

Healing mind, body, heart and soul



<http://www.thehealingbridge.org>

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This personal account of a true life story is offered as support and inspiration for your own healing journey. It is not presented as a definitive method of healing, or seen as encouragement to pursue a particular path

Seeing Something More

I first became engaged in the process of healing shortly after my mother died. Her death made me aware of the fact that there was something beyond this life. My sisters and I were with her and did hospice care. It was a very spiritual experience and it was obvious to us that it had become a palpable healing space. Very unusual things happened in that space while we were with her.

I had been raised Catholic and had rejected formal religion and spent a lot of time being very fearful of death because I did not have faith that there was something beyond this life. And it was very frightening to think that you would die and you were nothing. Her death was a gift of seeing that there was a spirit world, that there was something more. Even though it was sad, heart wrenching, and I didn't want my mother to die, at the same time, there was this beautiful peace about the whole process and a closeness to everyone that I hadn't felt in a long time.

When her spirit left it was a very clear transition, and that was a very interesting process to see too. I thought that some part of her would still be present, but when I went back to her apartment later that day, it was very clear that her essence, her spirit, was no longer there. You could just feel the whole shift in her apartment. That was real hard for me to accept at first; especially because of her attachment to her place. I was surprised that she was gone. And I would have liked to have kept her there, but that was my own wish and I realize would not have been good for her.

A Strong Pull

After that, I saw an ad in the paper for introductory shiatsu sessions, and I felt a real strong pull that I should go do that, though I had never received any body work before at all. So, I came to this Healing Center and Suzanne and I instantly had a connection. She spent about two hours with me instead of the half-hour introduction. The experience was so moving for me that I knew this was something I just had to do for myself. That was my first contact with any kind of 'holistic healing', anything with self-reflection.

I began to come here once a week to explore healing myself in all manners. I took a course in homeopathy and at this time I'd had about twenty years of chronic sinus infections and rashes and things like that. I went to see an M.D. who practiced homeopathy, went to hear his lecture, liked him, talked to him afterwards and asked for an appointment. Through my own learning and working with him, I was able to break this 20-year habit of being on antibiotics all the time. My head cleared up so much it was like being reborn. It didn't last, but it showed me that this could work if I would stick with it. I stuck with it; it was tough, even my head started oozing at one point. I had some real, real healing crises through this homeopathy.

In the meantime, I was getting the support of the bodywork, the support of Suzanne. She was someone that I could use as a sounding board, and she helped me with my process. She asked me if I could help them with computer work and the phones and I thought, "What a wonderful thing to be able to be here in this great energy and actually make some money at it." I couldn't be in this space without wanting to know more.

Seeking

I began my own seeking through books and classes and I kept being drawn to modalities that no one at the Center knew of or did, or had any experience with. Looking back, I don't even know what drew me to them. I would see something and I'd think I need to take that; I need to do that. So, I would take a course and it would always be very life changing. Other than taking things like herbs, homeopathy and reading, the first real "bodywork" thing I did was Reiki. It was extremely powerful.

The Right Time

I had a dream, a very waking kind of dream, that my mother was talking to me. I woke up in bed and she was next to me and we had a long conversation without words. She mostly was telling me about her process, the most wonderful things she had learned since she passed on. After that, I went to see a psychic that someone recommended to me. She confirmed what I already suspected, that my mother was the one who was acting as the catalyst for me from the other side. In fact, spoke to me, told me what my mother said to me and it was the intonation, everything about it was my mother speaking to me.

At the time, I was about 40 and thought "Why now?" I've been here for 40 years and closed and didn't know anything and all of a sudden, this world is opening up for me. Why did it have to wait until I was 40? She said this was the right time for me to be awakened and just not to worry about it -- go with it.

After that I couldn't get enough. I just had to know more, I had to work on myself and I was very fortunate that the right people and the right courses kept showing up for me. I could take it all the way back to the fact that I moved to Paoli. If I hadn't moved to Paoli, I wouldn't have met Suzanne, if I hadn't met Suzanne, I wouldn't have had the opportunity to be a part of this wonderful healing group. It's interesting looking back at how it's worked and the different people that I met...the synchronicities.

A Growth Period

One of the next things I decided to take was [One Brain](#) work. That also worked in a very congruent manner. I asked someone that I knew who practiced it if they taught and they said no, but gave me the name of her teacher. I called and she said, "Well I already started the class, this is the last class I'm teaching. I'm retiring but if you'll come in and meet with me a couple of times, I'll catch you up to where they are and you can join the class." That was an opportunity for me to grow a lot because in that class you're really working on yourself. You're working on old wounds and old belief systems through a year of classes and it was a big growth period for me.

