

Thank You For The Pain

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When you know the truth the suffering ends.

All paths ultimately lead to the Source of everything; some are a little more circuitous than others.



The term *pain* means many different things to different people. But when I use it here it means—*any and all physical and emotional sensations that you would not usually elect to take on*. Since pain is about your perception in the moment, your definition of pain may dynamically fluctuate.

As you read, do it with not just your mind, do it with your body. Set an intention to allow all physical sensations and emotions to arise and become present in your body. Your body-response is the body's way of acknowledging deep truths that you already know. You cannot be told any new spiritual truths. You can only be reminded of forgotten truths that are already imbedded in every cell of your body.

Your body and the emotions that run through it, are the most important communication gifts your spirit receives. Your body starts to react to external events well before your mind reacts. Pain is a message-waiting alert telling you that there is a truth you need to know. All physical and emotional pain, no matter how big or small, is the direct result of your error from truth.

When you set and live the intention to use pain as the trigger that bring you present, you can then hear the message you need to receive (Figure 1). Source sends you messages all the time; these messages are truths. Once you are present and hear

the truth, pain has served its purpose; the pain ends. Truth is the antidote that rids the pain.

Figure 1

INTENTION SETTING

Set your intention to always use pain to trigger you into the present moment. You can also use this method to set intention for anything.

When you set pure intention, void of expectations, you are free from the pitfalls of being attached to any outcome; you experience a peace and knowingness deep inside your core. Pure intention attracts what we desire; to others, we appear to be lucky and magical.

1 Pause for a brief moment, close your eyes, take a deep breath or two. Visualize yourself observing a painful moment while not reacting to it. Silently, or audibly, say the following words without regard to your feelings about your ability to live your intention, or about your stories on pain.

“Pain is any and all physical and emotional sensations that I would not usually elect to take on.

I intend to use my pain as a trigger to immediately bring myself present and observe my thinking mind.”

Now that you’ve set your pain intention, you’ll never have to set it again. You can choose to redefine your pain intention or create a new one about something else. But, the one you just set is complete and is good for the rest of your life. If you’ve spent more than 60-seconds on your intention setting, then you are probably overthinking it [reads: setting expectations].

2 Live your intention. For the next twenty-one days, every time you become aware of any type of pain, notice how long it takes you to come present and become the observer. In that moment, notice how you feel about playing this game. See if you have expectations. The way you’ll know is that you’ll have some thoughts and emotions about the process of using pain to trigger presence. Your thoughts and emotions may include what you judge as *good* emotions like happiness, excitement, etc., or *bad* emotions and thoughts like, “this is a stupid exercise,” or, “I’ve totally figured this out”. Whatever your feelings and thoughts, if they are strong, chances are you have some expectations that the exercise should work differently. It’s human nature to experience this. However, if you can keep the exercise going for twenty-one days, I promise that you’ll see an amazing transformation in using pain to bring you present.

Some of us have been taught that certain emotions, thoughts and physical sensations are either good or bad; we’ve learned to hold them inside and resist them [reads: block our energy flow]. The concepts of good and bad are religious constructs, not spiritual ones. In the spiritual world, our internal world, there is no good or bad; there is only truth or error. When we error, we are neither good nor bad; we have just erred from truth. Pain is not a punishment, it is the result of error and is a gift that points us back towards truth.

Love, the radiant joy of being present and the unshakable peace that comes with it, are the three aspects of your connectedness with the Source. They are not emotions. They are states of being. They are not subject to the universal law of opposites where everything has its polar opposite. Emotions are an amplification of your thoughts that originate in the false self that is mind-identified with external things. Sometimes you experience the short-lived pleasure side of the pain/pleasure cycle and misidentify it as joy. Pleasure always comes from outside. Joy always comes from inside, as does love and peace. Your connectedness cannot be taken from you.

