HEALING FROM THE INSIDE OUT

How Emotions Can Cause “Dis”- ease and What You Can Do About It

An e-book with do-it-yourself tools for healing

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WHAT YOU’LL FIND HERE

In this 3 part e-book, I muse on the role of emotions in our health and offer you simple do-it-yourself tools for health and well-being. Hoping that what follows can be of use, and perhaps even inspire you to find your healer within. That’s where your tried, true and trusted healer lies.

Here’s an overview of each part:

**Part 1: Emotions and Your Health: The How’s and the Why’s**
I explain the links between thoughts, feelings and our physical health, and the science of it all. I also describe the ancient wisdom traditions that have always understood the connection between mind and body.

**Part 2: Healing from the Inside Out: What You Can Do About It**
I give a brief overview of resources and tools for emotional healing — practices and practitioners that can be of support.

**Part 3: Healing from the Inside Out: Do-It-Yourself Tools**
I describe several mindbody medicine techniques that you can do on your own. These are simple practices that can empower you to access that healer within.

Feel:
How Your Emotions Affect Your Health
All healing is really emotional healing. It’s literally, an “inside job.” That’s why I call it healing from the inside out.

Repressed emotions can cause disease. Releasing emotions can heal disease. Even cancer. Even diseases that Western medicine deems incurable.

On the power of thoughts and feelings: getting well isn’t just about fixing the physical body. We need to address how we’re thinking and what we’re feeling. Emotional healing is the way to healing all that ails us, health-wise and even otherwise.

~ All healing is emotional healing ~
These notions, firmly rooted in the ancient wisdom of global healing traditions worldwide, have now been well-documented by the investigative tools of Western science. And we physicians in modern medicine are finally beginning to catch on.

Links between thoughts, attitudes, emotions and illness, and links between thoughts, attitudes, emotions and healing have been described in both laboratory — that’s experiments, usually in test tubes or with animals — and clinical studies — that’s with real people.

The Science
A little background — and why, as a medical doctor, I’m offering these tools:

For eons, modern medicine has held that our genes determine our destiny and are the fundamental root cause of whatever happens to us health-wise. Yet for many more eons, prior to modern medicine’s entrance into our lives, ancient wisdom has held otherwise: that we can affect our health with our thoughts. In other words, our genes don’t control our destiny.

And now, modern science is proving our genetic beliefs to be incorrect and supporting the truths of this ancient wisdom.

Here’s what we’ve come to learn:

- Our thoughts and emotions affect our physical health — and in fact, all areas of our lives.
- Unresolved or repressed emotions affect our physical health — and in fact, all areas of our lives.
- We can change our physical health — and in fact, all areas of our lives — using practices and techniques that address thoughts and emotions.

~ Our thoughts & emotions affect our physical health ~
Modern science has now shown that our thoughts and emotions can have immediate, significant and lasting effects on the physical body.
Thoughts and feelings can:

- Affect gene expression — for example, genes that control aging.
- Affect neuroplasticity in the brain — literally, changes in the brain's grey and white matter — affecting memory, thinking and regulating emotions.
- Affect physiologic parameters in the blood and neurochemicals in the brain — all affecting healing, repair, rejuvenation.

Some of the science of it has to do with what we call hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis and the autonomic nervous system, and the effects of thoughts and emotions on these systems.

What this means exactly is that we’re affecting that part of our brain and body chemistry that has to do with our stress response — what we call the “flight or fight” system. This system served us well when we were cave men and women and still serves us well when we need to be vigilant about any threat.

~ The stress of modern life ~

But even we’re no longer cave men and woman, fighting off wild beasts and protecting our kin, now we’ve got the stressors of modern life. And many of us are in a constant state of fight or flight response, because of how we deal with
these modern day stressors. Our emotions are turned on and turned up. And this can keep us in that state of fight or flight.

A bit more of the science of it all: studies have shown effects on gene expression linked to inflammation, immune system response and aging.

What this means exactly: we don’t necessarily inherit diseases. Rather, we inherit tendencies. Just because our mother, grandmother and aunt had breast cancer, doesn’t mean we’re going to get breast cancer. Just because our father and grandfather had heart disease, doesn’t mean we’ll develop heart disease.

We inherit tendencies, and we can affect these tendencies with our thoughts, attitudes, feelings and intentions. This is what we have come to call, in scientific terminology, the field of “epigenetics.”

~ Epigenetics ~

Epigenetics reveals that we are not “victims” of our genes, but are in fact “masters” of our genes.

