you by helping you cope with the highs and lows life throws your way. It is about coming to terms with your existence so that life makes sense. This leads to peace and understanding not only of yourself but of everybody in your life. It allows liberation from self-imposed negative beliefs that are a hindrance to success. Meditation helps you get out of your own way and paves the road to efficient problem solving and creativity.

There are four stages of meditation:

1. **Notice the thought;** By doing so you never react. It is like you are an outside observer.
2. **Gauge its Intensity:** See where the thought goes.
3. **See how long it lasts:** That could be seconds or minutes.
4. **Watch it fade away:** As does all thought.

This exercise teaches you patience by not allowing yourself to react to a thought by judging its importance. It also allows you to accept a particular emotion so you can deal with it. Pushing the thought away or denying them sustains their existence. By practicing this pattern you begin to accept all emotions and deal with them equally. Meditation reminds you of the best thing to do which includes seeing things just as they are.

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You may hear internal chatter or see images while you meditate but merely acknowledge them and let them pass without judgment.

Here are a few guidelines to follow when meditating:

1. Let things happen and have no expectations.
2. Stay relaxed and don't make things happen through willpower.
3. Slow down and enjoy the experience.
4. Just observe and accept everything as it comes without judgment. See things as a normal part of living and just let it go.
5. See the similarities people have with you as opposed to the differences.

Meditation helps you develop new mental habits, understand your emotions, control your conscious thought and feel different sensations within your body that may lead to problems. You have all the answers inside, you just need the courage to go look and meditation provides that opportunity.

When you see greed for what it is and how it affects people, solutions are easy to adopt.

Here are the steps in meditation:

1. Sit in one posture. It does not matter which position just maintain the same position without moving.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Stay in the present moment.
4. Focus on your breathing. Take three deep breaths and then continue normal breathing
5. Focus your attention on the outer ring of your nostrils.

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6. Notice the pause just after you inhale and just before you exhale. Now notice the pause just after you exhale and just before inhaling.
7. When you notice the feel of your breath on that part of your outer nose, this is your breath point and this is where you focus your attention.

If you find your mind wandering, just re-focus on your breathing by counting this way. Here are your options:

1. Count 1, 2, 3 for each in breath and the same for each out breath.
2. Count 1 for each in and 1 for each out breath.
3. Count 1 for each cycle of in and out breath.

Note any feeling or sensations in your body only as they appear and disappear.

Here are some helpful hints:

1. Meditate in the morning before you go to work or at night before bedtime.
2. Meditate once a day starting with a ten minute duration. Work up from there to thirty minutes.
3. Resolve any personal issues before you begin as they will get in the way.

Your goal is to just observe and feel any changes including both mental and physical changes without judgment. This allows you the practice to notice things without reacting and can be transferred to your every day behavior.

At the beginning of your meditation it is always best to create a good intention and release any negative thoughts. For example:

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May everyone be happy, joyful and content. May they have no difficulty or experience problems or endure no physical or mental harm. May everyone enjoy success. May they be patient and understanding and have the determination to face any adversity.

By releasing all negativity, you are free to explore any positive outcomes. Your enemies become your friends.

It is a well documented fact that psychological and emotional problems show up as physical illnesses. As you begin to understand your own energy and how to work with it, you discover balance and life becomes much better.

Meditation trains your mind to look inward for answers. You can practice meditation any where. Here are a few suggestions:

1. **Eating:** Most times we are so busy we eat without tasting the food. Next time slow down and really get in touch with your taste buds. Feel every morsel as it enters your mouth. Feel the texture and the sounds.
2. **Showering:** Notice the sensations of the water hitting your body and the feeling of it running down. Notice the smells of the soap and shampoo.
3. **Shaving:** Many times we are in such a hurry we cut ourselves, me included. Next time slow down and be present by noticing the feel of the razor on your skin. Get in touch with the sounds of the razor as it glides along your skin.
4. **Driving:** Notice the sound of the tires. Have the window down and feel the fresh air and the sounds of nature.

These are just a few of the ways we can live in the present moment. When we allow ourselves to do that, we release the problems of our past and future and allow ourselves to be truly free and at peace.

You read in Chapter I that we are all energy. This energy is comprised of emotion born from our past experiences, including relationships, our beliefs and attitudes. This energy can be both positive and negative. Here is an example: The mere dropping of a plate does not cause emotional scarring until the parent scolds the child for doing it. This negative emotion can leave lasting scars that continue for a life time.

The basics of energy health involve three concepts:

1. ***Mind and body are one:*** Mental illnesses affect our physical bodies. Depression can have devastating affects on your body including digestive problems. Stress can cause ulcers.
2. ***We all have power symbols:*** It is important to understand where you get your power. This could be from money, possessions or simply by always wanting to be in control.
3. ***The power of one:*** You have all the resources you need to create change. Many people continue to look outward and sometimes turn to drugs or alcohol for a temporary fix or an escape all the while contributing to their problem. When you become involved in your health, you become a do-er and you take an active part in the healing process. You rely on yourself to create life balance.

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Before we delve into energy, I would like to clarify something. There is a difference between being religious and being spiritual. There can be one without the other and there usually is. Being religious means you have or show belief in and reverence for God or a deity. Spirituality is the practice of compassion, love, understanding and forgiveness just to name a few. Some people go to Church because they believe in God but do not understand what God believes in. In other words, a person can worship God yet be very judgmental or refuse to show forgiveness. Call it spirit or energy or centered power, they all mean the same thing and they affect how we feel. This energy can add to or take away from our health.

Eastern culture, namely Buddhism, tells us that we have seven energy centers called Chakras and they are crucial to well-being. They are centered in the body and run from the base of the spine to the crown of the head. Each Chakra represents a spiritual lesson along the way to enlightenment.

