

Getting to Neutral :

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A Building Block approach to Restoring Yourself During and After Divorce.

by

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Stephanie Moses

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A Note From Stephanie

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I wrote this book to help you. That said, if you're reading a certain part and you just want to get to the exercise or skip to a different part then please do, please get the help you are looking for here. I know that each and every tool works, but only you can reach out, grab it and use it.

65 I believe that to make real change for the better in your life, whether it's emotional or physical, you have to first address three realms. First, you can use your conscious or cognitive thoughts to help you get to a place where you know you're ready to actually do something about your situation. Second and third (although not necessarily in that order), you need to engage your "supercomputer" subconscious mind. And you need to "correct" the patterns of both your body and your mind.

70 If you can address each of these three areas with gentle, yet powerful therapies, you'll see rapid permanent change.

Hypnosis is one therapy that can help a lot. Hypnosis helps you find relaxation and the "good feelings" that go along with it. You need those feelings. They're the fuel that will help you desire even more good feelings, motivating you to continue on your healing journey.

75 Many of us have struggled for so long that we've locked up our feel good and just relax responses. If you can get just a taste again, you'll remember.

EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique) is another therapy that helps you not only stop negative emotions, but even remove the physical manifestations that these emotions can cause. EFT helps when you don't know what your core problem is. It can help you reach a place where you feel strong enough to proceed into deeper emotional territory.

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I choose love.

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Foreword

Everyone wants to be strong, independent, a whole person. But when you've suffered some trauma or pain, sometimes it can be hard just to get out of bed in the morning. Even if you believe that you have hope for a brighter future, how do you get through *today*?

That's what *Getting to Neutral* is all about. The subtitle, *A Building Block Approach to Restoring Yourself During and After Divorce* says it all. Stephanie was a child of divorce, then years later lost the father who meant everything to her, and then ultimately endured the pain of an unwanted divorce herself. She has survived by using these techniques every day, and now she wants to share with you what she has learned on her journey.

The things Stephanie will teach you in this book are simple and straightforward. Anyone can do them. Although every approach in this book is specifically designed so you can do it entirely yourself, they also work in concert with any other therapies. In fact, they can actually improve your overall results. If your search for happiness and self-love has left you drained, this book will bring you much-needed rest.

For now, right in this moment, you can use Stephanie's principles to help you face each day with strength, courage, and most importantly, peace. Perhaps best of all, you can mix these methods with any other therapy or spiritual approach to self-improvement.

You need to do whatever helps you. But this book is about that first step: Getting on your feet today, getting to a neutral place that will allow you to move forward with any approach you choose.

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Thoughts on thoughts

130 There's a lot going on in your life. If you've just been through a divorce, there's probably *too much* going on in your life. But what if I told you that you could feel like you had some control again? Even better, what if I could show you how to take control of how your thoughts affect you? What if you could actually roll with the punches and still be able to deal with it all? How does that sound?

There *is* a way. It's within your power, and it's much **closer** than you think. By the time you're finished with this book, you'll have many practical strategies that you can use every day to feel better...immediately.

135 Part of what's happening in your life is habit, how you think about things when they happen. Part of it is your coping mechanism, how you react or respond when there's something you need to deal with. By now, we've all heard of the power of positive thinking. But what's going on is actually biological, neurological, chemical,...even electrical.

140 Much of what you read here has been taught before, some of it for thousands of years. I don't have the time and you don't have the time for me to convince of how much power you have over how you feel and act. Just know that I have been in your shoes and these are the answers I have for you. Trust in the good you can do, even in little bits, even if over and over again.

A good friend of mine read this book and said to me, "You know, when they say 'sticks and stone may break my bones, but words can never harm me' they are so wrong." "Never were falser words spoken, it is the words we hear that cause the damage, the words outside and inside that cause the dents."

145 For some of us, even when things are fairly positive, we have a nagging feeling that things are not okay, and we focus on the negative. This is why we see movie stars who seem to have it all having breakdowns.

150 Negative thoughts and fears can overtake our mind and cause great discord and discomfort. Now, add to this a situation where things *are bad*, where you're struggling and fighting for yourself, and it can seem impossible to ever get your head above water. This is especially difficult when it seems like the outside world can't understand what the problem is.

155 There are many reasons why we do this, but what is important for you to know right now is that the tools I will give you in this book will stop the pain and panic and allow you to move forward.

160 **Neutral**

Where we're going to start is actually a much simpler goal: *neutral*. Rather than allowing ourselves to have these great highs and incredibly low lows, we're going to aim for balance. People ask me all the time, "How can I think positive things when all this bad stuff is happening?"

165 The answer is found in a three-step process. We'll talk all about how to do each of these things in detail later. For now, here's what you need to know:

First, stop the giant flurry of **negative thoughts, doubts and fears**—that's getting to neutral.

Second, start inserting positive thoughts and actions that are a believable jump for your mind.

“ *First, stop negative thoughts, doubts, and fears...*
Second, insert positive, productive thoughts...
Third, engage your subconscious mind. ”

170 This is usually an internal change. It takes repetition and vigilance.
Finally, the **third** step is to start to **engage your subconscious mind**, through hypnosis and repetition. We'll work together to discover a productive thought process that you'll enjoy and feel comfortable doing.

175 The most important thing you need to remember through this whole process, and especially now, at the beginning, is where we're headed: **We always want to get to neutral. At that point we're stopping the damaging thoughts...and that's a huge step toward healing!**

Getting to neutral

180 Neutral is where you can walk, and you can talk, and you can start to be yourself again. Neutral is your starting point on the way to positive. At neutral, you can function in your daily life, and you can see options and start to move in the direction you choose.

185 Maybe you feel stuck, like you can't make the positive changes in your life that you want. Think about what that is for you. Is it to feel more happiness? To be happier with your family? To change your career? To lose that weight (finally!)?

185 You can't do any of those things while you're in the middle of the terror storm, where the negative thoughts are bombarding you, getting the better of you. You're struggling under water. Let's get you some air.

190 This book is designed mainly for people where neutral seems above you—perhaps even *far* above. You need to reach a place where you have some fortification, where you can actually prevent negative energy from even getting in in the first place. We want your mind not spinning out of control, but where you can stop it at will. Stopping it is the first step, and that will position you where you will have created space for your positive feelings to finally gain a foothold.

195 I'll teach you a few simple "tricks" to stop your mind from going there. You might be thinking, *I know there's a lot of buzz around affirmations, so why not just switch to those?* Affirming things is great, and I'll address those later.

200 But look at it this way: if you're struggling under water, how about we get you up to the air first? Later, when you've gotten some good rest, we'll work on the whole flying thing.

The problem with affirmations for you for right now is that frankly, your subconscious mind will simply reject any jump that's too big. In fact, it's likely to start bringing up more proof of the bad to your mind.

205 So I'm going to take you there in steps: first we'll get to neutral, and then later we'll get you to positive.

I want to help you avoid any negativity about doing this for yourself, so your first tool is right here – it's very simple and very powerful. As soon as you have a doubt or fear slip into your thoughts you're using up brain power that could be repairing and restoring, read this now and start using it immediately..

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Canceling: Stopping the Negative Thoughts

You may have heard someone say before, "If you want to achieve different results than you've been

*Neutral is your starting point...
“you can function in your daily life...start to move in the direction you choose.”*

getting, then you're going to have to do something different." Canceling is a great example of that.
215 The moment, the second—the very instant—that you feel a negative, painful, hurtful thought coming on, capture it and cancel it:

"Cancel, cancel, cancel."

Cancel it as many times as you need to. Cancel it until you cannot remember what it was.

220 There you go. You're welcome. What? Are you thinking, *Stephanie, that's ridiculous! That's too simple! No way could that work.* Then try it. It works. It really is that simple.

I guess the only way it could be simpler is if you only had to say "Cancel," once or twice, as opposed to three times. But of course we've already talked some about repetition, and we will some more before the end of this book. There's no denying its power.

"Cancel, cancel, cancel."

225 What sorts of thoughts does this work on? Well, the thoughts you're specifically on guard for are those which are not useful, not resourceful, or simply are not going to help you move forward to a more positive place, someplace like neutral.

230 Cancel any negative thought coming from within or without. That means even things we say in a self-deprecating humorous way should be canceled. For instance, "Oh, I'm so stupid" - right away, cancel it. If you really need the humor then say the opposite, "Oh, I am sooo brilliant".

Bring yourself to neutral this way whenever necessary – and don't be tricked into checking to see if it still hurts. In exactly the way touching a bad tooth shoots horrible electrical shocks throughout your mouth and body, these thoughts create a jolt to your whole system.

235 Is there some thought that you've had again and again, but you just can't seem to reach any sort of clarity on it? Then that's a prime candidate for canceling. Maybe it's a painful memory. Maybe it's just bad feelings or negative self-talk. Cancel them.

As you first begin to put this tool into practice, you need to verbalize it, actually saying it aloud. Once you've been doing it for awhile, that need will diminish, and you'll be able to just do it in your head.

But don't try to start there. Say it out loud, every opportunity you get.

240 If you're in the middle of a group of people, whisper it. If that's simply impossible, then at the very least, do it in your mind. The most important thing is to tenaciously begin to get control of these thoughts *immediately*, every time, the instant they start to pop up. You want it to become an automatic habit.

245 That means you're going to have to remember to do it. Remember earlier, when I told you I'd hold your hand? Consider this a hand holding moment between us. No matter what's going on, cancel those negative thoughts.

If you've just thought of a repeating negative thought, then cancel it right now.

250 Your subconscious mind, the part of you with all the memories of your lifetime, is kind of like a sweet little dog that wants to please you. Of course, this puppy has supercomputer abilities. So when you even hint at "bad memories," it just keeps bringing you the ball, over and over again, more bad memories, more pain.

Instead, cancel it every time it comes back. Don't stop canceling until it stops bringing the ball back. It's just that simple.

Get on your side. Be determined. Get to neutral.

255 This stuff works. I'll share this simple technique with clients in my practice, and one of the most satisfying aspects of what I do is the payoff they get when they actually do the work. They'll come in and we'll visit about how things are going, how everything's working. I always love to hear from a client that they canceled a thought, and now they can't even recall it to tell me about it. Perfect!

Canceling is the polar opposite of roadkill. With roadkill, you just can't stop replaying it. With
260 canceling, you've actually removed it so far from yourself that you couldn't call it back even if you
wanted to.
"Cancel, cancel, cancel."

Roadkill

265 You know how, when you're driving and you see a dead animal on the road, you just can't help looking
at it? You know it's going to be upsetting. And you know there's absolutely nothing you can do about it
at this point. The damage is done; it's too late. And yet, you find yourself unable to look away. Your
eyes and your mind are just magnetically drawn to it.

I've mentioned roadkill already several times in this book. Now I'll fully explain to you what I mean
by it. *Roadkill* is the word I use to describe that event where you just can't help looking at something
270 that's going to damage you, even though you're completely aware that there's just no good reason to. I
used to use this concept to explain why I occasionally enjoyed watching really bad movies. However,
during my divorce, the reality of it for me took on a whole new dimension for me.

Do you have any negative thoughts that just repeat and repeat, and you just can't seem to shut them
off? Regarding my divorce, my cycle was like this:

275 Blame them: *Why would he do this to us? How could he? What was he thinking?*

Blame myself: *Was it me? Was it something I did? I should have seen this coming. Maybe there's
something wrong with me.*

Defend myself: *No, I've done everything I could. I tried. I'm still trying. That can't be it.*

280 ...and on and on, in an endless circle. And then it just gets worse, intensifying and magnifying, as the
"reality," the gravity, of the consequences begins to dawn on you:

*What's going to happen now? How will I get by? What am I going to do for a living? How can I care
for my children? What if they get sick? What if I get sick, and I can't take care of them? Where are we
going to live?*

285 As if you're not in enough pain already, it's like you start searching out the most painful memories
possible and then *really* get yourself going. You start tearing yourself up, as if your soon-to-be ex and
the lawyers aren't doing enough.

That's roadkill.

I bring this up all the time...because it *comes* up all the time—whether it's in my practice, when I'm
talking with people in my seminars, or even just in casual conversations with people in various settings.
290 Almost everyone I know struggles with this at some point in their lives, and some people do constantly.
When you combine roadkill with a habit of negative self-talk, you end up in a circular pattern, where
you're just repeating painful, bad, hurtful memories or events. cycle.

That's why it's just so important to put a stop to it all. Even people who love you and want the best for
you may not be able to really help you.

295 Remember when I talked before about people who offer you unsolicited advice? It's not always helpful,
is it? Frequently, not only is it unhelpful, but it can actually be damaging. Hearing other people's
suggestions about "what you ought to do," or "what *I'd* do if I were in your situation," can cause your
subconscious mind to validate what you're feeling. You may find yourself replying to their casual
suggestion days later. This is the kind of repetition we want to avoid.

300 You have to stop it. You have to filter. You have to be on your own side. Tell yourself:

"Hey pal, I'm on your side."

Or, if you're feeling perky:

"I'm on my own @\$#& side, and that's that!"*

305 In these kinds of circumstances, when you're overwhelmed with negative input, and real, often negative things are happening in your life, happening *to you*, it's like your thoughts, your mind, and particularly your subconscious are a runaway stagecoach.

Be your own hero. Take the risk. Climb down between those horses. Grab those flapping reins that are dragging the ground. Get a firm grip, and pull yourself back up into the driver's seat.

310 This is your stage. Take control. Take responsibility. Take ownership. Get on your own side.

You've already learned to CANCEL thoughts. That's your quickest on-hand tool.

Saying the opposite

315 Another simple tool for dealing with negative self-talk is to say the opposite. (I told you it was simple.) Just like with canceling, if you don't believe me, I leave it up to you: you have to try it. What have you got to lose? Besides the negativity, the sadness, and the depression, I mean. Do you want those things? Well, what *do* you want? Then say that.

320 When you have a thought that's negative, say the opposite. Again, this is one of those things that you'll need to do out loud for a while, until you really get the hang of it. Eventually, you'll be able to just do it in your head. But start out talking out loud.

If you think: *"I just can't do this today."*

Then say aloud: *"I'm up for anything today. I can do whatever I need to."*

Sounds simple, doesn't it? It is! (And no, you don't have to believe it.)

325 If you think: *"I just don't have the patience to deal with this right now."*

Then say aloud: *"I have all the patience I need. This could not have happened on a better day. I can face this."*

If it helps, think back to our stagecoach analogy. You're the hero of your own life. Those negative thoughts are the bad guys with the bandannas over their faces, trying to hold you up. Take them out.

330 Attack them. Take the fight to them.

If you think: *"I just can't lose this weight."*

Then say aloud: *"I can lose as much weight as I want to."*

335 Often I find that people are consistently using negative self-talk in a very open matter. They'll say things like, "I'm just too stubborn," or "I'm too hyper _____." (Fill in your favorite.) As if these are badges to be proudly worn. These are great to reverse with an opposite.

In the 1987 movie *The Untouchables*, Sean Connery's character tells Kevin Costner's character what it's going to take to bring down Al Capone: "They pull a knife, you pull a gun. He sends one of yours to the hospital, you send one of his to the morgue."

If you think: *"I don't know how I'd ever get that job."*

340 Then say aloud: *"I can do that job. I'm going to have some great ideas that will get me there."*

Get on your own side. Don't let that negative self-talk, those negative thoughts even get a foot in your door. Be vigilant, and attack them mercilessly. What have they ever done for you? Then why would you want them around?