The Shift of Letting Go

I went on to take other things and all this time just slowly learned how to let go and how to process beliefs about myself and my wounds. Through it came healing for my daughter, especially through the One Brain work I learned. I became aware of issues she had picked up from myself and from my husband, that were not hers. As I healed myself, she got better.

My shifting was a little scary for her. And being a child, she really picked up on the subtleties of that shift. The nice thing is that I was in a position to recognize it and do something about it before it became a big deal for her. Every shift that I made also became a shift in my family, and she's gotten the benefit out of it the most of all. My husband has definitely changed throughout this time, but being an adult, he has a lot of old baggage of his own that he has to handle. It's been a slower process, although I've definitely affected him.

In my daughter's healing it was a way of her coming back. She was already getting those beliefs put on her by us. You know, unconsciously, I certainly would never intentionally. It was a whole process for me sitting in on her sessions, in fact I had to be sent out of the room the first time because it was so upsetting to me, realizing, watching her process, that I had done this to her, unconsciously. I had to process this so that I was able to sit in the room and look at it from the perspective of, "Yes, I did this to her, but that's okay, I didn't know what I was doing and we are both being healed by this." But it took a little while for me to get to that point, to not be like, "Oh my God, look what I did to this child. I put all this crap of mine on her." But so did my mother and father, and so did their mother and father...

Breaking the Cycle

Now I had broken the pattern and so I could look at it from "Isn't this wonderful that she doesn't have to be 40 years old to have this taken off of her?" I can now try to help her keep up with this. Of course, I can't keep her from having her own process and her own stuff, but she doesn't have to have mine along with it, or her father's. At least it can be hers and she can have some more awareness of it. So it was a real gift to be able to know that being a child, I can help her. What I did learn is that you cannot help other adults. You can be a reflection for them, you can be an example for them, you can maybe put little things in there that will somehow swirl around in their consciousness and help them in some way.

Finding Myself Again

Back then I understood healing to be getting in touch with the real me. In fact, it was almost like a remembrance. I remembered how I felt as a little girl and realized that somewhere in that growing up process, I had lost myself. So it was like finding myself again and finding my strengths and remembering my dreams. It was a place that I felt so good in that there wasn't any way that I could forget about it. I had to keep pursuing. There wasn't any way to become unconscious again. No matter how hard the road was to this consciousness, I could not allow myself to go back to almost a mechanical way of being... the way that you were told to be -- going through life without knowing why you're here. You went to work, went to an office, went home and cooked a meal, watched television, read a book, had sex and you got up again. There was no real purpose for the fact that you were here. There was no true happiness.

Happiness was always just this abstract idea, down the road, that if you worked hard and got married and did all the right things, that somewhere down the road, there was this happiness that you were working toward. But what was that? What would make you happy? Never any sense of contentment, taking jobs just to earn a living, always looking for the type of activity that's going to pay the most or give the most prestige. It was always outside of self purpose, because this is what one was supposed to do. But it was just following a script.

Challenges of Awakening

After all this learning, the first thing I wanted to do when all this wonderful stuff happened for me was, "Oh, my God, I want to go save the world." I'm calling my siblings right away, trying to drag my husband in, trying to drag everyone along. And what I got was like a slap in the face. And that was the thing that I really had to learn, that I cannot live for someone else. They have to come to all these realizations on their own. It was very difficult for me to close off the sharing that I wanted to do. You know, "Why can't you wake up? I woke up!" I'd want to shake the person. "Why can't you see what I'm seeing?" Learning that I can't do that was one of the biggest lessons I had.

Not Rescuing

No one else out there that I tried to convert knew or cared about it. They were dealing with their own belief systems. That was my own process that I had to go through because it threw me a little bit into, I want to say "hurt," but almost "devalued" because I felt that I had all this valuable information to give, and it was rejected. It threw me into old rejections and old hurts and old patterns that I was trying to break out of. So it was still a lesson. It made me see all the old things that I could go back to and then I started looking where they came from. What messages did I get that made me feel this way? It's also a help in that it is something I needed to work through.

In my work, it's certainly helpful to know that I cannot rescue people. All that I can do is be a support. I cannot be a rescuer. It's very helpful that I've gone through all of this, that I've had all this process, because I can empathize with the person. I can know where they are, I've experienced it myself, and I can support them in their own experience. But I couldn't take them from A to Z without having gone through that process myself.

It's extremely helpful as a working parent to know how to work with someone else, because I remember when I was there. Obviously, I don't know exactly how somebody is thinking, but I do have the general idea of how their thought processes are going and what's coming up for them. It helps me in knowing how to guide a session to help them to get their own answers.

The clearer you are, the more you can benefit someone else. Otherwise, you run into the problem of being pulled into their issue because it's setting off your own. Then you get into "What's theirs and what's yours?" and you can't do that. So it's real important if you're going to work with people that you've done lots of work on yourself and you continue to do a lot of work on yourself because you have to be very clear about your own issues, and your own process, and keep that separate.

