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Introduction

There is no doubt that we are living in a time of enormous upheaval, all the systems we have relied on to provide us stability are collapsing. There are two ways to view what is happening in the world today, either through eyes of fear and struggle or fearlessness. We are being called to reinvent ourselves and in the process our lives, for the old way is no longer working. The unknown brings up all sorts of negative feelings that cause us to doubt, cling, and grasp for some sense of security. If you are afraid, angry, poverty-stricken, or even depressed, the practices described here are designed for you, because they will encourage you to use all of those negative emotions as the fertile ground to awaken to your fearlessness and compassion for yourself and others. The beauty of transcending fear is it turns to grace, that rare quality that arrives as a gift from the Divine. We can’t barter for grace, nor can we choose it. Grace is the spiritual essence of gratitude through living in a state of acceptance and surrender. Grace brings sweet peace to your soul a balm that softens all the hard edges of life. When you are, living from grace you are open to all the good around you. You are inspired to take bold steps toward your highest aspirations. Grace allows you to be fully present and connected to the unity of life. You feel a deeper connection to Spirit and to your inner wisdom. You feel oneness with life, and know that although there are seven billion of us on this planet, we share this human experience together. We are not alone.
In order to understand grace, it may help to understand what grace isn’t. When we are struggling against the flow of life and resisting what is showing up in our lives, we are living in the opposite state of grace. Fear, grasping, and clinging are the ways we experience a perpetual state of restlessness and anxiety. Ninety-nine percent of people on the planet today are experiencing greater uncertainty about their future than in past generations. The evidence is the number of anti-anxiety medications and anti-depressants that have tripled in the past decade. We must cease looking in the outer world for the quick fix and discover the underlying cause of the ‘dis-ease’ to find the appropriate prescription for healing. Our history reveals times where life was difficult. The difference is we now have capabilities that we did not have in the past. Closer study into the evolution of humanity shows the leaps we have made and will continue to make through evolving our consciousness.

The exciting news is...

Crisis precedes transformation. Conscious evolution promises that no matter what you are personally challenged by in your life, you have the ability to transcend that challenge through refining your consciousness. Refining our consciousness is not as difficult as it may sound. Although it may sound like something that requires in depth study or is new age or rooted in religion, the truth is it is not. Each of us can refine our consciousness and the gifts of doing so are the magical qualities of Grace that will shower on us like nectar to a honeybee.

My intention is to support you on your journey navigating the sometimes frightfully turbulent waters of life. My hope
is that by keeping it simple and direct, you will have a reference that you can return to for guidance.

**Hopi Prophecy**

“You have been telling people that this is the Eleventh Hour, now you must go back and tell the people that this is the Hour. And there are things to be considered . . . .

Where are you living?

What are you doing?

What are your relationships?

Are you in right relation?

Where is your water?

Know your garden.

It is time to speak your truth.

Create your community.

Be good to each other.

And do not look outside yourself for your leader.

There is a river flowing now very fast. It is so great and swift that there are those who will be afraid. They will try to hold on to the shore. They will feel they are being torn apart and will suffer greatly. Know the river has its destination. The elders say we must let go of the shore, push off into the middle of the river, keep our eyes open, and our heads above the water.
And I say, see who is in there with you and celebrate. At this time in
history, we are to take nothing personally, least of all ourselves. For
the moment that we do, our spiritual growth and journey come to a
halt.

The time of the lone wolf is over. Gather yourselves!

Banish the word 'struggle' from your attitude and your vocabulary.

All that we do now must be done in a sacred manner and in celebration.

We are the ones we've been waiting for.”

Hopi Indian Elders Prophecy

Oraibi, Arizona, June 8, 2000


**Know Thyself**

“We are the ones we’ve been waiting for!” The Hopi Prophecy leaves us with a valuable and powerful assertion; **desist in looking outside of you for fulfillment or recognition or even leadership.** The true fulfillment in life is by knowing, accepting, acknowledging and loving yourself. The most important endeavor you can embark on, is to delve into asking yourself these primordial questions: Who am I, what am I here to achieve, to learn, and to live. To have an intimate relationship with yourself will enable you to reach your highest potential. When you recognize your True Self, which as Jesuit Priest Teilhard de Chardin said, “we are spiritual beings having a human experience” we open up to the expansiveness of our potential in this human experience.