Many of us walk our paths and look outside ourselves for fragments of happiness, pleasure, security, validation, a sense of belonging and hope. Sometimes we fail to realize a truth that is already inside us: *You are already connected to the Source of everything and have been since before you were born into this world. Through your connection to Source, you have non-linear and unrestricted access to all that has been, all that is and all that will be. You already have love, radiant joy and unshakable peace if you will only allow it.*

The True Self

Your true self is the subtle energy body that lives within your physical body; it is Source looking through the windows of your eyes. You are not your emotions; you feel your emotions. You are not your thoughts; you are aware of your thoughts. You are not your body; you look at it through the mirror and experience the physical world through its eyes, ears, nose and skin. Your true self is the silent *I am* who watches the false self, the ego. (Figure 2)

As you become aware of your thoughts you also become aware that you are listening to a voice in your head. As you listen, do it without any judgement about what you hear. Don't condemn or laude it—Just watch it and allow it to be. If you are judging it, you've stopped observing it and have once again identified with it.

When you are listening without judgement, and are aware that you are listening, a new dimension of consciousness has come in. You sense the presence of your true self. This sense is not a thought, it arises from beyond the mind; it is the state of *being*—the state of *I am*. This state is your direct and toll-free connection to Source. Being is something you can only know with your heart, not your mind. If you look at being, it will evaporate. If you think of being, it will run away. If you strive for being it will elude you.

Figure 2

FIND YOUR TRUE SELF

Use this exercise to help you get into the present moment.

1 Pause for a brief moment. If your situation allows, close your eyes.

2 Take seven full and continuous breaths in and out. Count five-seconds on the inhale and five-seconds on the exhale. Continue right into the next breath; do not pause when your lungs are full or empty.

3 While breathing, visualize stepping out of your body, standing next to it and looking at it. Slowly scan your body; start at your feet and work up to your crown. Relax your muscles. Without judgement, observe the physical sensations, not emotions, in each part of your body (temperature, texture, pressure, tingle, ache, dull, sharp, etc.). Notice how your skin feels where your feet meet the floor, or the tenseness of your muscles.

4 Observe your thoughts. As you are observing your body sensations, draw your attention towards the chatter of your thinking mind. Observe your thoughts without judgment or condemnation. Stay uninvolved with them and just watch them. Notice how your thinking-mind may want to take control of this exercise, draw you in and end it; just continue breathing and observing.

You are now watching the thinker, the ego, the false self. The part of you that has stepped outside your body is the true self. When you are identified with the true self instead of the false self, pain relief is delivered to you. Your pain is replaced by love, joy and peace.

Bill was a 45-year-old man who had recently made a commitment to improve his tennis playing skills. He played daily matches and was committed to effecting substantial improvements. Bill attended clinics, took private lessons, practiced drills, and read books about playing tennis. Still, he was not able to see the results he expected. One day, he inadvertently stumbled into a moment of presence; for a brief moment, he experienced a state of being. Bill told me about his experience:

“A few years ago, I elected to end my corporate television career and exit that industry. Intending to understand who and what I was without my business identity, I decided to take up the game of tennis. As usual, I decided to go with a full-immersion program. I easily secured a job as the Marketing Director for a local tennis club. Part of my compensation was intensive training from the head coach. Not including my marketing activities, I spent about 35+ hours per week playing singles tennis. Within six months, my skills progressed from a novice-park-player to a tournament-level-player.

One day, while playing a match, I got angry about something and decided to focus that anger into my game. At that moment, my playing ability rocketed upwards and went off the scale—my body was doing things that my mind would usually not allow. My movements, hearing, sight and action

were perfect. I experienced a *quiet knowingness*. I was in some magical place; I named it the 'Glide'.

With my eyes wide open I was experiencing tunnel vision. I looked through a small opening and could only see the ball. It appeared to be two times its usual size—I could see its rotation and texture. Everything around the ball appeared darker and blurry.

My movement was easy and my body effortlessly did exactly what was needed to achieve the goal of winning. The knowingness I possessed was quiet and peaceful. Time slowed to a point where it was a foregone conclusion that I would hit the ball and return it to the exact point I intended. Electric vibrations ran up and down my entire body creating goosebumps.