From Darkness to Light

When I look back on opening up to this whole new life, it was like going from darkness into light. Being lost and found. I won't say there's no more darkness, but there is more light. Something that I didn't think I'd move into. I'm still not into organized religion, but that spiritual sense, that knowing that there is a higher being, that there is a higher force that we're all part of, and that we're reaching toward, is something that gives a lot of peace. And the fact that I can be my own support, that this higher Self, the Soul, the spiritual part of yourself that's one with everything, is extremely supportive. The oneness of being with every blade of grass, every animal and every atom that's around -- knowing that we're all part of each other, interacting with each other -- is a wonderful gift because I think many of us feel very alone.

A Sense of Belonging

To know that you're not alone, that it's not you vs. everyone else, that we're all entwined and part of a oneness, and that our actions affect the world around us and affect others and everyone's actions affect each other--if everyone could be more aware of that, I think we'd live in a nicer world.

I think that a lot of the pain that people have is their separateness, that feeling that they're the "other," or that everyone else is the "other," and the more you can have the opportunity to experience the oneness, the world is a much friendlier place. I've been really lucky to be able to access that and have the opportunity to feel that oneness. As the light expanded and the process unfolded, there was more openness for me, more of a sense of belonging, of peace, of sharing.

Short Time, Big Movements

When I think back on the healing process, it all kind of rolls into one significant shift for me and it snowballed very, very quickly. It was not small changes for me. They were very, very big movements in a very short period of time. It started out with little steps of taking classes and getting this little bit of knowledge and knowing that I had to continue to do that. That may have been a little slower. But I'd say over the last five years it has been so fast, so quick, that I can almost have daily shifting. Things are just processing through very quickly for me now.

Times of Healing

Big, big pieces of healing are forgiveness, letting go, really being able to look at the past, all the things that have happened, all the people that have come into my life, and being able to look at it for all the gifts that I got out of it, all the learning that I received. And being able to let go of all the little hurts and slights and to look at that as part of a learning process, though it was necessary to have, and it shaped me, but not feeling attachment to it anymore.

Forgiveness really is the big piece. I've actually done processes where I've brought different people in, I've seen them in my mind's eye before me, brought in the energy of them, and went through thanking them for what gifts they gave me and then letting them go. I needed to heal with my father, who died when I was 18. It's only been in the past few years that I could really let go of the hurt that I felt. Being able to invite him into my healing sessions and being able to embrace him in my mind's eye, it's been pretty recent to get to that point.

Letting Go

Probably the biggest thing that was different after that was that I didn't slip back into any old wounds around my father. I wasn't even able to think about him in any negative light. I was really able to see him as a human being with all of his own problems and feel much kinder towards him, much softer. I'm not going to say I was warm and fuzzy. It's being able to accept him for who he was and knowing that he was just going through his own process. Maybe it's not taking it personally anymore. It's not that, "He did this and if this had been different, this would have happened." You know, just really able to see him as another spirit, another soul that was on a journey and happened to be my father. And I was going to say that my mother was very much my mother but you know what? Thinking on it right now, she isn't anymore. I've gotten to a soul spot with her too. I'm just looking at them both as souls, who interacted with me and may interact with me again. I'm thinking of them less as parents. I've gotten to the point of letting go of the physical roles that they had, and perhaps there's a release for them in that they can go about whatever they need to do. I think of them sometimes and I'll just say, "You're invited in, if that's what you'd like to do."

Mother's Spirit

I haven't had any real contact with my father, but my mother has been very influential in our lives as a family. A couple years after my mother died, my sister almost died, through a botched operation. They weren't sure that she would make it. I'm sure we were all praying similarly but I did ask my mother to please do something at the time, and when I went back to see my sister, it was like my mother was my sister. Her husband saw it, my other sister saw it, and when my sister was able to come out and be with us again, she said she was very aware of when my mother's spirit entered her and that there was a part of my mother still inside of her.

My daughter was about five then. She went to see her in the hospital and interacted with her like she was my mother. It was very interesting to watch how she saw my mother there. Later I talked to my sister on the phone for about an hour, got off the phone and I turned to my husband and I said, "I just did something I didn't think I'd ever be able to do again." And he said, "What?" I said, "I just had a nice talk with my mother." It was so unbelievable how her energy was there and I really think enabled my sister to live. Even the non-believers in the family witnessed it and will say, "Yes, it happened." It was so strong there was no denying it. And my sister said it took a very long time for that essence to completely leave her. Some piece stayed there for a while. There's no one that witnessed it that can deny it. It really touched us in a profound way.

