MOVING BEYOND DEEP SEATED TRAUMA ON OUR ASCENSION PATH

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DISCLAIMER:

I am not a psychotherapist, nor do I hold any degrees in psychology. What I AM is a HUMAN. I've been a human for 51 years now and I have been working on healing my own trauma for at least 32 years. My professional work is in the healing arts—bodywork and energywork. These past 10 years I have taken advanced studies in CranioSacral Therapy and Somatoemotional Release. All of this to say that I have worked with enough people to know we are not alone in experiencing TRAUMA.

IT IS INTRINSIC TO THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE.

DEFINITIONS

- Trauma:
 - a psychological, emotional response to an event or an experience that is deeply distressing or disturbing
- Stress:

a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances

MANIFESTATIONS OF TRAUMA

 Trauma and the chronic stress resulting from trauma is much more of a widespread human experience than most people understand, largely due to the misunderstanding of the forms in which traumas can be manifested. When people think of trauma, they might think only of sexual or physical abuse. But trauma, in fact can manifest in be much more subtle forms.

CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

- Experiences we have had from the age of 8 months gestation until age 8 may have imprinted trauma into our body and/or psyche.
 - Gabor Mate says in his book When the Body Says No "what matters are the child's unconscious perceptions, based on his innermost interpretations of his interactions with the world. Those interpretations, embedded at the cellular level, constitute the biology of belief that governs so much of what we feel, what we do and how we react to events."
- It's important to note that many times we as children didn't understand why something was happening to us or in the family and we thought it was our fault. This subconscious belief can set us up for taking the blame when bad things happen in our adulthood as well.

TRAUMA FROM LIFE EXPERIENCES

- Trauma from life experiences can take up residence in our cells if the trauma wasn't dealt with properly. Unhealed trauma is pervasive inside all humans.
 - Most of us have not been trained to heal trauma and in our North American culture, we haven't been made aware that this was a "thing" until people like Dr. Gabor Mate and Peter Levine started writing and speaking about it.
 - (Of course, Shamans since the beginning of time knew trauma needed to be dealt with, but they haven't been taken seriously in this modern era)

TRAUMA IS ENERGY BECAUSE EMOTIONS ARE ENERGY

- The energy of trauma comes from the shock of whatever occurred. Many times we go into fight, flight or freeze mode and disassociate from our bodies.
- Energy is designed to pass through, but if we haven't been taught about this, we feel the energy of trauma and the energy of emotions and clamp down or disassociate. We freak out. Our mind/body feels as if the trauma is actually happening in real time. It's uncomfortable and we haven't been taught how to deal with it. We've actually been taught the opposite.
 - How many times have people been celebrated in our culture for being "brave" for not showing or dealing with emotion?
 - Keep Calm and Carry On, Man Up, Keep a Stiff Upper Lip, etc. are all slogans flying around in our cultural soup.

ENERGY IS MEANT TO MOVE

- Energy will remain stuck unless it is felt, acknowledged, allowed to move and release.
- The bottom line is
 - Why is stuck trauma such a big deal?
 - Because the more trauma we're carrying around in our tissues, the more weighed down we are. Essentially, we're not able to live the fullest expression of what we came here to BE.
 - Furthermore, unhealed trauma in the body can eventually, over time, manifest as illness/dysfunction—physical, mental or emotional.

HOW STUCK TRAUMA AFFECTS OUR EMOTIONAL RESPONSES

- Have you ever heard yourself lash out in anger and then afterwards thought "why did I react that way?" Unconscious responses come from unhealed trauma.
 - A friend observed her 7 year old daughter saying frequently "I'm mad at myself." How could a young child develop self loathing at such a young age? There has to be more to the picture. This 7 year old child's father is dealing with a cancer diagnosis and she's the youngest one in the family. The older sibling throws stuff when she's angry. This youngest one, though, is gentle and mild-tempered. She doesn't want to hurt others with her anger, so she turns it inward and is angry with herself.
 - I once traveled with a friend who I observed get more and more agitated when
 the flight attendant informed her that she needed to check her carryon
 luggage. I later found out she had experienced a significant amount of trauma
 involving being locked in confined spaces as a child. Flying seemed to evoke
 those feelings of not being able to control her personal space.

HOW STUCK TRAUMA AFFECTS US MENTALLY

- Depression is one manifestation of unhealed trauma. It is actually unexpressed rage turned inwards. Raise your hand if you know someone who is depressed. Yeah, this one affects almost everyone on the planet.
- Limiting beliefs that railroad our decisions and lifepath are a side effect of trauma. Constant negative thought patterns to the tune of: "I don't deserve to be happy. I don't deserve to be loved. I don't deserve good things, etc."
 - Raise your hand if you've had these types of recordings playing in your head.