I only stayed in the Glide for a few points. When I started to think about what was happening, the bubble popped and my skills went downhill fast. I thought, *this must be what the pros do—get into this place on demand*.

I was excited about stumbling into this secret portal. However, it was quite difficult to reproduce. Getting mad enough to trigger the Glide was a painful and negative experience; I was usually unwilling to attempt going there very often. At most, the Glide has only lasted for 2 – 4 minutes. I have been unable to reproduce another Glide right after being in one.”

Bill accidentally discovered his inner truth about using his pain [reads: anger] to trigger him into a state of presence. Although he was not conscious of that truth, it was programmed into every cell of his body. For brief moments, his false self was quieted. His body was allowed to do what it already knew how to do. His thinking mind, his ego, was not blocking his energy—he was in a state of being. When his unobserved thinking mind resumed its chatter, his state of being vanished.

The False Self

To many, the word *ego* means different things. It is used here to mean the false self that you create by identifying with your compulsive thinking mind.

Your ego is born of all the stories you or others have created or will create. The stories are about our parents, the places we have come from or visited, the jobs we have held, our station in life, the people we have met or loved, etc. The stories are all part of the false self that is ego. Because your false self identifies with all things external, it is subject to the universal law of opposites.

You have two types of pain: the pain you have created in the past that still lives on in your mind and body, and the pain you create now. The majority of human pain

is unnecessary. It is self-created as long as the unobserved thinking mind runs your life. The pain you cause today, even physical pain that is inflicted on you by another, is always some form of resistance to the truth. On the level of emotions, the resistance is some form of negativity. On the level of thought, it is some form of judgment.

The level and duration of the pain is directly related to your level of resistance to the present moment. Pain does not want you to observe it and see it for what it is; a message-waiting alert telling you that there is a truth you need to know. The moment you observe, allow and breathe in the pain, you break your unconscious identification with it. Your pain starts to decrease. Once you are present, and know the truth, your pain has accomplished its purpose and ends. If you come present, reduce the pain but do not learn the truth, your pain will increase and continue until you seek and find the truth.

Have you ever watched a professional tennis match and noticed how some players straighten their racquet strings after a difficult point? It appears that they are doing just that, straightening their strings. In reality, they don't need to straighten their strings. The racquet works just fine with the irregular string spacing caused by intense play. They are using a simple and effective method of triggering their own presence. When perfectly aligning their strings, they are forcing themselves to visually and mentally focus on the strings (texture, color, etc.) and the spaces between the strings (the symmetry). While they are present, their ego is unable to live in the past (*I can't believe I lost that point... What a great point I just made*) or the future (*I need to make this next point if I'm going to win...*). Because they are fully present, their ego is quiet and unable to create the pain of anxiety, fear, pride, or any other emotional excursion, that will distract them from doing their best. These players also know how to transmute pain into no-pain and presence; they use the pain of losing the last point (discouragement, frustration, etc.) to trigger them into the present moment.

The more you practice using pain to bring you into the present moment and become the observer of the thinking mind, the more you will find love, joy and peace (Figure 3, Figure 4, Figure 5).

Allowing does not mean accepting and supporting. When you allow, you acknowledge that something is, whatever it is, in the moment. Just because you allow something does not mean that you are supporting its continuance or end; it simply means you are acknowledging the unfolding of life which you cannot control. That does not mean that you can't take action to change it, but you must allow its energy to pass through you. You can't control it because it has already happened. What you can control is what you allow in the moment. If you resist and try to bend life to conform to your ego's stories, you will suffer pain. Things you don't want to happen will still happen, but they don't touch you as much when you

allow them to be. If you are able to allow life, and let it pass through you, you are free. Life cannot hurt you anymore. The worst thing it can do to you is hit the pain that is still inside of you. If you no longer care about life hitting your pain, because you know how to process it, you are truly free. Life hitting your pain becomes a gift.

Figure 3

SATELLITE DISH

Use this method when people or situations flood you with unwanted emotion and energy [reads: pain]. Try it when standing in line with a crying baby or when another motorist yells at you on the highway.