The Blessing of Support

Having the experience of my mother's death, the experience of my sister, and having the opportunities of pursuing my own healing, there was no going back. How could I go from being asleep to being awake and then go back to being asleep? I can't do it. At least it's not something I would ever choose to do. It's a journey I make on my own, and sometimes lonely.

It's helpful to have a support system. I was very lucky that I worked in a healing center and had people that were willing to support me, and I could help support them also. That was such a blessing for me. It's two steps forward, one step back. It's never easy. People think, "Oh, that means everything's easy for you." Well, it's not. If anything, it can be harder because I have this awareness now, I hopefully don't do things unconsciously.

Stepping Out of the Emotion

There were times when I had to choose a path; and maybe there were some roadblocks, but I don't think anything is a wrong turn. I think that there is learning in everything. If things go smoothly, there's no growth either.

There was never a time when I would consciously say, "I'm making a choice that is against what I want to do." It wasn't anything like that. It was certain lessons that I learned. Anything that went "wrong" always had some value. It might have been very upsetting at the time or drew me back into thinking, "Why did I do that? I should have done this. It would've been better if I'd done that." When I could step out of the emotion of the time, it would always lead to some kind of learning experience that was helpful.

Difficulties

I don't get a lot of support at home and that's very hard for me. It would be easier to put myself in a situation where, almost like the monks, I would be in this perfect world and support space for this process of growth that I want to do, this inner reflection--this wonderful place that I can go to in meditations and being in nature. But as much as I'd like to go there, we do have to live in the world. I do believe that we're here to learn, or we wouldn't be in physical bodies, and that,

unfortunately, we have to take the good with the bad, but we have to learn from it. As long as I don't interact unconsciously, there will be growth and learning. It's acting unconsciously that causes problems with everyone, with the whole world. This being unconscious is why we can hurt each other, why there can be war.

So, yes, it would be easier, it would be wonderful to live like that, to live consciously but in a protected environment. I do try to get that once in awhile, and I think I need it in order to be able to interact the rest of the time. It's kind of a renewal, like recharging your battery. But, in a way, this is acting unconsciously, in that it's hiding. It's not the real world and we have to live in that real world.

In a way there's a modality of becoming more conscious by growing apart from the world. But in a way that can be actually out of being unconscious, because then you're denying what's out there and going on, and you're not interacting with it. Growth would stop. Yes, you could stay in this very wonderful, high spiritual place without interacting with the nitty gritty unpleasant things, but in a way would stop growth.

Listening and Letting Go

What I'm coming to is that my purpose for being here, besides finding out about myself, is to help others find themselves, so it's necessary for me to interact to affect that. It's not an easy process. Just because I become conscious doesn't mean that everything goes swimmingly for me. I still get angry, still have doubts, still hurt, get sick, but I'm less into, "Why is this happening to me? Why are you doing that to me? Oh, poor me. Why me?" It's easier to get out of that. I don't say that I don't ever fall into that, but it's easier to look at it now and say, "Why is this happening to me?" It may be something as simple as I'm pushing myself too much, that my body is saying, "If you don't rest, then I'm going to make you rest—you're going to get that virus that's going around that will put you flat on your back."

In fact, I hurt myself about a month ago. My back went out, and it was not at a good time for me to have it go out. It meant cancelling clients, it meant lying in bed. I gave into it a lot faster than I would have in the past, and said, "Okay, fine. I am going to cancel my week. I am going to just lie in bed." And I had a wonderful week in bed! I did a lot of reading, a lot of reflecting, I relaxed, I rested, I let go of the fact that I was losing money, that I wasn't getting the things done I thought I had to do. Once I gave into it, I healed faster than I usually do from something like that. And I enjoyed it, instead of not enjoying it. It was very nice to lie there and I didn't try to be a heroine. When people asked me to do things, I said, "I can't get up. I have to stay here in bed. You'll have to go do it for yourself." The world didn't collapse around me and everyone managed to find food and fend for themselves. It was a good lesson for them too, that they could take care of themselves without me. And it was a lesson for me to let go and listen to my body, pay attention and relax, and it was okay for me not to do anything. So, everything can be a lesson.

Opening Up the Spirit

There's not a clear distinction for me between emotional, psychological, spiritual or physical aspects of my healing process. I think that one flows into the other. I guess I originally sought emotional healing over my mother's death, physical healing over my sinuses. But I think that the distinction blurred very quickly. And healing my physical and emotional wounding and hurts was about opening up the spirit, and the line became blurred. As I went from that darkness to the light, it all got better.

Growth in Degrees

Another analogy or metaphor that would represent going into the light would be "taking blinders off." This whole process has been like going home. It's been becoming more comfortable. At one time in my life, I used to think that I didn't belong here. I felt very different, very alone. I kept myself that way pretty much. Even as I was doing all of this work, there was always separateness—even in a classroom situation where I still felt very much apart from what I could see around me. Sometimes I felt envious of the connectedness that I could see other people were having but I was not feeling. I no longer feel that way.