We have everything we need - within each of us is a well-spring of creativity and abundance waiting to be tapped. When you recognize your spiritual essence and live from that essence, you attract that same essence in others. You are a pleasure to be with, like a lighthouse beacon radiating a bright light that illuminates all in its path. Every great man or woman has discovered in some degree this Truth. Emerson said, “I, the imperfect, adore my own perfection.”

The exciting news is that once you rise up in consciousness, all things will rise to meet you. Everything in life begins to take on a finer quality in short life begins to unfold with grace and ease. The word **struggle** is eliminated from your vocabulary, and you can see that every circumstance every challenge comes bearing wisdom and a lesson. Imagine thinking one way, feeling another then expecting to be an
expression of all you desire. It cannot happen since we create all we desire in our life through our thoughts. When you know who you are without doubt, you realize that you are worthy, you are valuable, and the world needs you to show up and share your unique gifts and talents with others.

Thinking or feeling you aren’t enough, will force you to seek something from the outside of yourself which will potentially lead you to self-destructive behaviors and addictions. To maintain a sense of balance, and not seek from outside, it is necessary to harmonize your body, mind, & spirit. We are multidimensional beings living on all three planes. Our body needs to be nourished through eating organic whole food free of toxins, exercising our bodies so we maintain flexibility and strength as we age and finally learning to breath deeply. Our breath is the first thing we do in this life and the last. We take our breath for granted usually breathing short and shallow with no awareness - especially under stress.

So knowing yourself doesn’t seem like such a difficult thing does it? It means you will discover you are more than you ever imagined. Within each of us is a Divine Spark, a light, when ignited has the potential to light the world. Each of us is an expression of the Creator. Think of any great man or woman who has done things that inspire you. Mother Theresa, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, JFK, all embodied their light, they weren’t selfish at all, most would describe them as selfless, they were fully self- possessed, they knew who they were and shined their light by making a difference in the world. Ponder this... If you were to take a piece of mountain (as in a rock) off, would it be any less, of
the mountain? If you were to take a cup of the ocean out, would it be any less, of the ocean? Use this metaphor as an example of yourself as a unique piece of the Creator you can see that within you exist the magnificence of the Creator. It doesn’t matter what name you call the Creator... God, Universe, Spirit, Energy, Higher Power, the Light it is a personal choice for you, the point is to align with that part of yourself, your Highest Self so you can source your own life and know without doubt that you truly are: Infinite Spirit clothed in a human bodysuit.

You are the most vital and important thing in the entire Universe, as far as you are concerned. Wherever you are, whatever you are doing, how big or how little your life maybe, you are and will always be at the center of your world. The highest experience we can have in life is to know ourselves and be comfortable in our skin, inspired by our actions and what we are up to in the world. Your whole life is controlled from within, learn to cultivate inner awareness, what I call a healing room within where you connect with your inner wisdom and receive guidance, wisdom, and creative ideas to support you to make conscious choices that will lead you to feeling more peace, love, joy and abundance.

You are here to find your True Self; you are here to be the unique expression of the Divine that only you can fulfill. You are here to leave the world better than you found it, to make a difference as only you can do! How do I know this? You wouldn’t have been led to reading this book, there are signposts along the way, and if we are open, we receive the messages. When you live from your Highest Self you embrace the uneasiness that comes from uncertainty. The
Hopi Prophecy warned us let go of the shore, or you will suffer greatly.

What are the ways you cling to the shore in your life? What is it costing you in terms of your health, relationships, finances, creativity, and spiritual connection? What could you create or manifest if you trusted and let go? I read a parable once early on my spiritual journey – it was taken from the book by Richard Bach entitled: *Illusions*, it made a profound impact on me - notice what you feel as you read it:

“Once there lived a village of creatures along the bottom of a great crystal river.