Western culture, namely the Catholic Church, has seven sacraments that closely align with these seven Chakras and the Jewish religion practices Kabbalah which also aligns with both Buddhism and Catholicism. I will now go into Kabbalah but will compare both Buddhism's Chakras energy centers and Catholicism's seven Sacraments.

TIER I	Buddhism calls it the tribal chakra while Catholicism calls it Baptism. Both involve becoming accepted into a family unit and being grateful for this unity. This is the power of teamwork and unification. We accept everyone as equal and we treat everyone with respect.
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TIER II	Buddhism calls it the partnership chakra while Catholicism calls it Communion. In both cases there is a partnership bond. We show respect for everyone as we realize that all those we meet play a part in our development. Promises are made to be kept and commitments are honored.
TIER III	Buddhism calls this chakra personal power while Catholicism calls it Confirmation. It signifies self-esteem and to honor each other. Self-esteem creates power which builds the spirit. Our intuition plays a big part here and we become weak when we don't trust ourselves or our gut feeling or intuition. Without self-respect and a strong inner core we tend to identify with external forces like gangs or cults. We gain energy when we appreciate what we have and lose it when we focus on what we don't have.
TIER IV	Buddhism calls it the emotional chakra while Catholicism calls it Marriage. In both cases, they acknowledge the need for love and closeness. Love is the center of the universe. We grow weak when we act negatively towards others and refuse to forgive. It all starts with loving yourself first.
TIER V	Buddhism calls it willpower while Catholicism calls it Confession. Both emphasize your life purpose. Why are you here on earth? Why do you get out of bed every morning?
TIER VI	Buddhism calls it the mind chakra while Catholicism calls it Ordination. Both deal with insight and service to humanity. When we use our mind, we continue to grow; to be able to lay your head down at night knowing that you are better than you were in the morning. You channel your energy so you are supportive to all people and you know that the world is a better place because you made it so. You practice pragmatism so everyone wins and benefits from your actions.

TIER VII	Buddhism calls it the spirit chakra while Catholicism calls it Anointing of the Sick formerly Extreme Unction. Both help the individual move past our enemies into self-actualization and pure spirituality. This is the true power of living in the NOW. We give ourselves permission to release the past and move on.
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When we lose our spirituality, we lose energy and become both mentally and physically sick. When we are at peace, we no longer have to justify anything to others including yourself. We realize that outward displays of strength are merely inward signs of weakness.

The Seven Chakras

The picture below portrays the seven energy points of the body. These seven chakras determine your spiritual balance, your health and well being. The seven chakras are not physical, you cannot see them. But you can sense them. Think of them as spirals of subconscious spiritual energy. They interact with our nervous system which is why it is possible to sense them by thinking about them.



Level VII Spirit

Level VI Mind

Level V WillPower

Level IV Emotion

Level III Personal Power

Level II Partnerships

Level I Family

First Chakra: The Basal Chakra

The Basal or Root Chakra (level I) is Red and is located inside the base of the spine. The basal chakra deals with feelings of group security of family ties and beliefs. That is why it is called the basal chakra because it is the foundation of all other chakras. A strong family unit defines our character while a dysfunctional family unit can be devastating. This chakra is the foundation of emotional and mental health. Doing things that keep the family close is essential to keeping this energy system powerful. Family outings, family night, family dynamics as well as family decisions all contribute to a strong first chakra. Our psychological wellness stems from the strength of the family unit and feelings of non-belonging can lead to negative behaviour like drugs and alcoholism. A weak first chakra leads to immune system problems like frequent colds and influenza as well as auto immune diseases like lupus.

Teaching your children strong values is integral to strengthening this first chakra

Family loyalty is essential to family strength but loyalty with negative consequences can be devastating. How would you handle a situation where you knew your son had stolen a computer game from his friend? Would you ignore it or look upon it as a teachable moment. What would you do if you knew your son or daughter was dealing in drugs? These are tough situations and no parent wants to face them. Yet the tough decisions you make can have far reaching consequences and can set someone up for success or failure.

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I remember accidentally finding out that my sixteen year old daughter had missed school. Now she was an honour student and vice-president of the graduating committee. She just wanted to take a ride with her best friend who had just received her license. When I met with the principal and my daughter, I saw this as a teachable moment and did not plead her case but merely asked that she receive the appropriate punishment. It was a lesson in understanding consequences, not in loyalty to see what you can get away with.

Trust is another component of power within a family unit. Making sure that you keep your promises creates strength within the family and when you give your word, you stick to it. Nothing harms a child more than a parent breaking promises. These children do what they see so be ever mindful of your actions.

Fairness also plays a huge part in family dynamics. Along with fairness there are proper rules and boundaries. Many times we allow our children to get away with transgressions because we are not on the same page as our spouse. Our children play one against the other hoping to win their battle.

Here are some things to consider:

1. What morals have you taught your children?
2. What negative beliefs have you learned from your parents that are holding you back?
3. What negative behaviours are you passing to your children?
4. Are you teaching your children responsibility or excuses?
5. Do you ensure that everyone gets equal treatment?

6. Do you have rules and boundaries and enforce them?

Second Chakra: The Sacral Chakra

The Sacral Chakra (Level II) is Orange and is located just below the bellybutton. The sacral chakra determines our relationships with others. It begins to energize around age seven. Children begin to shift their focus from family to friendships. As long as we have high self-esteem, we maintain our true identity and don't get pulled into negative group behaviours like gangs. When we have developed a strong first chakra, we naturally maintain this entering the second chakra. We see all relationships as opportunities for growth and learning and we value the differences in all people. The key to maintaining a strong second chakra lies in the ability to attract those people who align with our values as these people make us stronger. Ignore those who are opposites as they make us weaker. Even when we attract negative people we use it as a learning experience.