Growth is in degrees, I guess. It's been a slow unfolding. But the fact is that I'm conscious of it now, I'm aware of it and can almost look outside as a witness to that person who sat there feeling alone and this person who feels part of everything. I can see the difference now from this other place and be joyful in this person who feels a part of everything else. I know that's me and its where I need to be.

Answers from Within

When things were difficult I needed understanding. You know, "Nobody understands me. I'm so different. Nobody understands this different person," and feeling separate. And then when I don't get that from someone else, it brings feelings of unworthiness. A lot of negative feelings come into my being when I'm looking for that from outside. I have to get to the point of knowing that it's all in me. Once I know that I get everything I need from myself, I'm free to interact with other people, because I'm not looking for something anymore, I'm sharing.

One thing that's real helpful is having someone who will listen, not give advice but listen. It allows for a sounding board, allows for me to speak these words. They come back and flow through me again and I hear them in a different way. To have that caring acceptance of someone listening to me, without judgment is necessary. I was very lucky in that I had taken a lot of courses. I knew how to use flower essences, I knew how to use homeopathy, I knew how to meditate and have that type of support too, for inner reflection and grounding and getting myself back on track. Having some sort of a spiritual practice, whatever that means, is helpful. The biggest thing is really coming to the realization that I have my own answers. And having the inner tools necessary to be able to explore that.

At the Right Time

It always seemed that the right people showed up at the right time. And they didn't necessarily have to be teachers. I did have a couple very wonderful teachers who showed up for me. Sometimes it's the clients. It's somebody I just met on the street, or met in a class, or met here. Other women here have been very helpful to each other in our sharing. I think being able to share with someone that is accepting of you is really crucial.

I had a student in Reiki class who's young; it's somewhat unusual to be as young as she was, to be so wise and on a spiritual path. She's a nurse and she came here and was just so happy to be in a group that accepted her, and didn't look at her like she had three heads. She had been very open all her life. As a young girl, she saw auras and intuitively knew things. But she was treated like a pariah because of it. You know, she was odd and it was discounted and she heard the, "No you don't" kind of thing. She was in a field where it wasn't respected to know these things or to share them. She was in awe of the fact that she could be in a space where people could accept her.

She has gone on to become a Reiki Master and she is doing wonderful work. She has started all sorts of circles for men and women to come together and share, and has been very supportive of them. She shares her life with me, and I share things I'm doing with her. I told her the other day, "I just want you to know how really proud I am of you that you've taken what you know and shared with people, that you let your light shine through like that." It was a real beautiful process to watch and to know that I was a part of. It's been a mutual sharing and she was very validating for me. Once, while I was talking about the Reiki story she said, "I'm sitting here watching little purple bubbles all around you." That was very validating for me. I think it's wonderful that she has the gift of being able to see things.

Trusting What's Right

My beliefs that were most challenged in this healing process were the belief systems of women, of "Who am I to be able to know or say or do this?" And my spiritual beliefs. There's some old organized religious beliefs within women. And I had pretty much rejected it, so for me it was building on what felt true. I really emphasize that everyone is entitled to his or her own beliefs, and that you have to do what feels right for you. You have to trust what's right for you, not what someone tells you. It's fine to listen to what someone tells you because you have the right then to reject it, or accept it, or maybe take a piece of it. But just because someone has letters after their name, or is supposedly a higher being than you, doesn't mean that their truth is better than your truth.

Knowing My Own Truth

Times when I had to find something to keep me going has been mostly about family. My brother's a doctor and when I first started doing this he told me I was invalidating his life. Even now, although he's changed a bit, he'll still say things when we're in a setting where there's other family members, like "Oh, I forgot you're a doctor now." It was very hurtful for me in the beginning and it threw me back into "Well, he has more training"—comparing our intellects. I have to be careful of what I say and do because he grabs anything I say that isn't factual or doesn't fit the medical model. He'll just go like a wolf into that and tear at it and there's a certain belittling involved. It goes into self-esteem issues. It's really a touchy subject for me. Now, I'm able to just laugh at it really. It's because I am very aware that it's his own self-esteem issues and his own unhappiness, in that he's not satisfied with his own life's choices.

When I'm up against those kind of challenges I have to go inside myself and say, "I know my own truth. I know what's right for me." And I have to let it go because if I don't, I could just go into a whole process over it. So it definitely has to be let go. I feel that little grab, and I have to just ffff! gone! I don't have to go there anymore. I don't need that and I don't need to do that to myself. There's no purpose in it. It's his problem, not mine and I'm able to see that. It's just that this is challenging his belief systems and it's his own insecurities. Whether he's aware of it or not, I think it's a jealousy that I'm finding happiness. He has even said that at times, that he wishes that he could have the belief that I have.