“The current of the river swept silently over them all - young and old, rich and poor, good and evil, the current going its own way, knowing only its own crystal self.

“Each creature in its own manner clung tightly to the twigs and rocks of the river bottom, for clinging was their way of life, and resisting the current what each had learned from birth.

“But one creature said at
last, ‘I am tired of clinging. Though I cannot see it with my eyes, I trust that the current knows where it is going. I shall let go, and let it take me where it will. Clinging, I shall die of boredom.’

“The other creatures laughed and said, ‘Fool! Let go, and that current you worship will throw you tumbled and smashed across the rocks, and you will die quicker than boredom!’

“But the one heeded them not, and taking a breath did let go, and at once was tumbled and smashed by the current across the rocks.

“Yet in time, as the creature refused to cling again, the current lifted him free from the bottom, and he was bruised and hurt no more.

“And the creatures downstream, to whom he was a stranger, cried, ‘See a miracle! A creature like ourselves, yet he flies! See the Messiah, come to save
us all!’

“And the one carried in the current said, ‘I am no more Messiah than you. The river delights to lift us free, if only we dare let go. Our true work is this voyage, this adventure.’

Our lives can be an adventure; we can choose to trust the unknown current in life, and by doing so, we will be delivered to a life that is so fulfilling and so powerful that all who bear witness will be inspired by our fearlessness.

If you are holding a belief that others are unique because they let go of the shore, creating a life that you can’t see for yourself; thinking that they have some unique quality of character you don’t possess that is a LIE. This is your birthright this is your destiny it is only you who stand in the way of living it! When you acknowledge and integrate your unique gifts and what you believe about yourself, you are fully self-expressed.

Everyone is searching for the highest expression of life as human beings – if we aren’t living that passion we aren’t fully living.
Impermanence & Change

You can’t always change the outer circumstances, but you can always change how you relate to the circumstances.

Everything is energy from the earth spinning on its axis to the cells in our bodies, in a constant flow and movement. Estimates of quantum biology reveal that you have a brand new stomach lining every four days, new skin every thirty days, a new liver in six weeks, even the skeleton is replaced every three months. What this says is that when you find yourself unhappy with life, and resisting change you are literally fighting against the entire Universe. You are clinging to the shore.

In our brains, there is the survival mechanism to avoid danger and seek safety. This survival mechanism is called the fight-or-flight response. When faced with anything that threatens us, our automatic reaction is toxic to our well-being. When we look back at the history of humanity, we understand that, in prehistoric times, it was this response we needed to survive an attack by woolly mammoth or saber-toothed tiger. The challenge today is we don’t often need this acute stress response, this automatic response system gets triggered in minor situations rather than life threatening situations. You can open an e-mail, experience traffic stress, or hear some news that sets you off. The National Center for Disease Control and Prevention lists stress as the leading cause of disease, creating in us everything from heart disease, cancer to diabetes and everything in between. When we live from this reactive state we are literally killing ourselves.
Our brains are also hardwired to seek stability. The greatest challenge in seeking stability in a world *always changing and unstable* is that it sets us up for suffering. For a moment, just think about what you are doing... **You are trying to create certainty in an uncertain world!**

When you fight the flow of life, you are as the Hopi prophecy cautioned us not to do, "**hold on to the shore for, you will feel you are being torn apart and will suffer greatly.**" We are encouraged to "**let go of the shore, push off into the middle of the river, keep our eyes open, and our heads above the water.**"

Problems and the absence of problems do not come from the outer world. Problems, as well as all peace and happiness, only come from your own mind. As long as we continue to believe that happiness has to come from the outer world, from other people or things, we will always blame something outside whenever we have a problem. Often people think that their problems come from their parents. They say, "I'm like this because of my mother or father. My parents are to blame." But real contentment has nothing to do with the past, with our history, or our upbringing. Real contentment and peace comes when we free ourselves from our dissatisfied monkey minds.