345 Don't get me wrong: I have to do these things, too. In fact, I wouldn't tell you to do things that I'm not willing to do myself.

You see, negative self-talk can really be very subtle. For example, I catch myself sometimes telling my son, who's a toddler, "Mommy just can't take insert random drama here anymore." But that wrong

thought goes directly into my subconscious, which immediately agrees with me because it wants to please me: *We can't take this anymore. Got it. Check.*

350 I mean, for quite some time during my divorce, I was barely touching life. Not even petting my horses. I wasn't laughing (really laughing) when my baby did cute things. In that same moment, I was actually sad, thinking, *I'm missing his babyhood.* I live on a farm, and I wasn't just breathing in the amazing nature all around me. I had stopped being 'me'. I know what it's like to walk through life wrapped up in panicked, fearful thoughts. And I'm telling you: You *can* start to feel better, and very soon, by doing

355 these things.

So instead, I make myself smile really big and I make myself say - ***quite sarcastically and even though it feels really silly as I'm doing it***—"Fantastic! Please scream, little boy. I can take this all day long." It changes everything, inside and out.

Here's another all-purpose one you can use: "I...love...this."

360 It's really powerful to make a mental list for yourself of all the things that you love. Tell your coffee, "I love you." Tell your pet, "I love you." Tell your child, "I love you." Tell your favorite lamp, "I love you." Whatever you have that you love, zoom in on that. Bring up the love you have for it and hold the feeling for as long as you can. Holding the feeling of love, especially unconditional love, for 15

365 seconds switches the chemical stimulus of fear and pain off. When you repeatedly stop the chemicals you are reaching neutral.

Tiger Woods: "I love this"

A few years ago, I saw a university research program on television that was all about "elite athletes in the zone." As an example of how elite athletes view competition and the stress involved, they told a story of Tiger Woods during a tournament.

370 I'll tell you, I know absolutely zero about golf. I don't follow it, don't watch it. But I know who Tiger Woods is, and of course in the clips I've seen of his ability, he really is just amazing.

He was in some really important tournament, and he was behind. Even though he was the number one golfer in the world standings, he had slipped down in this tournament, and his prospects for winning were not looking good.

375 Tiger's caddy had just told him the situation, and in this massive moment of incredible, intense pressure, with literally millions of dollars riding on just this one shot, he said quietly to his caddy... "I love this."

The researcher played up the angle that Tiger just naturally loves intense competition, and that he likes it even better when the odds are stacked against him. That may or may not be true. Who could say what

380 he was actually thinking at that precise moment besides he himself? What I saw looked like something else.

Tiger Woods has been playing golf since he was two years old. According to Wikipedia, he has more career major wins and more career PGA Tour wins than any other golfer actively playing today. Almost literally, he's been receiving coaching in golf his entire life.

385 In most professional sports—and especially in those involving a strong element of self- and psychological control, like golf—they don't simply coach basic physical technique. They also coach mental and spiritual fitness, at least as much as physical fitness.

I believe that Tiger Woods has had terrific psychological fortifying, and that he's been trained to say, "I love this," in precisely those kinds of situations. Certainly, he may have even trained himself to do it, to

390 look at each extreme challenge and embrace it as a personal growth opportunity, every time one presents itself.

Think about your own day, and how much input you have to deal with. Think about some event in

your day. Okay, now just imagine there were millions of people watching you do that, and tons of money was on the line. The level of filtering goes up exponentially. (Particularly in Tiger’s case, where there are actually people who want him to fail)

395 When you’re facing that moment, can you hold in your mind to every time you’ve made this exact shot before...or to every time you *didn’t*?

And just what was *he* doing? How did *he* do it? He was changing things around, rearranging his thoughts, his memories, his feelings. He was using simple, proven techniques, canceling negative thoughts. He’s learned to control the negativity, to filter for it, stop it, and turn it around so he can press forward.

400 You can, too.

Your life is happening, with or without your participation. Don’t miss it. Join in. Play an active role. **Remember who you were. Did you used to smile more? Did you used to laugh more? You know who you really are. That means you also know what to fight for. That was a great person. People loved that person. You loved that person. Guess what? You’re still that person. You’re a great person. Reclaim that person. Take that person back.**

405 Smile. Laugh. Find that joy again in your life, even if it’s based in the absurdity of your circumstances. *Do just those tree things, those three simple things: Cancel, say the opposite, talk about all you love.*

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What traditional therapy alone misses

Any traditional therapy eventually gets to the roots of why we do what we do. I’ve had *plenty* of traditional therapy, and while it works for many people, I can tell you it wasn’t the way for me when I was going through my divorce.

415 As children of divorce, we began psychotherapy at a young age. Then, throughout my life, my father always encouraged me to go to therapy when I needed help. But as I faced my divorce, I actually deliberately avoided therapy because of the pain I knew it was going to cause me. I already had

420 plenty of pain to spare, just thinking about everything that was happening. Going to a therapist and recounting my stories only made me feel worse each time I told them.

I just knew that I already felt awful, and going to psychotherapy wasn’t helping. It had helped me with specific issues in the past, but for this present pain, it just wasn’t getting me there.

425 I guess I first realized this when I was going to therapy after losing my father. Revisiting the story of his passing in a session...again...for the umpteenth time...drove it home for me. Addressing it over and over finally became so painful that I just “shut off.” Unfortunately, that time was for a long time.

430 Over the years, I’ve come to realize why that happened. I’ve learned that it’s because there’s something missing from the traditional therapy process. Now, please don’t misunderstand me. Please don’t misinterpret what I’m saying. If you have something that works well, use it. Therapy is a tool—*one tool*. There are other tools. Therapy is simply one tool in a whole toolbox.

435 I now believe the best way to get that help is through hypnotherapy, coupled with the use of other techniques to help, on a daily basis. And that’s exactly the point: If you’ve wondered if it could be easier, if you could feel better quicker, then please study these pages and do the techniques – you are in the right place.

“Therapy is a great tool, but it’s one tool... simply one tool in a whole toolbox.”

Chapter 1 Restoring yourself vs. creating a “new you”

440 Do you have some haunting memory of who you once were? Wouldn't you like to get back to that? To that place where you can just remember, *I felt good then*.

I believe that most self-help doesn't actually move us in that direction. Instead, it points us toward certain ideals, which may or may not be practical (or even reasonable) for us. If you're proud of who you are deep inside, your subconscious will reject any “new model” that fits some specific program.

445 **Your innate knowledge of what makes you strong and whole and happy is important. Use it.**

In my practice and in my workshops, I've met so many people who tell me that they feel like they've lost themselves to their marriage. They'll say things like, “I don't know where the person I once was went. Who I was is just gone.”

450

That's why I encourage people to first restore themselves. That positions you so much better to make deliberate, controlled, strong decisions about who you want to ultimately become. Once you're back, then you can allow that restored, whole person to make decisions about changing yourself.

455

“If you're proud of who you are deep inside, your subconscious will reject any “new model” that fits some specific program.”

Therapy in a vacuum

460 I believe that our subconscious minds might reject therapy because the “jump” in thought required is simply too big. Here's what I mean: There's a part of you that simply can't align with what the therapist seems to be hoping for you, and thus with their therapy. Especially if you are not even at neutral.

Therapy in a vacuum is what happens when your therapist just doesn't “get” how difficult things are in your real-life world. What I mean specifically is that the solutions they offer you are not immediately helpful or relevant. They're offering suggestions that would be much easier, much more realistic, to accomplish if life wasn't happening.

465

For example, I went to a therapist a few times after my divorce. I kept catching myself actually feeling animosity toward him as he would suggest assignments for me to try. I'd think things like, *Um... I have a two-year-old running around. I'm desperately trying just to pay my bills and keep my day-to-day life together. If not for those things... MAYBE*

470

I could write a list of my dreams and goals and prioritize them.

475

Do you see what I mean? It was a bad dynamic that wasn't good for either of us. Maybe you can relate. Maybe you've been there yourself. You need help that works on the spot and in the middle of it all. You need to know what “better” feels like physically and emotionally and then have the tools to at least get to neutral—time and time again—when things happen.

“Our subconscious minds might reject therapy because the “jump” in thought is simply too big.”

480 Frankly, you might not be anywhere near neutral. (I wasn't for years.) To me, neutral was up. *Way* up. All I cared about anything was avoiding the pain. My mind chose to accomplish that mostly by sitting on the couch like a zombie. I wished desperately that someone would come and take my hand, pick me up, help me. My body ached and my mind was fuzzy.

I wondered, *Where did I go? Can I get back? What's going on with me?* I know now, from my work, 485 that if a person can feel the peace of neutral, then they can start to imagine feeling better and better. Feeling better can help you start on a road back to yourself, back to the person you were born to be. My personal journey really began in earnest as I was going through my divorce. As I mentioned earlier, I wasn't finding relief, or solutions, in traditional therapy. That's when I started looking for other ways to get better.

490 I knew that I absolutely could not lose myself into another breakdown. I had to get (and stay) healthy and strong for my child. With that option off the table, I was able to be proactive and find other tools. That's what this book is about. I'm going to share each of those specifically with you, just like I share with the people who come visit me in my practice and in my seminars.

My first big step toward feeling better was to start hypnotherapy. The relaxation it gave me, and the 495 ability to vent out and eliminate those awful feelings, were lifesaving at that time. I then started using EFT and self-hypnosis actively in between sessions. As I gained some footing (in the form of neutral moments), I was able to create a blend of tools for any situation that came up.

You don't have 10 years to wait for your therapy to "work." You need to feel better *today*. You need tools that can get you to a place where, if you choose to, you can do the 10-year thing. The combination 500 of hypnotherapy and EFT has proven itself over and over again, both for me and for my clients. Your only job now is to ask yourself over and over "what work can I do *right now?*" And then do it!

3 realms: cognitive, subconscious, and personal energy

As we begin to help you feel better, one of the first things we have to do is open up the channels of communication between you and your inner self.

505 **1. The cognitive, or conscious, realm**

The first part of that equation is "you," by which I mean the *cognitive* you—that is, your conscious mind, what you might call your waking consciousness. These are your intentional thoughts, ones that you originate on purpose, and that you basically have control over. I want you to start to think of your conscious thoughts as **very powerful**, begin using this part of your mind for resourceful, productive 510 thinking. Your conscious thoughts influence every aspect of your life whether directly or through the effects they have on your subconscious and energetic patterns.

2. The subconscious realm

Your *subconscious mind* is the supercomputer that runs all your functions automatically—it holds all of 515 your memories and the "rules" and "models" that you live by. Most of the territory in your subconscious mind, you don't have much control over. When we refer to the "inner child," what we're talking about is that part of your mind which still runs by those rules and those models, even though they might not be practical anymore.

Of course, your subconscious also is that part of your mind that responds constantly (and usually 520 instantly) to the input that you're always receiving from your surroundings, from the things that are happening in your life. It's the part of you that's always trying to "protect" you, triggering emotions and feelings, that part of your brain activity that's harder to quantify or explain with words.

3. The realm of energetics

525 Human beings run much the same way machines do. Although we're made up of extraordinarily complicated mechanisms, our lowest-level functions take place based upon some pretty simple principles.

When you receive input through each of your five senses, nerve endings (neurotransmitters) are constantly sending impulses to your brain to tell you what's going on. Although these are actually
530 chemical reactions, scientists typically think of them as electrical impulses. Understanding these principles is what has allowed such fields of study as neuroscience to measure and examine how we tick. Much of what we experience from this chemical activity is perceived as emotions, very often overwhelming emotions because of the connection of these chemicals to our survival mechanism.

When I say *personal energy*, what I mean is the sum total of all those chemical impulses that are
535 forever pulsing through your body's systems. Your mind is as much a part of that complete system as any other part. However, it's actually much more important, since it's the center of the action. It's where everything gets sorted, decisions get made, feelings are measured and examined, and coping mechanisms evolve.

Precisely because it's a system with neurological rules and biological limitations, patterns tend to
540 emerge. That's why, over time, we see habits develop in ourselves. Habits are generally neutral. They can be healthy things that are good for us, or they can be unhealthy things that lead us down negative paths.

These patterns or trends are composed of those positive and negative energy flows, just like everything else in our body.
545 All the time in my practice and in my workshops, I'm telling people how important it is to pay attention to your personal energy patterns. You ignore them at your own peril. Our natural tendency is to try to protect ourselves. But as we mature, we learn to shut out or overrun the things we know to be true, even sensible. Some patterns have been set by what we've seen and learned in childhood. The important

550 thing to remember is that by addressing them in the following ways, you don't have to know 'why', you can just change to a better habit.

What is true in this physiological sense is equally true of our emotions and the coping mechanisms that
555 we develop as a result. Too many people simply ignore their own personal energy these days, mercilessly running their bodies without rest and the opportunity for restoration.

When you couple this stubborn refusal to recharge with our tendency toward the self-damage, that's a recipe for disaster. As a whole system, your body requires therapeutic time to regroup and rebuild to stay healthy. Especially your brain.

560

*Pay attention to
your personal
energy
patterns... You
ignore them at
your own peril.*

Chapter 2 – What you're going to need to do

Recognize communication

You need to start noticing all of the communication that's going on in yourself all the time, and in particular between your mind and body. Nerve transmissions typically occur at about 260 miles an

565 hour. That means that we have this huge amount of input coming from both inside and out, and it pretty much never stops, as long as we're awake. Even simply becoming aware of this activity in your life will help you begin to filter all that information in a much healthier way.

Start listening—*really listening*—to your own running commentary. Watch for the physical feelings that your body automatically associates with everything that goes on during your typical day. Recognize that every thing that happens, every thing that you feel, every thing that you think, are all affecting you, all the time.

570 Decide right now that you will filter out those things that are negative and unhelpful. In this book, I'll teach you the same specific strategies for doing this—the same ones that I teach in my workshops and in my practice. But for now, just recognize it. Be aware.

Promise Yourself

580 Promise yourself right now that you are going to take steps to feel better. Promise yourself that you will not be part of hurting yourself in any way. Promise that each and every time you will take a few moments to restore yourself.

Earlier I talked about therapy in a vacuum. That's not what I'm talking about here. I'm talking about small things, easy things. Baby steps. You can do this. You *have* to do this. Again, you're reading this book. That's a good start. Now just keep going.

585 You're living with your pain every day. No one else is living with your pain. Sure, maybe you have family, supportive friends, people you can turn to who can empathize with you. But they're not *living* it, not like you are. It's not actually a part of their everyday lives.

590 Even though other people can help you, they're not with you 24/7. You are. That puts the bulk of the responsibility directly on you. When you start to feel bad, when you need to start pushing up to neutral, you're the one who's going to have to do the work on yourself.

Consider this: the beauty of the approaches I'll offer you is that, most of the time, this work is *much* easier than feeling the pain. It's really just a little jump from simply letting the damage continue, to getting restored instead, but the payoffs are exponential, astronomical. The work is worth it!

595 Even with all the promise, still, this is a big responsibility that many people just won't take for themselves. I think it's because we've let it just become our nature to dwell in the negatives, reviewing and reciting the painful moments to ourselves. People might make the excuse, *That's just the way I am*.

Well, whether it feels fake to you or not, it's *your* responsibility to do the work. See for yourself. See what it does for you when you recognize, *Hey! I really do feel better*. And beyond that, **confirm** that you feel better. If you accept the responsibility, then you get to reap the rewards and benefits. In this

600 book, I'll give you many examples and exercises to make this clear to you. But you have to do the work. Are you ready?