But mostly what I've learned to do is not say a lot around my family. That's hurtful in that I can't share, but it has served no purpose for me. All it does is bring up that my family wants to keep me in the comfortable mold that they're used to. Whenever I go around my family, and even old friends too, they want me to be the same person that they've pigeon-holed me as being. And when I'm different, it's scary for them. So they will try their best to put me where I was. If I feed into that, then it brings up old issues for me that I've gotten rid of, hopefully, and I'm not interested in going there anymore. So a certain part of me has to shut down around them. I do have to put up

some protection for myself, some internal protection, and I might have to do a little process with myself after I'm with these people. I have to have awareness the whole time and, if I feel it, I have to say, "Let it go. It's not about you. That's not who you are." And I have to let it go. So it's being very aware, going into the fact that it's putting them into fright. As an example, the more I became healed and the more I healed certain areas of my relationship with my husband, the whole family began to interact differently, and this difference was frightening for my daughter because it took her out of the known to the unknown. That's when it became her process and we had to clear that up.

Fear of Change

So that was a very interesting thing to see, how our interactions work, but it also shows how, if you go out of what is the accepted norm, even if that is not working for you, it's still what you know. And if you go outside of that, it causes fear, since change is fearful for people. This is one of the big obstacles that the person who is on a pattern of growth will run into, that as they change, they create fear, not in themselves, but in others around them. They don't understand why you're different, and they don't want you to be different because even if you're happier, and things are better, it still creates all this fear of, "It's different. Oh, my God. What are we changing into?"

I found that in my own home. After my first Reiki class, my husband and daughter were away for the weekend so they didn't see me during those days. They came home; my husband looked at me and said, "You're different." This is a fairly unconscious person who recognized I was different and I looked at him and said, "You're right. I am." A lot of anger and fear came up around that difference for a long time until he was able to grasp that this change was for the better. This was a positive change and this made life better, and he was able to accept it. But the initial reaction was the fear and anger of "What's this going to mean to my life?"

Shifting the Pattern

Peak experiences were mostly around meditations or some sort of altered consciousness states where I felt such oneness. These are wonderful experiences. Practical epiphanies, I would say, revolve around situations which would have thrown me into old unerving patterns, and finding that these interactions didn't trigger me. I was able to witness it and say, "Hmm. Isn't that interesting? I don't have to take that in." It was very good that I didn't get that reaction, that immediate clench in the gut, throwing me back to all my old stuff or reaction. And because I don't react, the whole thing shifts. What could have gone into days of "could have, should have, would have," just shifted in the blink of an eye to being nothing. It didn't happen because it needs two people, so if one of them's not playing the game, it shifts it.

Things like that, synchronicities, congruences, the little "ahas", the little epiphanies, and they're fun kind of things. But I would stress that as much as this is just a wonderful, wonderful process and wonderful unfoldment, it's not easy. It's not always going to go the way I would hope. It's a lot of slipping. But I feel so much more alive. I feel so much a part of life that I just cannot go back to that darkness--that darkness of being unaware. And no matter what has come up for me, I still would not choose to go back to that.

Taking Responsibility

Maybe there's more physical healing, then there's more emotional healing, then there's more spiritual healing. I suppose there is a progression there. They do intertwine and there's some physical stuff going on even now. But maybe the focus point might have been a little more

physical, then a little more emotional, then a little bit more spiritual. I guess you could segregate it out, slightly.

To get to a healed spiritual place, I had to clean up the emotional baggage. A lot of chronic physical ailments that I can trace to emotional processes, tend to disappear, at least chronically, but sometimes would be reactivated under certain circumstances. I guess this would be my weak point, but I'm able to do more conscious work around it, "Why did I flip into this? Why did this happen now? What's going on with me? What's going on around me? What would make this become a focal point again?" It's a different way of reacting to it. Instead of, "Oh, this is just my physical ailment," and looking for somebody outside myself to fix it, looking at it on a purely physical basis, "my body's failing me." Or that it's something that was done to me, or happened to me, or that feeling of being "the other". Now I respond differently, "Okay, this is going on right now. Why is it going on? What's going on in my life that would trigger this? What's going on for me emotionally or spiritually? What's this about? What growth do I need to do around this?" It's not having that feeling of being "the other," and it's about taking responsibility.

That's real important--responsibility. The society we're in right now upsets me in that no one wants to take responsibility and we're going there with our court system. It's "Well, my father beat me. I didn't have any money. He looked at me the wrong way. They put a roadblock up." It's always the other, it's always someone else's fault, and no one will take responsibility for his or her actions or reactions. Unfortunately, the media and the legal system is feeding into this right now, and allowing people to do this. It's something that upsets me in that it's leading us into a downward spiral instead of an upward growth. If people would take responsibility for themselves, we'd have a better world to live in. It's my hope that as people are trying to learn about themselves, that there will be enough of us to lift us out of that consciousness.