This method uses the physical law of phase cancellation. When a signal from one source is met by its exact polar opposite, the signals cancel each other out and disappear.

1 Visualize yourself as a large satellite dish that is receiving an external disturbance (a crying baby, an angry person, etc.), identify the dominant emotion (fear, anger, etc.). Inhale the disturbance into your lungs. You are not accepting the signal you are just receiving, identifying and allowing it to be.

2 Name the emotion that is the polar opposite of the received emotion (fear < calm, anger < compassion). There is no right or wrong about the opposite word choice. It's the act of choosing to be the opposite of the incoming emotion that shifts everything.

3 Exhale the opposite emotion and visualize beaming the polarized signal back to its origin.

4 Continue until you perceive a significant shift in your pain.

You'll experience the shifting within seconds of performing the four steps. Initially you may find this difficult and awkward. Stick with it for twenty-one days. Once you've practice, it will come naturally and reflexively.

Figure 4

FLAMING HOT CANNONBALLS

This advanced method can be used for consciously creating non-resistance. Use it to let life pass through you instead of creating pain from resistance.

This method works well if you are already practiced at reflexively using pain to trigger you into the present (using the *Intention Setting* method) and have experienced regular success using the *Satellite Dish* and *Thank You For The Pain* methods.

1 Watch for early signs that life is shooting at you with opportunities to create pain. Visualize those opportunities as slow-motion flaming hot cannonballs heading straight towards your body. It works best when the cannonballs are viewed as harmless opportunities to play a game.

2 Visualize your body as being transparent. Invite the flaming hot cannonballs to pass through you.

3 Breathe in and watch the cannonballs pass through or around you. Emotionally focus on your gratitude for being presented with another opportunity to be your true self instead of your false self.

At first, some cannonballs may impact you because you are resisting. As you start to master this game, you'll no longer feel their impact; you'll start to experience joy, peace and amusement in situations that used to deliver pain.

Figure 5

Thank You For The Pain

Use this advanced method when you experience any physical pain (stubbed toe, back pain, etc.) or emotional pain (awkwardness, heart ache, etc.) in your body. Employ it at the very moment your pain has triggered you present as intended (see Figure 1).

1 When you first feel pain, silently or audibly say “Thank You.”

You do not have to feel thankful, you just have to create the thought. This step is thanking your body for sending you the message-waiting alert telling you there is a truth you need to know.

2 Visually and emotionally focus on your body sensations and inhale the pain (don't hold your breath). Notice all your tight muscles and release your resistance by softening them. As you slowly and fully breathe, invite the pain to manifest its maximum power over you; talk to it and treat it as the welcome visitor it is.

3 Silently or audibly say the following words -

“I hear the message-waiting alert. What is the message I need to know?”

This step is about asking Source to show you the truth that you are missing.

4 Listen for that still-small-voice. If you are present and quiet enough, you will hear the truth. When Source tells you the truth, you'll be able to separate it from the chatter of your thinking mind. When the truth message comes, it floods your body with a wave of physical and emotional sensations. You *know* it's the truth.

Steps 1 and 2 almost happen simultaneously and take less than ten seconds to do. While performing these first steps, you'll experience a measurable reduction in your pain. You may be surprised by how little the initial flood of pain, especially sudden physical pain, actually makes it to your senses.

It may take you a little more time to get through steps 3 and 4. Sometimes, especially when you are receiving pain in the moment, you are unable to quiet yourself and hear the truth. You may have to wait until you're able to sit in mindful meditation. Just observing yourself decide that you are not yet ready for steps 3 and 4, prepares you for the moment you will be ready.

Give yourself at least twenty-one days to make this a new habit. Be patient with yourself; you are unwinding years of habitually resisting painful events.

The Pain-Body

Unless you have learned to come present and become the observer of the ego, all the emotional pain you experience gets stuck inside you and combines with all of the other pain you have accumulated in the past. This includes pain you have suffered in your childhood while growing up in an unconscious world. This is the

pain-body. Once it has taken you over, you want to create more physical and emotional pain as the perpetrator, the victim, or both. You are not conscious of this, of course, and will heatedly claim that you don't want pain. If you become the observer, and look closely at your thoughts and actions, you'll see that they are designed to keep the pain going, for yourself and others.