What to do FIRST

605 You need to reconnect—or maybe connect—with the little you inside, what many people call their “inner child.” What happened that split you apart?

You see, at one time (perhaps even a long time ago) your subconscious had this innocent, childlike trust of your

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*Start listening —
really listening —
to your own
running
commentary...
Decide that
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that re negative
and unhelpful.*

*When your
subconscious
has shut down,
you can't take
risks anymore.
You can't be
brave.*

ambitions. Anything your conscious mind could come up with, you could try, and your subconscious
610 was like a little neighborhood friend, just tagging along with the bigger kid everywhere she went. Your
subconscious might have offered its opinion from time to time, but hey, it's just a little kid. You could
consider it or ignore it.

But then your conscious self allowed your subconscious to get hurt (or *dented*) one too many times, and
now it won't play with you anymore. Here's a practical example of what I mean: When I was going
615 through my divorce, I remember thinking, *How come I'm not myself? I used to be so self-secure, so
confident. I should just get up and fight for myself. Why can't I just brush off the insults like I used to?*
When your subconscious has shut down, you can't take risks anymore. You can't be brave. Your
subconscious chimes in: *But we always get hurt.* You can't take on new challenges, new relationships:
You haven't looked out for me. I tried to tell you, but you wouldn't listen to me.

620 Unfortunately, your little kid subconscious doesn't have the vocabulary and eloquence that your
conscious self does. Instead, what it offers you are abstract fears and sadness, physical and emotional
pain, maybe even a feeling of detachment from who you once were. Sometimes these cues are barely
tangible, and they often defy what our waking mind might consider "reasonableness" and "logic."
625 Sometimes they're really blunt, although you might still be missing the message. Some examples of
this include headaches (without any noticeable physiological cause), anxiety attacks, vague aches and
pains, and of course, tiredness. Lethargy and exhaustion are a huge road signs that your mind would
like to vent.

Fight, flight, or... freeze?

The natural, instinctual human reaction to trauma has often been described simply as *fight or flight*.
630 Have you ever found yourself in one of those modes before?

In my dealings with people, I'd actually add a third, which I think is much more common in our
culture: *freeze*. As you see what's going on, you hear it, you sense it again, your body picks up all the
signals and begins to react physically—your muscles constrict, your breathing becomes irregular, your
heart races.

635 In traditional terms, you're bracing for fight or flight. But in practical application, you're not allowed to
just beat somebody up. You can't run around the yard screaming and yelling. You can't drive your car
through the front of the bank.

You freeze.

What does that mean? Well, when you freeze, you get stuck.

640 When you get stuck enough times, it becomes a pattern (like
a habit) in your mind and physically, in your muscles.

You've probably heard that muscles have memory.
That's where that old saying, "It's like riding a bike," comes
645 from. Once you've learned how to ride a bike, with all its
complexities of movement and balance, it's really hard for
your body to forget. Everything in you has to work in
concert to pull that off. It's no accident that you can
remember.

In terms of getting into the habit of freezing, what that
650 means on a practical level is that you have triple feedback
programming your response:

First, your conscious mind is telling you that you have a problem.

Second, your subconscious mind is repeating, *We have a problem.*

“
When you get
stuck enough
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pattern (like a
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your muscles.”

655 And third, your body is tightening up—possibly even in pain—sending very clear messages, *Something is wrong. Things are not okay. I'm frozen.*

When an animal feels frozen, like there's no way out, they curl up and give in. What separates us from animals is our cognition, our ability to process conscious thought. We can say, *Hey! I'm NOT going to curl up and die.* But we may indulge in the human equivalent: we sit on the couch, avoid our friends, and shut ourselves off from the outside world.

660 **Get on your side**

State right now that you're on your side, and that's that. Create a definition in your mind where being on your own side also covers your children, so that it never feels like a conflict with being a parent. For example, if you're happy, then of course your children will be safe and healthy and thriving. Whenever I talk about being on your own side, it's for the purpose of getting you positioned to care for yourself so that you can both feel and be better. Even when it's a little uncomfortable on the outside, it will register deeply as trust. That trust will help you move forward.

665 As a child, sometimes I would get into such a state of anger and rage that I wouldn't know how to back out of it. I'd be past talking, screaming or swearing, exhausted and tortured yet still fighting.

670 My father used to gently say one phrase to me. He would say simply, "Hey pal, come on. I'm on your side." Even if I couldn't calm down immediately, it would always stop the torrent of awful feelings, that incredible loneliness, and the

675 feeling that I had gone so far that I couldn't come back. I knew he was on my side.

Although my father has passed away, his words still ring just as true today, and they help me care for myself now. I have learned to take the same stance between my cognitive self—as we discussed, my conscious waking mind—and my subconscious "child."

680 I can say to that person inside me, "Hey pal, come on. I'm on your side." It's a meaningful way to take the reins strongly, yet kindly. You can do the same thing for yourself. This is one of the first things we do in my workshops, and it's very *first thing* that you need to do for yourself now: Establish that you're on your own side, period. *Do this right now:*

*My dad would
say simply, "Hey
pal, come on.
I'm on your
side."*

1 Get still. **Take three deep breaths. Allow your eyes to close.**

2 **Count down** from ten to zero.

3 When you reach zero, imagine yourself at, let's say, at eight years old. Look into your own, younger eyes. **Recognize the difference** between that person and the person you are today. Since that innocent time in your life, you've had this sort of sad surprise: life has dealt you an awful lot of hurt.

4 Now **say to that younger you**, “*It’s okay. I’m listening to you. You’ve been very brave, but now I’m the grownup, and I’ll protect you. It’s okay. I’m here.*” You may want to say more than that. That’s fine—but just be sure that you speak kindly and gently. This is a frightened, confused child.

5 **Take a deep breath and gently come back.** Take just a moment to reflect on what you’ve just done. You’ve created a protection for yourself, a safe place inside. By aligning with your inner self, you’ve done a very powerful thing that’s going to help you going forward.

Be a good parent... to yourself

685 In getting in touch with myself and reestablishing that connection, it really helps me personally to imagine the analogy of a kind and loving parent. Some of us actually had kind and loving parents when we were children. Others might not have been so fortunate.

690 Either way, you’ve seen what it’s like, whether on television or in popular culture, or even when you would visit a friend at their house. Even if you didn’t get to experience it in your own home, you at least have some idea or dream of “what should be.”

Go with that dream. You’re a grownup now. What kind of parenting would you like to have for yourself? Well, what’s stopping you?

Be that parent for yourself.

Do it... even when you don’t want to

695 In my practice, I work with clients all the time who share with me how hard it is for them just to get out of bed some days, let alone to actually do the work that they need to do to feel better. And that’s okay. Most of my days were like that as I was going through my divorce, and immediately following it. (Honestly, I still have plenty of those days.)

700 But you have to be tenacious. You have to remember that you’re your own best friend in this process. You have to face yourself in the mirror every single day. And from now on, when you look in the mirror whether you’re able to smile or not, you’ll know that you’re on your side. That may seem obvious, but once you start to say it—and mean it—then the

705 real you can come back...and now you’ve got a team. No one else can do these things for you.

You have to be on your own side. Be the owner, coach, and MVP of Team You. That means practice. No team takes the field and wins consistently if they haven’t paid their dues. It’s not like they really like lifting weights at the gym, running in the stands, and getting stretched by a trainer. But it all pays off where it matters.

710 When you’re “in the game” of your everyday life, all that practice you’ve put in on your own comes automatically to the rescue. But that’s the trick: you *have* to do the work...even when you don’t feel like it, even when you don’t want to.

*What kind of
parenting would
you like to have
for yourself?
Then be that
parent.*

Use it like a caveman with one tool

- 715 Sometimes we reject what seems too simple. Especially at first. But the techniques I teach in my workshops, and many of which I'll be teaching you in this book, are simple because that makes them easy to use all the time and every day. I've found that although some longer processes are great – if they are too intricate or drawn out people lose momentum or skip them because of time constraints.
- 720 **You will always have 30 seconds to do EFT. You will always have the moments before and after sleep to do a little constructive work, You will always be able to silently reject negativity.** When something I teach you starts to work, grab hold of it, and don't let go. Don't just plan to use it at scheduled times of the day, whenever you think you can work it in. Learn how to use it every time you need it.
- 725 As I teach these practices to my clients, I remind them in this way: You're like a caveman with just one tool. The caveman doesn't have some long existential meditation on whether the rock will work—he just uses it. That's where you need to be with this. If it's a leap of faith for you, then take it right now. Get that out of the way—and get ready to use these tools.
- 730 I promise you they'll work. I know that they work, because I've used them all myself, through moment after moment of fear and pain, both for myself and for my clients. This is a very empowering idea. You *can* start to make a difference. You *can* start to change your patterns of response.
- 735 No matter what comes up, try what you know. What have you got to lose? Even if it seems like a particular tool or approach doesn't seem like it would apply to that situation, try it anyway. Worst-case scenario: it doesn't work, but then you're certainly not any worse off. More likely, you'll actually feel better, and the process will point you in a direction that you can pick up at a later time. Best-case scenario: it *does* work, and you've made yourself feel immediately better.
- Like so many things, repetition is key. Every time something comes up, address it with whatever tools you have. Most importantly, choose to protect and repair yourself each and every time – this messaging alone is invaluable to your bio-emotional state.

740 **Chapter 3 – Assess where you are**

Do you want your junk?

- Let's talk about some of the kinds of things that have hurt you over the years, and that you're still carrying around. I've heard hundreds of these kinds of stories in my practice and in my workshops. Maybe someone told you they haven't loved you in years, or that you're not what they want. Maybe they said you're just not what they want... anymore. Maybe a parent or some other authority figure told you that you haven't lived up to the expectations they had for you. Maybe your boss told you that the company just doesn't feel like you're "the right fit" for the organization anymore, or they have to right-size. Maybe you've tried every kind of diet, every kind of exercise, but it seems like the weight just won't come off, and you've given up.
- 745 All of those kinds of events represent big dents, genuine trauma that you're going to have to deal with sooner or later. If you leave it, it's not like your subconscious is going to forget. No, it will just keep replaying it silently in the not-too-distant background, affecting the rest of you, pulling you in a downward spiral. So you need to face it in a positive, constructive way.
- 750 We can talk all about the things that cause us to suffer, and we all have stories. The important question is: Do you want to keep it? Do you want to just keep hanging on to all that junk you've accumulated?.

Maybe others can't seem to empathize if your problems are beyond a certain threshold. Say your heart is broken, you're about to lose everything financially, and you're desperate to protect your children. Maybe other people just can't relate to something on that scale. Maybe they are too uncomfortable. It doesn't matter why, the point is very often during divorce, people we thought we could count on step away.

760 However, if you bring up how tired you are, if you mention your struggles with binge eating, they're right there with you.

Wouldn't it be healthier to just address those things in your life? To actually change them? I'll teach you how to get all that stuff out, but it's a process that honestly takes some time, effort, and perhaps most of all, will.

765 For right now, I just want to teach you some small ways to get back to neutral. That way, you can find the courage (and strength) to continue the rest of the way.

What are you holding?

770 One of the elements that I call "back doors to the mind" is how your body moves. There are very specific movements and exercises you can use to communicate to your mind with your body. But before we get to any of those, first we're going to study what I call *holding*—that is, the ways, the positions in which you "hold" your body (usually without thinking). As soon as you start to notice these patterns, you will catch the self-talk that goes with them. This is far more important than just relaxing muscles; it is the "back door" that will begin to place good, relaxed, calm feelings into your mind.

775 Many times, as you're in your bed, drifting off into sleep, it dawns on you, *Mmm... I'm almost all the way asleep*. However, you might notice that even at that very moment, even as every part of you is beginning to relax, beginning to drift off, you're still "holding" something, some part of your body. Maybe it's tension in your jaw.

780 This phenomenon doesn't only occur when you're about to go to sleep. You can notice it in any moment when you're very close to relaxation. For example, you may realize as you're driving your car that you're holding your leg or your arm in a certain way, that you're positioning yourself *just so*. Most of us shift our bodies from side to side and land one particular way, perhaps slumped over to the left. Certain positions just feel more comfortable, more *right* than others. As you begin to examine this, I

785 promise it will amaze you. Here's why taking stock of this information matters to us: Your body has tiny little message units networked just under your skin, *all over you*. They're primarily clustered around your joints, your centers of motion.

790 These nerve endings and groups, called proprioceptors, are always sending minute little messages to your brain, constantly gathering information about the environment around you. Although this may seem like just one form of input, it has a profound impact on you. Because

795 proprioceptors cover your entire body, they take in huge volumes of information. And they're extraordinarily efficient.

How that received information makes you *feel* affects your overall well-being. Do you want to change how you feel?

How received information makes you feel affects your overall well-being. To change how you feel, you have to change the information... or at least, how you take it in.

800 Then you have to change the information.
While you can't literally change your physical environment in many cases, you *can* change how you take it in. I'll show you soon the same techniques that I teach people in my workshops to accomplish this.

805 For now, I just want you to begin to pay attention to what you're holding. Are you curled forward, or are your shoulders hunched? Do you clench or stiffen your hands? Do you furrow your brow or bite your lip? Are you pushing against something when you drive or sit at your desk? Are you holding your head forward of your neck? (Check for this especially when you're driving or watching TV.) Here's something interesting about all of these positions, all these ways of holding yourself: Did you notice how all of those same words could be exchanged, almost literally, for emotional situations?

810 That's ultimately what we'll be looking for. As you get yourself into the habit of taking note of those, they'll begin to communicate clearly to you everything that's going on with you. Heightening your self-awareness in this way will ultimately help you to address whatever's bothering you, so you can deal with it productively.

3. Practice in front of a mirror

815 I'm almost embarrassed to admit this, but I can't put on a hat. I mean it. I can't put on a simple baseball cap. For some reason, every time I put on a ball cap, it's completely crooked, kooky, just goofy. As I'm pulling it on my head, my proprioceptors tell me it's right. It feels right. It feels like it's on straight. But it's not. Like, ever. I'm surprised every time I catch myself in the mirror, and I look like a four-year-old who's got his sun cap on sideways.

820 When we look in a mirror, we add a simple layer of feedback that we so often take for granted: sight. Take the time to watch yourself in a mirror and practice. Consciously "re-train" your proprioceptors, matching *how they feel* with *what's really going on*. Rest your posture and the look in your eye every time you catch yourself slumped and spaced. Pretend you're suddenly on stage or receiving an award – it doesn't matter which scenario you choose– just change the state of your body and mind as often as you can.

825 This is why dancers face a mirror as they practice: because if you, say, try to raise your arm directly out to the side, most people's arms will be nowhere near straight out to the side. I used to see this same phenomenon in my own personal experience as an aerobics instructor. Dancers have to look in the mirror and get that messaging again. We all need to be reminded. And we have to be deliberate about it sometimes.

830 Going back to my earlier point, I'm convinced that these adjustments are merely a reflection of our holdings. When we go to a relaxed state, we tend to favor one side, one position. It just *feels* right, *feels* "normal." We may have moved far away from relaxed and confident in our body and now it's holding. Simply look in the mirror and say to yourself, shoulders down, watch as your shoulders settle and saturate your mind with how it feels, what it looks like, which muscles let go to do it and which muscles acted. Do it again. Now add a 'label' to this, as usual you can get a little humorous here, my best transformation is Catherine Zeta Jones in the elevator with George Clooney (Intolerable Cruelty) looking flawless and untouched by the fact that he'd like to wring her little neck. Just pull the image into your mind and play the part, your body will respond and you will be surprised at how the mental aspect will align.

