

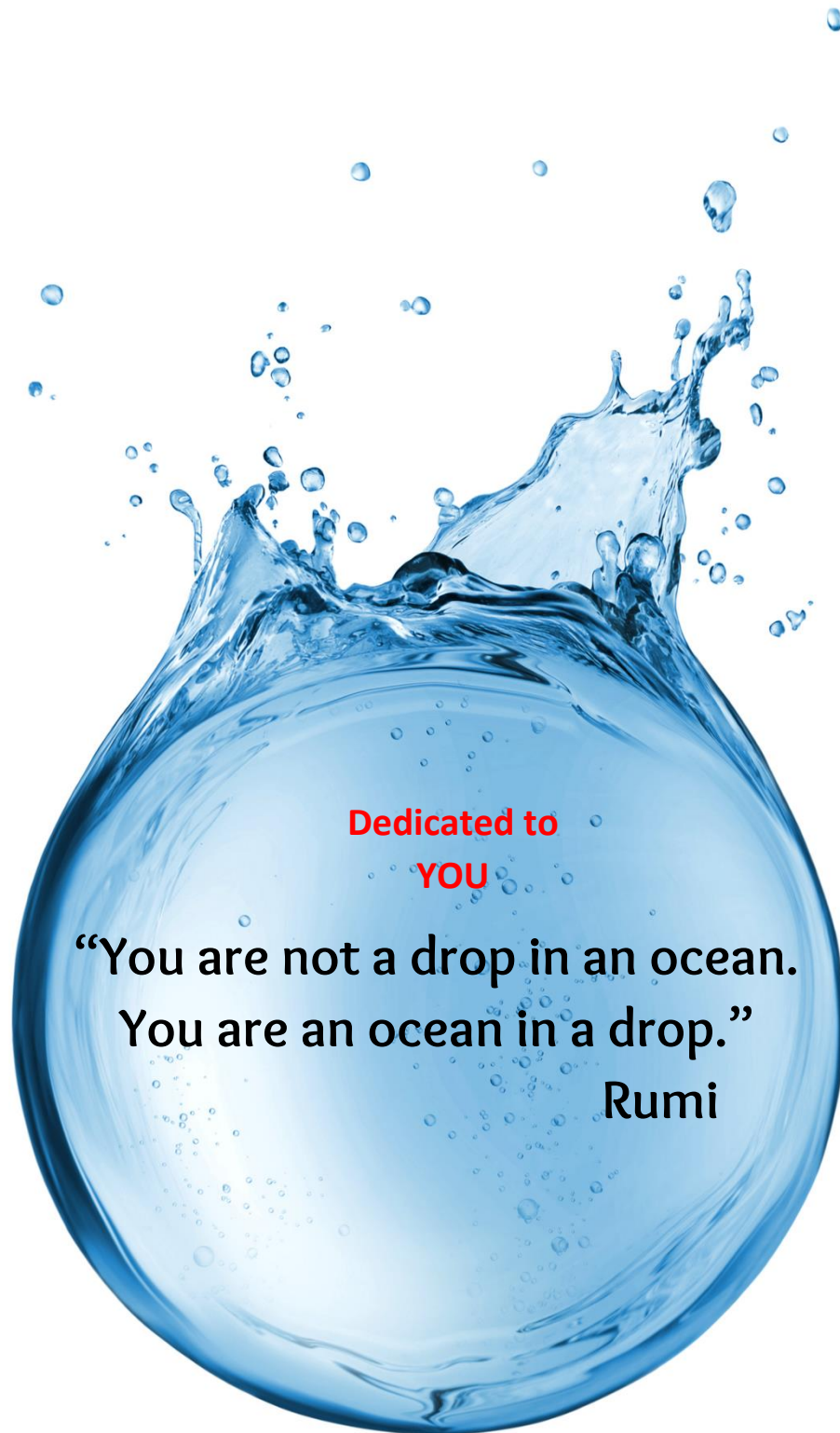
A close-up photograph of a pink lotus flower with water droplets on its petals, serving as the background for the book cover.

Grace Under Fire Awakening

Managing Life with Wisdom, Grace and Ease

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Second Edition

Niloo Soleimani



**Dedicated to
YOU**

**“You are not a drop in an ocean.
You are an ocean in a drop.”
Rumi**

**A special thanks to Bonnie Glass and Sandra Jonaidi
for editing the book**



About The Author

Spiritual coach and mentor, and a practitioner of A Course in Miracles, Buddhism, Sufism and Taoism and non-duality teachings

I have worked for over 30 years in prominent corporations and high-tech companies in Silicon Valley, leading projects, working on highly complex cross-functional teams, organizing events and managing diverse people across the globe. Additionally, I have volunteered for many years while working, most recently in the slums of India developing an e-Learning computer science curriculum and teaching computer science to impoverished children. All of these experiences have given me a diverse perspective on life and people. It is one of my greatest joys to see beyond the surfaces of people's situations, into their beautiful souls, and to love, honor and celebrate them.

There was a time I had everything I ever wanted. I was a successful professional, climbing the corporate ladder. I traveled all over the world. I studied new and ancient sacred texts as well as many spiritual and personal-growth teachings along the way.

Until life threw me a curve ball and I lost everything, my job, my home and guardianship of my son.

I knew it was time to stop. To breathe. To look within.

I took all my corporate experience and spiritual knowledge, and condensed them into specific practical everyday practices and methodology. It has taken me 4 years to revise and refine my work, all the while applying the principals to myself and my clients. These practices have helped me and many clients heal, and create a new life; a life of serenity and joy in every moment.

And now the gift that was given to me by Spiritual Teachers all around the world and Corporate Mentors, is offered to you in this book and my workshops. May this Gift of Love and Awakening reach you and extend beyond us to envelop the entire planet and all its beautiful inhabitants.



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Preface

COVID19 has turned the world upside down but has allowed us time for reflection. It is a very stressful time for many of us, as we struggle to put food on the table, manage work and children, find care for our parents who are high risk and cannot leave the house, etc. But we are finding at least some spare time on our hands. For many it has been a brutal halt to the daily rat race of our lives: wake up early, get the kids ready, drop them off at school, deal with stop and go traffic, work frantically to be productive, reverse the process, oh and don't forget to pick up the kids, prepare dinner, put them to bed, and breathe a sigh of relief, sit in front of a screen, maybe order a few gadgets on the Internet to feel better for living such a crazy life. Many of us work late into the night from home because of the intense competition and fear of losing our jobs. This way of life was so normalized that none of us really noticed it, until we either fell sick from stress or the pandemic hit us.

As we have momentarily stopped the running around, we realized what insane and unsustainable lives we've been living; we noticed we are overwhelmed by problems in one or more area of our lives, be it in our health, relationships, finances or careers, always running to keep our heads above the water mentally, emotionally or physically. Or we're gripped by compulsions or emotions we cannot control, based on events in our past.

If we look closer, we see that in both pre or post COVID19 times, we live a life run by circumstances, meaning the circumstance of the day determines our mood, our feelings, our thoughts. Whether it is COVID19 or something else, problems seem to permeate our lives and we're always dealing with the curve balls life throws at us, one after another. Exhausted and depleted we wonder when it's going to get better: "may be after vacation, may be if I change the job, leave the relationship, get that promotion, buy a bigger house, when the kids go to college." On and on, we strategize and plan to survive the life we have now, in hope of a better future.

What if I told you that you can could experience peace and happiness now, regardless of your current circumstances, your compulsions or your past?

What if you could handle everything life throws at you with ease, grace and wisdom, instead of stress?

What if you could create a life of joy, instead of constant turmoil and suffering?

In this book you will learn the principles and tools you need to live a life of peace and happiness, from an empowered place of love, and you will be able to manage your life with grace and ease. You will experience serenity and contentment in the midst of life's storms.

Sources

Here's a list of my main spiritual teachers and favorite sages/gurus. I've used quotes from these people:

- Deepak Chopra, MD, spiritual leader
- Hafiz, 12th Century Persian poet and mystic

- Khayyam, 11th Century Persian astronomer, scientist and poet
- Joe Dispenza, PhD, neuroscientist and lecturer
- Wayne Dyer, PhD, author, spiritual teacher
- Thich Nhat Hanh, Zen Master and global spiritual leader
- Rumi, 13th Century Persian poet and mystic
- Eckhart Tolle, author and spiritual teacher
- Lao Tzu, 500 BC Chinese sage and author of Tao Te Ching
- Marianne Williamson, author and spiritual teacher
- Neal Donald Walsch, author and spiritual teacher

All the quotes in the book are from these texts:

- A Course in Miracles (ACIM) – Helen Schucman, scribe
- The Bible
- Breaking the Habit of Being Yourself – Dr. Dispenza
- Conversations with God – Neal Donald Walsch
- Divané Shams – Rumi
- Letting Go – Dr. David Hawkins
- Power of Intention – Dr. Wayne Dyer
- Power of Now – Eckhart Tolle
- Return to Love – Marianne Williamson
- Tao Te Ching – Lao Tzu
- The Secret – Rhonda Byrne
- The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success – Dr. Deepak Chopra

Chapter 1: Grace Under Fire

*“It is only with the heart that one can see rightly;
what is essential is invisible to the eye.”*

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Journey From the Head to the Heart

I started my spiritual journey 40 years ago. At the age of 14, I came to the US for a vacation and ended up staying because of the Iranian revolution of 1979. My parents left me here and went back to Iran to sell everything. They were supposed to come back in a month, but were caught in the revolution's storm and weren't able to come back until a year later. I was very depressed and alone. I wanted to go back to Iran, be with my friends or at least say goodbye to them, but couldn't.

One day a family friend invited me to stay overnight. She saw that I was lost. That night when she came to say goodnight, she told me that “god” is inside all of us and if you pray, you will become stronger and empowered to deal with your situation.” And that's all she said. This was the first time I thought about God. My parents were quite secular and we never talked about religion or spirituality. I never saw her again and in fact forgot about her for a very long time but she was the angel that came to my life to awaken my soul.

I travelled extensively in search of truth. Who is this God? I went to the Vatican where I studied and read the Bible and practiced the teachings; to Iran where I practiced and studied Islam and the Quran. There, I was introduced to Sufism, Rumi and Hafiz, the greatest mystics and authority on Love. I continue to study them today. Then, I travelled to India and studied Hinduism, to Tibet where I studied and practiced Buddhism and China where I learned about Taoism, Lao Tzu and Tao Te Ching. I continue studying Tao Te Ching even today. Lastly, I went to Japan and studied Shintoism. I feverishly read sacred spiritual texts in search of the Truth. So many religions, so many gods, so many different practices. Which one is Truth? What is the right way?

There was a time I had everything I could ever want, a beautiful son, a successful career, a good life, and mountains of things. I had carefully and meticulously planned it. Professionally, I was doing really well but no matter, I had this feeling of emptiness and angst. I woke up in the morning, went to work, came home, went to bed and repeated it the next day, over and over again; there was one struggle or another. I had happy moments too, but I thought, “my god is this all there is to life, dealing with day-to-day minutia?” I changed plans, set different goals, I took motivational and self-improvement classes, I volunteered my time, I did everything I could to give some meaning to my life, but it wasn't enough. Nothing was enough. People asked me what is it you want, what more can you ask for?” I didn't know. All I knew was that there was a gaping void in me and I struggled. I ran like a hamster in a wheel until I collapsed from exhaustion and depression, until I was forced to stop!

What's the meaning of life? Who are you? What do you want? What is your purpose? What is your gift? I sat on a balcony facing the mountains in Iran, drank tea and smoked cigarettes for six months as I pondered these existential questions. I started putting all the knowledge I had

collected in my head for 40 years, down on paper to see if I could make sense of it all. I realized no one religion was for me; I liked some of the practices from one and didn't like the rest, I liked some of the beliefs but disliked the rest. And in the end, I chose the Path of Love. There is no such religion or a single teacher/prophet in this path. Many claim Love, but very few deliver it. On this Path of Love, there are no "shoulds" and "shouldn'ts" really, only what works and what doesn't. I spent many hours collecting the teachings that came with/from Love and distilled them into what made sense, what felt inspiring and loving. I then put them into practice! And wow, magic was created!

I transformed my life and wanted to share what I have constructed from 40 years of study and practice. Something inside me was telling me to reach out and share my findings with others so they didn't have to go to such a length to find their way. Others had shared their knowledge and experiences with me and I wanted to pay it forward. And thus, this book and workshop was conceived and created, as a form of thank you, an acknowledgement of and appreciation for all the teachers and sages who taught me.

My journey was a long journey, but yours need not be. You can reach inside and access your Divine, what you are, what you were at the beginning without mental analysis or intellectual understanding, without the Ego. No, you don't have to go far, just chart what "A Course in Miracles" (ACIM) says "the journey without distance, from your head to your heart," and combine it with the wisdom of the intellect.

"Your heart knows the way. Run in that direction!"

Rumi

This journey without distance, from the head to the heart, or of self-discovery can be hard. The principals and practices are not difficult, but what we find difficult is our resistance; many just don't want to go there.

"It takes courage to endure the sharp pains of self-discovery rather than choose to take the dull pain of unconsciousness that would last the rest of our lives."

Marianne Williamson

So, it takes guts to hold a mirror to yourself and see yourself with all the glorious mess *and* beauty. At times it will be very painful but this "good" pain (as athletes call exercise pain) is much better than the dull pain of unconsciousness that lasts a life time and eats your heart and soul from inside. Thank you for your commitment to looking deeply at yourself and your life to discover the things that prevent you from experiencing inner peace and joy.

Promise of the Book

My commitment is to empower you and give you the tools and practices you need to dissolve the barriers to love and happiness which then allows you to experience yourself as a Divine beautiful Being of Light.



These barriers overshadow who you really are. It is like a solar eclipse. The sun is still there, only you can't see it. You only see darkness.

There are many self-improvement books and courses that teach you how to fix-change-improve your life. But let me emphasize that this is not one of them! This book is **not** about changing-fixing-improving you or your life. You're not here to learn new techniques that will help you with your financial situation, or your career, or your relationships or your health, though all of these things will transform if you upgrade and update your old conversations and do the practices! They will help you see things from a different perspective, specifically the perspective of Love.

The underlying premise of this book is that:

You are a Divine Being of Light, you ARE LOVE. There's nothing you need or don't have. You already are whole and complete and there's nothing you have to evolve or change into.

Having said that, I will say that we all have barriers to experiencing ourselves as Divine.

"Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it."

Rumi

Throughout this book, your work is to remove the barriers that have been built over the years, to get rid of this excess, destructive fear and thought forms of the world that actually hide the light of the soul, hide your true being.

"The spiritual journey is the unlearning of fear and the acceptance of love."

Marianne Williamson



When they asked Michelangelo how is it that he can create such magnificent statues, he said that God had already created the statue and his job was *just* to get rid of the excess marble.

Please remember, I'm not the carver, you are! In a nut shell, my job is to help you carve the excess so you can see and rediscover who you really are. I cannot do the work for you. So, ***in order to get the most out of this book, please do the deep contemplation and pause to look at your life. It's what is going to transform your life.***

As you do the practices, you'll become healthier, more successful with less effort, more capable of real love. The transformations are permanent. Unlike other self-improvement books or courses, you're not going to go through a high now and crash later. You will discover your inner self. You'll understand what the great sages tried to convey to us. You'll understand it because

Truth is self-evident and within yourself. There's nothing to memorize or learn. So just relax and be present. The material will bring you the experience of freedom. You're going to feel the weights removed. You'll become lighter and happier. Everything you do will become more enjoyable.