Another part of our survival brain is to seek pleasure avoid pain and to polarize into opposing opposites: good vs. bad, right vs. wrong, success vs. failure. We are seeking through our possessions; our titles and relationships to find something that will help us feel safe and secure. You try to stabilize so you won’t feel unstable, uncomfortable, or insecure but, in doing so, you are setting yourself up for struggle and suffering.
We are being called to learn to stop running away from the aspects of our lives that scare us and face them directly. The paradox is that these are the exact parts that will show us how to have an open heart to life and accept it just as it is. Only to the degree we have related with our personal fears, anxieties and pain will we be brave enough to feel the pain of others.

“The time of the lone wolf is over” the Hopi’s said. We are not islands apart from one another. We are receiving a message not only from the indigenous cultures to find our link back to our roots and heal the planet, but that we must also come together and support one another, as opposed to struggling alone and feeling our pain, is personal. Our pain is not personal – yes it may feel like it when you wake up in the middle of the night worried about how you are going to pay your bills, feed your children, or even get back to sleep; but it is not personal, it’s a shared feeling that all humans feel.

We are told, “At this time in history, we are to take nothing personally, least of all ourselves. For the moment that we do, our spiritual growth and journey come to a halt.”

The mind wants to make everything mean something. We make up meanings about ourselves, about the world, about other people – this causes us so much unnecessary suffering. Drop the story about what something means – people treat you badly or react to you negatively because of their own consciousness – it has nothing to do with you!
When you honestly get that is has nothing to do with you, your life changes! You stop trying to be a people pleaser and rather give yourself permission to be authentically who you are – the so-called good and bad. You learn to say no, set boundaries and source your own company. When I got that I didn’t care what people thought about me; that I only cared what I thought about me – I was liberated! I’ve taught myself to catch in the early stage, when I am caught up in worry or care that someone isn’t approving of me, or they are judging me in some way – I always turn it back on myself by asking: do I judge me? Do I approve of me? If the answer is no, then I go directly about healing that judgment or disapproval within myself. Easy to do if you are aware of what you are doing, easy not to do if you are unconscious. Everything is consciousness, and, everything is energy – learn to work with both and you will positively transform your life.

TRY THIS:

Practice: Quick Coherence Technique by The Heartmath Institute

Quick Coherence® is especially useful when you start to feel a draining emotion such as frustration, irritation, anxiety or stress. Using Quick Coherence at the onset of less intense negative emotions can keep them from escalating into something worse. This technique is especially useful after you’ve had an emotional blowup to bring yourself back into balance quickly.

Step 1: Heart Focus.

Focus your attention on the area around your heart, the area in the center of your chest. If you prefer, the first couple of times you try it, place your hand over the center of your chest to help keep your attention in the heart area.
Step 2: Heart Breathing.

Breathe deeply but normally and feel as if your breath is coming in and going out through your heart area. As you inhale, feel as if your breath is flowing in through the heart, and as you exhale, feel it leaving through this area. Breathe slowly and casually, a little deeper than normal. Continue breathing with ease until you find a natural inner rhythm that feels good to you...

Step 3: Heart Feeling.

As you maintain your heart focus and heart breathing, activate a positive feeling. Recall a positive feeling, a time when you felt good inside, and try to re-experience the feeling. One of the easiest ways to generate a positive, heart-based feeling is to remember a special place you've been to or the love you feel for a close friend or family member or treasured pet. This is the most important step.
Obstacles

“When we descend all the way down to the bottom of a loss, and dwell patiently with an open heart, in the darkness and pain, we can bring back up with us the sweetness of life and the exhilaration of inner growth. When there is nothing left to lose, we find the true self – the self that is whole, the self that is enough, the self that no longer looks to others for definition, or completion, or anything but companionship on the journey.” ~ Elizabeth Lesser

In order to overcome an obstacle we must first take responsibility for having attracted the obstacle at some level in the first place. Certainly there are many situations and challenges that on the surface do not seem like something you would ever attract. Who would in their right mind attract being addicted, violated, or abused? But the truth is, no matter what the obstacle is you won’t be able to move forward and transcend it, until you accept the reality of the situation. The next step is to accept that at some level you are responsible for attracting the obstacle. Until, you fully accept you are not a victim of anything in life - you won’t be empowered to change it.