840 If our feelings, our emotions, are not coming out the way we want, then we can adjust them by making a complementary physiological, literal change. It forces our mind to adapt and change. Changing what you're physically holding can literally help you change what you're emotionally and psychologically holding.

845 **Experimenting on kittens**

Discussing this subject always reminds me of an experiment I read about many years ago, involving kittens. These researchers wanted to study force-feedback and the physiological effects that it has over time. They placed one kitten in an apparatus that was basically a mechanical harness. His movement was completely restricted, and he could only do what the harness made him do.

850 In the cage next to his, they wired up the other kitten with positional transmitters on his body. He had complete freedom of movement in his cage. When he would move, the wires would send messages to the harness on the other kitten, which would mirror the movements of the unfettered kitten. Basically, one kitten unwittingly controlled the other.

855 If the free kitten moved his head to look at something, the bound kitten's head was forced to move in the same direction. He became a slave to the other kitten's experience. (Even now, as I'm remembering this experiment, it makes me sad.)

So what happened? The harnessed kitten went blind.

860 If your mind is not allowed to control your body, eventually it will just give up. They have to work together, or they both suffer. If your body is forced to just settle for what's going on inside your mind—let's say, negative talk—then your body will live that out. If you allow the painful, negative occurrences in your day to fill your mind, it will want to retreat and shut off.

865 In a true emergency state, the muscles in our body tighten and stiffen so that we can propel ourselves. Especially the muscles along the spine stiffen or you'd have legs running fast with a floppy doll on top. This is all engaged from the primitive fight or flight part of our brain. Well, with daily stress and high emotionality, these muscles can be fired many times and sort of lock. They now reverse the information to the mind and send the message back that we should be running like hell. But as we've discussed it actually leads to a sort of frozen (blind like the kitten) state. It is also completely exhausting for the body. This is why physical relaxation has such profound effects on your emotional state.

870 Of course, you can send positive messages with your mind, as well: by loosening the tightened body, by decreasing the messages that say "tight, on alert, in danger, uncomfortable" you send a clear signal for the mind to move from an emergency state to a more resourceful, beneficial state. Even if that is just neutral for now, it is the rest you need to begin to restore.

875 ***Always think of changing your mind with your body and your body with your mind. Use whichever works at that moment.***

Chapter 4 – Dents

880 I have this theory about what happens that leads you up to the point where you find yourself feeling like an emotional wreck.

885 The Theory of Dents is simple: if you allow enough small emotional "dents" to accumulate, then one day your subconscious mind will no longer trust you. It's like that lifetime of dents builds up to a sort of misfire that overtakes you.

And what exactly is a dent? A *dent* is any little injury or hurt to our psyche, to our emotions, to our energy field, and thus

“ If you allow
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then one day
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to our well-being. Dents can be external or internal.

890 An *external dent* is when another person does something to you or says something that hurts you, whether physically or emotionally. Maybe one of your parents was abusive either emotionally or physically. Maybe a loved one was always pointing out your flaws. Those things both hurt, and they both originated from outside sources. Even after you've found a way to live with what was said, your mind has registered and recorded it.

895 *Internal dents* are those you inflict on yourself. These are psychological, like being critical or negative about yourself. Feelings of guilt and impossible responsibility are also ways of denting yourself internally. Replaying past hurts or failures in your mind over and over again (*roadkill*) also inflicts dents.

Dents are unavoidable, and they can easily accumulate or pile up. They happen every day of our lives.

900 Here's a practical example from my own life: Each time I would walk through my memories of something painful, whether it was in therapy, or even just thinking about them, I was inflicting a dent. While that can be valuable in the sense that it helps you address the reality of actual events in your life, that should only be the very first step. Here's an interesting thought about that first step: There's only one first step. After that, the next step is...*the second step*. The second step is different from the first. And the third is different from the second, and so on.

905 But I found myself just taking that same first step over and over again.

Also, in the context of therapy, where I was in a highly suggestible state, with my mind wide open, what I was doing was only driving the pain deeper and deeper into myself, allowing it to hurt me over and over again. Repetition is so powerful, and after repeating this pattern again and again, I felt helpless, basically ready to give up on myself.

910 My mind responded in a way that should have been predictable: *This hurts too much. I'm locking down.*

The "model" or models that we have adopted for one reason or another cause us to allow and then manage these dents in certain ways. Some people have a healthy mechanism in place that filters what they accept as real information about themselves, as well as what that information truly means in the big picture.

915 Most successful powerful people have this in place—and although we often have our own opinions of them, you have to admit that they are usually happy and brush off unwarranted, negative criticism. If you think of politicians, they often brush off warranted criticism and though I joke a little here, they do it because they have a deep self-belief and are confident.

925 At a time when your whole world has been shaken and you're struggling to find yourself, wouldn't it be great to feel such solid self-confidence? Often we believe that these are just inborn qualities, but most often they are learned. I'm sure that if you were raised a Kennedy, you'd learn how to do this at a very young age.

930 Unfortunately, as I just described from my own life, dents don't only damage us once. We keep remembering them, revisiting them, whether in therapy, talking to friends about what's happened, or simply negative self-talk. Every time we "play back" a dent, it damages us again.

The "model" or models we've adopted... cause us to allow and then manage dents in certain ways.

Dealing with dents

935 We've discussed how dents can be serious or not so serious, and that either way, every dent is attached to a core feeling. It's hard to categorize them because they affect each of us so uniquely. For example, I might say that an insult is not such a big dent to me. But to you, the biggest, most traumatic moment in your life it might be an insult. So for our purposes, we'll take all dents into consideration.

In the middle of divorce, events and feelings (dents) are flying at you at such a rate, it seems impossible to decipher what you're most upset about. By looking at what I'll call the lineage of dents, you can figure out what's becoming overwhelming because of the tally your subconscious is keeping.

940 Dents are okay. Dents happen. But when you get a dent, pop it out.

Once you've realized that you have dents, and you've been able to acknowledge that they've added up in your life, you're ready to address them. There are three main things you need to focus on:

*Dents are okay.
Dents happen.
But when you
get a dent, pop
it out.*

1. Notice when dents happen

Now let's keep this simple. I'm not talking about going as far back into your childhood as you can to start uncovering and listing everything bad that's ever happened to you. (That's actually the last thing you want to do at this point.) After all, you're already under daily stress. You still have a constant stream of input coming in. We don't want to just create more trauma.

950 Instead, just notice what's going on *right now*, every day. And as soon as you realize, *Hey! That was a dent!*—deal with it. That's right. Deal with it immediately. Don't put it off. Don't save it for later. I'll teach you how—primarily Emotional Freedom Techniques, or EFT, coming up next, and venting with hypnosis aids.

955 Sometimes the process will lead you to a childhood memory—or suddenly you'll see a pattern that is based on an earlier belief—and it's fine to address it as part of what's going on now. **All I'm saying is, stick to what needs to be addressed now so you can feel better today, right now.**

The kinds of dents you're watching for are those that create any kind of emotional discomfort for you. Once you start to look for it, there will usually be a physical aspect to it, some kind of holding in your body or even just your breath. This is what I call a *bio-emotional* impression. It can be tightening in your stomach, tightening in your hands or shoulders, or even just a vague, nervous feeling. If something happens that makes you feel any of these ways, or anything like them, then take note. All of those events will usually surround an emotional dent.

965 Just as important is to take notice when you no longer react to something you would consider an insult or injury to someone else. Look at what happens with a new, more careful perspective, and create a protective atmosphere for your mind.

It might be that your body is remembering a pattern from previous times and revisiting that pattern. It also might be an entirely new pattern. If you've ever pulled your back doing absolutely nothing, that's a bio-emotional impression. This is not to ignore actual pain that is caused by an action, however the same principle of *mind to body* and *body to mind* is in effect here and by cuing in to those messages we can lessen both physical and mental pain.

970 And like I've said before, these will start to add up if you let them...so don't let them.

Dents can come from almost anything in your daily life. Maybe someone's being slightly insulting to

975 you. Maybe you feel disappointed in yourself or in someone else. Maybe it goes all the way up to the full-on heartache of a divorce situation. Whether it's simple emotions or much deeper emotions, those things are creating dents. Notice those things when they happen. Pay attention. What are they?

3. Do a few rounds of EFT on any dent you notice as soon as possible.

980 As soon as you feel upset, hurt, angry, frustrated, belittled, anxious and whatever else you might name as a dent, do a few rounds of EFT on as much of it as you can. Trust in this tool and use it any which way. The instructions that follow are very easy, ***but if you forget half of it and bumble through the rest – you will still have great results.*** If you're still wondering what constitutes a dent, think of it as anything you wouldn't want your child to feel or think. You wouldn't let them stay scared or embarrassed, you'd do or say something to help them feel better, well this is what you'll do for you now.

Chapter 5 – EFT: Emotional Freedom Techniques

990 Now, this next section is hugely important, so you really need to pay attention. It's one of the key components that you're going to be using every day, and you're not going to believe how much better you start feeling as soon as you can get started.

So if you need to, you might want to take a break from reading for a little bit, and get back here ready to break some ground. Are you ready? Great! Then let's go...

995 To get the most out of the principles I teach in my workshops, you'll need to learn the methodology of Emotional Freedom Techniques, or EFT. You may notice me almost interchangeably referring to this technique simply as "tapping." You'll understand why as I begin to explain to you how it works. I'll show you everything you need to know.

1000 One of the nice things about EFT is that the methods for performing it are not set in stone, so you can adapt it to fit your own style and needs. My own style, although not flowery at all, is very effective, and you can master it quickly. My particular version is available on

1005 gettingtoneutral.com.

Another really nice thing about EFT is, like almost all of the techniques I'll teach you, that you can do it yourself, pretty much wherever you are.

1010 You'll get the biggest bang out of EFT if you can also couple it with some hypnosis and I will give you complete directions in this manual. During seminars I always hypnotize participants once or twice so they have the experience of more hypnotic depth. I'll give you some very basic guidelines for simple self-hypnosis in this book and you will have great success reaching hypnotic sleep.

1015 Let's backtrack a little: What *exactly* are we trying to accomplish with EFT in the first place? We've already discussed the ideas behind denting. So first, we want to become (and remain) vigilant about dealing with those dents. Notice them when they happen. Get really picky for awhile, so you can rebuild that trust relationship with your subconscious. Every time you reduce the intensity of an emotion or memory with EFT, you are creating a neutral space for positive emotions and memories to take hold.

One of the nice things about EFT is that it's not set in stone... You can adapt it to fit your own style and needs.

1020 Through EFT, you're going to change the energy of those things. Through hypnosis, you're going to
 change the thought pattern, and therefore change the emotional impact. And finally, through venting
 (which I'll talk about at length in another section), you're going to release what's left, just let it go.
 As you begin doing EFT, and you get used to it, comfortable with it, you'll notice that different aspects
 will come up. Different dents, different emotions, different feelings. That's actually my favorite aspect
 of EFT, the most beautiful part. It's forthcoming and therefore so freeing.
 You'll feel something, just allow it, accept it, and then be able to go forward. The EFT process actually
 1025 lowers the intensity from that unbearable hurt, and it changes the energy pattern of the source of those
 dents. Then, when you couple that with hypnosis, you can actually *re*-place some positives into the
 spaces where those dents once were.
 If you've never heard of EFT before, don't worry. I'm sure
 none of this makes any sense...yet. But it will. You'll be
 1030 able to experience exactly what I'm describing as you begin
 the procedures which I'm about to clearly outline for you.
 After you've experienced some success for a few days with
 some small, manageable dents, then you'll be ready to tackle
 something more, something bigger.
 1035

“ ”

EFT points and basic method

These are the most basic steps for EFT. Complete them in the following sequence, referring to the diagram as necessary:

1 To the extent that it is safe for you to do so, **access the feelings you have about the situation** you want to address. Assign each feeling a rating from 0 to 10, where zero is “no effect” and ten is “very strong feelings.”

2 **Recite the following affirmation** 3 times . In the blank, insert the idea of the small dent that you want to work on:

“Even though I have this _____ , I deeply and completely love and accept myself.”

continued on next page ...

- 3 With feeling and emotion, starting at the top point and working your way down, **tap 6 or 7 times on each point**, in the following order:

1. Eyebrow
2. Outside of eye
3. Underneath eye
4. Underneath nose
5. Underneath lip
6. Collarbone
7. Underneath arm
8. Underneath breast
9. On thumb tip
10. On tip of index finger
11. On tip of middle finger
12. On tip of little finger
("pinky")
13. On top of hand
(back, just below knuckles)
14. Karate chop



Repeat this entire step completely, **2 more times**.

- 4 Let your hands drop and take a few breaths. Review your ratings. If you're working on remaining _____, **use the following phrase:**

"Even though I have this remaining _____, I deeply and completely love and accept myself."

- 5 **Continue performing rounds** on different aspects of the issue.

Now let's select just one dent. Again, pick something small. Isolate it, and start thinking about it.

1045 What's going to be different this time is that you will not be concentrating on it in the old, self-punishing way. Instead, let's work on it. While you're thinking about it, begin doing a little EFT to lower the intensity.

Pay attention to what's going on. Do a little more EFT on any aspect that this first work brings to your mind.

Be honest with yourself about how you feel. Come from the inside, and stay on your side.

1050 A client of mine, an attorney, one told me that he spends all of his time in therapy trying to convince his therapist that everything is okay. Avoid that place during this process. You're on your own side. If something doesn't feel right, you're the one who has to care enough to act.

*If something
doesn't feel
right, you're the
one who has to
care enough to
act.*

1055 Here's an example from my own life. As I was going through my divorce, I felt that everyone was expecting me to act much more mature than I felt on the inside. Accepting what they were projecting onto me—"Just be a grownup, Stephanie"—would have been a betrayal to my subconscious mind in its state at that time.

1060 I'm not saying that you should run around whining to everyone. What I *am* saying is that if you feel whiny, then bring that to the fore in your mind, and use EFT to tap on it:

"I feel so whiny."

Tap on:

"I'm miserable. I just want to whine. I don't want to be this grown up."

1065 You know what you're feeling and thinking. No one else does (really!). Listen to what's going on with you. Feel it, press into it, and use EFT to move it away from you.

On your last EFT round, tap on each point and say:

"Everything I've brought up here today, I have done so with the intention to let go and release it. I will continue to release these negative feelings and thoughts by venting them out in my dreams."

1070 That's it! Honestly, doesn't it feel good to know it's not any more complicated than that?

But what should I tap on?

As you start to try to come up with ideas for things to tap on, always first remember: establish with yourself that you're on your own side. Is that hard for you to do? To get on your own side? Do you just feel down on yourself? Or like you just can't do it?

1075 *Then tap on that.* I'm serious. That's a great place to start. If you need to, start with that. Do a few EFT rounds on that. You can make your phrase something like this:

"Even though I just can't see myself doing this..."

"Even though this is too simple to work..."

"Even though I don't think this will help..."

1080 Honestly, that will move the energy around, and that will give you some room to continue.

Next, try think about some problem that just keeps bugging you. In my workshops, I try to help people by framing it this way: "You're thinking about this problem, turning it over and over in your mind, maybe trying to 'solve' it or figure it out. Realize that every time you do that, you're repeating it into your subconscious mind."