It's okay to be skeptical! "Yeah, right! I've been down this path, you say!" It's more realistic than gushing enthusiasm which is a set up for a let-down later. Quiet contemplation will serve you better.

When you go to a store to buy a suit, do you look at all the suits with skepticism and avoid them? Or just try them on to see if they fit? If you are skeptical, all I am asking is to try what I offer, that which wise sages said long ago, the way you try a suit in the store. And if it doesn't fit, OK, take it off and put it aside. But I want you to try it and don't just pass by it with skepticism, which "A Course in Miracles" says is based on fear and shrinks your life rather than expanding it.

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate

Whether you're new on this journey or have been on this road for a long time, you will benefit the same. Being on the spiritual path longer just means we're able to apply the principals more universally and more deeply. Practices are not new but distilled from many sources into what is really effective.

I have included a section called "Pause. Investigate. Contemplate." at the end of each chapter or after concepts. This section includes specific exercises and practices. These are designed to bring the concepts into your own life and deepen your understanding.

Investigate means to observe or study by close examination and systematic inquiry to discover the facts of a situation as to establish the truth. So basically, see for yourself whether the wisdom applies to you. Look at your own life and see how it is impacted by the material.

Only concepts that are integrated, applied and used in your own life are useful. Otherwise, they become another tool for the Ego to brag about! So, please pause, investigate and contemplate the material.

For those of you who've perhaps heard this material before, read it as if it is the first time, with what Zen Buddhists call "Beginners Mind". Go deeper within yourself to dig out whatever remaining barriers are still holding you back and sabotaging you.

Who and What is God?

Let's start by talking about God, since it is at the pinnacle of almost all spiritual practices that I have come across.

I debated a lot what word to use for the Source of all life, the Consciousness that runs the Universe, the power that keeps the planets and stars in alignment, that creates these magnificent bodies or the perfection of a snowflake. This source has been called by many names: God, Creator, Lord, Father, Jahveh, Shakina, Tao, Allah, Yahweh to name a few. These words have been used and misused for eons, especially the word God which is usually an angry male, a God

that craves worship and servitude. That is not who we are talking about here. The god that I'm talking about is the Universal Consciousness that is pure love and light. It does not require worship. It does not ask you to go to war, to impose your view on others. It is simply Love.

So as to not add extra baggage to this Consciousness, I am going to use a new name: the **Source of All That Is – SATI or the Source** for short. You are more than welcome to use any word that resonates with you, as long as you do not carry along with those terms the misperceptions or superstitions that are so rampant in our world today and interwoven into the fabric of our being. Beware that we have a tendency to revert back to our beliefs and misconception under difficult circumstances.

Setting Intentions

I would like to start your journey by bringing your awareness to the reason you are here, your intention for reading this book. I would like you to inquire into why you picked up this book and what you want to get out of it?

Setting intention is the first of the many tools I will share with you. Everything that happens in the universe begins with intention. Every decision we make starts as an intention, even if sometimes we're not aware of it. Our destiny is ultimately shaped by our deepest intentions and desires.

Dr. Wayne Dyer said:

“The power of intention is the power to manifest, to create, to live a life of unlimited abundance, and to attract into your life the right people at the right moments.”

Many sages and spiritual teachers believe in the power of intention.

Dr. Deepak Chopra said:

“Intentions compressed into words enfold magical power.”

He continues,

“An intention is a directed impulse of consciousness that contains the seed of that which you want to create. Only when you release your intentions into the fertile depths of your consciousness can they grow and flourish.”

Our intention is a statement to the Universe and sets the infinite organizing power of the Universe in motion.

It aligns the body, mind and spirit into a single focused beam of energy, like a magic wand that Merlin, Harry Potter or the Fairy God Mother in Cinderella use; it's like having all the rowers in a boat paddle at the same tempo as one. The movement is focused and powerful.

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

Close your eyes and take a moment now to set your intention. Write this intention down in a

journal.

May your intentions manifest throughout this book with the power of SATI.



What is Grace Under Fire?

Grace under fire is a military expression. I dislike anything and everything that has to do with military and war, but this expression is truly powerful. It means a leader is able to issue and carry out coherent orders that are strategically correct while under bombardment. It means remaining calm and cool-headed when in stressful situations, even under extreme pressure and taking the right action and managing the situation with grace and power.

And that's what this book is about. Instead of a war zone, we're going to look at your life, which can feel like a war zone at times. Don't you feel like life is coming at you and you are overwhelmed managing multiple situations or crisis one after another?

As I said, most of us live a life run by circumstances, meaning the circumstance of the day determines our mood, our feelings, our thoughts; someone says something, something we don't like, and we become angry or pissed, defensive and/or ballistic! Something unpleasant happens and we're thrown off balance for the day or more.

I remember I was once in a dry cleaner waiting to pick up my clothes. There was a man in front of me who started yelling and screaming... about a *little* string on a button that had come undone during dry cleaning. The lady at the counter kept saying I will fix it for you right away sir! But he went on and on until the woman burst into tears. I thought to myself, boy this upset over such a small thing must have happened a long time ago!! It was probably dormant and burst forth when the opportunity arose.

Have you noticed that you also at times get triggered by such small occurrences? Especially if you're in a hurry or had a stressful day? Have you noticed how you take everything personally? Events unrelated to you become personal and set you off into defensiveness and judgement!

And it may not be just defensive judgmental behaviors. How about the times you absolutely knew you shouldn't eat that last piece of pie and did it anyway? Or any other compulsive behavior, because you couldn't stop yourself, like working so hard, you collapse from exhaustion? How about spending the money you don't have on things you don't need?

Don't feel badly! It happens to all of us. We're constantly run over by our emotions, which are a reaction to what life is throwing at us. Or we're gripped by compulsions we cannot control. These behaviors are probably tied to something that happened in our past, where we are wounded. We carry our wounds with us, mostly because we're not aware of them or even if we are, we don't actively try to heal them. On the other side of the scale, some of us spend years carrying the same wound or childhood trauma, trying to analyze or understand and come to terms with it.

Some of us *notice* these places where we are wounded or the things we do to sabotage ourselves

and we try to change ourselves, fix ourselves and work hard at it, but when the rubber meets the road, nothing's really changed, and we fall into the same self-sabotaging compulsive patterns again and again. How many times have you tried to lose weight and gained all of it and more back? And we suffer because of it.

Why do we keep repeating these behaviors? This is because we see ourselves as physical beings. Because the mind interprets everything it doesn't like as an attack on your physical body. Everything is a threat and you live in fear. But you are not this physical body. This body is only a suit you are wearing for the time you are on this mortal plain. You have probably heard the adage that "we are a Divine being going through a human journey?" But we often forget it and think and behave as if we are human beings trying to have moments of Divine experience!

That's why in our everyday life, we, even those of us who have been on a spiritual path for a long time, get triggered and don't experience ourselves as Divine. We have forgotten who we are because of the barriers that have been built over the years, because of our childhood wounds.

You are really a Divine Being. You are powerful, and your essence is Love. But you've forgotten this for the most part.

Over the course of the book, I will provide you the principles and practices that will help you remove the barriers to experiencing your Divine Self, upgrade the conversations that keep you stuck in unhealthy loops, and operate with *grace and ease* when you are under fire. With practice and patience, you will begin to dismantle these barriers and conversations; once you begin to remove or upgrade them, you will begin to have access to your Divine Self and you will experience inner peace and joy regardless of your circumstances. The more barriers you remove, the more you let go of old beliefs and conversations, the more you will be free to co-create your life with the Source of All that Is. Wouldn't that be amazing?

Barriers to Experiencing Ourselves as Divine

There are 4 barriers to experiencing ourselves as Divine; in other words, they are barriers to the expression and experience of Love:

1. Living in the past or future (Chapter 2)
2. Your Ego Mind (Chapter 3)
3. Your identity and belief system (Chapter 4)
4. Your stories (Chapter 5)

I will cover them each separately in the next 4 chapters.

Are you ready for a wild ride? Let's go!

Chapter 2: Living in the Past or Future

“To live in the present moment is a miracle. The miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green earth in the present moment, to appreciate the peace and beauty that are available now.”

Thich Nhat Hanh

You are a Divine Being of Light, you ARE LOVE. There’s nothing you need that you don’t already have. You already are whole and complete and there’s nothing you have to evolve or change into.

We all have barriers to experiencing ourselves as Divine. The first one and perhaps the most important one is:

1. Living in the Past or in the Future

Most of us live either in the past or future. We are either:

- A. upset about something that happened in the past, like something unpleasant happened to you during the day, you had an argument with your spouse or boss that was upsetting and you go over it again and again. Some of us go over some painful event from our childhood, for years. We can’t seem to let it go.

Or

- B. worried about the future. How will I pay the bills? Will my kid turn out okay? How will I pay for college? What’s my boss going to think of the report I’m working on; if only I could have this, be this or achieve that, then my life would turn out better, I will get some joy that I am supposed to get in the future. You know what I’m talking about, right? We have all had such fears and anxieties to different degrees.

When you live in the past or the future, you miss out on the joy and peace in the *Now*. When you’re caught in the thoughts of the past or future, rather than being in the moment, you don’t get to be fully present and can’t enjoy what you are doing. You are either experiencing the pain and regret of the past or worry and anxiety about the future. This type of thinking will take you away from being in the moment and does not allow you to get as much as you can out of the present experience.

Eckhart Tolle, writer and spiritual guide explains this well:

“All negativity is caused by an accumulation of psychological time and denial of the present. Unease, anxiety, tension, stress, worry - all forms of fear - are caused by too much future, and not enough presence. Guilt, regret, resentment, grievance, sadness, bitterness, and all forms of non-forgiveness are caused by too much past, and not enough presence. The past gives you an identity, and the future holds the promise of salvation, of fulfillment in whatever form. Both are illusions.”

Being fully present means having your focus, your attention, your thoughts and feelings all fixed

on the task at hand. Being Present is what you experience when you are completely at peace with this very moment. Many spiritual masters have said that being present, or living in the present moment, is the key to ending suffering because the past fills us with regret and the future fills us with anxiety.

Khayyam, the 11th Century Persian astronomer and poet calls them: Dead yesterdays and unborn tomorrows. He said:

“Be happy for this moment. This moment is your life. Don't concern yourself with the future or the past but savor this moment. That's the secret of inner peace.”

Buddha said:

“Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future. Concentrate the mind on the present moment”

We all think if I do this or that, or when I get this or that I will be happy; if I had done this or that, things would have turned out differently. But this type of thinking is the cause of all of our suffering.

I could site so many quotes from spiritual masters and texts, but suffice to say,

The secret to happiness is making peace with the present moment.

I'll say it again: the secret to happiness is making peace with the present moment.

Again, Eckhart Tolle explains, in the book, Power of Now:

“As soon as you honor the present moment, all unhappiness and struggle dissolve, and life begins to flow with joy and ease. When you act out the present-moment awareness, whatever you do becomes imbued with a sense of quality, care, and love - even the most simplest action.”

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

Take a few minutes and write down some areas about the past or the future that upsets you. These events in the past or about the future create pain, suffering and anxiety for you. This is the cost of not being present. Write down what it has cost you to continually be in the past or future – the cost could be to your relationships, health, vitality, self-expression. An example could be missing the opportunity to spend time with a parent or loved one before they die, or a loving relationship with your children because you are not present with them in the moment.

Select one that has the strongest hold on you and keep it in mind as you continue reading. See where you can apply the knowledge and practices.



Practice of being Present

We all lead stressful lives, working hard, running around managing demands of a modern life. So how can we bring calm and peace to a stressful day or life? The answer is simple, though not always so easy to practice: **learn to be present.**

The practice of being present is called mindfulness. No matter how out-of-control your day is, no matter how stressful your job or life becomes, the act of becoming present can be an oasis. With practice, you will notice your mind quieting down, and you will begin to experience a peace and contentment that you have never felt before.

So how can you become more present?

- The first step to achieving presence on a more consistent basis is simply becoming aware of the times when you are not present—when your mind is wandering to something that already happened or thinking about something that might happen. It can be frustrating at first because if you notice that it happens a lot. But being present is a process—a journey. Keep working toward consistency and gradual improvement.
- Focus on your breathing, the most natural act! Take a deep breath and follow the path of your breath through your nostrils into your lungs. Hold. And release, following the path of exhale. Do this 3 times or until you are calm and peaceful.
- Have Mindfulness Bells. I have several chimes around the house in positions where I'm bound to run into them. And their sound brings me out of my head and into the present moment. You could have a chime regularly sound off on your phone or computer. There are apps that do this, to remind you to pause and be mindful of what's going on right now. Set your phone timer for 30 seconds.
- Include a pause before each activity and think for a second about what your intention for that activity might be. What are you hoping to accomplish?

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

Try at least one of these practices. See which one works for you, or come up with your own practices. Try to incorporate it into your daily life.

Chapter 3: Is Your Mind a Friend or Foe?

“All problems are illusions of the mind.”

Eckhart Tolle

The second barrier to experiencing love is your Mind. But our mind is absolutely necessary in everyday life. So, is it a friend or foe?

When you become present and bring mindfulness into your life, you will inevitably notice the voice in your head. Do you hear it? It is that voice which is asking “What Voice? Uhm, what? What is she talking about?!” It often says things that we would never say to a friend: What is wrong with you? You’re so stupid! Or I’m such an idiot or I’ll never get this right. Mine was: You disgust me!” Have you noticed how the voice in your head is not a cheerleader for your life?

This voice has challenged your every dream: “who the hell do you think you are?” It tells you all the ways in which your dream is not possible, how you are not good enough to accomplish anything. It sets you up with goals that are unrealistic and unachievable; it basically sets you up for failure and then criticizes you for failing. And it continues to gather evidence of why you’re such a failure and throws it back at you every chance it gets.

And the judgements don’t stop with us. It judges, criticizes and evaluates EVERYTHING. “She’s such a bitch! God, I hate this job! Why can’t he take out the trash? Oh, this place is a dump! How many times do I have to tell him to put his shoes away?”

Have you noticed the chatter? It has multiple personalities and it is nonstop! From one thought to another, it jumps, it begs, it yells, it laughs, it chides, it judges on and on and on. If we were to repeat everything that is said in our head out loud, they’d think we’re crazy and commit us as Schizophrenic.

So, who is talking? Who is yakking away in your head? Can you stop it from talking? Let’s try for 1 minute? Stop reading and try to stop it from talking..... What happened? You couldn’t, right?

Most of us think that voice is us, but is it really? If it is you, then who is noticing the talking? Well, the voice in your head is NOT you, thank god! The voice in your head is your Ego and you are actually the awareness, the consciousness behind that voice.

The next logical question is: is Ego your mind or in your mind? Is it a friend or foe? There are two types of minds: First, the Ego or Thinking Mind which filters and reacts to everything through all our beliefs, self-concepts and identifications. Second, the Working Mind which is a computer, a powerful tool that takes actions and solves problems. It is what is needed to live life.

And then there is the real you, the Personal Consciousness (Atman) that we’ll discuss in the final chapter. In this chapter, we will focus on the Thinking Mind and the Working Mind.