The more who can be on this path, who can speak with, help others, and support them on the path of finding out who they are and their purpose, the more we can all shine ourselves out to the people who are still feeling themselves in darkness, and alone, and as 'the other'. If more can help others find and feel their own inner light and be a part of the oneness that we all are, these misunderstandings don't have to occur.

Thrown Off Balance

I am fortunate to be able to travel to an area of this country, a space that is so completely supportive, where the physical space has unspoiled natural beauty, --the earth support is there--and interact with other spiritual fellow travelers, and have the guidance of our teacher facilitating our growth. Then I go back to the so-called reality of daily life and home, family and work environment. The environment here affects me greatly; this external environment of trees dying, the uprooting of the earth, and a lot of angry, negative energy that's around. Being so spiritually open, even though I do try to do some closing down and protecting of myself before I come back, it seems that the negativity that's around gets soaked up like a sponge and it's difficult to maintain my own balance, to know what's mine and what's others. I tend to pick up negative vibration into myself and it starts making me feel unbalanced.

Being off balance goes right into the physical. I fell the other day. I get to the point of not having the sensation of being grounded and I can be thrown off my base very easily. A lot of negative feelings come into play, thought processes go around, and it seems that going from that very open spot to coming back is a difficult transition. I'm finding that this is becoming a pattern for me. It's something that's an awareness this time after coming back from a training. So I'm aware, "Look at

this. This has been a pattern. These things have happened every time." And that awareness is going to allow me to work through it quicker. I don't know that it's going to completely abolish it but it at least will help me to not be such a sponge for it, to maybe be able to block it out before I take it in and act unconsciously or have some unconscious reaction to it.

Allowing Negativity

I am responding to that challenge by letting go. It's what I was sharing with you before, of allowing myself to stay in some negativity, and running that over and over again in my mind... of looking at it from "What purpose is that serving you?" It makes me feel like it's a 'me against them' kind of thing. It's putting me in a position of being unhappy. It's bringing up some old issues, but there's some sort of gain there, and I haven't quite put myself around the gain. It's feeding me in some way. The fact that I'm willing to allow myself to live in that negativity is giving me some kind of personal gain.

There's a certain ego involved of maybe making myself better than the other person. You know, "I'm loftier than you are" kind of thing that goes on in that negativity. But it's a choice that has to be made. I mean I can stay there or I can decide to dissolve things, which is probably not going to serve anyone at this point. I really need to take a long hard look at that negativity and what is that really going to serve? Is it going to serve that I'm right?

Glimpses of True Happiness

I think that's one of the biggest things. Is leaving a negative situation going to make me right in some way, or do I want to stay in and do the work, which has not always been pleasant? But then I see glimpses of some true happiness there too. So do I want to throw that away, the baby with the bath water kind of thing? I think I've processed over the last couple days that it's really worth pursuing. I'm never going to say that one way or the other is the right way, but right now I think it's worth staying in and hanging out and getting myself out of that loop of negative thoughts which isn't serving anyone, least of all me. I'm the one suffering! So why am I doing this to myself? I think that's where the learning is. Part of that realization came out of a class I just took, which was not any part of the class itself, it was just what I was able to take out of it.

Everything Serves a Purpose

Someone asked me today if there were any classes I was sorry I had taken. And I said no, because I got something out of everything. Even if it was negative I learned something about myself, something that would help others, some piece of material that I could use -- I got something out of it. Everything served a purpose.

Empathy at Work

In my work, I feel that I can truly be empathetic with a person's process. I tend to attract people with the same issues as mine, even if they are healed issues, I think I am able to help them by having had experience around those issues. Not the same exact experience, but enough that I know how to guide the person or facilitate that person around those issues. I can listen. I can be supportive through the work that I do, through the touch that I do. It helps open that person to their own truth in a safe way.

No Endpoint

I don't think I would be of any use to anyone without having had my own processes going on and my own life going on. So that's how I think it benefits, but I don't think there's an endpoint to it. I don't think that there's ever any point where I can say, "I've reached the pinnacle and now I'm just

going to be here and take care of the people down there." There's no end for where I'm going and I don't want it to end. It's too much fun. I'm saying that, and I'm not going to say I don't sit and cry and anguish over things too but it's fun too. It's exciting. Wonderful doors open up, wonderful people appear, wonderful friendships are made. I could not go back to where I was.