Bruce Lipton, Ph.D.

Knowing that we can affect our health so profoundly by affecting how genes are expressed can be truly empowering. We can move out of a fear-based disease focus, to an empowerment-based healing focus.
**Summing it all up:** clear links between thoughts, emotions and the physical body have been demonstrated: our thoughts and feelings affect our physical bodies. We can literally create “dis”-ease in our bodies. But that being said, because of these connections between our minds, our thoughts, our feelings and our physical bodies, we can just as easily create healing, wellness and well-being.

~ You can heal yourself ~

**Bottom line:** if you can change your thoughts, if you can change your emotions, you can change your health.

~ The ancient wisdom of it all ~

**Some of the Ancient Wisdom**
Every single non-Western healing tradition views the relationship between our thoughts, our feelings and our physical bodies as key to understanding how we can get sick and how we can get well.

In the traditions of Chinese medicine and Ayurveda, for example, emotions and bodily symptoms are linked. In Chinese medicine, grief and sadness are linked
to the lung; anger, frustration and irritability, to the liver; worry, fear and rumination, to the kidney. In Ayurveda, the traditional healing system of India, similar connections are seen.

Here’s a little more detail from these two healing systems:

- **There are seven emotions: joy, anger, melancholy, anxiety, grief, fright, and terror. When any one is in extreme, without appease, disease results. Anger is a primary cause of disease, with effects on the liver, heart, brain and stomach. Eventually, on the whole being. Cancers and tumors often arise when anger is held. ~ tenet of Traditional Chinese Medicine**

- **Ama, or toxicity, is the cause of all disease. Ama can be mental, emotional, physical, spiritual or “karmic.” Withheld emotions create ama. Anger imbalances can result in stomach issues, particularly ulcers, inflammation of any kind, and eventually, destruction of health. ~ tenet of Ayurveda**

Even the forefathers of Western medicine believed this — that our thoughts, attitudes and feelings impact our health. Hippocrates spoke of the links between mind, body and soul....
He also spoke of treating the person, not the disease. And that healing is unique and individualized for each and every one of us.

~ Healing is unique & individualized for each & every one of us ~
As a practitioner, I have witnessed these relationships in my work. As a fellow journeyer, I’ve experienced them personally. For those of you who like reading personal accounts, I’ve included several in the resources section at the end of this little e-book.

**A little digression on emotions and “dis”-ease**

How we think about our thoughts and feelings affects our thoughts and feelings, and our physical health, too.

Anger, fear and sadness, for example. Some call these “negative” feelings. However, I’ll beg to differ. We’re beating ourselves up if we do.

We experience all sorts of feelings and they’re all normal and natural aspects of our wonderful humanness. If we judge ourselves for having them, these very thoughts of judgment affect our physical body, literally creating stress and “dis”-ease in the body.

**Here’s my take home message:** be gentle with yourself, with how you think and what you’re feeling. Don’t judge. Don’t criticize. Whatever you’re thinking, whatever you’re feeling, consider yourself normal and perfect, just as you are.

We may want to shift thoughts and feelings if they’re not serving us, if they’re not supporting us. But, above all, don’t judge. Such thoughts in themselves will be harmful to your health.

I’ll get to the how-to’s of it all in Parts 2 and 3.

~ Be gentle with yourself ~

**Coming up in Part 2,** I describe resources and tools for healing — practices and practitioners that can be of support.
Coming up in Part 3, I offer you do-it-yourself tools for healing — take home techniques that you can do on your own to feel truly empowered, to help you to discover that most powerful healer there is, your healer within.

“The natural forces within us are the true healers of disease.”

- Hippocrates
Part 2:
HEALING FROM THE INSIDE OUT — What You Can Do About It

Emotional healing is unique and individualized for each and every one of us. We all experience feelings uniquely, and how our feelings impact our physical body is unique.

And because thoughts and feelings and the physical body are connected — in fact, there’s an inherent “oneness” to their connection — we can approach healing from any level. We can start with the physical — the bodily symptoms or issues — or we can start with the mental/emotional, with thoughts and feelings.

~ Tools for healing ~

There are many, many tools and techniques to enable emotional healing. I like to think of these tools and techniques as either “passive” and “active.”

Passive approaches are those that are done to you, such as acupuncture, massage and other forms of bodywork. Active ones are those that you can do yourself, completely on your own, such as breathing exercises, meditative practices and journaling.