First, let’s get to know the Ego or Thinking Mind, which is the second barrier to Love. The voice in your head is your Ego Mind; Ego is the false thought that we are separate. It lives and thrives on our separation. The Ego Mind is very loud and very often takes the form of monkey chatter in our

head, it is a curious beast.

Lao Tzu, the Chinese sage who wrote Tao Te Ching 3000 years ago, says this about ego:

***“Ego is a monkey catapulting through the jungle:
Totally fascinated by the realm of the senses,
It swings from one desire to the next,
One conflict to the next,
One self-centered idea to the next.
If you threaten it, it actually fears for its life.”***

The goal of the Ego Mind is self-preservation; it's concerned with security, comfort, and social status. It wants certainty, and repetition. Therefore, it wants to control everything. When you were young the world was a promising place because of the promise of fulfilling all of its desires. As you go through life and experience a bad event or trauma, the Ego commits them to memory and reminds you of those events again and again, so you would *never* forget them!

As you become older, and you acquired wealth, material comforts and status, the world became a threatening place because the world might take it all away. Worry and anxiety about the future becomes constant. Thus, we begin to repeat the memories of the past and anxieties about the future. We're not able to live in the present moment. It constantly judges and evaluates every moment to decide whether it is good or bad. The Ego strongly alters your perception of reality because it only sees the world through the lens of this duality, good or bad, this vs. that.

Ego promotes the belief that your life is not enough; if you get this or that you'll be enough; if you get that job, you'll be enough; that relationship, that anything; then it will be enough, then you will be happy and feel content.

You get that thing and then you're happy for a short time. But this constant nagging sense that nothing is ever good enough continues! “If only if I had something else,” your Ego will say, “then I'd be happy.” You get that something else and you still feel incomplete and unhappy.

The Ego has you believing that the source of your happiness is “out there”, outside of you. But no matter how much of this or that you try to get, be or achieve, it will never be enough, because the source of your happiness is not outside of you, ***it is inside of you.***

But because the chatter is constant, you begin to identify yourself as the Ego. Then, because you think you are your Ego, the needs of the Ego become yours and the images, beliefs and judgements of the Ego become you.

And then, as if you are wearing rose colored glasses everything is pink! You've been wearing these glasses for so long, you think that's the color of the world, but are things really pink?



Let me give you an example. My father and I have had a shaky relationship for most of my 57 years of life. He's always been extremely critical of me because I am different (my story). He makes a snidey remark about me and I either leave the house or start responding back with uncontrollable anger which pushes him to start putting me down even more.

The Ego doesn't have the power to create, to invent new ways of being. It keeps repeating the only actions it knows to take, based on past experience, even if the present situation requires a different action.

So, this is how the Ego responded in the past. As chance would have it (not chance really, mystery of the Universe), I ended up living with my parents when COVID19 hit the world. And not soon after I arrived, bam! He started with snide remarks about me, criticizing me for unimportant things (Thinking Mind). Gosh, there was such chatter in my mind criticizing my dad, about how I should react, all the various strategies (all from the past) to "put him in his place!" I just watched it all, observed it (Working Mind).

After choosing the path of love, through the 7 practices, I didn't need to repeat the past. I thanked the Ego for his advice and basically told it to shut up! I meditated and prayed. I came up with/was guided toward a whole new way of communicating. I wrote a letter expressing my love and gratitude for all he had done for me; I apologized for all the times I had gotten angry with him and insulted him; I let him know about the pain I feel; I lovingly pointed out what was possible for us and what an opportunity it is to be able to spend time with him (he's 90 years old). I asked his help in transforming our relationship. He didn't talk to me for a couple of days but when he did everything had shifted. He never mentioned the letter but he's been so loving towards me, I have to pinch myself to make sure it is really real! Magic? Yes! Miracle? Yes! The Spirit is capable of these things!

The Ego Mind is only capable of perceiving the future only based on past, whereas our spirit, our Divine Self is connected to the Source of All Life and as such, is beyond time and space.

Let me say this again: The Ego Mind is only capable of perceiving the future only based on past, whereas our spirit, our Divine Self is connected to the Source of All Life and as such is beyond time and space. The Ego constantly competes with the Spirit for control. As time passes, we don't hear the voice of our Spirit any more. We only hear the Ego and its constant chatter. Actually, we become the voice in our head!

When you start noticing and becoming aware of the Ego's voice, it starts to annoy the hell out of you! It speaks first and it speaks the loudest. It is only concerned with me, me, me. The constant barrage of opinions, judgements, sarcasm, ridicule, criticism goes on and on in your head.

Annoying right? And you ask, "how the hell do I stop this chatter in my head? How do I stop the Ego from yakking away? Can we stop or get rid of the Ego?"

You can't fight the Ego, just as you can't fight darkness. You must bring the light of your awareness to it. So, no! We can't get rid of the Ego. We can transcend the ego which is not the same as "getting rid of ego" or "fighting ego!" Rather, is it about learning to not be controlled or driven by it.

Lao Tzu's poem about Ego continues:

Let this monkey go.

Let the senses go.

Let desires go.

Let conflicts go.

Let ideas go. (Meaning let the thoughts and strategies go)

Let the fiction of life and death go.

Just remain in the center, watching.

And then forget that you are there."

I will give you seven principles and practices in the next chapters that will help you do this. And as you practice them more and more, you will notice the chatter in your head quiets down.

Now, let me say that Ego Thinking is not bad or evil. It's the way which SATI (Source of All That Is) gets to experience itself and Life. Neal Donald Walsh, in Conversations with God, wrote:

"God cannot experience all that God is within the Spiritual Realm alone, because in that realm there is nothing that God is not."

Therefore, I and many believe Ego was created as a false sense of separation to obscure the supreme, underlying unity of SATI, so SATI can experience Life through us, experiences itself through our experience. Therefore, our lives are an opportunity for SATI to play, explore and creatively express life, all the different possibilities and permutations of it. Roger Castillo, the Non-Duality teacher, calls this "Being Lived".

In addition, according to the twentieth century's influential English psychoanalyst and child psychiatrist, Donald Winnicott:

"The false self is an artificial persona that people create very early in life to protect themselves from re-experiencing developmental trauma, shock, and stress in close relationships."

So, technically, the ego is a survival mechanism to protect ourselves, so it is necessary. The problem is that:

We have inadvertently identified with Ego and it has taken over.

As Einstein aptly said:

The intuitive mind (Working Mind) is a sacred gift and the rational mind (Ego Mind) is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift."

The Ego Mind is now controlling all of our actions and experiences. The Ego continually distorts reality. It is relentless in its pursuit of attention and power; it undermines the power of the Spirit and the greater possibilities for awakening and experiencing the Divine You.

In summary, your Ego is not you. It's a structure built of a lifetime of experiences, disappointments and pain (and some good stuff too). Your True Self is the consciousness that lies beneath the Ego. It's built out of love and purpose. But your Ego doesn't want you to know that. It loves being in control and maintaining power. It does this by tricking and convincing you that it **is** you.

Now, let's talk about the Working Mind. According to Roger Castillo, non-duality teacher:

“Peace of mind is the absence or dissolution of the thinking mind with the aid of the working mind. The working mind understands the beauty of inner silence and is more than happy to STOP when it's not needed.”

The Working Mind provides reasoning and wisdom to make the decisions necessary to living a full life.

As Roger Castillo explains in his video:

“Equipped with this information, the working mind is able to observe the many forms the thinking mind takes in the belief that it needs to get somewhere and achieve something.”¹

When the Working Mind sees, understand and recognizes that the Thinking Mind has become a problem, it will automatically stop the Thinking Mind.

By connecting to SATI through the practices you've created on a regular basis, and with the help of the Working Mind, you can dismantle the power of Ego over you and tame the beast! I promise!

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

1. Take a moment to write down a few sentences you hear over and over in your head, like “you stupid fool,” or “life is hard,” or “nothing is ever easy.”
2. Write down five to ten sentences as a simple biography, an “identity” of sorts. How do you introduce yourself? For example, “I am a mother of a wonderful son. I am a marketing manager. I live in northern California. My most favorite hobby is watercolor, though I'm not very good at it! I also write, though I've never published anything. I am a strong and independent woman that is why I haven't married. Relationships are all about sacrifice and I feel being in a committed relationship would limit me and would force me to lose these qualities. So, I am alone.”

This will help you understand the next chapter much better.

¹ Roger Castillo, A Spontaneous Stop, https://www.rogercastillo.org/watch/roger-castillo-satsang-a-spontaneous-stop?a05b3665_page=2&ca4152f5_page=2

Chapter 4: Your identity + Your Belief System

“Tear off your mask; your face is glorious.”

Rumi

The third barrier to love is your identity plus your belief system (what I affectionately call BS) which creates the life you live. Our thoughts and words directly influence how we feel and behave.

As Hafiz, the 12th century Persian poet and Sufi mystic says:

“Your thoughts and words become the house you live in.”

Take a look at the labels you, via Ego, have placed on yourself. Maybe you’ve declared and judged yourself not smart enough to succeed. Or perhaps you’ve decided you’re a failure at something or you’re a bad mother, not very creative or not good enough for something, etc. What judgements about yourself keep repeating in your mind?

It is usually a heavy judgement; do you hear that gavel of an angry mean judge coming down?

In the last section, I asked you to write 5-10 sentences as a simple biography, an “identity” of sorts. Please pull that out; the reason behind this exercise is to give you an opportunity to evaluate the way in which you identify yourself at this moment. When we think of the “identity” of a person, we think of them of as an individual, separate from others, with distinct habits and traits.

Your identity has multiple layers. Some more superficial than others. The external world defines you by your name, gender, nationality, race, religion, height, weight, role, job, qualifications, etc. If you look a little deeper you may describe yourself in terms of your moods and emotions, for example: I *AM* sad! Not that you *have* that emotion but that you *are* that emotion. Maybe you have a belief about life and death and what happens when our physical body dies, some religious belief about heaven and hell. Maybe based on defined classifications, you say you are middle class and educated. It’s common practice to think our identities are who we are. But do you realize that your identity, or that which you perceive yourself to be, shapes your life experiences?

These beliefs are formed through consistent and repetitive thoughts enforced by Ego: thoughts about yourself and your life; thoughts passed down to you repeatedly by your parents, society, cultural and religious norms, many of which remain completely unconscious until examined.

The beliefs that hold the most power over you (for good or bad) are those of which you aren't even aware of. They are so embedded so deeply in your psyche, that you are not even conscious of them. They are the hardest beliefs to discover/uncover. Those that have such deep roots that you don't even view them as beliefs—they are facts of reality. But they are not real. They are all constructs of Ego.

Our false-identity combined with our belief system, our BS dictates what you can and cannot do, who you can and cannot be. They limit your true potential and power; they block our ability to experience our Divine Self and they take away the joy of life and the exploration, creation, fun and growth that is possible when you connect with your Divine Self.

These superficial descriptions and beliefs are **NOT** who you truly are. These things are transient – they change, they evolve, they come and go – they are not constant.

Your Divine Self is the enduring part of you that exists outside of the physical reality of this human experience.

Your Divine Self is who you are deep down without labels, roles or identities. You are the constant in all things changing.

Our body, including heart and mind, are not our true selves either, but what houses the Spirit -- as I said before it is how SATI experiences itself and life through us. The best I can describe it is this: the mind, heart and body are the personal elements and the Spirit is the transpersonal element connected to the Source of All Life; the field of awareness or the quantum field unites them into a Human Being. We will talk about the quantum field a little later.

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

1. Take some time and become aware of your internal thoughts and examine them closely. What is the voice in your head saying to you constantly? What story do you tell over and over about your life? What were you able to see about yourself?
2. Take a look and see what characters/roles you are playing in each of your relationships? What mask are you hiding behind? The martyr? The Wounded? The Macho Man? The Rebel? The Joker? The fragile Woman? The Depressed? The Frightened?
3. So, who are you REALLY, underneath these roles you play?

Chapter 5: Your Stories

“The story of your life is not your life; it’s your story.”

John Barth

The fourth barrier to experiencing love is our stories. But before I get into that, I’d like to tell you about energy, matter and vibrations and how they impact our lives.

Energy, Matter and Vibrations

As there are laws governing the material world, such as gravity, there are laws that govern the field of energy (the quantum field) we live in. I won’t go into detail of quantum theory and quantum mechanics. There is a lot of information on the Internet and many books written, if you are interested in learning more. I will only include a brief summary of how the quantum model impacts us.

Nichola Tesla, one of greatest geniuses of the 20th century said:

“If you want to find the secrets of the universe, think in terms of energy, frequency and vibration.”

Albert Einstein’s said:

“Everything in life is vibration.”

His famous $E=MC^2$ revealed that energy and matter are basically the same. All matter is organized energy and energy is the very fabric of all things material.

The quantum field is an invisible field of energy and information that exists beyond time and space. Nothing physical or material exists there. It is beyond anything we can perceive with our senses. With the advent of quantum physics, scientists realized that subatomic particles obey a different set of rules. Max Planck, the father of Quantum Theory, describes the subatomic particles as “a field that connects everything.” This energy field is called the quantum field.

In this field, multiple possibilities occupy the same space, and exist simultaneously. The act of observing the quantum possibilities is what forces the particles to appear and manifest. One of the most famous experiments in physics is the double slit experiment. It demonstrates, with unparalleled strangeness, that little particles are waves, until the very act of observing turns them into matter. It’s as though the electrons “know” whether you’re watching them or not. The very act of observing this setup changes the outcome of the experiment.

Werner Heisenberg, the German theoretical mathematician (known for the Uncertainty Principle,) among others, interpreted the mathematics to mean that **reality doesn’t exist until observed**. “Whhaaat?” You say! The proverbial rabbit hole gets even deeper! The term Holographic Universe has been used by many to denote our reality. You can read up on it or watch videos on YouTube to better understand the implications of this.

But for now, and in summary, the advancement in quantum physics has shown that particles don’t behave in the same way as the laws of the physical universe and that there are laws in the

universe that define the interaction of energy and matter in the quantum field. Any subatomic particle, like any particle in the three-dimensional space, obeys the laws of quantum mechanics.

Law of Attraction

One of these quantum laws is called the Law of Attraction (LOA). It simply states that the energy you put into the Universe is what you get back; what goes around comes around. It may be a cliché but it is true!

In other words, LOA states that we attract into our lives whatever we are focusing on and by who we are being, regardless of age, nationality and gender.

Law of Attraction translates your thoughts and feelings and materializes them into this 3-dimensional world we call reality. In basic terms, *all thoughts and associated feelings create form on some level*. We broadcast a distinct energy pattern or signature and we communicate with the quantum field through our thoughts and feelings. Our fluctuating states of being change that signature because we are more than a physical body. We are a consciousness using a body.