1085 If you can think of something like that for you, then that may be something you need to tap on. In that case, make your phrase something like one of these:

"Even though I can't let go of figuring out this problem..."

"Even though it's hard for me to let go of figuring this out..."

1090 As you tap through the rounds, you'll start to feel the anxiety lowering. You'll actually feel the energy moving, and you'll start to get used to that. Best of all, you'll be able to see what it feels like to think about specific topics and not have them bother you. That will give you the strength to face new challenges, right when they arrive.

1095 In other words, breaking down your emotions on the way to neutral on specific things will lead you toward an overall comfort.

One of the first things I personally like to tap on—and many practitioners do this—is the breath. What I mean by this is simply working on improving the flow of your breath in and out of your body.

1100 Yoga focuses on breath. Hypnosis focuses on breath. Many, many modalities do, for what should be obvious reasons.

1105 The more freely you can breathe, the more positive the energy flow throughout your body. Also, your constant feedback from body to mind means that as you receive oxygen in a full and constant manner, your mind and body will relax. The more positive the energy flow, the more comfortable your body is physically, the better equipped you are to cope.

*Breaking down
your emotions
on the way to
neutral on
specific things
will lead you
toward an
overall comfort.*

Look for what's tight

1110 As you begin to breathe freely, that reveals to you the tightness or other feelings of constriction that you have in other places in your body. You can take a long, deep breath, and as it flows through your body, if you concentrate, you can identify specific areas of your body—muscles in particular—that are tight and uncomfortable.

1115 The way it works is actually kind of counterintuitive. As you take in a long breath, your body begins distributing that oxygen throughout your body, to all the places that need it. That helps pockets everywhere begin to relax, as they open up to receive the fresh supply. So really, you actually feel pretty good in most places. Then, if you'll pay attention, you'll be able to feel those places that *don't* feel as good. Usually, it's because they're tight, and they're not letting the blood flow freely into them. For me personally, my body typically tightens around my solar plexus or my stomach. I can actually sense my entire body posture wrapping itself around my core in this way, pulling my back around forward, through my shoulders. *Basically headed toward a fetal position.* Although I may notice those things beginning to constrict as I'm dealing with something stressful, I may also catch myself at other times when they're tight, but I wasn't even aware of it until I started trying to breathe deeply.

1120 Next, pay attention to your physical reactions to intensity or emotionality. I alluded to this before when I talked about my own constriction centers. These are often the same as the areas of general tightness, although not necessarily.

1125 You may notice yours in other places on your body. Maybe your neck gets tight. Maybe your temples get sore. Maybe you feel "butterflies" or nervousness in your stomach. Does your stomach become upset, or do you have digestive problems that you would relate to stress? We each have unique reactions and patterns, and you need to find yours so that you can address them.

1130 Many of us have this sort of "it's all so mysterious" attitude. If you have a headache, you take a pill. If your stomach hurts, you'll take something for that. Now, I certainly will take something for a headache, and I'm not suggesting for one second that you endure pain. What I *am* suggesting is that if you examine what is connected to, and therefore causing these "symptoms of emotion" or bio-emotional effects, then you can get rid of a lot of them.

1135 Here's a quick story that illustrates what I mean. My personal physician is a bit of a toughie, and she shoots straight. I went to her shortly before my divorce—keep in mind: I had no idea that was on its way—complaining about recurring headaches. I mentioned that they seemed to almost always occur on Sunday night.

1140 After she checked me out, she said, “Well, it could be hormonal and we’ll check that. But if you get a headache every Sunday after your husband’s been home all weekend, I can’t help medically with that.” As before, you’re not looking for specific problems and causes (yet). That’s not the point of this exercise. Instead, just notice where these places are. As you discover them, simply tap a few rounds to get some looseness to those areas. Take them one at a time. Select a specific one, and tap on it until you feel relief. Then pick another one and move on. Keep progressing through them until you feel better all over.

1145 What’s happening is that energy is blocked and holding in those places as you take on dents. But through this entire process, you’re moving energy around. So you may find yourself working on the same spot again and again. Not only is that okay, but you should probably even expect it. Just keep tapping through it until it feels better, however many times that takes. Realize that it truly only amounts to just a few seconds out of your day.

1150 Here’s some even better news: *You don’t even have to physically be doing the tapping.* After you’ve had sufficient practice, you can actually simply tap in your imagination. It’s best to do the physical tapping and speak out loud, but you will always be able to do some quick work silently when you’re in a public place or need to be quiet. A good technique is to tap on the hand points, especially Karate Chop under the table or just in your lap. This is great, because it means that you can be tapping throughout the day, whenever you need to, and moving energy back in a positive direction.

1160 Just as you need to create depth with your first hypnosis session, it’s important to do your first few EFT session with full dedication. As you become able to recognize better energy, it will help you reach comfort sooner. Also, you’ll be able to do it anyplace, anytime, whether physically or mentally.

1165 The mind affects the body, and the body in return affects the mind. So as you work on your physical responses, message get to the brain as, *Hey, I feel a little more relaxed. I can breathe. I’m okay.* You want to keep those messages moving. Your brain registers tightness along your spine, and it signals your body that something is wrong. Your spine has to be free to move, not only for feedback, but even for nutrition (in the form of oxygenated blood flow). If it can’t move freely, then that feedback causes a basic shutdown.

1170 While it’s not severe enough to knock you unconscious on the floor, it most certainly *does* negatively, deeply affect brain chemicals, nerve transmissions, and organ function.

1175 There’s an old saying that goes, “How do you eat an elephant?” And the answer is, “One bite at a time.” You’re not going to feel better all at once. Instead, you have to tackle the task in bite-sized chunks. Each little moment of relaxation, each free-breathing exercise, each time your body sends your brain neural feedback that it’s okay—these begin to add up.

It doesn’t happen suddenly, but gradually. Perhaps most important, your body is re-learning good patterns of positive flow, getting you unstuck.

Just keep tapping through until it feels better, however many times that takes. Realize that it truly only amounts to just a few seconds of your day.

Loosen up

1180 Once you've become aware of the places where you tighten up, and once you've addressed some of that with tapping, your next step is to loosen up generally. You need to get your spine and body moving. Now, I don't mean straight-up exercises...yet. What I mean is actually, physically rotating your hips and your spinal cord, doing little dips in your knees as you go. (Of course, this is much simpler to demonstrate in a workshop setting than in words.)

1185 I call this my "go-go girl" move, but I know that's kind of old-fashioned. Most people now would probably refer to this maneuver as something more like an exotic dancer. The idea is to be as goofy, silly, and exaggerated as you can, just to get yourself loose.

*Be as goofy,
silly, and
“exaggerated as
you can...get
yourself loose.”*

1190 If you're currently out of shape, ease into it. Don't head straight for the stage on your first try! I recommend using a large exercise ball to practice. Basically, you can sit down on it, and just begin to roll around slightly in your midsection.

As with any new exercise or physical exertion, listen to your body. Don't do anything your doctor wouldn't approve of—and especially if you have a history of back problems! Use common sense. Go slowly. Take your time, and pace yourself.

1195 Move very loosely, very gently, arching your back and rotating around your middle. You want to spiral your spine in a sort of slow, gyrating motion. Remember: the whole point of this is to free up your spine to allow messages and fluids to flow freely between your brain and the rest of your body. You're not auditioning to be in a rap music video.

1200 Another thing that's important to note here is that it's two-way communication. You have to loosen up your body to get it to hold up its end of the bargain. Don't let your brain have the final say, the only input into your experience. Stay on the ball, and get yourself ready to go-go dance!

*Stay on the ball,
“and get yourself
ready to go-go
dance!”*

1205 In my own life, I had been frozen for a number of years, my body and my mind disconnected from each other. I went to a wedding, and people were dancing. I decided I wanted to dance, too, but I hadn't in a very long time. Hadn't even tried.

1210 I made my way out onto the dance floor, and I was shocked to discover just how little my body could move. My hips didn't shake, and nothing seemed loose. It was pretty much the exact opposite of being drunk on a dance floor in my twenties!

I realized at that moment, although not consciously: *This is not me. I'm stuck in here, trapped in my own body.* Over time, I came to understand the very real connection between my physical body and my emotional state.

1215 You have to get on that ball. (By the way, you can buy a big kid's toy ball at almost any grocery store.) You have to at least start to rotate and gyrate, and get as silly as you possibly can. Like I said before, be careful, and don't hurt yourself.

1220 Stretch, breathe, dance a little, any time of the day. When you're about to enter into a tense situation, start moving. You might hear some snapping, crackling, and popping—especially if you haven't tried in awhile—but as long as it's nothing dangerous or painful, you want to get that movement. You *need* that movement.

This is a very important fact: your body can only get rid of adrenaline by movement.

1225 That means that unless you move, the chemicals that signal “Run, there’s a Tiger” and make your body numb and mind hyperalert to the point of almost paranoid overfocus, will stay with you. You don’t have to start there, necessarily. Like everything else, you can start smaller. For example, whenever possible (probably not on the way into a board meeting), walk silly. Wiggle. Walk and shake, and let all your joints move. Get your wrists moving, your elbows, your hips, exaggerate what your knees are doing. Get loose.

1230 **Work with your body**

Remember, we’ve talked some about paying attention to what your body is doing, especially looking for patterns and repeats that you can focus on. You’re going to continue that work here.

1235 Take note of what your body is doing. When you catch yourself holding, the back door into your mind is actually very simple: *do the opposite*. For example, if you’re holding with your left hand, try one of these approaches:

1. Loosen your left hand

1240 Loosen that left hand, if it seems possible. Move it around. Flex it. Adjust it. Change its position. Release your grip. Release the tension. Now, you may find that in attempting to loosen it, it really shouts back at you, *No! I NEED to hold here! I NEED to bend this way! This is my positioning*. If that happens, proceed to option 2...

2. Switch hands

1245 Hold with your right hand, and let the left hand go. Get the message to your brain: *Hey brain, you’ve got options*. Move yourself from stuck in that position to something different. Very often, doing the opposite, on the opposite side of the body, is strong enough messaging to allow your brain to adjust. Holding on the opposite side creates a more symmetrical body stance, which consequently leads to...a similar emotional stance. Do you see?

*Get the
message to
“ your brain: Hey
brain, you’ve
got options.”*

1250 As simple as these small changes seem, they are key to creating a neutral zone for your mind and body to start to communicate in more productive ways. Very often you will have a quick flash of a hint as to what the holding is connected to. Go with whatever comes to you and try to give it words or a rating. Take the 30 seconds to tap on it or check in with an inner conversation about how it is safe to let go now.

1255 **Chapter 6 – Models**

1260 Models are usually formed by what we saw worked in our family when we were young, whether it was the role we played, a role we adapted to, or a role that was assigned to us by others (typically by authority figures). A model is neither good or bad, it is something you want to be aware of so you can modify the restraints it is placing on your well being. A belief included in the “definition” of your model may resist all other influence, dragging you into inexplicable repeat patterns. Examples of this might be “the clown,” “the little tough guy,” “the loyal one,” or “the angel.” A model may also be a recurring situation that we witnessed which was presented as fact by our family experience. In my family it was, “Sometimes people get sick emotionally.” Maybe in yours it was, 1265 “People drink,” or “People hit,” or “People don’t share their feelings.” Ultimately, these two

components evolve into a combination where on the one hand, your subconscious behaves like a computer, working within the given parameters, and at the same time, the child in you registers the pain (dents) or recognizes the behavior as self defeating.

1270 We all have a model inside us that has our best interests at heart, but still may be working against us. In my case, I have a good little “loyal” reporter inside me. It diligently records everything that happens to me and keeps great records, so that I can press play in therapy and recount absolutely everything.

1275 One problem is that it keeps *everything*, both good and bad. Another is that if I can be honest, that play button is not truly within my control. Sometimes I start replaying things that are damaging, and of course that begins to affect everything else.

1280 What about you? Can you identify your model? What about its priorities? Maybe your model is “the hero.” The hero endures the dents and never complains, because that’s just what heroes do. Heroes are there for everybody but themselves, and they take the pain in stride. I want you to start thinking about your model in the context of the unintentional damage that it can potentially inflict on you. (Oh, and another thing about models: you may have more than one.)

1285 Were you the perfect son or daughter, getting the best grades, winning awards? Were you the clown and because you joked so much, you certainly weren’t allowed to suddenly call “hurt” when your feelings were stung?

If you’re the loyal one, have you ever found yourself being more loyal to other people than to yourself? Many of us were raised to see others as more important than ourselves.

1290 Some examples of what I mean are an over-emphasis on courtesy and so-called politeness, which in practice lead to you constantly worrying that you’re going to feel embarrassed in social situations because you’re not doing “the right thing,” acting in “the right way.” And the consequence ends up being that you sacrifice your authenticity, the reality of yourself as an individual, with unique thoughts, ideas, emotions, and needs. While it is important not to be selfish, and to care for others, we have to be able to count the cost and set some boundaries.

1295 The spiritual ideal is of course to treat others the way that you want to be treated. But that works both ways—you must protect yourself from others who would treat you worse than you treat them. You can’t allow others’ interests to trump your own overall well-being.

1300 If you can maintain yourself, you have more to give to others. In situations where you leave yourself open to hurt, it’s important to stop the negative thoughts that come from trying to please people who really don’t even have a high place in your life. What your child thinks of you is important, and you should be willing to work on that. In the grand scheme of things, what the person behind you in line at the grocery store thinks about you doesn’t really matter.

1305 So as you can see, just changing a few of the parameters within the model allow for a self-nurturing version of that model. Use EFT to release yourself from some of the dictations of the model. Give yourself permission to update the model and then use time in hypnosis to create a beneficial version of the model. Let’s use the hero as an example, of course being heroic is a wonderful quality so wouldn’t it be great to be a hero for yourself and shouldn’t we give heroes a break now and then? It may be that the hero has been waiting a lifetime to hear ‘good job’ or ‘thank you’. Again, think of how you would change this for your child and then use the same kind and loving words and actions to

We all have a model inside us that has our best interests at heart, but still may be working against us.

modify how the model affects you.

Chapter 7 – Venting

1315

We've already talked about EFT, which you use to change the energy of the things you have to deal with. Coming up in a little while, we're going to talk about hypnosis, too, which you use to change the emotion. Our other main tool, which I'm going to tell you all about in this chapter, is *venting*. Venting, just as it sounds, is how you release everything that's left after all the other processing. All the emotion, all the troubled thoughts, all the bad feelings...venting is how you just let those things go. More on that in just a minute.

1320

1325 We can simplify this whole process by breaking it down into three parts:

1. Work on the dents

We've already discussed this from a practical standpoint, and that's identifying dents in real-time, as they happen, and working EFT on them, tapping through them immediately.

2. Watch for patterns

1330 The second part of the process is to start to see a pattern of what has allowed the hurt to go on, to find a place of prominence in your life. Once you can identify your patterns—and perhaps your model is involved here—then you have a good starting point to itemize things, specific things, that you can be addressing in a proactive way.

3. Position yourself with protection

1335 The third part of the process is to create a stance for yourself of protection. In practice, this is simply a way of changing your thinking, where you deliberately create a new energy pattern that's actually purposefully designed to push off emotional hurt and pain. In effect it is something to change your positioning in a given situation and bring with it strength and composure, a feeling of being protected.