HOW STUCK TRAUMA AFFECTS US PHYSICALLY

- Did you know that many autoimmune diseases stem from unhealed trauma? Check out "When the Body Says No" by Dr. Gabor Mate or "The Body Keeps the Score" by Bessel Van Der Folk or anything by Peter Levine.
 - I've seen many, many clients over the years who can't figure out why they have pain in a particular area of their body. Going to doctors has yielded no answers and they end up in my office. I could give you so many examples.

PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF TRAUMA

 One middle aged woman (a nurse by profession) with debilitating migraines, so much so that she is on disability from work. She's been to neurologists and had CT scans. No medications help her migraines, she eventually found me (and CranioSacral Therapy). The pain and auras improved after the first session, but what she told me a few sessions later was that she had been sexually abused as a young person. These migraines typically come on for her when she's overly stressed.

PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF TRAUMA

- Another client has an unexplained tremor in his left hand/arm. He said it developed after he decided to sell the business he'd spent most of his life building. The people who bought the business kept him on and then proceeded to change everything.
- Recently, a client I hadn't seen in a year came into my office. She had a
 crutch to help her walk and told me she had a lot of knee pain, but she
 hadn't fallen or injured it. As we continued talking, she revealed that she'd
 been on vacation at the beach and her dog became sick and died. She
 broke down and said he had been her companion through the craziness of
 the past two years and now she is feels she is so alone.

DESTRUCTIVE/UNHELPFUL PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOR/ADDICTIONS

- Anything can become an addiction if we do it to distract or numb ourselves --food, alcohol, vaping, videogames, etc. (I know someone who is addicted to getting her hair done)
 - These have developed because (as we said before)
 - We've never been taught to feel/recognize a trauma response
 - Therefore we disassociate from what we feel/a.k.a. the body
 - Numbing the feelings give us an illusion of control
 - We go into "doing" mode to distract ourselves from feeling the pain/discomfort (it is legit pain, so no judgement here)

SOME METHODS TO HELP RELEASE/RESOLVE TRAUMA

 There are so many techniques and therapies out there. No one can tell you which one or combination will work best for you. I recommend trying a few and see what seems to help.

EFT/TAPPING

• Tapping, also known as EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique), is a powerful stress relief technique. Tapping is based on the combined principles of ancient Chinese acupressure and modern psychology.

This gentle tapping technique resolves negative feelings, thoughts and emotions, cravings, and emotional and physical pain. It is sometimes referred to as emotional acupuncture, because by tapping on specific acupuncture points on the body, the energy pattern behind a problem can be released. In EFT/Tapping, it is not relevant how long ago something happened or how big or small of a problem it is in your life. With the correct EFT protocol, the troubling aspects in your life can permanently disappear.

• This technique can be practiced by oneself or with a practitioner

INNER CHILD/SHADOW WORK

- The general idea of **inner child work** is that that if you make an effort to contact, listen to, communicate with and nurture your **inner child**; you can find and heal the roots of your issues as an adult.
- Inner child work might take the form of: dialoguing (talking) with your inner child; journaling from your inner child's voice, using your imagination to go back to yourself at a younger age and reassure that version of you.

HEARTMATH TECHNIQUES

- Breathing techniques specifically designed to sync up the mind and heart and achieve a better heart rate variability (otherwise known as Heart Coherence)
- These techniques calm the nervous system and allow us to proceed from a more grounded space

THE EMOTION CODE

- A simple technique designed by Dr. Bradley Nelson to muscle test for and clear emotions stored in the body. This technique actually helps release generational trauma, childhood trauma and even emotional energy from past lives. The beauty of it is specifically targets emotions in the subconscious.
- This technique can be done by oneself or with a practitioner.

TRADITIONAL PSYCHOTHERAPY

- This continues to be a valuable resource. Modern day mental health therapists have access to more trauma informed training than ever before.
- Being accompanied by a mental health therapist can definitely support us as we practice other at home techniques to resolve trauma.

CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY/SOMATOEMOTIONAL RELEASE

- There are types of bodywork that access the emotional energy of trauma stored in the body. CST/SER is an extremely gentle form of touch therapy that accesses the much deeper layers of connective tissue in the body (where emotional energy is commonly stored.)
- It is very common that people release tears during a session or experience a previously unknown memory from much earlier in their lives.
- A few stories of people who experienced deep emotional healing—
 - Me: healing of relationship with my mother during a prenatal class
 - EG: visualized a brick wall in her abdomen that gradually dissolved during session (related to a date rape experience in her college years)
 - Laura: tears leaking silently during session, felt so much lighter afterwards

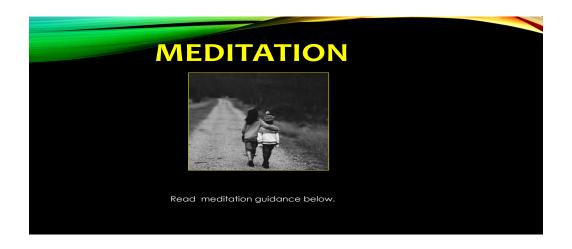
AWARENESS

As in all things, is the first step. Once you become aware that you're experiencing a trauma response, you can choose what to do next.

"THE WOUND IS THE PLACE THE LIGHT ENTERS YOU"— RUMI

Trauma is actually a gift that keeps on giving because it is the CATALYST for our growth. It keeps us going back and HEALING another layer, day after day, year after year. There is **always** HOPE.

"YOU CAN GO THROUGH LIFE AS THE VICTIM, THE STUDENT OR THE MASTER"—
JOHN HOLLAND



Take a breath, feel your body on the chair. I will lead us in a brief inner child meditation. Let's work with something that is not too overwhelming.

Put your hand on your heart and feel the hand on your heart, it's warmth, it's weight and feel you are safe right now. Close your eyes, keep your hand on your heart. That will be your key to your safety and security. With another breath, I invite you to engage with your inner child. Inside of us lives ourselves of every year we've had on this earth – age 2, age 4, age 7, age 9, age 10, etc.

I invite you to just make a connection with your inner child in a loving way, in a gentle way. And, always feeling your hand on your heart and feeling safe.

Once you have started to feel you have connected with your inner child, ask your inner child to share with you a "mini movie" a moment in your life. Take 5 or 10 minutes and just go back and sit with a younger version of yourself. Sit with curiosity, with compassion and with an intention for healing.

We want to choose a memory or a moment that is not too overwhelming. We want something we are able to deal with in a gentle way today in a brief amount of time.

Trust your inner child to show you a moment that is the most perfect one to access today.

Allow the inner child to lead you by the hand into that memory – into that moment in your life.

You might sit next to your inner child and observe what is taking place. Allow your inner child to share with you how he or she is feeling....

Allow you inner child to share with you what he or she needs to say. ...

As you experience these moments through the eyes of your inner child, you feel this healing. Also feel the hand on your heart and know that you are safe.

We will take some more minutes and spend some time with our inner child and this situation. Feel again our hand on our heart and know that we are safe.

As we gently begin to leave the scene, we start to feel our body here in the chair where we are sitting. We start to feel our hand on our chest going up and down. And when we feel that we can open our eyes.

WRITING – Take up your pen and notebook or a document on your computer.

Now we will transition into our journaling time. We will spend about 10 minutes writing about our experience using, if you wish, the questions on the next slide.

WRITING PROMPT

- What moved me about the encounter with this past version of myself?
- What message did he/she have for me?
- How do I feel about reestablishing contact with this part of myself?

SEE NEXT THREE SLIDES FOR THE RECOMMENDED RESOURCES.

RESOURCES

• Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT/Tapping)

https://www.thetappingsolution.com/

Dr. Bradley Nelson author of
 <u>The Emotion Code</u>
 https://discoverhealing.com/the-emotion-code/

• Emma McAdam, LMFT

Video: How to Release Emotions Trapped in Your Body https://youtu.be/GZw8fRPK-8k

Therapy in a Nutshell YouTube Channel
 https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpuqYFKLkcEryEieomiAv3Q

Udemy Courses

https://courses.therapynutshell.com/



• Dr. James Gordon

Author of the book <u>Transforming Trauma</u>
Founder of the Center of Mind-Body Medicine in DC

• David Berceli, PhD

Developer of TRE- Tension, Stress and Trauma Release Exercises Author of the book The Revolutionary Trauma Release Process

· Dr. Gabor Maté

Author of <u>When the Body Says No</u> The Wisdom of Trauma Film-- <u>https://thewisdomoftrauma.com/</u>

RESOURCES 3 of 3

Heart Math Institute

https://www.heartmath.com/

- Online Traditional Psychotherapy (plenty of resources exist, but I have used) https://www.betterhelp.com/
- Amy B. Scher

Author of <u>How to Heal Yourself When No One Else Can</u>

<u>How to Heal Yourself From Anxiety When No One Else Can</u>

<u>How to Heal Yourself from Depression When No One Else Can</u>

<u>This is How I Save My Life</u>