The second chakra also controls procreation as it relates to relationships. Some people use this negatively by means of seduction which many times leads to rape. There are other times when power can emotionally rape someone because of the constant need to suppress people by means of verbal attacks.

This second chakra teaches us to understand the reasons for our choices. What is our intention? Is it controlling by having a mindset of my rules for me and my rules for you. Or can we see when people have this same mindset towards us and we feel our energy become weak. It is important to see whether you exercise internal power by focusing on what you

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can control which is yourself or external power by seeing what you can manipulate out there. With a strong second chakra it is easy to see how this way of thinking is flawed and usually leads to conflict.

Creativity is controlled by this chakra. Handled properly, this gift can provide you with insight as long as you trust yourself, and with a strong first chakra this is a reality. However, being too imaginative, in the form of lies and over exaggerations, can weaken this chakra so be ever mindful of these concerns. Creativity can stifle progress if used negatively when you decide that your idea needs to be totally controlled by you. Without self-trust you may reject a new idea because of fear of failure or rejection.

When we support each other, we honour the second chakra and give it strength. We see each partner with unique strengths and allow these strengths to grow and prosper. Problems are seen as opportunities and conflicts are avoided.

Besides relationships with people we also have attachments to other things like money and possessions. The stronger your attachment is to these material things, the weaker the second chakra. Now using wealth to help those in need strengthens this chakra as well as using your time to help people enables the power of the second chakra.

As we begin to harness the power of relationships, we understand how to use them so we become empowered as our inner strength grows and prospers. This enables us to respond to external challenges with deep resolve and commitment to the good of all involved.

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Some ideas to consider:

1. How would you measure your creative side?
2. Are you open to new ideas?
3. How would you rate your values?
4. Do you focus inward or outward?
5. Where is the center of your control?

Third Chakra: The Solar Plexus Chakra

The Solar Plexus Chakra (Level III) is yellow and is located just below the bottom of the ribs. The solar plexus chakra governs your self esteem and personal power. It becomes apparent during puberty as your sense of individuality and identity grows. It forms our personality and ego. As children, we continually look outward for approval but during this phase we start to internalize and without a strong second chakra, life can become full of turmoil and hardship.

It is here that we develop self-respect and learn to take care of ourselves. We begin to understand our limitations. We also develop our intuition and begin to listen to our inner voice. A strong second chakra contributes to a powerful third chakra.

High self-esteem contributes to good decision making skills while the opposite forces us to rely totally on outside support for guidance because we don't trust ourselves. What we hear from the inside seems nonsense to us.

How do people with physical handicaps achieve while others with powerful physical bodies flounder?

When the Dalai Lama was asked why he was not upset with China for taking away his freedom and his country, he simply replied, "They have taken

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everything but I refuse to give up my inner spirit and inner peace.”

If individualism is not nurtured and weak family values are predominant, then the third chakra is compromised. Our inner voice can cause us to act out of fear or strength depending on our self-worth. We see ourselves as either running away from our problems or running towards solutions. Weak families turn weak power centers into drug and alcohol abuse while strong families nurture individuals to stand on their own two feet and develop self-discipline.

There are five stages of personal empowerment.

1. **Change;** We move from group dynamics to individual focus. We develop a sense of self by questioning our existence and purpose. Change allows us to become something we are not but for change to happen we must do things that we have not done. This can be scary because it requires a shift outside our comfort zone. Without self-worth this becomes a challenge instead of an opportunity.
2. **Going Inside:** Getting to truly know ourselves requires courage. What we see may not be all that great depending on what we have heard depending on the values we have heard and seen during chakra one. We mask our true identity by creating an alter ego that takes over and our shyness and lack of self-respect is replaced with aggressive behaviour.

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3. **Individuality:** We either become strong inside based on our upbringing or we become submissive because of a weak core. This becomes the make it or break it stage of our development.
4. **Independence:** Some of us decide that social swaying will not decide who we are while others just go with the path of least resistance. It is here when people decide to come out of the closet, talk about and admit their sexual preference.
5. **Interdependence:** This is where we begin to work together and value the opinions of others. It is during this stage that life becomes a journey of self-discovery and inner learning. It is a sort of pilgrimage of getting to know ones self and inner workings. Of course this includes both the positive and negative aspects of our being.

Considerations:

1. Do you like who you are?
2. What would you like to change about yourself?
3. Can you admit your mistakes?
4. Do you enjoy being alone?
5. Do your discussions turn to arguments?
6. Do you constantly attempt to convince others of your beliefs?

Fourth Chakra: The Heart Chakra

The Heart Chakra (Level IV) is green and is located in your chest, in the middle of the breastbone. The heart chakra is the center of love. This includes romantic love, family love and love of yourself. A balanced chakra lets you give love and receive love. It is called the emotional chakra.

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This chakra is the connection between body and spirit. A strong fourth chakra allows us to use our emotional energy for good as opposed to evil so it emits warmth, love, compassion and forgiveness. It compares our relationships to our internal world.

Love is the primary emotion and when we respond with love we experience peace and tranquility. The first three chakras had us experience love of external things like family, relationships and possessions. Now this chakra turns love inward.

Forgiveness is the ultimate act of love. When we forgive, we extend to our transgressors only good fortune and happiness.

This chakra allows us to move past the bonds that tie us up and helps us control our own destiny. My personal philosophy is that, "You are successful as a parent when your children don't need you anymore." I mean this in the sense of becoming independent and are able to look after themselves. Of course there will be times when they will require help only after they have attempted to help themselves. I remember my daughter Megan saying to me that she wanted to manage university by herself just to prove she could do it. This builds self-esteem and confidence.