Another difficult thing that I will say about being aware and open is that when I do interact with people or situations or crowds of very heavy negative energy and unawareness, it can actually almost make me physically ill. I've had to leave at times, because I'm too much of a sponge. Some people aren't, but I am a real sponge for that kind of thing. No matter how much I think I'm protecting myself, I do pick up that negativity and it's difficult for me. It's hurtful. It really feels like physical pain for me. That's a downfall but at the same time I can go out and pick up some wonderful beauty and wonderful connections with people.

Going in, having an open heart, being able to open your heart and let my love and light shine out means that I have to be accepting and sometimes in that acceptance, hurtful things come in. But if I don't open up, then the love can't come in either. I need to take risks and need to be challenged, and need to stay open.

Two Sides of Everything

And I need to eat, or I can't have the joys. Like the light and the darkness, the yin/yang, there's two sides of everything. With the joy comes the pain, but we don't have to live in pain. I can't live in joy either. Unfortunately, I have to experience both. And I have to have both things flowing in and out, hopefully, with awareness. They can just pass, just these transitory passings of this energy that can interact with and be a benefit in the pain and the joy.

Healing the Disconnection

What I see in people that seems to me most needs healing, is the feeling of separateness, living in the past, old wounds. It's a feeling that they are their wounds, consciously presenting themselves as their wounds. It's become who they are, not being able to let go and forgive. Doing that rollover in the mind constantly of "If only this didn't happen, I could have done this, I could have been this." All you're doing is hurting yourself by repeating that dialogue. How can you ever reach for anything good if you're doing this? You get stuck in that pattern and that's what you attract and that's what you live in.

There's another thing I find, especially with women (I'm sure to a certain degree it would happen to men, because the men might still be in their role of provider), women in their 40's and 50's who have raised children and have gone from their identity of being the little girl, to the wife, and to the mother. Now their children are grown, and perhaps they don't really have a fit with the husband as far as what their role is. They've lost that role, that place that they knew was comfortable, that they didn't really have to think in, because they were mothering. All of a sudden they're left with nothing except their thoughts and so what do the thoughts do? They start spinning about all the old stuff, and they don't know who they are, they don't know what they want to be. They feel disconnected. They're happy, they're sad, they begin to have a lot of pain in their body and usually the pain in the body tends to be related to emotional issues.

Through the work that I do, they get to a place where they can just be without thinking. They're just there and they're able to get in touch with a soul, that spirit essence of themselves that they have missed all these years that they just had no opportunity to get in touch with. There's an awakening spark that happens of something that they hopefully want to keep working at. It's

finding who they really are and knowing that they don't have to look outside of themselves to find their happiness.

A Joyful Place to Be

If I was asked to say one most significant thing to the people in the world who I see are in need of healing, it would be, "You're not alone." We may want to see ourselves as being different. We think of ourselves as being these individual, different people as with, "That person can't understand me because I'm different." I've thought that way. But as you become strong in yourself and feel your own inner light and your own connectedness to everything else, you really find that you're not alone; you're not so unique. Other people have the same thoughts and qualities to them and instead of making you feel less for not being unique it makes you feel happy in that oneness, that connectedness. That's a joyful place to be instead of feeling uniquely alone.

That's something that I can't just tell someone, you have to experience it. And the only way to experience it is through that gentle unfolding of yourself. I'm saying gently unfolded, but it can be like getting hit by a speeding car at times. Sometimes it isn't so gentle. It can be a real shake-up, wake-up kind of thing, but it still is an unfolding. And even terrible, terrible heartbreaking losses can be looked at through the light, and you can see a gift, or you can choose to stay in darkness and be tormented. It's a choice that each individual has to make. You have free will. But which would you rather have, darkness and torment or a gift and the light?

A Spark in the Darkness

I have worked with people who had wonderful insights and were just, "Wow! This is great!" But they choose to completely ignore it. You know, "I don't care what I saw. I don't care what I got out of this. I will not forgive." I've had that. "I absolutely will not forgive them, those people that did this to me." You know, again looking at, "It's somebody else's fault."

It makes me feel sad to see that but I've also been able to get to a place recently that that doesn't bother me anymore. That probably fed into ego. You know, you want to be able to fix everybody. Obviously, it makes me feel good if someone else feels good. I won't say I'm 100% there, but I'm much more there than I was. I don't worry about that anymore. I really feel that on some level, there was a shift for them, there was a difference, there was a grain of sand. It might take another ten years, it might take two weeks, it might take the next day, but there will be a benefit, or it'll make sense somewhere down the road. There will be that little spark in the darkness that sets them off. And they may never think about me again, and that's okay... I can let that go now.

Beauty Unfolding

I think that you have to continue growing and when you stop growing, you die. We're never done, we're never a finished product. Think of yourself as a beautiful flower unfolding. That's interesting because I wanted to say clay but that's getting into somebody else molding you, putting you into a shape or container that's not you doing it, that's an outside process. A flower unfolding is your own process and you can find the beauty of your own soul.