1340 Some of this may have a spiritual component, as well. That's really up to you and your personal journey.

1345 So that's it: three steps. (1) Recognize what's happening in the moment, and address it. (2) Go back through your history to see where the biggest dents were made, and why you were in a place that would accept them, both emotionally and physically. And (3) start building yourself some protection against them. Think of your filters being out and in front of you – doing the work of deciding what comes in to your mind and emotions *before* it actually 'touches' you. Start to use 'due diligence' for yourself, your mind can do this in milliseconds. Examine the source, check whether the content is authentic and true, establish whether this information or input is good for you and then decide *whether it comes in*. Decide what is productive for you at that time.

1350 That leads us directly into the process of venting, and sets up nicely why venting is so important... There are just so many situations in life that lead to dents, as we've already discussed. Pretty much all therapies—including alternative therapies—are intended to help you address these things from different angles. Physical alternative therapies like EFT or hands-on energy work (which I do a lot of in my

*Venting is how
you release
“everything that’s
left after all the
other
processing.”*

practice) and acupuncture are simply fantastic.

1355 However, if you've stirred up emotions and painful memories, and especially if you're then revisiting these events on your subconscious mind during one of these types of sessions, or when that energy is released, now you have a new problem: You need to vent.

You need to get those thoughts out of your head, vent those negative memories. Earlier in this book, I talked about the three realms. Here's where that plays into our current discussion:

1360 **The conscious.** I've brought it up, and therefore, activated your bio-emotional response to it.

The energy pattern. In examining your feelings, the energy pattern has been stirred, so you'll need to release that energy pattern with EFT.

1365 **The subconscious mind.** In the third realm, your subconscious, you're going to use hypnosis to optimize your venting process. That's where you're going to release what I call "the hard track" of your memory.

All day, every day, your subconscious mind is taking in all of this information around you. While you might only be able to focus consciously on about six things at once, your subconscious is running your whole body, noticing every detail around you, and paying attention to what the conscious mind is doing as well.

1370 That's a huge volume of information. But that's okay. We're designed to take it all in.

Your subconscious mind is your operations center—again, sort of like a computer. It dictates to you when to think of *this*; or when *this* happens, or when this situation comes up again, then I feel *this* physically and I feel *this* emotionally.

1375 Maybe it tells you to run away (flight). Maybe it tells you to feel insecure, to be too shy to speak up for yourself (freeze). Maybe it closes up around your throat (also freeze). Maybe it makes you erupt with anger (fight).

Fortunately, our bodies have a neat escape valve built in: we vent most of that (that is, we release it) through our dreams.

1380 Unfortunately, in times of overload, your regular dream time and rest may not allow you sufficient time to get everything out.

In my own case, both when my father died, and then again during my divorce, I was trapped in a vicious cycle. I'd have these repetitive, damaging thoughts all week (what you'll hear me refer to as *roadkill*). Then "the loyal reporter" Stephanie would struggle to remind me of as much as it could so I could have a good therapy session. Finally, whether during therapy or just in conversation with friends, I'd say it all again out loud.

1390 My dreams were supposed to be letting me release. But I was so stressed that I was barely sleeping! My poor dream valve just couldn't keep pace.

The three types of dreams

Your brain does so much for you while you're sleeping. All this work occurs in essentially three different phases, or types, of dreams:

1395 **1. Taking stock dreams**

When you first enter into real sleep and begin dreaming, your mind more or less replays some of what has happened in your day, just recounting and unwinding. It's the beginning of the sorting process.

*Our bodies
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escape valve
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subconscious
overflow...
through
our dreams.*

Your mind starts to file things in different types of memory and sorts them according to knowns and unknowns.

1400 **2. Planning dreams**

The second part of the night, once you're truly, deeply relaxed, and your mind is free to wander, is reserved for your pre-cognitive dreams. Basically, your subconscious mind goes through a sort of planning process. Your brain "imagines" the future: what might happen, what you'd like to happen, what you hope happens, and how your mind would like things to be.

1405 **3. Venting dreams**

The first two kinds of dreams set the stage for the final set of dreams. This last phase, which occurs in the very early morning, not long before you awaken, is perhaps the most important for your emotional healing. These are your venting dreams.

1410 Your subconscious mind either bundles or separates the information it's been processing, and then just lets it go. Often, it's in the form of simple dreams that don't particularly go anywhere. It may take the form of symbols and metaphor. The language of the subconscious mind is symbols.

This is why you have dreams that seem like other dreams...only *not quite*. Remember, your subconscious mind is like a supercomputer. It has every detail in there, so it's got a lot of data (details) that it needs to dump each day.

1415 Before I understood this process, I looked for meaning in my dreams just like everybody else. The downside to that was that sometimes, particularly through my divorce, I'd be totally upset with how my dreams were going. They'd be very disturbing, the opposite of restful, sometimes even violent! I'd think, *Why would I dream that? That's just awful!*

1420 And then I couldn't stop thinking about it, which trapped me in a vicious cycle. I'd just keep seeing recurring patterns and recurring bad dreams—because I wasn't letting them get out and just be gone. I suggest you start to feel very happy that something disturbing has been vented and leave it at that. If you're working with a therapist who understands the idea of venting dreams, then it's safe to discuss it with them. Basically, when you get up in the morning, leave it alone. You'll soon be able to relish the good dreams that can begin when your mind sees that things are getting better.

1425 However these things get vented, it's all good for you. Your mind vents "unnecessary" thoughts, unnecessary thought patterns, and information you're "finished with." During hypnosis your mind has the ability to vent some things and during hypnosis we always give a suggestion that any other negative thoughts will be vented out during our early morning dreams.

1430 It should be obvious: getting these negative patterns and negative emotional thoughts *out* of you is critical to your overall sense of well-being. I cannot overstate how important this process is. When your mind has "cleaned house" so to speak, you can really start some good constructive thinking, seeing options and having your full mind to work toward whatever goals you set.

Use EFT to "Release Thoughts"

1435 Any time you find yourself holding on to a thought that is not beneficial, do a few rounds of EFT on releasing that thought. Your wording might be,

"Although I've held onto thoughts about...I'm ready to release them and the pain that goes with them." Continuing with, "Any remaining negative thoughts attached to this problem I will allow to vent during my early morning dreams"

1440 By releasing the energy pattern attached to the thought you have 'pre-set' your mind to finish working with it. Remember the feedback cycle between conscious, subconscious and the

body/energetic realm. You are now becoming a coach as to who can influence who and simply choosing the method *you can use at that moment* to influence all three.

Sleep, sweet sleep

1445 The problem is, many people simply don't sleep enough. They don't give themselves enough opportunity to sleep properly, and they inadvertently make themselves unable to create change in their lives.

When you're not sleeping enough, or you're suffering from emotional distress or disturbing dreams, you're not venting enough information. You'll feel more anxiety in your waking hours because your subconscious mind is simply overwhelmed with too much information, too much data. Your brain is full, even as it's still trying to take in ever more information during your day.

1450 Have you ever noticed how someone who's depressed, I mean, really clinically depressed, just seems to want to sleep all the time? How they're lethargic, quiet, withdrawn? Have you ever wondered why that is?

1455 Many times it's because on the inside, their brain is moving very, very quickly. Their brain is just frantic with information overload, and their mind is desperately trying to vent it all out by sleeping and sleeping and sleeping. Why withdrawal? Because it helps them avoid still more input.

Have you ever been to the grocery store in the middle of the night? What about to the pharmacy? Have you ever found yourself channel-surfing through re-runs of *The Girls Next Door* and *Murder She Wrote* on cable in the wee hours of the morning?

1460 Sometimes it's difficult for us to care for ourselves properly, when we feel things are constantly coming at us, getting out of our control. You have to watch out for your tendency to let that self-talk kick in that convinces you that you have to do, do, do. If you can't allow yourself to rest, then you can possibly push yourself right into some sort of emotional explosion.

1465 Our "Go, go" culture, while it has its benefits, does everything it can to encourage us to ignore our biological necessity for sleep.

Science has shown that the brain does all of its "housekeeping" during sleep. All restoration and rejuvenation happens when we sleep. And if we go without, eventually no matter what physical danger it may cause us, we'll actually pass out. So let your body tell you how much sleep you need. Celebrated physician Christiane Northrup says we should all be bragging about our naps!

1470

Chapter 8 – Self – Hypnosis

1475 EFT is what you use to redirect and change your flow of personal energy and the thoughts and feelings attached to it. Venting is where you release all the "leftovers" that you can't really process any other way. And that brings us now to the third pillar of our toolkit: hypnosis.

Now, we've all heard lots about hypnosis, and honestly, it's a pretty straightforward process for the most part. I'm about to share with you the different ways that you're going to use hypnosis to feel better, and then we'll wrap up this section with some practical "How to" procedures.

1480 For me, although hypnosis is just one of several

Traditional self-hypnosis can allow you to sleep more deeply, more thoroughly, and most important: it can help you sleep.

tools, it's a really powerful one. It's kind of the jack-of-all-trades of my toolkit, as far as I'm concerned.
1485 I use it to assist with rest, to quiet the input, to "reprogram" with new more resourceful patterns, and to place suggestions that help me streamline and optimize the venting process.

It is way beyond the scope of this book to list all of the uses of hypnosis and hypnotherapy. You're here to get the tools to get through an unbelievably difficult time, and that's the way we'll use hypnosis. I want all of these tools to be so simple that you use them at the drop of a hat. Somewhere, somehow, you have made the bold step to stop the pain and feel better, so respect your choice of these methods and give them your complete faith.
1490

When your dreams are stuck, there are two ways you can "fix" that: either dream more, or dream more efficiently. Fortunately, the best approach for either one is the same.

Sleep aid

1495 If you find you have difficulty getting to sleep, traditional self-hypnosis can help get you there. The most basic thing you can do is use traditional self-hypnosis to allow you to sleep more deeply, more thoroughly. In fact, perhaps its most important application is to help you sleep *enough*...

Venting aid

To vent through your dreams, you might find you need the same kind of help—that is, hypnotic sleep.
1500 To dream more efficiently, you can use simple techniques to visualize what you want your dreams to be tackling on your behalf, and then to pre-program your subconscious to work on those things while your conscious mind is taking a breather. That sounds more complicated than it is. All you will be doing is suggesting to yourself, during self-hypnosis that you will easily let go of anything not beneficial to you during your sleep.

1505

Chapter 9 – Get some sleep

I've already talked at length about the importance of rest and sleep in your life. Any decent medical
1510 practitioner can tell you how your body rejuvenates itself on a physiological level during the night, but of course, it's not just that. Remember when we talked about the kinds of dreams, and venting dreams in particular? You *have* to sleep.

Unfortunately, when you're going through really difficult, really painful circumstances in your life, sleeping—which should be so simple—can actually be one of the hardest things for you to pull off on a
1515 regular basis.

When you lie down to sleep at night, you still feel that edge, either that emotional low or that worrisome buzzing, and you just can't shake it. And of course, it keeps you awake. Ironically, this condition is often aggravated when you're trying to sleep, and you just can't. You know you need your sleep, but you can't sleep because you're worrying. And not being able to sleep makes
1520 you worry that you're going to be even worse off, since you can't vent properly.

I've also experienced this same kind of anxiety on those mornings when I find myself awakening (usually too fast) to a day that I feel I'm just "not ready to face." But there's hope.

Try this first

1525 If your heart is racing or your mind is spinning, turn to energy work on yourself: EFT. Of course, tapping during EFT is a great time to use repetition. You can insert some positive thought deeply into your energy pattern and imprint it directly onto your mind. Repetition here may take the form of tapping on each of the points of whatever statement you want to focus on:

"Even though I don't feel like I can sleep..."

"Even though I'm afraid I'm not going to get enough sleep tonight..."

1530 You can even use an affirmation if you like. If you're into a specific set of affirmations, feel free to use those. Keep bringing them to your mind. Repeating them aloud softly can even bring them into your physical body (yet another great back door into your mind).

As an added bonus, this approach positively affects your energetics by creating a new positive, integrated energy pattern.

1535 ***More "musts" for sleeping***

Now I'm going to teach you some techniques and the strategies for how you can use them. Getting enough sleep and venting properly is a critical component of getting yourself back to neutral. Of course, you need to attack getting better from as many angles as you can. Don't lean too heavily on just one approach from these I'm going to show you. Certainly use what works for you, but continue rotating them around and trying different combinations.

1540

You have to sleep.

Fortunately, most of what you need to do to help you sleep is common sense. Let's cover some fundamentals here:

1. Take mineral supplements

1545 Immediately before you go to bed, you need calcium and magnesium, preferably with potassium and vitamin D for absorption. Both of these help your muscles relax and give your body the stores it needs to repair and restore you while you're sleeping. I prefer Dynamite mineral supplements as they have a patented method of chelation for the best delivery, you can find information to obtain them on my website. That said, be sure that the supplements you use are of the highest quality and stay within safe amounts.

1550

2. Cut out stimulants

Consider anything that turns your brain on, wakes you up, or in general raises your metabolism off-limits from this point forward. I'm serious. You simply cannot eat sugar and chocolate and drink sodas and coffee and still be able to sleep well.

1555 EFT is a great way to stop cravings and addictions. You may have to approach it from the reverse first, stating that you don't want to give it up. Remember it's about coming from where you *really* are, not some artificial enlightened place you aren't feeling (yet)! So, if it's coffee, you may have to do a few rounds on

"even though I don't want to stop drinking coffee...."

1560 *"even though I couldn't possibly give up coffee...."*

"even though I love feeling jittery and not sleeping at night..."

"even though I'll never get up in the morning..."

First of all you might be over it by then, but if you need to go further, trust yourself to find the words to eliminate it.

- 1565 Everyone has been educated on sugar and junk food, we all know it, it's just really stopping that escapes us. Well, use the tools you now have to make these changes, tap on it and then give yourself a clear suggestion during self-hypnosis of what you will or won't ingest. Willpower is the realm of the conscious mind – you now have access to the other two realms, so use it and make change. Think about it like this: you're already stressed. Maybe you're facing fear, even panic attacks. Now, 1570 why don't you add a caffeine rush and jitters to that? You see what I mean? It's a bad combination. Maybe you're feeling depressed and just low in general. You have a little sugar, you get that boost for a little while...that is, until your body's blood sugar drops after the insulin tapers off. *BOOM!* It's a hard crash back down, and you'll feel even worse than before. Start to notice how you feel after you eat or drink something. You will need to take a step back because we all give great credence to our emotions. 1575 I'm every bit the one to eat a box of cookies and then wonder why I'm so blue. But now, I'm every bit the one to use EFT and some strong 'rules' placed during self-hypnosis to knock it off. At a certain point it is worth a little doing without (*without eating garbage!*) to feel better.

Stimulating an already agitated system leads to chaos.

1580 **3. Seek positive input**

This is probably that main common sense thing that I alluded to earlier. Watch what you're watching. Don't go reading through your divorce papers last thing before you go to bed at night. Don't watch the news—or even the weather!—if that could potentially stress you.

- 1585 Instead, focus on reading or watching things that make you smile or even laugh. Be intentional. Take responsibility and ownership. Confirm the things that are going well in your life and allow yourself to register what is good. You can use the EFT points to confirm the good and imprint it energetically/physically. This is very powerful.

This is important at all times of the day, but it's by far the most important in your wind-down period before you go to bed.

- 1590 Be especially watchful of your interior input. Make any writing you do in the evening purposefully positive and productive. Take strong control of your thoughts and cancel as much as needed so your hypnotic transition to sleep is as productive and powerful as possible.