This chakra allows for self-discovery. We uncover our likes and dislikes, our wants and desires. This awakening has led to an increase in divorce because, instead of being complacent and subservient, people are realizing that their emotional needs are not being met.

Along with emotion comes emotional scarring. Some people hang on to this hurt, shut others out and never get a chance to experience real love. They live

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life as victims seeking support from outside never realizing that the solution to their problem lies within. They just need the courage and trust to do it.

Some people feel the need to get an apology when they feel they have been wronged. They refuse to move on and the absence of this apology ties them to the event. This mindset binds them to their anger which allows outside forces to control their fate. The apology becomes about the victimizer and not the victim. This attachment keeps the person stagnated in the past and weakens this chakra.

I remember starting a new business unique to my home town. I called the local television station and inquired whether they would like to do a news story on the opening. The reporter said, "No, people are not interested in that sort of thing but if your building burns down we would cover that." Is this what people want to see and hear? Are we so victimized that we prefer pain and suffering over peace and tranquility? Although there is a lot of negativity in the news, it is important to focus on what is good. I know what is happening, I just don't want to be reminded of it all the time.

Some people develop multiple chronic health issues related to mismanagement of anger. These range from allergies to heart issues. They are so debilitating that these people rarely leaves home. They have allowed their past to decide their present. Their beliefs, based on the stories they are telling themselves about their past, is that outside circumstances have caused the problems. They refuse to look inward, possibly because of what they fear they may see. They have become a victim and prisoner in their own home not realizing that their

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past is deciding their present. The very holding on of past issues are causing them grief and suffering.

The process of healing requires effort but is very rewarding. It provides emotional freedom. Firstly you have to decide that this madness has to stop. Here are the steps:

1. What is the wound?
2. When did it happen? What is the origin
3. Who is the person or person's involved.
4. How – Decide how you have benefited from this scar. Some of the greatest lessons I have learned in life came from the greatest adversity I have faced.
5. Forgive the person. This does not mean you accept what happened. That it is okay. It means letting go so you can heal. Of course there is no universal law that says you have to forgive but think about how deeply you have been hurt. The deeper the gash the more reason to forgive. This act removes the control the event has over you and provides the freedom to move on with your life.
6. Get closure. Write a letter to the person and explain how you have been hurt and how you have felt. Burn the letter, give them forgiveness and allow your anger to disintegrate with the ashes.

When your heart is broken, your choice is between holding on or letting go. You decide how long you want this hurt to last.

Considerations:

1. Do you have any emotional scars that need healing?

2. Do you find it hard to forgive?
3. What gain do you receive from holding on to pain?
4. Do you find it hard to say "I'm sorry?"

Fifth Chakra: The Throat Chakra

The Throat Chakra is blue and is located between the chin and the top of the ribs. The throat chakra controls our willpower. This chakra controls our ability to choose. A weak chakra is indicated when we say, "I had no choice."

A weak fifth chakra shows up in addictions to drugs, alcohol, smoking and even sex thus indicating willpower. It dictates low self-esteem. We question each decision and usually think out of fear resulting in procrastination because we assume failure.

A weak chakra can be identified when we see celebrities deciding to write a tell-all book about past relationships. Their agenda is one of wanting to be physically right instead of being morally right. It shows up in ugly divorce cases where lawyers get to pad their pockets at the expense of strong minded people. It shows up when individuals decide to seek damages after a car accident where no bodily damage occurs yet they see an opportunity to get something for nothing.

A strong fifth chakra shows up in self-trust and faith in our ability to make the right decisions. How are you motivated to act?

One determination of success is how we measure. Some measure by achievements while others measure by what they have learned. If we devote our energy to learning and seek knowledge through our

decisions and outcomes, our will becomes strong and failures are seen as learning experiences.

Allowing choices when we hit a brick wall allow us to seek advice which opens up other options. Just because we know the answer does not necessarily imply that we know the way, and understanding our limitations helps us to grow.

I had always had a dream of running a marathon (26.2 miles). I succeeded in September of 1983 and ran the St. John's marathon. I had trained very hard but I was not a long distance runner due to my stature. At twenty miles I hit the wall meaning that all my energy stores were depleted. I looked around and noticed my brother-in-law, Doug, was standing on the sidewalk. He immediately sensed my distress and began running with me. I had an out of body experience with two miles left where it seemed as though I was looking down on myself running. It was a very different experience which I attribute to my reserve energy being depleted. He stayed with me until I entered the finish area where I told him, "I can take it from here." I realized during that race that I could not make it alone and asked for assistance and to this day appreciate the guidance and support from Doug.

Willpower not only allows you to see your strengths but also allows you to see your weaknesses.

Willpower allows us to withhold judgment and refrain from speaking without thinking. Some people have no filter between their brain and their mouth. They are inflicted with emotional immaturity caused by a weak fifth chakra. A simple way to decide if we speak is to ask this question, "Is what I am about to say going to make life better for everyone involved?"

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Because this chakra is a balance between the head and the heart, it is important to see this connection. The head looks outward while the heart looks inward. It equates to a left brain – right brain comparison where we need to balance logic with emotion.

Considerations:

1. Are you bull-headed?
2. Does anyone control your life?
3. Do you look to persuade others?
4. Do you trust your intuition?
5. Do you exercise self-control?
6. Are you a procrastinator?

Sixth Chakra: The Third Eye Chakra

The Third Eye Chakra is indigo and is called the Brow Chakra. The third eye chakra is located on the forehead, just above the space between the eyebrows. The third eye chakra lets you view yourself in perspective and is the source of intuition and self knowledge. It is the power of the mind. This chakra involves our ability to judge and reason.