The pain-body has two states: active and dormant. In a person who is generally happy, the pain-body may be dormant most of the time. It may only activate in certain situations such as relationships, situations that link to past moments of fear, abandonment, physical trauma, emotional hurt and so on. When it is ready to awaken from its dormant state, a simple word, sound or action may launch it into its active state. In deeply unhappy people, some pain-bodies may be active all the time. Some may show up as harmless but obnoxious behaviors, such as a person who constantly complains and grumbles. Others may show up as a violent and vicious monster who lashes out at others and is highly agitated. It may try to hurt those around you or hurt you, the host. Thoughts and emotions then become deeply self-destructive and are often the source of accidents, illnesses and suicide.

It may be easier to observe the pain-body in others. However, it is more important to observe the pain-body in yourself. When observing your own pain-body, you may encounter intense inner resistance, especially if you have lived most of your life with your emotional pain-body and are heavily invested in identifying with it. If you are unwilling to observe it, you may find yourself attracted to advocating for those who have similar pain-bodies like parentless children, victims of violence and so on. The ego is cunning and deceptive. This advocacy-attraction justifies the continued existence of your own pain-body; it allows you to focus on fixing an endless stream of others instead of yourself. If you feel resistance to this truth, then you may be avoiding the observation of your pain-body.

The pain-body is the darkness of your ego. It's afraid of the light your consciousness brings. The ego needs your pain to create a crisis; it's survival depends on your unconscious identification with it and your fear of facing the pain that lives inside of you. But if you don't face it, you'll perpetuate the blocking of your energy. You'll be forced to relive the pain over and over again. The pain-body may seem like an ugly monster that you cannot bear to look at. It is only a puffed-up and ego-created phantom that cannot prevail against the light of your presence.

Set an intention to come present and observe the activation of your pain-body. Signs of pain-body activation may show up as unhappiness, emptiness, intense pleasure seeking, anger, depression, physical or emotional irritation, need for relationship drama, desire to hurt, somber mood, rage, resistance and so on. Note that these signs are all part of the earlier definition of pain: *Pain is any and all physical and emotional sensations that you would not usually elect to take on.*

Resisting Is Pain

You are addicted to compulsive thinking; your thinking mind is the *committee* that never sleeps. Your addiction provides you with a false sense of pleasure that ultimately turns into pain. Instead of doing its intended job of setting intentions, executing physical instructions, calculating, creating and so forth, it is compulsively generating a constant stream of thoughts. If your compulsive thoughts were heard aloud by others, they would surely betray you and remove any doubts about your insanity. The ego needs the committee in order to survive. If the committee is silenced, and you are present, it starts screaming for air and will ultimately die.

Your thinking mind cannot handle the infinite. The committee conspires to construct an alternative reality that consists of finite thoughts, fictitious boundaries and intricate stories about how life should unfold [reads: set expectations]. Some of these stories are banal: *people should be quiet during a movie, or, smoking is a filthy habit, etc.* Other stories are grand and hopeful; *a magical other will come and I will live happily ever after, or, I am an exception to the mortal human condition, etc.* The stories can then remain fixed and create your identity. Going beyond this alternative reality means letting go of your effort to keep things defined; you must enter the unknown. Ego abhors the unknown.

When the ego creates the false truth that you must control life, and you act upon it, you error. Your error creates resistance and blocks the natural energy flow of your body. The ego convinces you that by resisting what is, life unfolding around you, life will change and be under your control. The ego cleverly insures the perpetuation of itself. It constantly tasks you to control life. The task is impossible to complete; it creates a crisis and the ego is called into action as its own problem solver.

When the false self is your reality, it causes you to struggle every day to make the world fit what you have constructed. What it means to live spiritually is to not participate in the struggle. Allow the things that happen in the moment, to belong to the moment. They don't belong to you. They have nothing to do with you. You must stop defining yourself in relation to them.