Law of Attraction states that when:

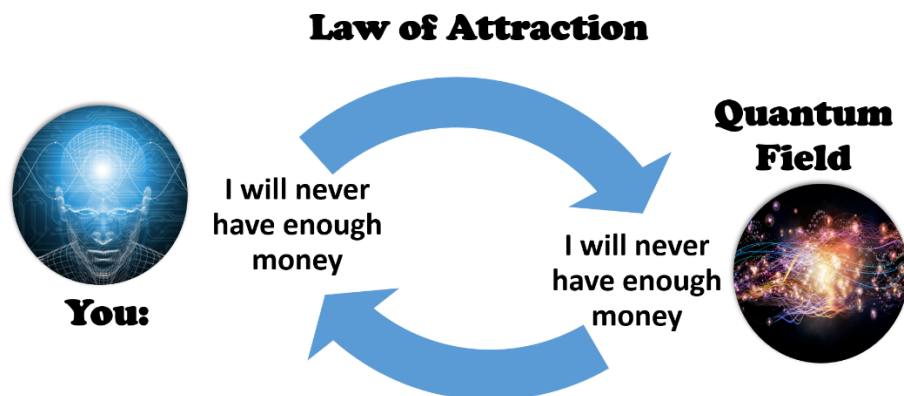
You feel joy -> you send joy energy -> you receive joy energy which increases your joy

You feel anger -> you send angry energy -> you receive angry energy which increases your anger

I really want you to get this. What you feel, think and say is what you're sending out to the universe and what you send out you receive back, *exactly!*

“The universe is just a big Xerox machine. It simply produces copies of your thoughts.”

Neale Donald Walshe



You believe you will never have enough money (feeling and thought):

=> You send out the energy of I will never have enough money

=> Quantum field echo's it back

=> You receive/attracts events, people and situations that proves you will never have enough

money

=> You have more evidence that increases your feelings and thoughts of I will never have enough money

You believe you have all the money need (feeling and thought):

=> You send out the energy of I have all the money I need

=> Quantum field echo's it back

=> You receive/attract events, people and situations that proves you have all the money you need

=> You have more evidence that increases your feelings and thoughts of I have all the money I need

Do you now see that your thoughts and feelings and who you are being are a constant broadcast to the universe, 24/7? Yes!

You are broadcasting your messages and they are being replied to.

So, what is your constant broadcast to the Universe? What stories are you telling yourself over and over? Are the messages you broadcast what you want? Unfortunately, these stories, usually harsh criticisms about yourself or someone or something, are acting as barriers against you recognizing yourself as the Limitless Divine Self.

Your belief system (BS) plus your false-identity tell your Working Mind what it is capable, or incapable of. Your feelings energize these thoughts into the reality you experience. When your thoughts and feelings are aligned or “coherent”, you are broadcasting a unified signal that results in manifestation in reality.

Neville Goddard, 20th century spiritual teacher explains this:

“That you believe yourself to be, you are, and you are given that which you are.”

It basically means what you believe defines who you are. It is a vicious circle!

Henry Ford said aptly:

“Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't, you are right.”

I was at the store once to get some water and the woman in front of me was purchasing lottery tickets. As she purchased them, she looked over at me and said, “I’m the unluckiest person I know, I never win anything.” What effect do you think this has on her reality? When in her life did she decide she is unlucky? The Ego tells her to buy a lotto ticket despite the fact that she never wins, in the hopes to get lucky. But then chides her that she never wins any way! Do you see the ridiculousness of it?

Another example: I can't do this! How many times have you told yourself that? Well, what do you think is going to happen? Of course, you won't be able to do it!

Throughout our lives, we've all lived in a judgmental and fear-based society (instead of a loving society) and with a mind-set overflowing with "I am nots." As a student if you got a bad grade the school system made you feel fearful about failing and you thought to yourself "I am not smart." If you didn't win, you were called a loser and you internalized that you are a loser. You looked in the mirror and compared yourself to a glamorous movie idol or that popular girl at school and told yourself "I am not beautiful enough." You broke up with your boyfriend in high school or the boy you liked didn't notice you, and you asked yourself "why did he not choose me?" And the answer, of course was "I am not good enough."

Not only do we label ourselves, but our parents, siblings and others in our environment, reflecting the fear-based social constructs (vs. constructs based on Love) often label us with something negative.

These thoughts and feelings of failures and not being good enough, are repeated throughout our developmental years into adulthood, and become our core defining identity or self-concept. Our Ego, then continues to gather evidence of these beliefs to prove the judgement it made long ago is accurate, thus making the rational identity even deeper.

What is worse is that:

Any thought that is judgmental, critical or condemnatory toward anybody including yourself (along with the associated feelings) reduces your vibrational frequency or signature.

What does this mean?

As I mentioned before, everything is Energy; your thought begins it, your emotion amplifies it and your action increases the momentum. So, **be mindful of your thoughts and feelings. They shape your reality.**

Every thought is energy with its own frequency, with negative thoughts at lower frequency and positive thoughts at higher.

So, basically, what impacts our overall Life Energy or Life Force are the thoughts and feelings we have. When we think thoughts of highest frequency which is Love, and feel them deeply, we are matching the vibrational frequency of the Universe and SATI and thus, we attract and bring forth to our lives higher frequency emotions such as joy, abundance, contentment and peace, and higher vibrating people and circumstances to our life. The opposite is also true; with lower frequency thoughts and feelings, we attract suffering, anxiety, sadness and lack.

Ego's focus is doom and gloom while Spirit *abides* in peace and Love. When something happens, the Ego attaches a meaning to the event immediately, and declares it bad, unpleasant, etc. and that thought is then repeated over and over in your head. You feel bad about the event and because the thoughts repeat, the feelings increase. This is true about inconsequential events or major events.

Eckhart Tolle explains:

“The primary cause of unhappiness is never the situation but your thoughts about it. Be aware of the thoughts you are thinking. Separate them from the situation, which is always neutral.”

So, it’s not your life situation, your boss, colleagues, parents, ex. or the money, the in-laws, etc., but your own perception, or Ego thinking that creates stress and negative energy.

Circumstances are neutral. It is your thoughts about the circumstance that creates the negative energy.

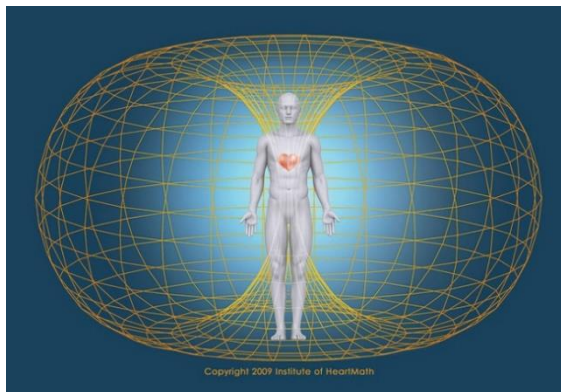
Every moment you have a choice – to be at peace or to be in resistance.

Let me say it again: *every moment you have a choice – to be at peace or to be in resistance.* When you are at peace, you attract positive energy and when you resist, you create negative vibes that reflect back on your being. It’s a simple choice that you need to make.

Many who read the book, “The Secret” or first heard of LOA, tried it out, just like me, only to find out it didn’t work. And we gave it up! Yes? Many tried to create something, thinking the end result was possible but feeling in our hearts that it wasn’t. It is not the fault of the book, The Secret or the Law of Attraction; It’s us; we’re doing it incorrectly!

As Dr. Joe Dispenza explains:

“Quantum creating only works when your thoughts and feelings are aligned.” This is called coherence.



To give you an example from my life, I wanted to be in a relationship (feelings) but believed that relationships are hard, and that *finding “the one” who is my match is impossible*, given my unique personality (thoughts). This incoherence in my thoughts and feelings distorted my communication with the quantum field. The result was, I didn’t find the relationship that I wanted. I tried everything and yet I was left with more evidence that *finding the “right match” was impossible.*

Dr. Dispenza also emphasizes that you have to feel that you *already have* that thing you want to create. You have to “imagine it so completely, that the future life is experienced right now.”

For many of us that is difficult because the underlying feelings and thoughts about a situation have not been resolved and let go. Ego has amassed years of evidence why it is not possible to have it! These thoughts and feelings will create incoherence in your energy signature and what you’re broadcasting, no matter how hard you imagine the new future with your mind. In one of the 7 practices I will provide you with the Letting Go practice that will help you resolve residual

feelings and thoughts that have plagued you for a life time.

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

1. Notice at what frequency you are vibrating? What frequency do you broadcast to the Universe? Please take out your journal and write them down.
2. Write down what has opened up for you reading of this section. What were you able to see about yourself? What are you able to overcome? What “aha moment” did you experience. Where were you able to use the tools to triumph over the past barriers?



Your Stories

So now let's talk about the fourth barrier, our stories. Let me tell you about a movie I saw based on a true story called: Exiled Forever. The movie was about a girl who knew nothing of the world's suffering and sadness. She was raised in a beautiful home, with loving parents. She went to the seaside for vacations and there was such a joy in the simple but loving family. Until one day she was yanked away from her home and country and sent to a foreign land, far, far away. There was an uprising in her country and her parents sent her away to keep her safe. There was a war; bombs were dropped on her people. Many were killed without cause and with violence. She watched the news, stunned and petrified. She felt so powerless and alone. She became sick with worry and anxiety and spent days in the hospital. They thought she had leukemia at 16 years of age.

She was in shock, not only because her country was being destroyed but also because she hated her new homeland. Everyone was shallow, they occupied their time with idle chitchat. She had nothing to say to them for how could they fathom her loss? Kids in the school knew nothing of war and killing. They knew nothing of loss. They knew nothing of not-belonging, the sadness that seared through her veins because of what was happening in her home country. She blamed her parents for her predicament. How could they send her away all alone in a country thousands of miles away? She was too young to understand.

There was also violence in her new home. The kids at school made fun of her and bullied her regularly. They burned her locker because they considered her a threat. To top it all, her best friend was sleeping with the boy she loved and was in a relationship with. The betrayal was horrible and she was devastated. She petitioned the school to graduate two years early because she had to get away. She thought maybe college would be different.

But there, she also found nothing but loneliness. “Who the hell are these people?” she thought, “partying every night, drinking alcohol until they were sick, obsessed with how they dressed and looked. Don't they know what is happening in the world?” Her depression took deeper and deeper roots with every passing year.

She graduated at the age of 20. What an accomplishment, right? But she didn't see it that way. She was relieved that she had found a job and she could now start living a normal life and make

money. After she graduated and before she began her new job, she decided to go back to her country. Thing had calmed down. She earnestly went back to find her friends, to connect with them again, to tell them everything she'd been through. But so much time had passed, their paths had diverged, and their experiences were worlds apart. They thought she was so lucky to be out of the country and wished they could leave too. She didn't understand them, as they didn't understand her alienation, sense of loss and loneliness. She realized the world she knew had crumbled and she no longer belonged in her home country either. She was a stranger in the world without roots. She didn't belong anywhere.....

Quite a dramatic story, huh? Heroes and villains, love and betrayal, drama and triumph!

Well, this is my life story... Yep!

If you stand back and watch your life as an observer, you notice your stories are prime time soap operas or box office hits! Just as mine was. There are all kind of juicy drama in it! The main character is so amazing but so many bad things happen to her, betrayal, sadness, sickness! Oh, she has such courage handling it all! You root for her, cheer her on and hope the story has a happy ending, you know, "a happily ever after"! I don't mean to offend you, but if you detach yourself from your life story, you will begin to notice the **continuing** drama.

As Shakespeare, 17th Century English poet and playwright said in *McBeth*:

***"Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more.***

***It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing."***

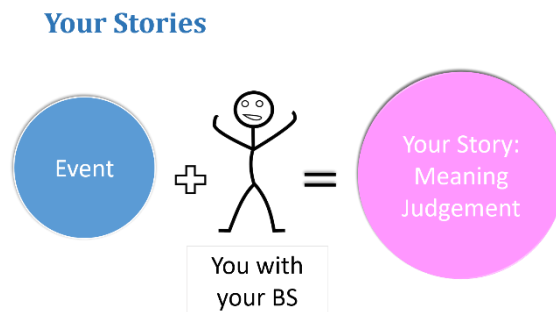
You may think this is morbid. But it's actually quite freeing.

Whether we realize it or not, we have defined ourselves and the definitions we have given to ourselves is the story we tell. The way we interpret the events in our lives *defines* who *we are*. Have you heard the cliché: where ever you go, there you are! No matter how your external environment changes, you still experience what you feel inside. Just like me, where ever I went, I felt exiled.

Our stories keep us operating at lower frequency and create the reality that enforces that story. One of the most important actions we can take to regain our power is to become aware of the story we tell ourselves and the world.

Simply stated,

Our story originates with our perspective and judgement about what happened.



A story is created in a simple way. First, something happens. Second, the Ego Mind makes it mean something. Remember the Solar Eclipse? There is the “what happened” and here’s the “story you made up about it”, and it is overlaid on top of what happened and it darkens your world and hides the light of your being.

Repeating what Eckhart Tolle said,

“The primary cause of unhappiness is never the situation but your thoughts about it. Separate them from the situation, which is always neutral. It is as it is.”

Where have you given away your Divine power by continuing to live in your story? See how and where you have become a victim or assumed a victim mentality. Look to see all your harsh judgement of yourself and others.

This is not to say the event didn’t take place, or that something didn’t happen. The events did happen! But the story we tell again and again continues to bring the pain and suffering from the past into the Present Moment and it shapes our present reality. Detaching yourself from the story and leaving the past in the past will begin to drop the heavy burden you carry with you and free you from the chains of the past. Separation of “what happened” from the “story” helps us to know ourselves better, and to learn. The problem is when you keep repeating the drama, it keeps you stuck in your story. When you separate them, you can put it behind; so, look at the story but do not dwell in it.

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

1. Take some time and write down your main story, the story that you keep telling yourself and everyone, every chance you get, in complete detail with all glories and failures, heroes and villains! The story that you’ve gathered evidence for throughout your life. See if you can separate/distinguish “what happened” from the “conclusion/judgement/story” you talk about it. See if you can look at it like a movie. If it were a movie, what would you call it? What can you learn from the events?
2. Also, turn up the volume on the chatter in your head! Listen! What is it saying? What does it repeat over and over? Start to recognize the voice in your head pretending to be you. Realize

that who you are is not the voice, but that you are the thinker, the observer, the one who is aware of the chatter. Knowing yourself as the awareness behind the voice is true freedom.

3. Write down what has opened up for you during the reading of this section. What were you able to see about yourself? What are you able to overcome? What “aha moment” did you experience. Where were you able to use the tools to triumph over the past barriers?



Impact of our thoughts on our reality

In the last section, I talked about the thoughts that we broadcast 24/7. Let’s look at their impact. Dr. Emoto, a Japanese author, researcher and photographer proved how we know this. Dr. Emoto showed us that thoughts and feelings affect the molecular structure of water. By presenting written, spoken words and music to the same water samples the water appears to “change its expression”.

If you have access to the Internet, please watch the link below before you continue reading.

[What the Bleep Video on Dr. Emoto’s Experiments²](#)

Think about the fact that approximately 65% percent of a human body is made up of water. At the embryo stage, we are 98% water! The earth is also covered in about 70% water! Life was created from water; it is the origin of life, at least here on Earth!

Here are some pictures of specific words said to the water in Dr. Emoto’s experiments:



Dr. Emoto’s experiment is solid proof that everything we think, speak and write about is constantly affecting everything around us. You can now start to see the impact that our thoughts have on us, starting with the water molecules within our bodies. We have spent so much energy throughout our lives judging and criticizing ourselves and others. Let’s change that!