People say knowledge is power but knowledge merely knows the right thing to do. It is just mental energy and therefore has no power. True power comes with wisdom because wisdom is actually doing the right thing.

We all have life experiences that affect our beliefs and personality. These beliefs live together but are opposites. You like to go to the beach but you are afraid of water. You would like to meet people but don't like crowds.

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We can have extreme experiences when the alter belief takes control and we have a panic attack while at the mall or in very extreme cases, split or dual personality.

The sixth chakra allows us to understand the difference between perception and reality. It helps us see the clouded lens we look through and view the world. It discovers what is an illusion, and what is truth.

It can be very hurtful when we are personally attacked. This can be either verbally or physically. Some of us take this personally due to a weak third chakra or low self-esteem. We believe we are the root cause of the attack as opposed to looking for the real cause.

A strong sixth chakra allows us to step back from the trauma and see the truth. We realize that these attacks are not about us even though we are the focal point of the attack. One of the most difficult truths to accept is not to take these things personally because they are never about you. This is where we apply understanding which strengthens our sixth chakra allowing us to maintain a peaceful existence.

Removing yourself from a situation helps you separate truth from fiction. It helps you realize that you are not at the whim of outside forces that want to control your life. You see these acts as mere blips on your radar as opposed to tidal waves.

Emotional freedom involves keeping an open mind without getting defensive. It means releasing anger and becoming present. It provides the freedom to discover alternatives. It helps you see that life is not a series of random events where you have little or no

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control. It means that you do have the power to exercise control over your decisions and ultimately your future. The beauty of this reality is that it all starts and ends with you. You decide how you want your life to be. By simply controlling your thoughts, you control your destiny.

Considerations:

1. Do you have a positive or negative attitude?
2. Are you judgmental?
3. How attached are you to your outcomes?
4. How easy do you recover from failure?

Seventh Chakra: The Crown Chakra

The Crown Chakra is purple and is located on the very top of your head. The Crown chakra is the source of oneness with the universe. This chakra is the power of living in the now by releasing your past and refusing to worry about your future. It is about realizing that a higher power exists called the SPIRIT.

A strong seventh chakra removes all physical, mental and emotional illusions from our lives as they are excess baggage just getting in the way. It allows us to see our being and we become self-aware. It is within this chakra that we begin to look at meditation as an important and meaningful part of life.

A strong seventh chakra permits us to seek other teachings like Buddhism and Hinduism. It sees all religious faiths as equal and gives the opportunity to learn from each one. It also understands that there is equality in all living things and each of us has a rightful place on earth and that we are all here for a purpose. A strong seventh chakra allows us to seek help through holistic methods because it

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understands that there are no limits to the human mind.

A weak seventh chakra sees no option other than their faith and what they believe in. I know of such an individual who decided not to attend her brother's wedding because it was held in an Anglican Church and she was Catholic. It is as though one person or one belief or religious faith is better than another. This destroys the very essence of the power of the human race; that the whole is better than the sum of the parts. This narrow mindedness leads nowhere.

Victor Frankl epitomized the power of the human spirit. Imprisoned in the German concentration camps in Auswich, he endured extreme cruelty. He saw many people gassed and others just giving up and left to die. He did not allow his spirit to be broken and this allowed him to survive and tell his story so others would benefit. He realized that his life had purpose. The strength of his spirit allowed him to endure and he lived to not only tell his story but also to develop an effective therapeutic process he called Logo therapy.

So how do you get in touch with your spiritual side? What needs to happen in order for you to become enlightened? You look inside and discover your true self and as you do you become self-aware. It is that simple. It is that mindfulness that allows you to discover your life's purpose.

Most people look outward for answers not realizing that all the answers they need are within just waiting to be discovered. All we have to do is open our eyes and the answers will be right there.

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It is through this process that I have managed to do work with the RCMP, in schools around the province and through my workshops. They all teach life skills that empower the human spirit.

This is my mission, to help people to discover their true potential, to uncover what was always there.

The process is simple once it is started and once started in the right direction there is no power on earth that can affect the outcome except you.

Considerations:

1. Can you ask for help?
2. Do you believe your religious faith is right and others are wrong?
3. Are you open to meditation?
4. Can you accept alternative medicine?

You do have the option of purchasing my meditation CD. You can also do your own meditation by following the script below. Use this script as a guideline and you can also use words and phrases that resonate with your soul.

Do some research on the internet and investigate the energy and meridian systems of your body. You can also look into visiting a holistic healer that specializes in energy work.

The traditional pose for meditation is the standard lotus position but you can choose any position as long as it is comfortable. Focus on your breath and begin to relax your body. I usually start from the head and work down.

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Once you have yourself in a comfortable and relaxed position (this can take anywhere from five to ten minutes) you can begin to balance your chakras.

You will find that the more you practice the quicker you will relax and the more time you will spend on balancing.

Chakra I	Bless your life including all the positive things within it and bless the life of your family.
Chakra II	Bless each person in your life as someone special who has been sent to teach you something.
Chakra III	Bless your inner standards and ask for help in maintaining proper values and integrity.
Chakra IV	Bless the love you have for the well being of everyone and have an intention of forgiveness.
Chakra V	Bless your positive choices and seek guidance in evaluating future ones.
Chakra VI	Bless your knowledge and wisdom and continue to seek insight.
Chakra VII	Bless your spirit as well as your self-awareness and mindfulness.

Chapter XIV

BONNIE'S STORY

I dedicated all three of my books to my wife, Bonnie, each for a different reason. This third book is the most significant because Bonnie's philosophy is one that has made me a much better person.

I thought I had life figured out. I was an understanding person who looked at all sides of the story. I believed I had compassion and truly understood the meaning of the word "LOVE".

Then a person comes along and re-writes my thought process and gets me to see a whole new way of viewing the world.