4. Address the only “have to”

- 1595 The *only* thing you “have to” do is take care of yourself, your children, and your pets. Arrange your schedule so that you have some time to simply “veg out.” And it doesn't have to be a lot of time—maybe it's actually just several shorter spurts placed strategically throughout your day. But be sure you reserve a spot for kicking back for awhile before you go to bed.

- 1600 Let the dishes stack up for now. They'll keep. You can rinse off what you need as you need it. Give your vacuum cleaner the chance to start missing you. Choose love.

I have a friend who told me once that when he grew up and had his own children, his mother told him that her greatest regret was that she spent too much time cleaning when he was little. She felt like she had missed much of his childhood. She felt she was a much better grandmother than a mother.

- 1605 Your kids won't remember a six-month period in your life when their clothes weren't ironed every day. They will *always* remember a six-month period where you held them in your lap and read them a story every night before they went to bed.

5. Put your feet up

I'm not speaking figuratively here. I mean, literally, put your feet up—straight up—and hold them there for at least four minutes before you go to bed.

1610 Have you ever awakened early in the night, and your feet ached? That's because gravity has pooled a lot of blood there. You need to give it the chance to reverse itself. When you lie down, you're spreading pressure evenly across one surface of your body, which tends to restrict those blood vessels and passageways.

1615 Your heart is up high in your body...until you lie down, that is. It's optimized to circulate your blood when you're in an upright position, as you are most of the time. When you hold your feet straight up for awhile, you're letting a lot of that blood circulate back closer to your heart, lightening the load it has to push on those lower systems. Again, you are creating messaging of calm and comfort to your mind.

The midnight panic session

1620 Does this ever happen to you? Suddenly you go from sleep to peering through the darkness, jolted horribly into wakefulness with terrible thoughts and a desperate feeling. I call this the *midnight panic session*. (Although honestly, for me, sometimes it's been more like 4a.m.)

1625 When I was working through my divorce, I'd snap wide awake, and almost immediately, the terrible thoughts would start: The terrible pounding in my chest made me think of a heart attack and I'd wonder, *If I died, how long would it be before someone found my baby?* (He was eight months old at the time.)

1630 When you wake up this way, what are you supposed to do? Your mind is racing, your heart is pounding, and now you're wide awake. So how can you get back to sleep? We'll go over a few options, and over time, you'll be able to discover which works best for you. It is a good idea to put yourself to sleep each night with hypnosis to create a habit of falling asleep this way. When you do you should also suggest that you will sleep all through the night deeply and comfortably.

Simple hypnosis is one path to sleep...

Long-cycle simple hypnosis

1 **Count backward slowly.** Start at **50**. Don't say the numbers aloud.

2 **Stay quiet.** Your main objective is to get back to sleep, so keep as calm as possible. Count only in your mind.

3 **Stay focused** on the numbers. Concentrate, and think only about this number, and the one coming up, really see and hear the numbers as you recite them...

4 **Interject short phrases.** Close to sleep, you're in a highly suggestible state.

Examples: "45, relaxing..."
"39, going down..."
"22, sleep..."

- 5 **Start over** if necessary. If you lose your place, just pick a number and keep counting down, or if you get down to zero and you're still awake, simply return to 50. Be very uncritical of how you do it but keep your focus on the numbers.
- 6 **Sleep.** Very often, just when you think, "Oh that's it, I'm going to have to start over" - zap, *you're out.*
-

Short-cycle simple hypnosis (with affirmations)

- 1 **Count backward slowly.** Instead of starting at 50, start at **10**. Don't say the numbers aloud.
 - 2 **Stay quiet.** Your main objective is to get back to sleep, so keep as calm as possible. Count and speak only in your mind.
 - 3 **Say "relax."** Again, only in your mind, tell each part of your body to relax. Keep this simple. Go through your entire body once and then again.

Examples: "Relax, toes..."
"Relax, feet..."
"Relax, legs..."

At a point where you feel true relaxation in your body, tell yourself
"deep sleep"

 - 4 **Interject affirmations.** This is the next step, if you're still not quite "there." Close to sleep, you're in a highly suggestible state. Keep it simple, yes while it is important that you say something positive, the idea is to almost 'bore' yourself to sleep with the comfort of the phrase.

Examples: "Every day, in every way, I'm getting better and better."
"I'm a child of God and He loves me."
"I choose love."
"calm and sleepy, sleepy and calm"

Note: It's important that you think about and plan affirmation phrases in advance. The last thing you want when you're trying to go to sleep is to wake up enough to come up with a good phrase.

 - 5 **Focus on your breath and heartbeat.** Slowly and calmly tell yourself to breath in a more relaxed way, tell your heart to be calm and beat slowly and rhythmically. Tell yourself you feel dreamy and drowsy, ever so comfortable, drifting off.....
 - 6 **Sleep.** Focus on the sleepy feelings and tell yourself that any problem you've awakened to is best handled by your subconscious mind during sleep. State that you will vent out this negativity during your dreams.
-

...and EFT is another

Mental EFT

- 1 **Take at least one deep breath.** Breathing in slowly through your nose, start drawing in air as deeply as you can, for as long as you can stand it. Engage not only the shallow part of your chest, but feel the air filling you deeply, all the way down into your diaphragm. Repeat this step as many times as you need to in order to focus.
- 2 **Notice where you're physically distressed.** What hurts? What's twitching? Is it your heart? Is your head pounding? Are your legs achy? Prioritize. Whatever point is least comfortable, that's where you're going to start.
- 3 **Stay quiet.** Your main objective is to get back to sleep, so keep as calm as possible. "Speak" only in your mind, not out loud. You'll do the EFT in your mind, as well.

Note: Since you're actually reading this right now, refer to the chart in the section on page if you need to. Just remember: you need to get this information deeply ingrained enough in you that you don't have to look it up when you need to use it. Obviously, turning on a light and looking for this book will be counterintuitive if you're trying to get back to sleep.

continued on next page...

4 **In your mind**, start **reciting a phrase** that addresses your **first area of discomfort** as you **tap** your way through the **EFT points**.

Examples: “Although my heart is pounding/racing ...”
“Although my jaw is clenched...”
“Although my head hurts...”
“Although my stomach aches...”

Important! USE COMMON SENSE. If you have a heart problem, take proper precautions immediately. Call your physician or 9-1-1. If you require medical attention, get it.

5 **Repeat Step 4 for each** area of discomfort, progressing through them in order of highest priority to lowest, until all are subsided.

6 **In your mind**, start **reciting a phrase** to help you **back to sleep** as you **tap** your way through the **EFT points**.

Examples: “Although I can’t get to sleep...”
“Although I’m up again...”
“Although I can’t stop thinking about...”

7 **Sleep.** It *will* happen. Just keep going, and you’ll get there. If you’re still having difficulty sleeping, try either “Long-cycle simple hypnosis” or “Short-cycle simple hypnosis with affirmations” (both above).

1640

When your dreams get stuck

Maybe your dreams are so disturbing that they keep waking you up. Maybe you actually dread sleep, because your mind is just so overwhelmed, and your dreams keep coming out in an almost violent way (perhaps even literally). Whatever you’re feeling, I understand.

1645 But you really need your sleep.

In fact, *you actually need to sleep more*. Do NOT entertain the thought of trying to go without sleep.

People who don’t sleep get weird, period. Even if you have another hour before the alarm, get that hour in.

1650 You have to vent, or you won’t be able to get better. You have to give your dream valve a chance to catch up with the rest of you. Your good sleep tonight can make your tomorrow a little easier.

A quick note on late-night EFT sessions...

When that midnight panic session sets in, you have a decision to make, one that pretty much depends

upon your unique circumstances

1655 1. You can just **try to get back to sleep** as quickly as you can, and resolve to work later on this particular issue that's stressing you,

OR...

2. If you're awake enough, you might instead choose to go ahead and **get that work out of the way** now.

1660 The downside to this second option is that, obviously, it's going to cost you some sleep. The upside is that it's immediate—you're here in the moment, feeling the pain, and you can go right at it. Early in your process of trying to get better, you may want to go ahead and do the work whenever it wakes you. Later, once you've made some progress, you may opt for the sleep (and therefore the venting) instead.

1665 If you choose to do the work, I'd suggest two things:

1. **Get somewhere appropriate.** What I mainly mean is, get somewhere where you can be alone. If you have a partner, or children in the house, and you don't want to disturb their sleep, get somewhere private, where you can talk aloud or whisper.

1670 2. **Be yourself.** This is your chance to be the authentic *you*. If you need to use profanity, if you need to be self-indulgent and say "*Poor me,*" then go at it. If you've followed my advice, then it's just you and what you're facing, alone together. Make this time count.

Chapter 10 – Unfinished business

Blocking Negative Input

1675 Because we take in so much information during our daily lives, and because our minds are spread over so much territory, we can become hyper-suggestible, or in a sort of hypnosis, all the time.

Hyper-suggestibility is that spaciness you feel sometimes, when you're walking in circles, not remembering exactly what you were going to do. There's a point where your mind has to depart from taking in so much information and simply protect itself, gearing you toward a safer base you can operate from. If you're spread too thin, hyper-suggestibility can be a real danger.

1680 Hyper-suggestibility is actually a deliberate technique that marketers and salespeople take advantage of. They realize that there's already a lot of information coming into you, so they deliberately place your desires into that field in front of you. And these bring with them even more information:

How much does this cost? Is this a reasonable price? Can I afford it? Should I? Should I not?

1685 That's why going to the mall can be so appealing to some of us. There's a lot going on: actual physical input—lighting, signs, pretty things—and with our suggestibility open, that's where we find ourselves. In the midst of divorce or trauma, when you need to be making critical decisions, you want your suggestibility closed. Truthfully, you want it closed at all times, unless you're in actual hypnosis intentionally.

1690 **Simple closing**

To do this, one very simple technique is to simply count yourself up. I've already talked about how to count yourself down and into hypnosis. You can also count yourself up, just as you would at the end of any sort of session.

1695 You simply say to yourself, "One, two, three, four, five... Wide awake, wide awake. In control." You can do this at any time, at any moment when you start to feel overwhelmed, slightly confused, or just not sure of the facts. Any of these conditions are important indicators that your suggestibility is heightened to an unsafe level.

1700 If you start to do something and lose track—say, pick up your keys, walk into the next room, and then don't remember why—it means that you're becoming too suggestible. In that condition, anything that crosses your path is going to interrupt your forward motion. That awareness is one way you can tell that you're becoming hyper-suggestible and therefore need to count yourself up.

Energetic closing

1705 In addition to counting yourself up, you have some more energetic ways to lower your suggestibility. You could use EFT to do a round or two very quickly, even in your mind. Focus on your suggestibility or on the feeling of being overwhelmed. You might even just say as you tap, "There's too much information. I need my mind to focus."

1710 Some of the energy practices use methods and closing rituals to accomplish this. People may close up the chakras, through meditation or otherwise. Some work with the aura. ***In trained hands*** all of this work is beneficial. However, I tend to have my clients avoid simple open meditation. They need to be in a slightly better place first. As a society, we have not really been taught to use meditation the way other societies know to use it. Many people in our culture are now becoming interested in it, which is a terrific thing.

But it's not a terrific thing to do in the midst of trauma when your mind is frantic and therefore wide open. Most of us frequently leave our minds open with gigantic amounts of negative, fearful thoughts

1715 running around for an hour—or for a day—without any kind of training or without any sort of spiritual goal.

When I say “spiritual goal,” I mean that there are societies who have taught their members since childhood a very clear picture of what you want to accomplish in meditation. In our Western society, we have not been so fortunate. Many of us simply pick up a new book every now and again and think,

1720 *Oh, I hope this makes me feel better. Let's give it a shot.*

I've worked with quite a few people who are in extreme emotional distress, and they meditate every day. Any of the tools that are out there—perhaps especially meditation—are terrific when you do them in accordance with some of the laws of nature, so to speak. Consider the real factors surrounding you:

Who are you? Where are you from? What is your mindset?

1725 All of these questions can help you much more realistically predict whether a certain set of tools can work for you. By gaining some control of your thoughts and energy with the methods shown here, you may be able to combine some quiet meditative time with hypnosis, but I strongly suggest you use that time to be directive with yourself to get to a better footing (at least neutral) before you open the floodgates and sit back to see what happens.

1730 ***Engaging protection – posture with spiritual or symbolic overlay***

What I call *engaging protection* is looking into your own experience for an icon you can hold in your concentration and use to feel complete protection for yourself. You can choose anything you like. It might be Superman. It might be a white charger. It might be a unicorn. It might be a beautiful butterfly, able to float up and dart away.

1735 It doesn't have to be some spiritual imagery or fantasy. It could be something as simple as a hammer. It could be a big old wrench. I keep a huge wrench under the seat of my car at all times. It makes me feel safer than some small tool or other weapon. ***It makes me feel safer.*** That's the point, find some image that means powerful protection to you.

1740 Your personal protection is an image that you can engage whenever you need it. Yes, it's imaginary. It's in your mind. It's a visualization tool for you. But make it as specific, tangible, physical, and real as you want.

1745 My personal protection is a set of angel wings. Any time I've had to deal with the attorneys during my divorce, I've visualized angel wings to strengthen me. My angel wings are useful for any situation I find myself in where I feel unsure: walking into a bank to make important financial arrangements, dealing with my ex-husband, or facing a medical crisis.

For you, perhaps it's speaking in front of a group of people. (I don't need my angel wings for that one, because I'm very happy and energized by that experience.) But you know what situations and circumstances apply to you.

1750 Literally, any time I feel fragile—whether it's as I'm walking up to that building, as I'm driving off from that confrontation, when I look down at the caller ID and see *that name* flashing up—I picture my angel wings. They rise out of my back, unfurling from between my shoulder blades and fulling extending. I stand up taller, more confident, encouraged. They make me bigger. They make me stronger. They make me more powerful.

1755 Mentally, a specific part of one of the wings actually wraps around in front of me, enveloping my body and protecting my stomach. It automatically covers that place I've told you about before—the place where I withdraw, where I bend in, where I back away. An immortal, iron-strong, white-feathered angel wing creates a solid wall that pushes strongly out in front of me.

This imagery is my protection. Try it for yourself. Close your eyes for just a moment and picture that for yourself. You'll be amazed at how your mind can create these images and thoughts, and your body

1760 will respond in strength.
One of the best times to practice your personal protection is of course while you're in hypnosis. You need to repeat your imagery over and over again in your imagination. Add any detail you can find that helps create strength and confidence for you. Put a bounce in your step. Make your voice deeper. Feel the very air move with you.

1765 For example, perhaps tomorrow you're going to visitation. Right now, before you're actually in that situation, and while you can completely control how events unfold within your imagination, picture yourself walking up to that building where you'll meet. Don't even try to imagine a conflict occurring. The event itself doesn't really matter that much. What matters most is how this event makes you *feel*. That is your new positioning: being on your own side.

1770 Think about it this way: Let's say you had a child who had to go to visitation every day, or twice a week. Every time, going for the visit made them feel nervous, scared and shaky. And every time, those feelings of fear compounded to make them feel like a failure. Of course, you as an adult know that it's not failure. It's perfectly normal to feel uncomfortable and awkward in unpleasant situations. You wouldn't want that for your child. You want your child to feel safe and secure, confident in what they're doing at all times. You also have the context to realize that they might not ever grow to like it. It's just a necessary chore that's not going to go away.