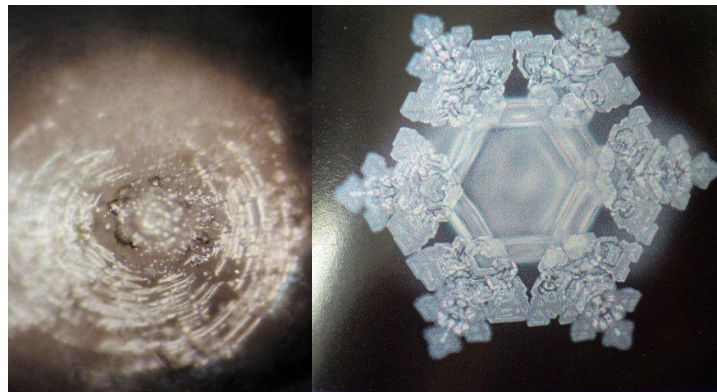
² You can also watch it on Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuPKNP_vTZU

Remember when we were looking at our identity? We can recreate our identity, or what we perceive ourselves to be. We are capable creators that are limiting ourselves based our thoughts and feelings.

So, if it's possible to think anything of ourselves, why not think the highest? With disciplined practice we can replace negative thoughts, basically re-programming or rewiring the brain. Even if we have negative thoughts (as we all do) we can quickly shift the energy into a higher vibration by replacing them with positive words. A good tool for this is affirmations.

Affirmations are sentences designed to affect the conscious and the unconscious mind. Words of affirmation plus related mental images in the mind and feelings, can shift your vibrational frequency and inspire, energize and motivate you.

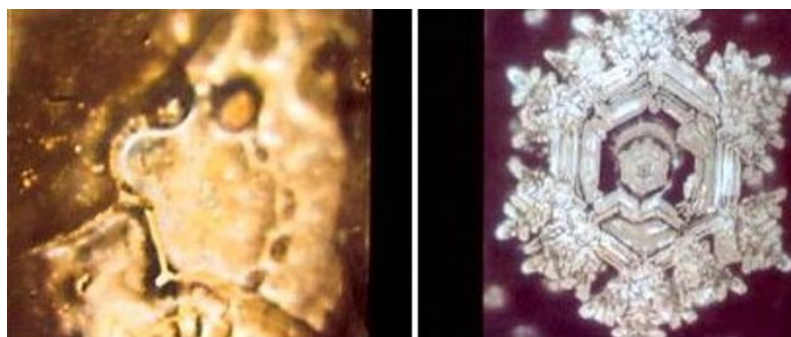
If you don't believe it, here's proof!



You Fool

You are beautiful

In the next chapter, I am going to talk about prayer as a practice. Here are the pictures that show impact of prayer to water molecules.



Polluted water from the Fujiwara Dam, Japan

Same water after a Buddhist prayer

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

Take a few moments and make a complete list of the things that you know, after learning about

the impact of your thoughts, would you like to define yourself and your life, begin to make the shift in your thoughts and words from an I am not or I am hoping to become to I AM. I AM are two of the most powerful words in the universe. What follows those two simple words will determine what kind of life you live. This is the most powerful tool that will attract what you desire into your life.

The words I AM, which you consistently use to define who you are and what you are capable of, are powerful holy expressions for and in the name of SATI—the highest aspect of yourself. Break lifelong habits of negative self-talk. Discontinue using negative labels on yourself.

You want what follows I am to be aligned with your highest self, your spirit, the SATI inside you. Beginning with your inner dialogue, simply change the words that define your concept of yourself. Redefine your self-concept by choosing the words that you opt to place into your imagination.

Your imagination is yours and you are free to place anything you want in it: I am blessed. I am wealthy. I am healthy. I am talented. I am successful. Instead of I am incapable of getting a job, shift to I am capable. Similarly, replace proclamations of I am not able to live in peace with I am peace. I am unlucky in love is replaced by I am love. I am unworthy of happiness becomes I am happiness.

As Dr. Wayne Dyer says,

“This will allow you to rise to previously unimagined heights. Teach your outer self to accept the unlimited power of your inner spirit and the things you place in your imagination can become true for you.”

So please make a complete list of the things that you are and would like to be known as, using I AM statements.

Now let me warn you that ***saying these statements once or twice does not rewire your brain after years of I am not statements.*** It takes a while for the I am nots to disappear and be replaced by your I AM statements. But I assure you, they do. Believe in them, feel them, and allow the feelings to engulf you. The more you believe it and match your feelings to that belief the faster they will manifest your reality.

Chapter 6: Love and Fear – Thought Systems that Shape Our Reality

“The enemy is fear. We think it is hate; but it is fear.”

Mahatma Gandhi (attributed)

So far, we’ve talked about how our own thoughts shape our reality. Now, let’s talk about the thought systems in the world that also shape our reality.

As many masters and sages have said, **there are 2 main emotions: Love and Fear** and all other emotions are nothing more than subcategories of these two. Where there is love, we have peace, joy, contentment, serenity, forgiveness while on the other hand, where we have hate, we will have anxiety, sadness, depression, fatigue, judgment, guilt and so on.

John Lennon said this really well:

“There are two basic motivating forces: fear and love. When we are afraid, we pull back from life. When we are in love, we open to all that life has to offer with passion, excitement, and acceptance.”

Here’s a sample of feelings based on Love and Fear:

Love	Fear
Peace	Anxiety
Joy	Sadness
Contentment	Depression
Serenity	Agitation
Acceptance	Judgement
Forgiveness	Blame

Fear is the energy that contracts, closes down, hides, hoards, harms. Love is the energy that expands, opens up, reveals, shares, heals. Every thought is based on one emotion or the other. How do you know which feeling you are thinking and acting from? If you are not at peace, then you are in the Fear thought system. Thoughts of judgement, blame, attack, thoughts that anyone or anything should be different than they are, thoughts that focus on the past or future instead of present, all of these thoughts are of Ego Mind and are based on fear.

Here’s what Yoda, the most beloved spiritual master in Star Wars says:

“Fear is the path to the dark side. Fear leads to anger. Anger leads to hate. Hate leads to suffering.”

Being a Star Wars fan, I couldn’t resist! 😊



Now, when you shift your inner thoughts to love, you will open yourself up to accessing the

Divine Power that runs the Universe. When you shift your thoughts to love, you shift from a path that leads to self-sabotage to a life of ease and joy.

“When you change the way you look at things to come from a place of love, the things you look at will change because at these highest vibrational frequencies, you are vibrating with the Source of All Life.”

Dr. Wayne Dyer

As I mentioned before, the higher the frequency of your energy or vibration, the lighter you feel in your physical, emotional, and mental bodies. You experience greater personal power, clarity, peace, love, and joy.

We live on a planet that is dominated by Fear and the corner stone of this perception is the false belief that we are separate from our true self, separate from each other and separate from that which sourced us, created us: SATI.

This thought of separation produces a constant fear that has gripped the world, it is not our natural and inherent way of being, which is Love. A Course in Miracles (ACIM) teaches us:

“Fear is the absence of love, the way darkness is the absence of light.”

When we're thinking with fear because all thoughts manifest on some level, these thoughts of fear manifest situations, circumstances and relationships that cause more fear. Because we live on a planet that lives with fear and because from an early age we're trained into this fear-based thought system, living from a space of love has become difficult. We really have to work at it, at least I had to.

Enlightenment is not learning to think with Love; it is an unlearning of thinking with fear. Enlightenment is really the dismantling of a thought system based on fear and shifting to a thought system based on love.

The power over your health, wealth, career, relationships and every area of your life is Love and that power is inside you.

You might ask: If I have the power over my life then why don't I have everything I want? Why haven't I been able to do everything I want to do? Why am I not filled with joy every day?"

Because in every moment, we have a choice to think and act with Love or with Fear. Whether you realize it or not, you have been making this choice every moment of your life!

Remember the Law of Attraction (LOA): when you feel joy, you give and receive back joyful experiences, situations and people. When you're irritated, you're giving off irritation energy and you receive irritating experiences situations and people. All the things you experience are the LOA responding to your thoughts and feelings.

As Rhonda Byrne says in *The Secret*:

Life isn't happening to you; life is responding to you!

So, in every moment you have a choice! But sometimes it's not so easy to make the right choice. Why?

Firstly, because there are times when you, *actually your ego*, won't want to think with Love; it wants to attack, judge and harm because all it knows is FEAR; its survival depends on you living in fear and separation. Thus, you are manipulated into choosing the negative.

Secondly, we carry with us a huge reservoir of negative feelings, attitudes and beliefs that drive our actions and give us the life we have. This we covered in the last sections.

Next, I will give you 7 practices that will help you shift from Fear to Love. They will NOT fix you! Remember you do not need fixing! They will help you to remove the barriers to the experience and expression of Love.

As Marianne Williamson always says:

“In the Bible Jesus said, ‘Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.’ (John 16:33). He didn't say ‘Be of good cheer, I've fixed things! He said I've overcome, which is rising above the limitations, lack, suffering and fears of this world, which means overcoming the thoughts of Fear.”

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

1. Take a few moments and make 2 columns on a piece of paper. First, write down all the areas where you operate from *fear* – What is present- i.e., which emotions are present in your body? What pains or voids are present? Then write down all the areas with *love* – What is present? Notice the frequency in your body, your energy. See if you can distinguish the difference in the frequencies.
2. Ask yourself: Am I willing to commit to a new way of thinking and the practices that are required in order to transform my life? If not, why? Write it down.
Really be honest with yourself. No one is going to ask you how you answered, and no one will be judging you, so don't judge yourself for your answer either! Remember the Ego speaks first and speaks the loudest. It is going to tell you, “You don't need this shit!” or “your life is fine, thank you!” or “this is BS” or something similar. Try to go deep and connect to SATI.
3. Then, make a list of people, places, situations where love is not present for you. Pick the best one and see if you can distinguish what happened from the story you tell about it? The event is not your opinion or thoughts about the situation. It is a simple “he said, she said” or this happened, retelling of the event. Your story is the judgements, evaluations, analysis, guessing why, etc.
4. Write down what has opened up for you during this homework or reading of this section. What were you able to see about yourself? What are you able to overcome? What “aha moment” did you experience?

Chapter 7: Grace Practices to shift from Fear to Love

“Spiritual practice is not just sitting and meditation. Practice is looking, thinking, touching, drinking, eating and talking. Every act, every breath, and every step can be practice and can help us to become more ourselves.”

Thich Nhat Hanh

In a fearful world that is dominated by Ego, how the hell do we transform our lives? I will give you seven practices that help you shift from Fear to Love, from Ego thinking to Spirit thinking which is with Love. I'll go over each in detail.

These practices are:

1. Making a conscious **choice to live in Love** (instead of Fear)
2. **Acceptance** (of what is **and** what is not)
3. **Letting go and surrendering** feelings
4. **Meditation** (clarifies the mind)
5. **Forgiveness** (is the key to experiencing peace)
6. **Prayer** (is the medium of miracles)
7. **Gratitude** (is the great multiplier)

Before we get into the practices, let me summarize the last chapter:

The way to change the nature of your experience is to change the nature of your thoughts and feelings from Fear to Love.

But that is hard to do when you are triggered. A trigger refers to something that affects your emotional state, often significantly, by causing extreme overwhelm or distress. It seems easy when you are alone, but you go out into the world, somebody says something, somebody does something and of course you're triggered. That's why spiritual practices are important.

Just as we exercise our physical body to keep the muscles strong, we need to practice our spiritual muscles to keep our spiritual selves fit. Spiritual practice gives you the spiritual power that physical exercise gives your physical body.

As Marianne Williamson, author of Return to Love says,

“Spiritual practice strengthens your attitudinal muscles and your internal musculature.”

The time to do the practices and use the tools and concepts is not when you are triggered by something or someone. When we are triggered, we automatically fall back on Ego-based thoughts and actions that have caused the situation in the first place.

By having a spiritual practice and practicing the principals on a regular basis, you can have them at your command when life throws you a curve ball.

As Marianne Williamson says in one of her videos:

Without these practices, you will have flabby attitudinal and emotional muscles!! Flabby

attitudinal muscles mean it doesn't take much to be triggered, to judge or blame."

The ACIM says "you might not like these ideas and practices, you may not believe in them, you might be actively hostile to them. None of that will decrease their effectiveness in any way."

So, just do them! Make these practices a part of your daily routine just as brushing your teeth, your hair and other routines are.

I promise you will see the results almost immediately.

Practice 1: Make a Choice to Live in Love

The pathway to inner peace and joy is not a *doingness* but a *beingness*. ***It is to decide to be loving to all no matter what!*** When you are triggered, when you are upset, you have a choice to make: the path of Fear or the path of Love! It is not always easy, of course! But you will hear me say it again and again: Our spiritual practice determines which way you choose when the moment arises. You may fail in the beginning but it *does* get easier with time and practice.

There are three powerful sentences that will help you shift your perspective and thinking from Fear to Love in difficult situations:

- 1. I'm willing to see this differently.***
- 2. I seek peace instead of this.***
- 3. Ask "what would love do?" And act accordingly.***

I use them like a mantra in my life. These sentences are particularly helpful for:

- Rising above issues/people/situations, for higher perspective and empowerment, when you've been getting frustrated.
- Resetting yourself if you're feeling unclear about how to achieve a goal, and you've been caught up in your mind about it.
- Tapping into your intuition when you're feeling blocked by doubts, fears and anxiety.

The first two are from A Course in Miracles (ACIM) which considers these two statements the most important tools in your spiritual tool box. These words have alchemical power; something changes in you and in your willingness and commitment to see and think differently, your Ego dissolves, which shifts you to a higher vibrational frequency, which then shifts your situation.

The third question is from Neal Donald Walsch, in the Conversations with God book; it's a question that burns away the mist and the noise. It stops clocks. "What would Love do?" Your Ego Mind is stunned into silence and that is your pause. You can say that love doesn't have a place in business, disputes, office meetings, or serious discussions and situations. Oh, but it does! When you make Love your first priority, you're basically raising your vibration and are operating from a place of true power where SATI abides.

As Danielle Raporte, the bestselling Canadian author and inspirational speaker, beautifully said:

"Love knows what harmony feels like, and doesn't care so much what it looks like on the outside, or to others. She is centered and inclusive. Love is frequently dignified — unless she's required to flip her lid. He is gentle and strong. He bends — unless what's best is to dig"

his heels in. She rewards. He comforts. He strikes. She waits. He speaks. She is silent.”

Try these sentences out, in a fight with a friend, when you are frustrated with your children, before you breakup a relationship, or at work when it seems clear that the only game to play is one-upmanship. These questions may feel awkward at first. But soon, you will experience their power.

And remember, at times Love may choose to play hardball — “ruthless” and “loving” are not mutually exclusive terms. Love may make demands. Love may crumble in apology; Love may weep with humility and grace. She might make a stand and defend to the bitter end. But I have found that, ultimately, Love knows what’s best for every difficult situation.

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

1. Review a couple of situations during the week where you were stuck. Practice these sentences and see what happens.
2. Write down what opened up for you during this homework or reading of this section. What were you able to see about yourself? What are you able to overcome? What “aha moment” did you experience?



Practice 2: Acceptance

The second practice is acceptance of what is **and** what is not. For much of my life I've struggled with this one, to accept certain things about myself, others, and life that I don't like. Being someone who is committed to change and transformation, the idea of "acceptance" of certain world occurrences has often seemed irresponsible, and because I couldn't accept or change the world, I've felt like a failure and powerless.