My words would not justify Bonnie's essence so I asked if she would be willing to complete my book; Here it is:

In 1968 I was 9 years old and had just moved to a new province with my two sisters, five brothers and my mother and father. This meant having to find new friends, go to a new school and just generally settle in to a new and foreign environment. I was a

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very shy child so meeting friends was a little more difficult for me than for others who were more outgoing. Fortunately, though, I quickly became friends with the children in my new neighborhood. There was another girl my age who had also recently moved in across the street from me but, for no good reason other than the fact of just being kids, the other little girls did not want to play or include her in anything they did. Even back then bullying of some form or other existed. This little girl clearly wanted to be included in our activities, but the other children just shunned her.

Even at that age, I was clearly aware of other people's feelings and felt terrible for the way they were treating her. I immediately let it be known that what they were doing was not okay with me and I went over to her house and asked her to come out and play. I did not want her feelings hurt. After much coercing on my part, she was eventually accepted by the other children but I felt I was the bridge between the two.

I will never quite understand nor comprehend the cruelty that some people show towards others. The thought process of protecting and showing compassion for this little girl carried me through to my adult life. She could have been me. How would I have felt if, after moving to a new neighborhood, I was shunned, rejected and made to feel un-wanted?

To me, the soul is the bare essence of an individual. And the essence of a soul is the ability to feel and give compassion, and to show kindness, forgiveness and love. Without these virtues, how can a person go through life and feel complete?

I have always been a forgiving person, showing compassion and forgiveness to the very people who

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might have wronged me in one situation or another. I always felt that anger and hatred only drained me of any positive energy I had and felt that letting go of these negative emotions was always a much healthier and positive option. Forgiveness doesn't always come easy to me. At times, like anyone else, I have found the process of forgiveness a difficult thing to do but to harbor bad feelings and anger only made me feel worse. Anger and hatred can chip away at a person a little at a time until, before they know it, they are a bitter old soul.

To start forgiving you have to understand the other person, put yourself in their situation or at least attempt to show some compassion even when understanding their behavior is hard. Perhaps the person who cut you off in traffic this morning just came from the doctor's office with some devastating news and wasn't concentrating on the road. Maybe they were just fired from their job or maybe they were rushing home to a sick child. You see, everyone has a story to tell.

People are overall generally good and do not intentionally try to anger you. The very ones that go around with anger and negativity in their hearts are the very ones I feel need the most compassion shown.

Whatever the reason, showing compassion and forgiveness is a positive start to mending any broken fences. Anger and hatred is poison to the soul and only when compassion, forgiveness and love is shown does one truly feel the happiness and peace that life has to offer.

I will conclude with a wonderful quote that sums up my feelings.

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"You will know that forgiveness has begun when you recall those who hurt you and feel the power to wish them well" ~ Lewis B. Smedes.

Chapter XV

WHAT WOULD YOU DO

During the course of our lives we will be faced with opportunities that reveal our true spirit. Here are some situations I want you to think about that when faced; what would you do? Just be truly honest with yourself.

1. While in a line up at your favourite coffee shop you are approached by a person asking for money to buy food. You have only five dollars which happens to be just enough for two coffees. What would you do?
2. You bring your usual large amount of recyclables to the depot and while there you notice a poorly dressed person entering pushing a shopping cart filled with containers. What would you do?
3. You are attending a professional baseball game and strike up a conversation with a small boy. You both have the same favourite player who just happened to hit a home run and you catch the ball. What would you do?
4. A friend buys you a lottery ticket and you win the prize of \$100,000.00. What would you do?
5. While driving you see a crate of apple pies sitting on the side of the road. What would you do?

6. You walk into a public washroom and see fifty dollars on the floor. What would you do?
7. Your mother leaves her house to you in her will ignoring her other three siblings for no reason. You all had a good relationship with your mother. What would you do?
8. While being last in line at the only cash register opened you notice another register being opened. What would you do?
9. You and your siblings are looking at gift ideas for the exchange of Christmas gifts this year. You have given gifts to your nieces and nephews every year and your options are getting low. What would you do?
10. Someone rear ends your vehicle and though you are not injured, someone suggests that you could get an insurance settlement if you complain. What would you do?
11. One of your parents passes away and even though your next door neighbour knows about this, they don't show at the wake or the funeral.
12. You have used your snow blower to clear your neighbour's driveway on numerous occasions yet they have never said "Thank You."

These are all good questions that tell a lot about a person's character and spirit. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. What would you do?

A1. I expect most people would say NO. Sometimes it helps to see who would benefit from your actions. Maybe the person truly is in need of food and your generosity would be greatly appreciated. Don't always assume the worst because you just don't know. Maybe the five dollars is worth more to him than to you.

A2. I always look to see who could use the fifteen dollars I would get from the recyclables and I usually see someone. I just walk over and dump the containers in his bin and walk out. It is worth more to that person than it is to me.

A3. What a great way to impact the life of a young person and to show him or her a lesson in generosity. Situations like this can have a huge impact on young kids.

A4. The question is not if, but how much. You would not have the money without that purchase. Many times greed takes over and we lose sight of the more important things in life.

A5. Some people would take the crate and load it in their car. The flips are not yours so look to see where they were made and notify the owner.

A6. The money is not yours. Maybe the person, who lost it, needs it more than you. Perhaps passing it over to the store clerk is the right thing to do as the person who lost it may inquire. What the clerk does is irrelevant to you.

A7. This actually happened to someone I know and he pocketed the money. Maybe your mother was not thinking straight when the decision was made. Your siblings deserve the same as you do.