Psychological And Clock Time

Eckhart Tolle discusses the usefulness of time and its nuances:

Learn to use time in the practical aspects of your life—we may call this “clock time”—but immediately return to present-moment awareness when those practical matters have been dealt with. In this way, there will be no buildup of “psychological time,” which is identification with the past and the continuous compulsive projection into the future.

Clock time is not just making an appointment or planning a trip. It includes learning from the past so that we don't repeat the same mistakes over and over. Setting goals and working toward them. Predicting the future by means of patterns and laws, physical, mathematical and so on, learned from the past and taking appropriate action on the basis of our predictions.¹

Notice how much time you spend in the past or future using psychological time. When you make reservations for your Hawaiian vacation, you are in clock time. Even though your thoughts are about the future, you are using clock time to be present. Practical use of clock time creates pure intention. If you enter into psychological time and start to emote about how good the weather will be in Hawaii, how you hope your flight will be easy, and so on, you are in psychological time and are setting expectations. Expectations are the stories you create about the way vacation *should* unfold. You receive pleasurable excitement and anticipation while dreaming of your Hawaiian vacation; the thinking mind feels like it is in control. When you daydream about how good the Hawaiian sun will feel on your skin, a rainy day in Hawaii will cause you to resist the truth of the rainy day [reads: pain]. If you had only set an intention to enjoy the weather while in Hawaii, then a rainy day would just feel like life unfolding around you.

Consciously or unconsciously setting expectations creates a path to pain. The depth and intensity of your expectations are directly related to their potential for causing you pain. The more you invest in psychological time, the higher the potential pain.

Be present as the observer of your thinking mind. Notice how much your mind is in the past or the future. Notice how it wants to escape the present moment and imagines the future as better or worse. If the future is worse, it creates anxiety or fear. If it is better, it gives you pleasurable anticipation or hope. Don't judge or analyze your observation, just notice it. Observe your thoughts and reactions, feel the emotion. Don't identify with your observations and feelings by making a problem out of them. As you observe the moment, you'll notice something more powerful than your thoughts and reactions: the still and true self behind it all.

The ego has an insatiable appetite that binges exclusively on the past and the future. The present is poison to the ego and threatens its very existence. It needs past time and future time to remain alive and deceive you into believing you are in control. Ego keeps you resisting what happened in the past. It creates hopes or fears about what will happen in the future; this is the big lie of the ego.

¹ *The Power Of Now— A Guide To Spiritual Enlightenment*, p. 56.

Your hope keeps you focused on the future where you believe that something, or someone, will bring you happiness, or some relief from your physical or emotional pain. Your fears keep you stuck in the past and trigger familiar destructive patterns that insure you remain in the not-now.

When you are truly present, and in the moment, you are incapable of having hopes, fears, desires or pain; you are just *being*. When you come present, your ego is temporarily quieted and the committee stops its yammering. Judgement is suspended. The present moment is not good or bad, it just is. Depending on how deeply you are addicted to the committee, or how practiced you are at staying present, your ego begins to scream for attention; it is hungry and fears its own death. To escape its death and insure its survival, the ego creates pain that it, and only it, is suited to manage. You lose your presence and are yanked back into the not-now. When truly present, there can be no pain because the ego is unable to attach a false meaning to the moment. Until you learn to use your pain as a trigger to bring you present and stay there, the cycle will continue.

As life unfolds around you, regardless of the stories you've made up as to how it should unfold, you have a choice to do three things: resist it, cling to it or allow it to pass through. Each moment you experience, whether you label it good or bad, must be allowed to pass through you.

Reflexively, your ego wants to resist external disturbances that are not in support of the stories it has created, and label them as bad. It convinces you to believe that resistance will change things and make the story turn out as originally planned. Your resistance gives energy to the very things that your stories say you don't want. The energy gets stuck in your heart.

Stuck energy manifests as physical and emotional pain that keeps us from experiencing love, joy and peace. All the energy that you have caused to get stuck in your heart builds up to a point where almost no energy can pass through. The little bit of energy that makes it into your consciousness must first trickle through the negative blockage. Eventually you'll find yourself in a state of depression and desuetude.