Active techniques can be truly empowering, but passive ones are useful too. Sometimes it’s helpful to have an experience, especially in the beginning of our healing process, without having to put forth a lot of effort. And often, when we’re just beginning, this outside support is a little jump start for our system. A group, a class and/or practitioner can offer such support.
~ Emotional healing is an essential element of all mindbody traditions ~

About particular therapies
Mindbody therapies are approaches that acknowledge the connection between emotions and the physical body. Emotional healing is an inherent aspect of their processes.

For example, homeopathy, Ayurveda, Chinese medicine and other global healing traditions — they all consider this essential oneness of mind and body. I like to call them “whole person healing systems.” If you seek out a practitioner of one of these traditions, he/she works with this inherent mindbody connection — the links between thoughts, feelings and our physical health. The process of emotional healing is a fundamental element of the practice.

~ Whole person healing systems support emotional healing ~

Also, emotional healing is an essential element of many stand-alone practices. Here are a few examples: acupuncture, energy medicine and energy psychology techniques; manual therapies like chiropractic and osteopathy; other body-centered somatic therapies like massage, Rolfing, Core Energetics and Reichian Therapy; and subtle sensory therapies like aroma and essential oil therapies.

And a few more: the various techniques of the classical yoga traditions; mindfulness and meditation practices; past-life and regression therapies; breathwork therapy; creative self-expressive therapies like writing and journaling; and movement therapies.
Here’s my take home message as I draw Part 2 to a close: Healing is unique and individualized for each and every one of us. There are many, many resources to support and enable emotional healing. And there is no one right way or right system, tool or resource. Whatever feels right, whatever feels easy and comfortable for you, will be the right and best way for you.

Coming up next, in Part 3, Healing from the Inside Out: Do-It-Yourself Tools: I’ll offer you do-it-yourself tools for healing: take home techniques that you can do on your own to feel truly empowered, to help you to discover that most powerful healer there is, your healer within.
Part 3:

HEALING FROM THE INSIDE OUT —
Do-It-Yourself Tools

What follows are 3 simple, easy and effortless do-it-yourself tools for connecting within, to access, explore and release any feelings that we may be holding: Breathing, Journaling and Mindbody Awareness Exercises.

To start, find a quiet place where you can sit or lie down comfortably, where you won’t be interrupted.

The tools of mindfulness are the first place to start. These are really just about being here now, with whatever is — just being with whatever you are feeling, physically and emotionally — just being with sensations and feelings. Peace in the mind and peace in the body come effortlessly when we can just be with whatever is.

~ Mindfulness is just being present...
just being here now ~
Rather than trying to resist sensations and feelings and wanting to make them go away — which can in fact make them larger — the exercises help us to be present with all that we’re feeling, both physically and emotionally. This is how the feelings and sensations can shift and release — just by being present with them.

**Breathing** is the most powerful tool we have to affect immediate changes in both our physical body and our emotional state. This is the easiest and speediest way to be in the here and now, with what is.

~ Breathing is the most powerful tool we have....it has immediate effects on our physical body & emotional state ~

Start by making sure you can comfortably and completely expand your belly when you exhale. You may need to loosen your clothing around your waist to do so.
Begin with breath awareness and “belly breathing.” Allow your belly to gently rise on the inhale and gently return on the exhale.

Continue on for several minutes, following your breath. Just several minutes of breath awareness and belly breathing can turn on the relaxation response. This puts the nervous system into the state that’s needed for rest, repair, rejuvenation and healing.

Be with whatever comes up for you….Emotions may arise. You may feel sleepy. Whatever you feel, allow it, and know it’s normal and natural.

And know that you can use this breath awareness and belly breathing exercise anytime you’re feeling out of sorts. And even if you’re not. It’s easy, it’s quick, and so very accessible – you can do it anywhere. You’ll cultivate peace of mind and peace in the body, just by breathing, no matter what’s going on.

**Journaling**

Like breathwork, journaling can be a powerful way for slowing down and connecting within. While it involves more tools than simply breathing, this writing process can be equally potent.

It’s a really useful tool to check in with what we’re thinking and feeling. Sometimes there’s a disconnect – we may not always be aware of what we’re feeling. Journaling can help us to connect within.

~ Journaling is a powerful tool that can help us to get in touch with what we’re thinking & feeling ~
To start: begin with the “stream of consciousness” technique. Write down whatever you are feeling — literally, whatever comes to mind, moment to moment.

If at any point you don’t know what to write, or if you start off not knowing what to write, then write just that. This is being in the very moment, with what is.