A8. This actually happened to me except the person behind me, who just happened to be at the end of the line, jumped to the newly opened cash register. Here it is simply common courtesy. Maybe you are in a hurry but your time is no more valuable than anyone else's. Was this person rude or just did not know any better? Possibly, but maybe he did not

know any better. It is easy to judge quickly without knowing all the facts.

A9. In many cases children get enough for Christmas and if this is the case, a possible donation to a worthy cause in the children's honour would be a kind gesture and you would teach the children the true meaning of giving as well as Christmas.

A10. In some cases where bodily injury has occurred, there may be justification. Only the person involved in the accident knows for certain.

A11. Maybe your neighbour has difficulty dealing with adversity. Maybe they are too uncomfortable facing you at this time of need.

A12. Some people have difficulty saying thank you. They were not taught this phrase. Decide what is more important, doing what is right or feeding your EGO.

All of these circumstances are things that can stretch our spirit and it is so easy to take the low road because of the benefits you would receive.

Most times we need to take a deep breath and think from our souls. It is only then that we make a pragmatic decision, one which we can be proud to tell our grandchildren.

FINAL THOUGHTS

There are a number of principles at work that determine your destiny. The quickest way to achievement is to get in touch with the feeling of already having your desired result. The thought of wanting creates the feeling of having a void which in turn creates the experience of not having.

So the key to inner peace and joy is not the thought but the feeling behind the thought. When you engage in the activities that provide you the feeling of accomplishment you continue moving toward your goals. Any activity that does not provide this feeling will only slow you down. Of course you cannot have the same feeling all the time, just make sure the feeling that gets you what you want is your dominant feeling. You cannot experience contentment without the feeling of being happy. Inner harmony is impossible with negative feelings and distress.

Fear pushes away happiness so the way to achievement is to switch your inner identity and subsequent thought patterns to that which you want. When your inner and outer self match, you have contentment and when they don't match, you experience discontentment. Once this shift happens, your actions conform to those of already having the result you want and everything else is unacceptable.

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Base your thoughts and actions not on where you are but where you want to be. Spending time and energy on where you are does not translate into results. What is required is spending time and energy on where you want to go. When you focus on where you are, you base your decisions on that feeling. So you focus on where you want to go and less on where you are and the results will come sooner.

So you start with your imagination, to dream of possibilities, engage your will to take action and then reap the rewards of inner peace and joy. Imagination is only dreaming without action and there are many dreamers out there doing just that.

Your “*will*” or willpower starts the whole process toward your goals so make sure you set proper ones. Improper goals are fuel for failure and every time you change goals you effectively are starting over.

Taking action through your will is important but only when inspired intent is involved. Intent provides your purpose for getting out of bed. There has to be both mental and physical action along with spiritual meaning all done together or again there is only dreaming.

It is not only important to take action but you must take positive action that moves you closer to your goals. Otherwise you are merely spinning your wheels getting nowhere because your action is not productive.

There is an old saying, “If you chase two rabbits you probably will catch neither” so concentration and focus is critical to success. If I placed ten different colored marbles and asked you to blindly pick the white one you would have a ten per cent chance of

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picking the right one. If there were only five marbles, your chances increase to twenty per cent but if there was only one marble you would get it right every time. The important aspect of success is to choose your goals wisely and maintain focus and concentration.

The true power of your mind comes from its ability to detach from any outcome. Attachment brings with it fear and anxiety because you focus on what can happen if you fail to achieve. Your subconscious mind cannot work for you when you think this way. When you detach, the outcome does not own you but you own it and you are not consumed by it.

A good example would be losing your job. Being attached to your job and feeling it is your life causes much grief and stress. You react as if it was the worst thing in the world. However, when you are detached, your job does not run your life so you are free to look for other employment options without the fear, anxiety and depression that accompany panic and uncertainty.

A good example of detachment is being able to take frequent breaks when you are faced with a problem. You remove yourself, forget about it and upon your return you quickly find a solution. It works the same way when you sleep. Going to bed focused on the problem will leave you restless with the same problem when you awaken. When you trust your subconscious mind to find a solution, it usually does and you wake up with the result you are looking for.

Detachment allows you to enjoy the process of life. Once you achieve your goals there will be others. When you attach yourself to your goals, you miss the journey which is the best part. The purpose of life is to grow and learn so relax and enjoy this process.

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True enlightenment is being non-attached. It is all about having emotional freedom. Do not misinterpret this as being uncaring as it is not. It is about caring yet in an unattached way.

Detachment is about letting go, listening to your quiet inner voice and trusting yourself. The true path to enlightenment is being flexible and having an open mind.

Enlightenment is our most natural state. It is the state that is the most comfortable for all of us. The truth is that we were all born loving human beings filled with empowerment. It just lost its way in the journey through life. In our passageway toward enlightenment we are starting to uncover our pure spirit and beginning to let go of all of our negative thinking, feelings, emotions and mental limitations.

What we have done is deny ourselves true happiness by not accepting ourselves for who we are. I believe this is the proper time to acknowledge your truth and accept yourself as a perfectly unique individual with limitless capability for spiritual growth. Once we accept these as truths we can live our lives in peace, harmony and tranquility.

It is important to unconditionally accept that we inhabit this planet called Earth to rise above negative thinking and live a life filled with unlimited love, joy and happiness. That is the true power of the human spirit. Promise yourself to make every moment special. Live each day as though it is a miracle, because it is just that.

Take time to look back at your past and learn from your mistakes. Look forward to a bright future full of promise and surprise yet take time to live in the present moment because it is that moment that is

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eternal. There will always be a “now.” Continually show appreciation and be grateful for the bountiful life you are living especially for what you have become.

Maintain a proper focus that helps you give love and respect to everyone you encounter and especially be gentle with yourself. Practice the art of forgiveness, especially yourself, because anger is a useless emotion. It eats you up from the inside out and solves nothing.