1775 So let's bring it back to you, now. Realistically, you might not ever grow to actually *like* visitation, to look forward to it, but you *can* create a personal protection that strengthens you through it. Your personal protection may only be for now. It may also be forever. (Why not? It's your own tool—it's not a crutch.) Your personal protection can make all of this much less upsetting, much less damaging to your own spirit and confidence.

1780 *You can even have fun with it.*
While personal protection is certainly a tool, it's even more than that. You can—and you should—make it fun. In fact, the more fun it is, the more effective it can be.

1785 Picture this: Let's say your personal protection is a gigantic hammer. In pre-visualizing the situation you don't like, you're walking confidently forward into that setting, with this huge hammer in your right hand. With each step you take, it takes these big swings, looking completely menacing. Then, as you approach to politely shake hands, you have to switch the hammer from your right hand to your left. You modestly interrupt the exchange and say, "Oh, hang on... Just one sec." Then you shuffle it from

1790 one hand to the other.
You can even do this literally, just a little, barely visible shuffle, and you don't have to look like a crazy person. This is all for you. This a tool for you to create a position of bemusement and amusement during these situations for yourself, in place of the fear. You're keeping yourself in a comfortable state, even if it feels totally surreal, the important thing to remember is that good chemicals and silly feelings shooting through your body are much more productive than cortisol and adrenaline surging through your body and mind and taking it's toll. Better to walk away giggling than shaking.

1795 Finally, as you visualize your personal protection, you need to take into account your posture. When I've helped clients build a personal protection, this is something we always try to address. Your posture indicates impact. If you find yourself in a situation that drains you or causes you to feel negative emotions, typically, you'll find yourself drooping somewhere in your physical body. You may even experience physical pain or discomfort, as I've described before with my stomach. You need to identify that place (or those places), and you need to specifically address covering them with personal protection (like the wing that I wrap around my stomach).

1800 Do your shoulders get tight? Maybe you can carry across your shoulders a laurel and golden leaves, just like a regal Roman soldier, or a courageous, victorious gladiator. The possibilities are truly only

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limited by your imagination. The more creative you can be—and the more humorous you’re able to be within your own true beliefs—the more powerful you’ll find this technique.

1810 In my own experience, and with clients in my practice, I’ve found the most success with deeply engaging personal beliefs. Identify what you believe. Understand your beliefs, and figure out a way to saturate your senses and “wear” them, wrapped around yourself.

Emotional surgery

That phrase “emotional surgery” sounds kind of scary, doesn’t it? It’s actually pretty basic. And it doesn’t hurt at all. On the contrary, it helps you feel better.

1815 Almost since the beginning of this book, you’ve been looking now for difficult and painful emotions and “dents” that you can treat. By now, you should have a pretty good list. If some of those things have been resistant to the simpler strategies I’ve offered you, like canceling and saying the opposite, they may have roots deeper inside you.

1820 If that’s the case, then they probably require more extreme measures to deal with. One way to know for sure is to examine them a little more thoroughly: Are those bad feelings often accompanied by physical manifestations as well? Again, the body messaging the mind that there is something wrong.

1825 All of that feedback the body is handing off to the mind is in the form of bad chemicals—and we want good chemicals. Emotional surgery can help you turn this cycle around. Emotional surgery is the tool we’ll use to address these negative, even backward patterns that we’ve allowed to evolve in ourselves over time. It brings to bear everything else we’ve learned—specifically, a combination of EFT and self-hypnosis—to “undo” the damage we feel.

An example from Stephanie

I went through a period a few years ago where, every time I became excited about something positive, my stomach would react in a negative way. It would begin to constrict and feel uncomfortable, and I felt shaky. It was very similar to how my stomach feels when I experience terror.

1830 At one point, it became so bad that even if I simply started *thinking* about something happy and exciting, even just reflecting on a memory, nervousness would set in, and my stomach would just start to tighten and twist. Eventually, I recognized the pattern.

1835 As I was trying to unpack how this could have happened to me, in time I realized that it was actually an incorrect response emerging from a repeated energy pattern. The whole response was simply a bad habit that I had developed over time.

And the drama was self-perpetuating. When something exciting happened, I would wonder if something bad might actually happen because I felt the weird stomach thing. Suddenly I would feel completely doubtful that I had made the right choice—*blah, blah, blah*—negative, rather than just enjoying the moment.

1840 Now it’s your turn...

Once you’re aware of these negative patterns, you can begin watching for signs in your own life. The easiest and most immediate approach is of course to draw from your past, your memories. See if you can recall any instances where emotions have registered with you as some physical upset when you felt, say, upset or nervous or worried about something.

1845 Then, over time, as you become aware of these patterns in yourself, you can actually start paying attention to what’s going on with you right now, in the moment. It’s likely that you’ll begin to notice specific kinds of events that trigger specific positive emotions, which are then followed almost immediately by inappropriate, or “incorrect,” physical reactions.

Odd Actions

1850 I call these incorrect physical reactions Odd Actions. They're not that difficult to recognize. When you feel excited about something, does your stomach start to twist uncomfortably? When you think about someone who makes you happy, does your throat start to tighten? When you're about to walk into a roomful of people, does your neck start to get stiff?

1855 These are all inappropriate, incorrect, reversed reactions. These kinds of things are ripe for performing emotional surgery.

Technique and practice

1 **Use EFT.** Tap on the physical aspect – the actual odd action.

“Even though I have this tightness in my throat.....”

2 **Select an odd action.** Think of the reversed physical reaction that you want to correct. Focus on one specific one.

Examples: Feeling excited makes my stomach start to flip.
Thinking of someone I like makes my throat hurt.
Walking into a room of people makes my neck start to tighten.

3 **Hypnotize yourself.** Begin to count yourself down into trance, and as you do, call the image of your reaction to mind and hold it.

continued on next page ...

4 **Tell yourself it's incorrect.** As you're holding the image, very specifically, very slowly, in a controlled manner, tell yourself it's an incorrect response.

Notes: Be very definitive about this, tell yourself clearly that you are letting go of this pattern, NOW.

While telling yourself the reaction is incorrect, try to avoid words like "don't" and "not.",

5 **Reprogram your preferred response.** Think of how you would like to respond, instead of the odd action.

Examples: Instead of my stomach turning, I will feel strong in my core, push my stomach forward and close the negative space.

Instead of my neck tightening, I will feel loose, relaxed, and happy.

6 **Recall the emotional part.** Think again on the feelings and emotions that have in the past been associated with the odd action.

7 **Rehearse the new action.** Imagine the entire situation all the way through, with your new preferred response as the outcome. Think of it like this: you will no longer "react"; your actions will be congruent with your feelings. Practice it at least a few times.

Example: When I feel excited, my solar plexus will open, and my stomach will push forward like a wall of strength.

When I think about going to a party, my shoulders will relax, my neck will flex, and my thoughts will become lucid.

8 **Lock it in.** Take yourself deeper. Tell yourself affirmatively, *This is how I will act in _____ situation from now on.* Integrate your mind and body with a deep breath, and lock the change in place. Count yourself up out of hypnosis.

Temporary relief is...temporary

1860 Many of us begin looking to so-called "self-help" techniques, and once we start digging up all those upsets and traumas without releasing them, then eventually, even though we started all gung-ho with a

program, we end up letting it go. Why? Because it's uncomfortable with no relief. Looking for that relief from another source outside ourselves might be one reason that "new age" and "hands-on energy" alone may not help us in the long run. In my practice, I've seen many clients, and met others attending my workshops, who have become "addicted" to the relief of sessions. They feel better physically and emotionally in that moment, but then they go home and sink right back into their old habits. They don't change anything—their behaviors or their energy patterns—and they just keep coming back with the same issues again and again. Now the practitioner is certainly doing their part, but only you can address all three realms to create lasting change. The next time you have a massage, you can stay relaxed afterwards by adding some self-hypnosis or silent EFT during the treatment to engage your mind and energy.

Be diligent to pursue these techniques, and to use the tools that I'm giving you for yourself. Emotional surgery in particular affords you a way to actually change both how you think and how you feel. These methods allow you to address everything coming in, as it's coming in, and make a positive difference in your life going forward.

Positivity with Self-hypnosis

Prepare yourself for trance with with some deep relaxation. How deep you need to go is up to you. Check where you are and start from that place. When you're ready, then start into repetition. You can use actual affirmations, or simple repetitive statements. Determine something that works for you, and stick with that.

You need to become comfortable with taking yourself down into trance, down into a hypnotic state, anytime you need to, whether it's the middle of the day, the end of the day, the middle of the night... whenever. It's a tool you need to keep always at the ready in your toolkit. Always count yourself up and out when you are done no matter how short the session.

One very simple method is to count yourself down, taking yourself into a light hypnotic sleep. If you've practiced before sleep each night, your mind is already trained to go into hypnotic sleep as you count down. Simply count from 5 down to zero inserting the same deepening phrases like, relaxing, going deeper, letting go. At zero, say "deep sleep". Depending on the amount of time you have, you can proceed with relaxing your body or go directly to the topic at hand. If you need to get a grip in the middle of the day then repeat "calm and relaxed" and talk to yourself directly as to how you will continue your day feeling secure and in control. You can always think of what you would say to a child, giving them the confidence to go on with their day in a more productive manner.

For example, protect your mind from these kinds of thoughts that have a tendency to drift in and start cluttering things:

"Oh my God, what will happen now?"

"I'm so stupid."

"Why did I do ____?"

"I should have never ____."

"How could I have been fooled?"

Just like saying the opposite, consciously, deliberately pick something positive to replace the negative self-talk. Keep it simple and positive. Here's a simple but great one:

- 1905 *"I feel calm and confident, I feel calm and confident"*
 One of my regular clients uses a simple phrase about her 17-year-old poodle:
"Claude has a bushy tail."
 Silly? Of course! But it works for her. Why? Because it makes her smile, it creates good emotion, it encompasses her priorities in her life and in her world. Mostly it stops and really shakes off the
- 1910 negative chatter.
 As a result, it generates a positive action on her mind. I can't overstate the importance of adjusting your chemical balances in this way. On a physiological level, that's exactly what you want to achieve.

Waking and sleeping

- 1915 We've all had this experience: You're just beginning to drift off, and you have that sort of twilight moment:
Was I asleep? Am I awake now? I thought I was asleep? What? Is the light on? No?
 Those interruptive thoughts, when you're not quite asleep, present great moments, wide open to suggestion through good, old-fashioned boring repetition.
- 1920 Either during the twilight time just before you fall asleep, or in the early moments as you're waking up, you need a very simple repetitive statement. Why simple? Because ideally, you'll want something that does not require your full attention, your full awakening, to recall. Here are some easy ones that I like:
"I love myself just the way I am."
"Deep calm."
- 1925 *"I choose love"*
 See? All of these are very simple, easy-to-remember statements. Here's an incredibly powerful, all-encompassing classic:
"Every day, in every way, I'm getting better and better."
 Of course, this quote from Emile Coué is very famous, and according to Wikipedia, it's been
- 1930 documented in clinical trials to be useful for helping people heal.
 If you find yourself having difficulty recalling statements, then make it simpler. One word like *'calm'* or *'confident'* is fine.

- 1935 You know those times when you come to, almost wide awake, in the middle of the night? (Now, I'm not talking about the midnight panic session here; I just mean generally waking before you're ready.)
 You need to be careful not to get yourself too active at these times, as that's just going to complicate coming back down.
- 1940 Your objective is to, through repetition, return yourself to a sleep state as soon as possible. The process is the same as when you're first trying to go to sleep.
 Perhaps even more important than those moments when you're trying to sleep are those final twilight moments, just
- 1945 as you're first waking up in the morning.
 It should be obvious: Not only is it the very beginning of your day, with the power to frame your experience for what's ahead, but your subconscious mind is still wide open to suggestion. You're passing directly from dreaming into

*Get a firm hold
 of your
 thoughts, and
 avoid getting
 too wound up in
 the middle of
 the night. Your
 objective is to,
 through
 repetition, return
 yourself to a
 sleep state.*

1950 wakefulness. It's like a corridor between those two worlds, and the doors at each end are still open. Compare it to what they say about breakfast: it's the most important meal of the day. This is your opportunity to beat that morning gong to the punch. Give yourself some time—even if it's only seconds—to shape yourself and the coming dawn with some positivity.

If mornings are tough for you, or if they've been particularly difficult for you in the past, then you

1955 likely know exactly what I mean, without me even getting specific. But the time frame you're looking to leverage is that precise, ever-too-brief moment where there's space, in that corridor, just before the harsh reality begins to spill in to fill that void with hurt, terror, and all kinds of negative emotions. Protect yourself: keep it from taking advantage of that chance to overtake you. Fill up the void instead with positive, repetitive statements, and don't even give those things the room to get into your mind.

1960 Be vigilant. You cannot afford yourself the "luxury" of any kind of negative self-talk. We'll talk more about this topic in another section. Negative self-talk will lead you straight into roadkill.

"Restore" by changing your patterns

As you go through this whole process of getting better day by day, you need to continue combing through your mental file of small dents. That's going to provide you with a list of specific things that

1965 you know you can work on. As I've said before, if you haven't been doing this for awhile, it's likely you're not really ready to deal with anything too big at first. You can get to that later, but for now, you need to work on just getting to a nice, neutral place, so stick to the small dents.

Through this whole process, and through EFT and emotional surgery in particular, you're going to remove those dents. By removing the damage you'll start to feel like yourself again, restoring the true

1970 you. You're going to create a really great base that you can build positive things on, and you're going to use only the best, strongest, straightest, dent-free building materials to move forward with.

If you can pro-actively approach that self-nurturing place with the idea of maintenance, then you'll be amazed at the real growth and real change you can create for yourself.

It's less complicated than it probably sounds. What's keeping you stuck? What's holding you back?

1975 You're going to examine those things, identify them, and nurture them to health.

And of course, as I've mentioned before about EFT, one of my favorite aspects of it is its power to help you continually find things to work on. Just as you get the energy patterns in one area cleared up, your body and your subconscious mind will begin to reveal to you something else. It's a constant fertile ground for improving yourself, for getting better, for getting back to *you*.

The power of suggestion

When my husband had first left, I would often feel this terrible, wrenching pain in my stomach. It was most prevalent when midnight panic sessions would wake me. Not only was it actually physically painful, but it was demoralizing.

Then finally, one night I reached a turning point. I awoke in the middle of the night. Probably set for a

1985 panic session. I was just coming into consciousness, and I became immediately aware of that awful physical pain in my stomach. I wasn't yet fully awake, and I was therefore still quite suggestible. Somehow, in that moment, I had the presence to yell, "There is no pain! There is no fucking pain!" The pain stopped instantly—right in that second...and it never came back..

That is the power of inserting something into the subconscious in a suggestible moment. It goes in, it

1990 locks in, and you operate on it from that point forward. Now, look at this in both directions. This is why when you were a child (a completely suggestible time) and someone said to you, "You always overreact," it stuck and self-perpetuated. The power of suggestion is also why we can create strong, powerful change very quickly.

My Wish for You -

1995

And that's just what you have to do. Do the work, even when you don't feel like it...*especially* when you don't feel like it. It's in those times that you actually need it the most. Do it again and again. Fight to restore you.

2000

Isn't it ironic that you have to feel better in order to *want* to feel better? And yet that's exactly how it works. It's really so simple.

Be diligent. Be persistent. Restore yourself. You *will feel better*.