Most importantly, allow your writing to flow from your thoughts and feelings, without interruption or analysis or judgment. Just write.

~ Just write. Whatever comes up. Without judgement ~

And if judgment arises, then write just that.

Keep in mind that the process is only for connecting to what you’re feeling in the present moment. The goal is to access feelings. It’s not for rereading later. What it looks like, whether legible or not, doesn’t matter.

It helps to write large. Ignore penmanship, spelling, grammar. The freer you can be, the more you’ll be able to connect with that’s going on internally.
And see what happens.

Often, feelings can shift, problems can find solutions, and ideas and inspiration can emerge.

**Suggestions for journaling in your daily life:** Experiment with starting your day and ending your day with a little writing. This can help ease you into your day and can help ease you into sleep at its end.

And consider carrying your preferred writing tools with you throughout the day. If and when any awkward or uncomfortable issues may come up for you, you’ll have a place to go to — to explore feelings, to express feelings, to connect within and to get clarity.

Next, we’ll work with a **Mindbody Awareness Exercise** to find our thoughts and feelings in the body.

~~ Mindbody awareness tools ~~

We hold thoughts and feeling in our physical bodies. Literally. And when they remain held, they can cause “dis”-ease. And quite literally, physical disease. By finding where we’re holding them, we can start to release them — that’s emotional healing. And when we heal emotionally, we free our physical bodies up for healing, too.
To begin, start with gentle belly breathing to check in with whatever you’re feeling. Breathe into your awareness of whatever you’re feeling.

Name the feelings. Label them as “anger” or “fear” or “sadness” or whatever else may have come up for you.

Then, explore where in the body you feel the feelings.

~ Find the feelings in the body ~

Check in with your physical body. Notice where you feel any tension, pain or a physical sensation. Or notice if your attention goes to a particular part of your body without any strong sensations.

Often, we feel anger in the neck and jaw, fear in the solar plexus area, and grief around the heart center. You may feel the feelings elsewhere. Wherever and whatever you feel is normal for you.

Once you’ve connected to where the feelings are in the body, simply breathe into that place…with the same slow, gentle, belly breath. Don’t try to make the feelings go away. Just be with whatever you’re feeling and sensing. And see what happens.

Often, feelings shift, feelings leave and new feelings may arise. Experiment with the process. If new feelings arise, repeat the exercise. You’ll likely feel a sense of peace, just by being with the feelings, finding them in the body, and experiencing the shift.
Some final suggestions: Be gentle and patient with yourself.

Emotional healing is a journey of exploration and growth — a journey that will always lead to a greater sense of wellbeing and to peace of mind. And these 3 tools can help to take you there, to a place of peace in the moment.

~ Your greatest healer lies within ~

And remember that the greatest healer lies within you, not within the office of any practitioner or scope of any technique or system.
**Additional tools, resources and writings for emotional healing**

Below are some wonderful resources to support emotional healing...a powerful energy medicine technique, links to guided videos and audios, and writings.

Emotional freedom technique (EFT), sometimes referred to as “Tapping,” is an energy medicine technique that combines the meridian system of Chinese medicine with contemporary positive psychology. It’s a technique that can facilitate healing of both physical and emotional pain, and can, in fact be used for any concerns you may be having — health, relationships, finances, life path or anything else. Nick Ortner’s work: [http://www.thetappingsolution.com/](http://www.thetappingsolution.com/) is a great place to start.

Also, Brad Yates, with a background in hypnosis and energy medicine and a focus on personal growth, has many, many videos on EFT for all sorts of issues, health-wise and otherwise. You can learn the technique and tap along with him: [https://www.tapwithbrad.com](https://www.tapwithbrad.com).

Judith Orloff, MD is a physician and psychiatrist whose work embraces mindbody medicine and the roles of intuition and spirituality in healing. Here’s her interview on healing emotional pain: [https://bit.ly/2mb4WUi](https://bit.ly/2mb4WUi).

I recently happened upon Elke Neher, who shares her wisdom and practical tools for healing on all levels. Here’s a guided meditation for healing emotional pain: [https://bit.ly/2N5IDL8](https://bit.ly/2N5IDL8).

And here are some inspirational writings — personal reflections and tools — from individuals who have “healed from the inside out.”

In Closing....
I hope you’ve found this little e-book interesting and helpful.

As always, I welcome your feedback.

Please feel free to contact me via my website: www.transformationalmedicine.org or email me directly: transformationalmedicine@gmail.com