Treat everyone the way you would want to be treated and endeavor to have everyone you meet feel better because they have met you and not in spite of having met you.

So there are two aspects of life that build us up or break us down. There are our toxic thoughts that bring negativity into our lives and there are toxic people who can drag us down to their level. If we are to believe that our thoughts and emotions have an influence in our lives, it is to our benefit that we choose the proper thoughts and the right people that contribute to an uplifting lifestyle. The reality of life is that negative thinking is just useless mental energy and what people think of you is really none of your business. We are all in this together, striving to make this world a better place and it can be a better place just because you made it your mission to do so.

So your job is not to sleepwalk through life but to wake up and truly experience life as it really is. Having a goal of inner wisdom teaches patience. Tranquility happens when we open up to a world of possibilities.

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As long as we continue to allow ourselves to always do our best, we grow and become complete. There are no hidden agendas or self-serving actions. Isn't that all we can strive for?

Suggested Reading

Brandon, Nathaniel. The Art of Living Consciously: The Power of Awareness to Transform Everyday Life

Brodie, Richard. Virus of the Mind

Brown, Michael. The Presence Process: A Journey into Present Moment Awareness

Dalai Lama, Paul Ekman., Emotional Awareness: Overcoming the Obstacles to Psychological Balance and Compassion

Dalai, Lama. Opening the Eye Of New Awareness

De Mello, Anthony. Awareness

Gladwell, Malcolm. Blink

Gladwell, Malcolm. The Tipping Point

Gunaratana, Bhante Henepola. Mindfulness

Kabat-Zinn, John. Full Catastrophe Living.

Kabat-Zinn, Wherever You Go, There You Are.

Koloby, Scott. Living Realization

Myss, Caroline. Anatomy of the Spirit

Osho, Osho. Awareness: The Key to Living in Balance

Palmer, Harry. Living Deliberately.

Peirce, Penney. The Intuitive Way: The Definitive Guide to Increasing Your Awareness

Tolle, Eckhart. A New Earth

Zukav, Gary. The Heart of the Soul: Emotional Awareness

Zukav, Gary. The Mind of the Soul: Responsible Choice

Zukav, Gary. Thoughts from the Seat of the Soul

Web Sites

www.about.com

www.dharma.ncf.ca

www.mindfulnessmeditationcentre.org

www.more-selfesteem.com

www.selfcreation.com

TRIBUTE



On August 4th, 2010 at 8:30 am with his loving family by his side, a wonderful husband and father was taken. It seems fitting that a man who spent so many years involved in the Regatta, pass away that very day.

We all have special people in all our lives. Those are the ones that make a mark that can never be duplicated. The kind of person you are grateful to have known and spent time with. Our father was that kind of person.

Walter (Mike) Summers was a small man in stature but big on common sense. He always knew just the right thing to say to help you through a crisis.

He was a humble man with a tremendous sense of humour who never sought the spotlight. He merely went about his life in a quiet unassuming manner. I can still hear him say, "You are only saying that because it is true." He will be sadly missed but always remembered.

We all love you Dad and we will think of you always. Life will never be the same.

We now have to pick up the pieces and begin the process of getting used to our new normal.

ABOUT the Author



Gary Summers is a professional magician, hypnotist and speaker with a Masters Degree in Exercise Physiology as well as certifications in both hypnotherapy and (CBT) cognitive behaviour therapy.

He conducts workshops on STRESS, PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT and WORKLIFE BALANCE as well as hypnosis seminars on stop smoking and weight loss.

Gary has developed a number of school programs including “Discover the Magic Within You – Say No to Drugs”, where he uses magic to teach school children proper choices concerning smoking drinking and drugs, as well as “Life Skills for Students”, where he prepares high school students for life after school.

He works closely with the RCMP and delivers a program called “Kids and Drugs,” which helps parents guide their children through their adolescence.

Gary started training4success, a company specializing in corporate training and employee evaluations. You can get more information by visiting his web site @ **www.garysummers.ca**

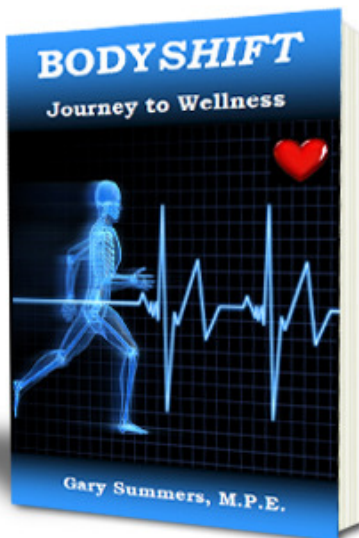
Other Books by Gary



Gary takes you on an incredible journey of self-discovery as he examines conscious awareness and subconscious programming. Re-write your software and change the printout of your life.

“Gary’s book is a practical approach to changing our thoughts and emotions. I like the way it is written and people will benefit from the ideas and suggestions that are contained in this book.”

Dr. John Angel, Psychiatrist



This book looks at the physical side of wellness. It is a practical guide to health, nutrition and fitness.

“This guide to wellness is a well composed and very comprehensive document backed by scientific data. The information is concise and readable and would greatly benefit all health conscious people.”

Dr. Randy Hart

You also have the option of purchasing a hypnosis CD for each book. The CD's are \$10.00 each.

MINDSHIFT has an optional hypnosis CD that allows you to work on any area needing improvement whether that is self-esteem, confidence or any phobia.

BODYSHIFT has an optional hypnosis CD on motivation that helps you get on and stay on the right track through inspiration on health and fitness.

SOULSHIFT has an optional meditation CD that helps you balance the 7 energy centers of your body leading to a more peaceful and calm life.