For most of us, in our personal life, accepting the present moment can be difficult, particularly if in the present moment we find ourselves in what is not one of our choosing.

Unfortunately, by resisting what is so, we become disempowered, hopeless, and stuck. As Carl Jung so aptly says "What you resist persists." It seems that we are constantly "resisting" and fighting against the way things are. Whether it's with our body, our work, our spouse, our family members, our friends, our co-workers, our finances, the state of the world and economy, or many other things -- we're often arguing with what is instead of accepting the way that it is.

Even though it can be hard and counter intuitive at times,

Acceptance is the first step in shifting from Fear to Love.

It's very difficult and quite stressful to try to change things from a place of non-acceptance and fear.

When you are in a state of inner nonresistance to what is – you do what is needed, what is required because the action comes from a different place - From the Divine which is eternally creative, rather than from Ego which acts only based on the past.

Acceptance is not resignation, failure, or agreement; acceptance is simply telling the truth about what is so and allowing things to be as they are.

When we accept ourselves, others, and life, we can create a real sense of peace and let go of much of our suffering. And, from this place of peace and truth, we're more able to not only appreciate life, but also to manifest the kind of circumstances, relationships, and outcomes we truly want.

Acceptance is a choice; you can either accept what's happening, or fight against it, be miserable, and struggle against the Universe.

Rejecting “what is so” doesn't change the circumstances; it just causes pain and suffering. We need to receive Life and what happens to us with open arms, because if we fight and resist it, we are generating a lot of turbulence in our minds.

Remember that "accept" is a verb.

It's an active process, one that must be practiced consciously. It's rare that we one day choose to accept our emotional or physical pain, our bodies, our finances, our difficult relationships, or our pasts, and never think about it again.

It can require effort, especially in the beginning. It can be frustrating at times. But, like creating a clearing in a grass field by walking the same path many times, every time you practice acceptance, you create and strengthen neural pathways in your brain, making it easier and easier to accept things as they are.

Eckhart Tolle explains,

“Whatever you accept completely will take you to peace, including the acceptance that you cannot accept, that you are in resistance. The more you are able to honor and accept the now, the more you are free of pain and suffering.”

He continues,

“Don't look for peace. Don't look for any other state than the one you are in now; otherwise, you will set up inner conflict and unconscious resistance. Forgive yourself for not being at peace. The moment you completely accept even your non-peace, your non-peace becomes transmuted into peace. Anything you accept fully will get you there, will take you into peace. This is the miracle of surrender.”

Lao Tzu says:

***The world moves in its own way
And the sage follows***

by yielding (i.e., surrender)

As Christians say,

“Let go and let God.”

Many spiritual paths agree that surrendering to and acceptance of the present moment and what life brings us is the first and most important spiritual practice. It doesn't mean you don't take action. It means once you accept what is so, you can begin to alter your perception. Once you alter your perception, you connect with your Spirit and only then, can you take steps that are in alignment with your Spirit, Love and SATI, instead of being driven by the Ego.

Many of us have a difficult time accepting the present moment, the Now. Notice how often we're there but not really present? Why? Because we're trying to get to somewhere else, we're trying to fix it or change it, to escape what we're feeling or experiencing in that moment.

Ego says, “this situation is unacceptable; you need the situation to change to feel better.” This means you can be at peace at some point in the future **after** you've fixed the situation and will have to suffer only at this present moment.

But the spirit says, “the situation will change when you accept it as is and are willing to see it differently.”

“Ego says, ‘Once everything falls into place, I'll feel peace’. Spirit says, ‘Find your peace, and then everything will fall into place’.”

Marianne Williamson

Have you noticed how much we love to complain to others and commiserate with each other about our problems? The only thing complaining does is convince others that you are not in control and are not responsible for your misery. But the truth is we *do* have control and can act responsibly.

Eckhart Tolle says,

“Wherever you are, be there totally. If you find your here and now intolerable and it makes you unhappy, you have three options: remove yourself from the situation, change it, or accept it totally. If you want to take responsibility for your life, you must choose one of those three options, and you must choose now. Then accept the consequences.”

So, we must stop nagging, complaining, wishing, whining and instead,

Make a choice to change it, accept it or remove ourselves from the situation.

It is that simple. Nagging and complaining are actually detrimental to your life because they reduce your vibrational frequency.

Another good practice is to catch yourself when you say these statements that start with:

- “I wish...” Wishing for a better tomorrow is no crime, but what does all that wishing really get you? Doesn't it make you sad that you don't have it now?

- “If only I had...” If only you had a better thing/situation/person in your life, then you could make all your dreams come true, right? Wrong. Happiness cannot be found outside of you.
- “It would be better if...” Yes, it would be better if the sun was shining, you weren't being nagged, you were filthy rich, you had the love of your life, etc., etc. But that is not how this experience called Life, works!

As much as I'd love to tell you that it's easy to stop saying these things and accept what is so, there's just no getting around the fact that it's not. I struggled with it every day for a very long time. But it has become my standard operating procedure and therefore is much easier now.

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

1. Take a few minutes to first write down the areas where you have a hard time accepting what is and what is not. Write down what your judgements are about what is so? What are you resisting? Where are you using the statements, I mentioned above?
2. Also, write down what opened up for you during this contemplation or reading of this section. What were you able to see about yourself? What are you able to overcome? What “aha moment” did you experience. Where were you able to use any of the tools/practices to triumph over the past?



Practice 3: Let Go and Surrender

The third practice is surrendering/letting go of feelings that have been bottled up.

Many follow a spiritual path, but very few succeed and realize the ultimate truth. We've all tried many things; gone to retreats, tried to do meditation, yoga, tap dance or EFT; homeopathy, hypnotherapy and regression; we balance our chakras, try affirmations, create vision boards, take courses and study new age spirituality, go to Vipassana, to an Ashram in India and seek and follow some guru's recommendations; we read new age books feverishly; watch spiritual videos on YouTube; many of us have studied the book “Secret” and tried Law of Attraction, visualization, actualization and try as we may couldn't manifest anything! How many of these have you done? I know this well because I have been searching for 40 years!

We know somewhere there is an answer and we keep searching trying to find something new, try it out with short-term success and get disillusioned again! We don't realize that “The Solution” to our struggles is not “out there” at all!

Have you heard of the saying “happiness is an inside job!” I kept seeing that meme on social media and for the longest time I couldn't figure out what the heck it meant! When I finally did figure it out, I thought why the hell didn't you say so! It means we take a look at all the bottled-up feelings and barriers to the expression and experience of love and begin to dismantle the thoughts and feelings associated with Fear. So basically, you have to **let go of feelings that have been bottled up over the years**. Imagine walking through life with a heavy bag full of rocks. It is like pulling a cart behind you with all your troubles and worries; it slows you down, you become

tired, frustrated and depressed. Aren't you tired? What is your number one complaint? "I am tired."

All the painful experiences you've endured, mistakes you've made, and setback you've had to overcome are weighing you down, making you feel stuck, and holding you back from living your life. **Letting go is the answer** and it is actually quite freeing!!

The principal and practice of letting go is simple. There's nothing to memorize or learn. Once you start the process, you will automatically have the experience of freedom. You're going to feel the weights removed. Everything you do will become more enjoyable!

Your first reaction is probably "yeah, right!" It is okay to be skeptical. All you need to do is apply the principals and practices and see for yourself. It is not a sudden boom! It is a gradual transformation of your life.

Your second reaction is probably "Let go? No way!"

I know! I'm asking you to let go of something that is deeply emotionally charged or something that directly relates to how you identify yourself and that, of course is hard. When we have a deep emotional attachment to an event or circumstance in our life and we're being asked to let it go, it can often feel like we're being asked to move on and forget about the past, person, or event that we're deeply connected to. It can be hard!! No doubt about it!

Often people hold onto negative memories as a method of self-protection, for survival. If you forget something horrible that happens there is a greater chance it will happen again. This survival function is the job of the Ego and it takes its job very seriously. So, you live in constant fear.

When we're living in fear, we cannot experience love as they are the two basic emotions.

You have to let go of what is hurting you, even if it feels almost impossible. Deciding to hold on to the past will hold you back from creating a strong sense of self — a self that isn't defined by your past, but rather by who you want to be.

When you release your past struggles, mistakes, setbacks and fears, you make room for something new to emerge. If your heart is filled full-up with pain and hurt, how can you be open to love or joy, or to anything new?

Once the feelings have been acknowledged and worked through, they will lose their charge. The fear will dissipate. Suddenly there's the recognition that you have survived and will continue to do so! You can find the courage to digest the situation and do something about it, if necessary. And now you can close that chapter, you've learned from it what you needed to and you can move on. You can jettison the baggage!

Once you've jettisoned the baggage, you will have new space for inner peace, joy and happiness. Now you can thrive! The world is full of amazing and exciting opportunities waiting to be discovered and new experiences will be knocking at your door when you allow yourself to close the old one.

I want to remind you, in all this,

You have a choice: to let it go or not.

You are free to acknowledge and let go of your feelings and you're free not to. You're free to refuse to let go. You're free to hang on to negativity as long as you want.

But I ask you: don't you want to stop reliving past pain repeatedly, to stop going over the details of the story in your head and to make new memories, a new movie about your life, your future? Do you want to become healed or remain one of the walking wounded?

The choice is always yours! It will take courage and faith, but I invite you to take this journey with me. By the end of the book, you will see why it is important and how it will benefit you.

Let's get into the principal of Letting Go.

Accumulated Feelings

We carry with us a huge reservoir of negative feelings, attitudes and beliefs. The accumulated pressure makes us miserable and is the basis of many of our illnesses and problems.

Most of us don't know or understand that it is not thoughts and events that are painful but the feelings that accompany them. Thoughts in and of themselves are painless, but that's not so with the underlying feelings we attach to them. It's the accumulated pressure of the feelings that causes thoughts. One feeling can create a thousand thoughts over a period of time.

One painful memory, one terrible regret and look at all the years of thought associated with that single event. If we could let go of the underlying feeling, all those thoughts would disappear. They hold no charge anymore and we are released.

“To love and let go, love and let go, love and let go...it's the single most important thing we can learn in this lifetime.”

Rachel Brathen

As Herman Hesse says,

“Some of us think holding on makes us strong, but sometimes it is letting go.”

Mechanisms of Dealing with Feelings

We have three ways of handling major feelings: Suppression, Expression and Escape.

1. **Suppression** – Suppression happens because we cannot accept it and don't want to be bothered with it. It can be conscious in the form of suppression or unconscious which is repression. In both cases, we suffer through them and try to function as best as we can. The pressure from suppressed/repressed feelings is later experienced as irritability, mood swings, indigestion, headaches, insomnia, muscle tension, hyper tension, auto-immune diseases and a whole bunch of other conditions.
2. **Expression** – When we express our feelings, we are just venting them. Like the valve on the pressure cooker, we let just enough out so it doesn't explode and the remainder can be

suppressed. And we hurt the people around us. We are basically throwing up all over them! Not a pretty picture, is it?

3. **Escape** – In escape, we use means such as excessive alcohol, drugs, working, gambling, eating and other means to avoid dealing with the feelings. We've all got some kind of escape and we all know the regret later, the shame and consequences of them are awful. Right?

Except none of these methods really work and that's why we need to learn the art of letting go!

Letting Go Technique

The letting go Technique was created by Dr. David Hawkins. Letting go involves being aware of a feeling, letting it come up, staying with it and letting it run its course *without wanting to make it different or doing anything about it*. Simply said: **you let the feeling be there and be with the feeling.**

Allow yourself to have the feeling without resisting, venting, fearing, or judging it. Again, **just be with the feeling and surrender all efforts to modify it in any way.** A feeling that is not resisted will disappear as the energy behind it dissipates.

Practices of Letting Go

Here are 4 practices we can do to dismantle the power and charge of strong feelings.

1. **Let go of All Thoughts**

When letting go, you ignore all thoughts. Focus on the feeling itself. Thoughts are endless and self-reinforcing; they breed more thoughts. Thoughts and external circumstances are only an excuse made up by the Ego Mind. The real reason is the accumulated pressure behind the feeling that forces it to come up. The pressure seeks relief and so external events only trigger what we have been holding down, both consciously and unconsciously. Remember the story I told you about the angry man in the dry cleaners who was upset about a tiny button. The situation was only a trigger, not the problem itself.

2. **Recognize the Costs and Payoffs**

We look at the costs and the pay offs of having the feeling or telling the story of our life, you know the story that defines you? The story that you've gathered evidence for throughout your life. Your costs are anger, hatred, self-pity and resentment. The cost is basically your vitality, your access to the Divine.

What are the *Pay offs*? Now that's a bit harder! We all have the cheap little payoffs, that inner satisfaction. There is a quirky little pleasure when we hang on to pain, when we blame others, when we insist others are wrong and we are right, when we withdraw and withhold love from others. What does it satisfy? Who gets the pleasure? Yes, your friendly neighborhood Ego! It likes to be right, make others wrong; it loves to judge and assign guilt and blame! It avoids taking responsibility.

But the satisfaction is temporary. Your suffering continues; the negative situation continues in the same pattern of unhappiness and fear and even escalates as it accumulates more pressure behind it. The question to ask is: Am I willing to bear the cost and for how long?

We have a choice: do we become healed or continue to be one of the walking wounded? We are free to acknowledge and surrender our feelings and we're free not to. You're free to hang on to negativity as long as you want. But realize that by so choosing you are giving up a life of inner peace and joy.

3. *Ask Why*

A simple way to become conscious of the underlying feeling or emotional goal behind any behavior or situation is to ask WHY, "why am I feeling this way? Why am I doing that? Why do I want this so badly? What for?" These are powerful questions. You ask again and again until you find the real feeling beneath it all.

According to Roger Castillo, a non-duality teacher, there are only 5 feelings that are the cause of all your suffering:

1. Blame
2. Pride
3. Guilt
4. Worry and Anxiety
5. Expectations or attachment to outcomes

And I firmly believe underneath these 5 feelings, is ultimately the feeling of Fear.

Here's a simple example. You hate your boss. Ask yourself these questions: Why? Because he's an asshole! Why do I feel he's an asshole? Because he doesn't see my contributions and caused me to not get that job in another department. So, what is the underlying feeling? Blame. If you dig deeper you will realize you're afraid of losing your job which will hurt your family. As you remember there are two main feelings of Fear and Love.

Your situation might be more complex. But keep asking why until you get to one of these 5 feelings. Once you determine which one it is, you ask yourself am I willing to let it go? And then apply the Letting Go Technique or the other practices I'll be sharing later.

4. *Find the Hidden Gift*

What is the Universe trying to show me here? What dark, wounded piece of me needs to be healed? What belief or thought from my past needs to be uncovered and let go?

Once you go through this process of inquiry, you acknowledge the feeling and surrender it using the Letting Go Technique, as suggested by Dr. David Hawkins. You just let it be there. *Don't resist it*; the more you resist, the more it will persist. Just be with it. And you will find the charge behind the feeling has dissipated, the feeling has disappeared. It often helps me to imagine my feeling as a beautiful balloon and I let it go, seeing it fly away, acknowledging the self-awareness and spiritual growth it brought me.

"The wound is where the light enters!"