Labeling external happenings as *good*, is one of the most fraudulent ways that the thinking mind gets you to identify with it; it compels you to cling to those moments. Clinging is one of the most primal acts. Because some happenings stay in your consciousness and some pass right through, your sense of awareness relates more to the ones that remain. You use them as fixed points that create a sense of orientation, relation and security in the midst of internal and external change. The ego wants to cling to the seemingly-good impressions so you can relive those feelings again and again; the ego keeps you in the past so it can continue to live.

The good impression energy needs to pass through you just like the bad energy impression. Resisting and clinging blocks your energy and manifests as pain. Some have such an ego-investment in holding on to good feelings, that the mere suggestion of letting good feelings pass through you, instead of clinging to them, seems like heresy. The ego complains, “*but can’t I just cherish this precious moment forever?*” Check your body right now and see if you feel resistance to this truth. If you are resisting, you’ll feel the ego’s protest: “*there is no way I should live my life and not hang on to those good feelings. Who would I be if I couldn’t do that?*”

When you are identified with the false self, the thinking mind, you block yourself from being present. You create pain—your body is telling you that you are blocking the truth that your soul is so desperately wanting to reconnect with.

When the soul sees the incongruity between the way you are living and the way truth guides you to live, the soul may protest with desuetude. Jungian Analyst James Hollis has written about how the soul wants to reconnect with the truth.

Desuetude is a protest of the soul which autonomously removes energy from us because it does not approve of how the ego is investing it. Such a powerful statement from the unconscious may be ignored, but then we may expect our symptoms to intensify. The soul will not be mocked. Its rumblings, however unwelcome are really friendly warnings to change our lives. When we attend to that task, the energy returns.²

As children, some of us were conditioned and trained to distrust the body and disidentify with it. We were taught to identify with our mind and thoughts. Most of us can hear the warnings and admonishments of our parents still echoing in our minds: “Young man/lady, you better think about what you are about to do.” Or, “You go sit in your room and think about what you just did.” We learned that we were expected to be in our heads.

As we applied that destructive programming to our adult lives, it blocked us from our connection to Source and forced us into a state of fear and expectation. When is the last time you heard a parent advise their child to “*check in with your body and feel it... listen to what it tells you and follow its guidance.*”? That’s crazy talk! Right? What self-respecting parent would tell their children to not think and let their bodies give them the truth instead of their heads? A conscious parent who identifies with their true self would say that.

Daily life offers many opportunities to resist or cling. When you see an opportunity coming, do not touch it or get involved with it. Make it a game (see Figure 5). Observe it and observe how your thinking mind wants to control it. Relax your shoulders, soften your core muscles and breathe deeply. Visualize yourself as

² *Swamplands of the Soul—New Life in Dismal Places*, p. 76

transparent and invite the disturbance to pass through you. Remember to also do this with things the ego may label as good; let them pass through you too. Within moments, it will offer no more power over you. Within moments, it becomes a distant memory that gets filed away as something that was not good or bad—it just was.

Start believing in the wisdom of your body. Change your old programming; become present and notice when you are in your head. Tap into your heart and notice the avalanche of truth you'll receive, if you will only allow it instead of trying to create answers in your head.

If you have already started on your pain-into-no-pain-journey, you are already influencing those who are on the same path, or at least seeking that path. You are brightening the corner where you are. Those who don't know about the path, but are ready to walk it, will be attracted to your light. They will find the path and know where to walk.

You can accomplish all of this without trying—you just have to be present and let your light to shine. It's so simple it's profound in its simplicity; it does not need to be impossible and complicated.

Ours is not to create the path, it's simply to walk the path that has always been there waiting for our light to shine.

Knowing that I have the power to receive the gift of pain, find the truth, transmute the pain into no-pain, and replace it with love, joy and peace, I am humbly reminded of the sacred old So Hum meditation mantra: ***I am God and God is not separate from me.***