Rumi

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

1. Take a look at a particular challenging situation, either one that you wrote down in your journal or one that has come up during the reading of this book. Write it down in your journal, then make up two columns, costs and payoffs and fill the columns.
2. Practice acceptance as often as you can. The practice is to stop nagging, complaining, wishing, whining about what is so and instead make a choice to change it, accept it or remove ourselves from the situation.
3. At the same time, if negative feelings come up about anything, use the Letting go Technique and practices to let go and surrender any negative feelings about the situation. These assignments go hand in hand.

So far, we covered the three practices: Choice, Acceptance and Letting go. Let's continue with our fourth spiritual practice, Meditation.



Practice 4: Meditation

Much has been said about meditation. When we meditate, we literally emit different brain waves, the mind receives information more deeply than it does during our waking hours.

There are many different meditation techniques. Breathing and quieting the mind is the simplest of meditations, called Mindfulness Meditation. There are also Transcendental Meditation, Buddhist meditation or meditations with words or sounds that instruct the mind to move into deeper regions of Spirit. These regions hold the key to not only stress reduction but to greater insight, understanding, expanded perspective, deeper peace, love and forgiveness.

But let me be honest, many including myself, have a hard time sitting down for long periods of time. Everyone who has ever tried meditating has had thoughts that I can't do this. You might get frustrated because you can't stop the chatter. You have this idea about what meditation must be like. You think that as soon as you start meditating, you must be free of thought, utterly focused with complete inner peace. That is absurd!!

But the deep stillness you seek does not arise because the world is still or the mind is quiet. Stillness is nourished when you allow things to be as they are in this moment. Moment by moment. Breath by breath.

To meditate, just breathe and focus on your breath. Follow the path of your breath through your nose down to your lungs and back. Thoughts *will* pop up in your head. Just observe them, like wild horses running free. Don't get on the horse. Instead, just bring your focus back to your breath.

All of your suffering arises when you think you are the voice in your head. Once you realize that you aren't the Ego Mind, you will have more opportunity to experience real inner peace. As Osho, the spiritual teacher says:

“When all identity with the Ego Mind is dropped, when you are an observer on the hills and the mind is left deep down in the darkness of the valleys, when you are on the sunlit peaks, just a pure witness, seeing, watching, but not identifying with anything, good or bad, this or that, all questions dissolve. The mind melts, evaporates. You are left as a pure being, just a pure existence – a breathing, a beating of the heart, utterly in the moment, no past, no future, hence no present either.”

Instead of struggling against the mind by trying to forcibly calm it, you need to become an observer of the mind. In this simple act of observation, you will see and experience that your thoughts and you are separate – because you can see that the one who is watching the thoughts is separate from the thoughts, different from them. When you become aware of this, a strange peace will envelop you because you will not have any more worries. You can be in the midst of all kinds of worries but the worries will not be yours.

When you become aware that you are not your thoughts, the life of these thoughts will begin to grow weaker, they will begin to become lifeless.

The power of your thoughts lies in the fact that you think they are yours. No thought is yours. All thoughts are different from you, separate from you. You are just a witness to them. That’s all!

The importance of meditation is not just quieting the mind. It is about getting in touch with your Spirit. You can walk in nature, listen to a beautiful symphony, read and contemplate one lesson from “A Course in Miracles” (ACIM), or any activity that brings you to the present moment. There are times I listen to sound healing meditation when I take a bath before sleep. It is so soothing and relaxing that I fall into deep sleep afterwards. Find practices you love which let you to get in touch with the Spirit.

ACIM suggests:

“Five minutes with God in the morning will ensure that you are centered in spirit and he will guide your actions throughout the day.”

Just Five minutes!

Remember God here is referring to SATI and not the traditional meaning of God. Refer to Chapter 1 if you need to.

Now, because meditation is one of the key spiritual tools you have, you might want to create a special place in your home that is dedicated to this practice. I have in my bedroom created an altar of the things I love. I’ve decorated it with cushions and incense and candles and it is my safe place, the sacred space I go to every morning or when I feel stressed or anxious.

Here’s a link to meditation for Energy Cleanings I found on YouTube. You can find many more.
https://youtu.be/FJw2SrD0_Nc

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

1. Make a commitment to meditate or contemplate at least five minutes every day. Write down

when and where you will do it.

2. Also, make a commitment to do an activity, at least one to two hours per week that brings you peace and joy and connects you to your spirit.



Practice 5: Forgiveness

Forgiveness is the key to experiencing peace. It is the most important practice to help you shift from fear to love. **Forgiveness means letting go of resentments, complaints and any other negative feeling we have toward ourselves, someone or something else, even if we don't want to!** The Ego most certainly will not want to forgive! It wants to keep you in lower frequencies and in the past. But our baggage of negativity harms us more than any other because we are the ones who carry it. As someone once said, "Holding onto anger is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die."

People say, "Oh, it is so hard to forgive this person who has betrayed me and broken my heart." And I ask: so, is it easier to sit with the anger and bitterness and toxicity? What is hard is walking around with this anger and blame. Keeping this anger closes your heart to the world and life.

If your heart is closed, you will stop the light and deflect miracles from your life.

I have made this a separate tool and practice from Letting Go because, to me it is one of the toughest to practice.

Forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting or excusing the harm done to you or making up with the person who caused the harm. It means that you've let go of the anger or blame towards someone, or yourself. It doesn't invalidate our mortal suffering. But it validates our capacity to rise above it. Forgiveness brings a kind of peace that helps us go on with life.

Here's what ACIM says on Forgiveness in Lesson 121:

"Forgiveness is the key to happiness. Here is the answer to your search for peace. Here is the key to meaning in a world that seems to make no sense. Here is the way to safety in apparent dangers that appear to threaten you at every turn, and bring uncertainty to all your hopes of ever finding quietness and peace. Here are all questions answered; here the end of all uncertainty ensured at last.

The unforgiving mind (i.e., the Ego) is full of fear, and offers love no room to be itself; no place where it can spread its wings in peace and soar above the turmoil of the world. The unforgiving mind is sad, without the hope of respite and release from pain. It suffers and abides in misery, peering about in darkness, seeing not, yet certain of the danger lurking there.

The unforgiving mind is torn with doubt, confused about itself and all it sees; afraid and angry, weak and blustering, afraid to go ahead, afraid to stay, afraid to awaken or to go to sleep, afraid of every sound, yet more afraid of stillness; terrified of darkness, yet more terrified at the approach of light. What can the unforgiving mind perceive but its damnation? What can it behold except the proof that all its sins are real? (Even though you think being unforgiving of someone is not harming you, it

actually is because you're now forever fearful it is going to happen again, so you're always on guard, defensive so that someone else will not do this to you again.)

The unforgiving mind sees no mistakes, only sins. It looks upon the world with sightless eyes, and shrieks as it beholds its own projections rising to attack its miserable parody of life. It wants to live, yet wishes it were dead. It wants forgiveness, yet it sees no hope. It wants escape, yet can conceive of none because it sees the sinful everywhere. (The Ego judging and criticizing everything)

The unforgiving mind is in despair, without the prospect of a future which can offer anything but more despair. Yet it regards its judgment of the world as irreversible, and does not see it has condemned itself to this despair. It thinks it cannot change, for what it sees bears witness that its judgment is correct (basically meaning Ego continues to gather evidence of the judgement it made.) It does not ask, because it thinks it knows. It does not question, certain it is right (Ego is so sure it is right it keeps telling you, you are right and they are wrong).

Forgiveness is acquired. It is not inherent in the mind. As sin is an idea you taught yourself, forgiveness must be learned by you as well.

Pretty powerful, yes?

Here's a link to a great Forgiveness meditation:

<https://youtu.be/cM2Jd9sgMKQ>

I have found that forgiveness starts with a mental decision to let go of the anger, bitterness and blame. As you let go of grudges, you'll no longer define your life by how you've been hurt. You might even find compassion and understanding. If you want an extra bonus, i.e., extra light in your life, pray for the other person and bless them for 30 days.

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

Write a letter to the person you want to forgive. You don't have to give them the letter. It is just for you to let go of this heavy baggage and move on with your life.



Practice 6: Prayer

The 6th practice is Prayer.

Marianne Williamson, author of Return to Love and my long-time spiritual teacher and practitioner of ACIM says:

“Prayer is the medium of miracles. A miracle is a shift in perception from fear to love.”

Prayer brings forth the pouring of light and love into your life and shines it on the darkness. Most of us have not realized the power there is in prayer. When we pray about something, we invite the light to shift our thinking from Fear to Love. Prayer is a conversation with SATI. When you pray you are plugging into the power of the Universe.

The Ego will tell you that you don't need a higher power. “What rubbish! You can get it yourself.

Just do this, that and the other and you are all set.” Except that we don’t really know what the Universe has planned for us and our lives.

Please view this video on YouTube before continuing. This is the best video I’ve seen on how we (or our egos) don’t have the capability to see the entire picture and basically *cannot* know what is best for us.

God’s Plan vs. Our Plan Video

<https://youtu.be/xLZjPDaTdA>

The force in the Universe that keep planets revolving in their orbits, that causes cells to divide, conception to occur, turns embryos to babies; trust this infinite organizing power to orchestrate the complete fulfillment of your desires, it can surely handle the details of your life! But your Ego has you believing that your plans, your actions, your will together are more powerful than the Source of All Life! You have more faith in yourself than this Source. Trust the Universe! Instead of praying to the Universe to get what you want, what you think is best for you, trust the Universe to provide you with exactly what you need.

Meditation is the way you hear the whisper of the Universe. Prayer is the way you actively invite SATI into your life. I personally don’t pray to get what I want any more because more often than not, it is what the Ego wants, not what the *real me* wants. Nowadays, I only invite the Light into my life, surrender my problems and ask for guidance. I also pray that my body, mind and soul are opened to receive the Light.

Here’s a prayer for forgiveness by Marianne Williamson. She is the goddess of prayers and has a great book entitled “Illuminata” if you like different prayers.

“Dear SATI, Dear God, Dear Universe, I surrender to you my grievances, the people I cannot forgive, the places I hold on and cannot let go, the darkness in my own heart. Please remove this darkness of unforgiveness from my soul and replace it with light. Please transform my anger and hurt into healing and peace. And so it is. Amen.”

Forgiveness of oneself is just as important. We are so hard on ourselves, so critical. So here is a complimentary prayer from Marianne:

“Today, I extend compassion to myself. The roughness of the world in hard on the heart. Mine has been tested. Today, I acknowledge any bruises on my soul and deliver them to SATI. Dear SATI I surrender to you the scars on my heart, the memories that sear and the sorrows that remain. Please heal me so that I might rise from the ashes of my past and experience a new life. Amen.”

Now do both of these prayers for 30 days and you will undoubtedly begin to notice a shift in your consciousness. Your feelings of anger and sadness will quiet down, and your sense of peace will increase.

In the last section I asked you look at the areas of your life where you are resisting accepting what is so. I would like to offer you a prayer to help you accept what is so. You’ve probably

heard this prayer before, but I've altered it and added to it to make it even more powerful. Use this prayer when you have a hard time accepting things.

*God grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can;
And wisdom to know the difference.*

*I let go of all judgements about what is so,
Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time;
I choose Acceptance as the pathway to peace;
Taking this world
As it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that all things are as should be.*

*I surrender to the will of the Great Consciousness
For I don't always see the greater plan.
May I be accepting of what is so,
So that I may be happy and at peace in this life.
And so it is. Amen.*

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

Select a prayer or two you like and say them out loud or to yourself before you go to sleep every night.



Practice 7: Gratitude

Gratitude is a powerful catalyst for happiness. When we appreciate something, our ego moves out of the way and we connect with our soul. ***Gratitude brings our attention into the present, which is the only place where miracles can unfold.***

As Rhonda Byrne, the author of bestselling book, *The Secret*, says:

Gratitude is the great multiplier. Your gratitude is magnetic, and the more gratitude you have, the more abundance you magnetize. It is Universal law!"

Rhonda Byrne, author of Secret

At the simplest level, when we practice noticing the big things for which we are grateful, the small things, annoyances, and disappointments won't overwhelm us so easily. We remember how we are blessed in every moment and won't get caught in the small pettiness of life that can suck the joy right out of us, not to mention make everyone who has to be around us miserable

too.

At the deeper level, feeling grateful is an internal experience of fullness and expansion of the heart, an expansion that spontaneously arises from the recognition of love, of goodness, and of grace. Gratitude is one of the highest vibrations we can feel, along with love. When you're grateful for the things you have, no matter how small they may be, you will see those things instantly increase.

When we live with a heart filled with gratitude, we raise our vibrational frequency and as we talked before, that helps us to rise up and above those things that create suffering for us; It is one of the easiest and most effective ways to experience an instant shift from Fear to Love. And as the old saying goes, what goes around comes around. So, the more grateful you are for what you have the more you attract things you are grateful for into your life.

Some gratitude tools include:

- Keep a gratitude journal by your bedside and each night listing three to five positive experiences from the day. Elaborate on one of these ideas. Don't forget to write down what you appreciate about yourself.
- Make a ritual of two to five minute "gratitude meditations." At night, I think of all the things I'm grateful for. For this, take a few deep breaths before your gratitude exercises to be grounded, present and mindful.
- Say thank you often -- particularly to those who serve you! We all want so much to be loved and appreciated for who we are and what we do. Acknowledge and appreciate those around you. You might laugh, but I constantly say thank you, thank you, thank you for the miracle that is my life.
- Write down a letter of thanks to someone who has made a difference in your life -- give it to them in person if possible.
- Express gratitude at meals alone or with loved ones.
- Express or show gratitude to your partner.

Of all the practices, I love this one the most! It is easy to do and it makes you feel good instantly, the more you are thankful, the more thankful things will show up in your life.



All in One Practice – Ho'oponopono

Ho'oponopono is a traditional Hawaiian practice of forgiveness and healing. It encompasses all the 7 practices in one fell swoop. It helps you to clean your psyche and to remove the barriers to Love. The practice includes: taking responsibility for the barrier, asking for forgiveness, express love, send a prayer of blessing and finally express gratitude.

You take responsibility because you were involved in the situation and not saying it's your fault. It is to acknowledge that the Universe has brought this particular challenge to your life for spiritual growth. This for me is our first practice: choosing the path of Love.

Who are you asking forgiveness from? It could be yourself and/or another. It does **not** have to be done with another person, and can be done alone, when in meditation.

By asking forgiveness, sending a prayer of blessing, and expressing love and gratitude, you are raising the vibration of the situation and bring healing and ultimately removal of the barrier to Love.

Meditation is not required but I find that when I'm soul-centered my feelings and thoughts align, creating coherence. Remember what Joe Dispenza said:

“Quantum creating only works when your thoughts and feelings are aligned.”

This is called coherence.

Also, a point of caution: it is recommended that you do this practice again and again, ***without any expectations or attachment to outcomes***, which of course is very hard to do. This is critical. Having expectations and attachment to outcome will result in disappointment and resentment. So, try it and see if you can.

There is no sudden shift or “OMG” transformation, but a gradual opening and spaciousness which allows you to take action from the space of Love. You will begin to notice the change in yourself, others involved or the situation itself.

I have neglected my body for the last 25 years, working long hours under stressful conditions, eating anything available while working. I didn't exercise and well, combined, all of these things put strenuous pressure on my body. I got rheumatoid arthritis, blood pressure, thyroid problems and a bunch of other ailments. My body aches most of the time and I take a lot of medication just to keep it going. And when I began to feel this strange burning and tingling in my leg, my first reaction was to go to the doctor and get some medicine. But instead, I decided to do this practice.

I began to take responsibility for the condition my body is in now. I asked for forgiveness for all the years I abused it. I thanked it for years of amazing service and finally I said I love you. I focused on how beautiful my body is and how amazing the complex inner workings of my body are. I sent Love. And I did this every single day, every time I felt any ache or something wasn't working right. Slowly I began to notice that I don't want to eat unhealthy food. I gave up carbs and sugar because they made me feel lethargic. In addition, I started blessing my food. I began to feel better, not so sluggish any more. So, I started walking which makes me feel better (because of production of endorphins). Because of walking, at the end of the day, I am tired, which helps me sleep deeper and longer, which means I am not so tired the next day. So voila, I feel soooo much better and the burning in my leg has disappeared (because it is being exercised)!!! I'm still not done cleansing and I will continue this process. But I can see the magic happening.

You may think “well this is not magic, it's a simple process: eat right, exercise and you will feel better.” True! But for me ***it is magic***, because I haven't eaten right or exercised in a very long time. I didn't want to. I didn't care. I had more important things to do, like write a book, devour spiritual wisdom, take care of my parents, etc. So, the fact that I am taking care of my body, is for me miraculous and magical!

Joe Vitale has a book called Zero Limits and teaches a course on Ho'oponopono.

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

1. Write down what you love about your life and everything that you have or don't have, that you are grateful for and continue writing for five minutes. Yes, five minutes. I am 100% sure you have many things you love about your life and are grateful for.
2. Also, write a heartfelt letter of gratitude so someone, to a real person that is not you!
3. As a bonus, if you'd like to remove a barrier, pick a particular problem and write a letter to SATI. I would like you to write how you have made yourself right, and someone or something wrong, where you judged, attacked, criticized yourself or someone or something, what part you played in creating or perpetuating the problem. Something happened and you made it mean something and created a story about it; Surrender it to SATI completely, the entire situation. Then, let your pen continue writing and let SATI reply back.

Chapter 8: Who You Really Are

“You are not a drop in an ocean. You are an ocean in a drop.”

Rumi

So far, we’ve talked about the barriers to experiencing your true self and to have inner peace and joy, and the tools and practices you need to remove these barriers and help you shift from Fear to Love. Now, let’s look at who you truly are.

Your Ego would have you think that you are your body, you are born, you live life and you die and that is what your life is! But is it not really! It would have you believe it is the core of your being, responsible for your survival. Ego says if I wasn’t so clever, if I didn’t tell you to do this or that, if I didn’t have you take your vitamins! You’d be dead!!! It creates the illusion that there is a separate I that is the cause of everything, separate from the infinite Oneness of the universe. But *none of this* is true!

Your Spirit is the core of your being. It is the eternal space/time. It is a field of infinite possibilities, infinite creativity. It is that part of you that existed before your body was born and will exist after you die. It’s the highest, most noble part of you. It’s the truth of who you are. You are not the flickering images playing out drama on the movie screen, but the screen itself, a non-judgmental witness unfolding the movie of life with no beginning and no end, infinite in its potential.

“If you really saw the light of your being, you would fall in love with yourself!” or bow to yourself.”

Hafiz, the 12th Century Persian poet and mystic

But we don’t feel that way, do we? Why? there is this cultural trend, at least in the US which is an extension of our consumerist mentality to get what we want, that thing that we don’t have now! The Ego says, “You can have it, you can do it, you can be it,” all of it predicated on the supposition that you are not enough already. In Ego Thinking, nothing is ever enough; your apartment is not quite enough; your house is not quite enough; the money isn’t quite enough; your partner isn’t quite enough; your body, your clothes, your job are not quite enough. And so, we’re on this treadmill to get more, to get something else.

This thought, this cultural paradigm is an extension of Ego’s belief that you’re not enough.

Nothing will ever be enough as long as you don’t think you’re enough.

This economic and cultural paradigm that focuses on the belief that you’re not enough exists so that you’ll try to get more, spend more, buy more of the things you don’t really need. All that so you could be happy sometime in the future. But happiness and peace cannot be found outside of you. As you do the practices, you will become more aware, more awakened. You will come to realize and experience your true nature. And ultimately you will realize your identity as the Divine Consciousness itself.

Eternal and Limitless Spirit is Who You Really Are

We've talked a lot about who the Ego says you are, your identities and self-concepts, your movie. So, who are you really? Well, who you are and who ego says you are, are two different and diametrically opposing things.

Ego has you believe that you and your other inner you are separate. The illusion of its separateness from the rest of the universe is so pervasive and so deeply rooted in the infrastructure of our language, our institutions, and our cultural conventions that we find ourselves unable to experience our Divine Self. The antidote lies in recognizing that not only we belong to and with the rest of universe, but that there is no "rest" in the first place — we are the universe.

The Ego says you are a separate wave in the ocean. It is terrifying and lonely when you feel separated from the rest of the waves in this huge ocean. Isn't that how you feel deep down, alone, tired, scared and powerless among the billions that live on this planet?

But one wave in the ocean or a drop in the pond sends ripples through the entire body of water. Only when you realize you're not a little wave but an ocean can you become powerful and leave the prison or trap that the Ego tries to keep you in.

Rumi, the Persian Poet and Mystic of Love says:

"You are not a drop in the ocean; you are an ocean in a drop."

The ACIM says,

"You are like a sunbeam thinking you are separate from other sunbeams."

Marianne Williamson explains this well:

"If I think of myself as one with the entire ocean, and I know as one wave shifts, the entire ocean shifts, then my experience of myself is different. If I think of myself of one little sunbeam, then I'm terrified of the light of the sun. But if I think I'm one with the other sunbeams, I realize I'm the light."

As these quotes imply you are one with everything. Everything that exists is within you.

You are the Divine. Not that you have a little Divine in you. You ARE Divine.

Let's bring in a little science or philosophy! The 1933 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Austrian physicist, most famous for his cat thought experiment, Erwin Schrödinger said:

"The total number of minds in the universe is one. In fact, consciousness is a singularity phasing within all beings."

The phrase implies that the apparent multiplicity of minds is just an illusion and that there is only one mind, or one consciousness, that expresses itself in a myriad of ways. In such a world view, a separation between subject and object does not exist, there is no existence of a subject on the one side and perception of an object on the other. In a world without the subject-object split, we are all an expression of the one.

Therefore, the Source that makes all living things in the universe is also the same Source that's inside of you. This Divine Source interacts and is inseparable from the whole of you, which means your body, mind, and soul.

To honor your divinity, to live a spiritual and physical life of happiness, serenity, abundant health, and to experience a loving and successful relationship, it's important to understand and to get to know your true essence – your soul. You must begin to reach inwards to meet your soul, to move through the barriers of what's been built up inside and around you over the years. When you do the practices, the barriers will drop and you will have a profound inner peace.

With awareness and experience of the Divine, you can powerfully share the gift you were born with, your uniqueness that enhances the world, that transforms the world from thoughts of Fear to thoughts of Love! Only when you live from that place which is connected to SATI, your soul, can you be free of Ego to share your gift with others.

You could be a dancer, a painter, a nurse, an accountant, a doctor, a healer, a gardener, a construction worker, it doesn't matter.

Only when you are soul-connected, when you operate with your Spirit, will your gift truly come forth and shine light on the world.

But, trusting your soul requires immense courage when you are operating from the Ego. That is because the Ego takes its job very seriously. It was given the task of keeping the body safe from harm, and it forgot that it was performing this service on behalf of the soul. And now you understand that to find true fulfillment it has to become the servant of your soul. And that is our journey of awakening, of enlightenment.

ACIM says this about our journey of awakening, From Darkness to Light – Chapter 11:

“The way is not hard it is different. Yours (meaning your Ego’s) is the way of pain and very lonely. Fear and grief are your guests and they go with you and abide in you. But the dark journey is not the way of God’s children. Walk in light and do not see the dark companions (i.e. fear and grief), for the children of God were created of light and in light. The great light always surrounds you and shines out from you (meaning your vibration). If you see dark companions, you are denying the light but deny them instead for the light is here and the way is clear.”

Dark companions, indeed! The fear and grief we live with every day of our lives, is painful. I know it was painful for me. I worked 35 years in corporate America, all the while wishing I could have a job that made a difference in people's lives. I was successful, I made a lot of money, but in the end, the work did not make my soul happy. But that wasn't all. I constantly lived in fear that I would lose my job and become homeless. I put up with years of corporate politics and backstabbing and other practices that ate away at my soul, until I finally collapsed.

I did soulful work on the side because I believed that I would never find a job that pays well and allows me to do the type of work that makes a difference in the world. I continued to pursue Ego driven endeavors that finally led to my collapse. And my fear came true! I lost everything, my job, my life, my family, my home.

It wasn't until I chose the way of the Love or the Returning to Love journey ACIM talks about, that miracles started happening for me. I immersed myself in the 7 practices. I surrendered what I thought I knew to be true and connected with the Eternal Consciousness and denied my dark companions (i.e., fear and grief). And I finally started living from my highest Self. And here I am, doing what I love to do and enjoying my life immensely. Never could my Ego imagine such a shift, such transformation!

By the way, doing what you love to do, serving others and operating from your soul, you will attract abundance to your life and this is called the Law of Divine Compensation! Marianne Williamson has a great book about this, with the same title.

When you are operating from your soul, your true inner being, you are able to align with your purpose, your passions and what makes you feel whole.

That's your unique gift to the world. Remember Ego speaks first and Ego speaks the loudest. The voice of your Spirit, your soul is a whisper and you cannot hear it clearly without making an effort to rise above the voice of the Ego.

Once you discover and meet your Divine Self, you'll radiate pure light, confidence, courage, strength, and unconditional love for yourself and others. As you live and view your life from your soul's perspective, you'll start to appreciate yourself as a Divine being and gain a deeper appreciation and awareness of the soul essence in others.

Once you raise your vibration, you begin to attract people and circumstance that are truly aligned with who you really ARE. When you are in touch with and operate from who you really are, when you treat yourself and others with Love, you will be giving this world an amazing gift... YOU!

Here is a video from Jim Carry and Jeff Lieberman called We're Eternal Spiritual Beings. It is VERY powerful. Please watch it before you continue reading.

Jim Carrey and Jeff Lieberman Video

<https://youtu.be/FSzVEkqM6Zo>

Pause. Investigate. Contemplate.

1. Write your new biography – one to two paragraphs. Who are you now?
2. Meditate on what barrier you still have that stops you from experiencing inner peace and joy yourself as Divine? What practice can you bring to it that can help you heal in that area?

Chapter 9: Final Words

“The door is round and open. Don’t go back to sleep.”

Rumi

Let’s do a recap of what was covered in this book. We learned about barriers to experiencing peace and joy:

1. Living in the past or future
2. Your Ego Mind
3. Your Identity and Belief System
4. Your Stories

I gave you the 7 practices that remove the barriers. With the exercises, you tried to remove some of the barriers that have been built by the Ego to prevent you from experiencing your Divine. These practices are:

1. Making a conscious **choice to live in Love** (instead of Fear)
2. **Acceptance** (of what is **and** what is not)
3. **Letting go and surrendering** feelings
4. **Meditation** (clarifies the mind)
5. **Forgiveness** (is the key to experiencing peace)
6. **Prayer** (is the medium of miracles)
7. **Gratitude** (is the great multiplier)

And hopefully you discovered and experienced who you truly are during this last chapter, if not sooner. The barriers are not all removed at once. It’s like peeling layers of onion one at a time until you get to the core. So, I can’t stress enough that these practices are not for this once reading the book they require maintenance and continued practice.

Take the practices to your life and use them to deepen your communion with your soul and the Universal Consciousness, or what we have been calling SATI. The more you connect with your Soul, the more you’ll remember your divine nature.

Here’s what Marianne Williamson, author and spiritual teacher says about our journey from emotional pain to inner peace:

“The most depressed and difficult periods of life can be initiations to our spiritual power, as we come to take an honest look at deeper forces at play in our personal dramas. Such is the spiritual path and it is indeed the hero’s journey. It is the journey away from the Ego’s destructiveness as we rise, however bloodied from the climb, to the emotional peak of nakedness before God, dare to drop our masks and embrace our True Selves. Of course, it is painful to endure the death throes of our false self, that self-sabotaging enemy, who if allowed to, runs ramped through every corner of our lives. But as false parts of our personalities begin to die, the truth of who we are gets a chance, at last, to breath. Every thought of fear, every behavioral pattern, that is based on fear and

every mask we wear that is filled with fear is hiding a light so bright within us that its gorgeousness exceeds the beauty of any beauty in the world.”

So, “such is the spiritual path and it is indeed the hero’s journey.” It is not an easy path, but it is as many have said the only way to be free from suffering. And we, humanity is at a critical junction. We’re the only species that is systematically destroying our habitat. We are brutally killing each other with more and more advanced weapons. We need now, more than ever to awaken to the Divine, to breakdown fear-based institutions that are causing so much pain and suffering and return to love. The only way is to be the change we want to see in the world.

As Jim Carrey asks, “what if we, all of us living on the planet were connected with our Divine Self and operated from with love, instead of fear?” What kind of life would we have on this planet? Maybe it is possible to eradicate human suffering altogether.

What would the world look like then when every single one of us felt and saw the light in ourselves and others?

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our Light, not our Darkness, that most frightens us.”

Marianne Williamson

So, as you go back to your life, remember who you really are; remember that your soul is endless, infinite and timeless and this life is a play of forms, a co-creation with SATI of what is possible.

Remember what Rumi said:

“Stop acting so small. You are the universe in ecstatic motion.”

Yes, your soul is SATI itself and it’s waiting for you to say Hello.

Here’s a beautiful poem by Ylonda Rosenthal-Greene:

Don't lose your fire
That fire that burned
When you were a child
And you were told to keep quiet, calm down, be nice, don't cry, don't scream, don't laugh too loud, don't be too proud, too wild, you're too much, too sensitive, don't say that, do this not that, behave,
Ssshhhhhh!
Remember when you believed you could be or do anything? You were care free, wild untamed. No worries about what others thought or how you appeared.
Maybe the world dimmed your light
But you came here to take flight
No longer a reason to hide

Turn on your light
And the space will be there for you to create.
The right ones will find you

Your shine may hurt someone's eyes
Who is still trying to cover them, attached to the darkness.
Not everyone will like you
But many will love you
Because all we ever wanted was you
Just you.

We've come to the end of our time together. It's been an honor and privilege to be with you on your journey. I'm immensely grateful and humbled for your trust in me, for being open to learning new things, thank you.

I leave you this beautiful poem by Rumi, my greatest teacher:

***“Out beyond ideas of right and wrong, (meaning beyond judgements)
there is a field. I'll meet you there.
When the soul lies down in that grass,
the world is too full to talk about.
Ideas, language, even the phrase “each other”
doesn't make any sense.
The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you.
Don't go back to sleep. (Meaning don't become unconscious)
You must ask for what you really want.
Don't go back to sleep.
People are going back and forth across the doorsill
where the two worlds touch.
The door is round and open.
Don't go back to sleep.”***

Namaste and now, go forth and thrive, dear one!