Cravings & Desires

The most difficult obstacles come under the headings of cravings and desires. I believe to the degree you desire something and you don’t get it you will suffer. To the exact degree you want your life to be different from what it is, and you are attached to it - you will suffer. It is only through the qualities of acceptance, surrender, and
**detachment** do we find that which we are seeking.

It is not wrong to desire, for that is how we manifest our dreams. The challenge is that when we attach ourselves to the desires as a *means* to our happiness. The key is to practice detachment; it will allow you, effortlessly to attract, into your life all that is for your highest good.

Detaching isn’t a passive act; it’s an extremely powerful thing to do. You don’t give up your dreams and desires; you give up the *attachment to the result*. Attachment is based on fear and insecurity – we seek security because we haven’t yet met our true *Self*. When you desire something just give gratitude for it: I give thanks in advance for this or something better – releasing it and allowing it to come into my life, if it’s in my highest good and the good of all others. Release that prayer into the ethers and let go - detach.

We are attached to so much *stuff*. For far too long we have been consuming more than our share individually and collectively. We have set ourselves up to suffer by taking more than we need. Presently, more and more of us are being forced to give up things we used to take for granted. As I write this book, fifty percent of American’s are financially fragile – that is about one hundred and seventy-five million people. A quarter of Americans are living in homes that they can’t afford, and most are being foreclosed. If you are spending more money than you make, you are living a lie!

If you have spent years buying stuff to feed some momentary emptiness, or to feel good enough because you are driving a new car, or living in the right neighborhood - more than likely you are taking it personal now that the economic systems of the world are collapsing. Here, is the wakeup call – especially during the holidays. Do we
honestly need more STUFF? Everyone loves to give gifts but seriously what will it take to wake us up from this delusion. It isn’t even what the holidays are about! Can’t you give without it needing to be some material object? As long as you buy into the consumerism model of more is better, you are a part of the problem, not the solution. Interesting how we are not even called citizens but rather consumers. Bottom line is... Chasing things will always end up making you feel empty and hollow inside – stuff is fleeting; it comes and goes.

I know firsthand what it feels like; growing up poor all I ever wanted was stuff. Deep within I didn’t feel worthy without all the material trappings. Once I earned success, I was the classic “keeping up with the Joneses” and the sad thing was; I wasn’t even conscious of it! I would make excuses, “I deserve nice things” or “expensive things are better quality; they will last longer” or the biggest statement of denial, “I’ll charge it and pay it off later – or I’ll make more money.”

My life now is totally transformed – I woke up mostly from refining my consciousness and listening to my inner wisdom. I realized it was out of integrity, but the truth is it was the economy gave me the BIGGEST push in that direction. This is the gift that I have extracted from the current economic crisis – a wake up call.

For a moment think about how our satisfaction is short lived, you get something new, some clothes, shoes, a new car, electronics, whatever the object of your desire may be; the feelings of satisfaction are almost always short lived. You spill something on the clothes, now they don’t bring the pride they once did when they were new and spotless. The car gets a ding, the shoes are scuffed up, the latest
electronic is upgraded, the trip you have planned and held high expectations for doesn’t live up to the visions you held; then you spiral into the abyss of negative emotions and monkey mind chatter.

Triggers

The key is you must know what sets you off – what are your triggers; the things that hook you and keep you grasping and wanting to control. Clinging and attachment come from poverty consciousness. Poverty consciousness is that state of mind where you fear that there isn’t enough. This could be there isn’t enough men, women, time etc... But the crucial one is money. Many people think once they have enough money then they will feel secure. But it never happens – it never happens! Here, is what happens: you get more and then it creates an insatiable desire for more; it’s a never ending cycle.

Here, is a truth I believe most people ‘know’ intellectually, but they don’t truly live it... If, you seek security from the things of this world you will never find it. Security can’t come from money alone or any material object in the world. The solution is simple; live in uncertainty, live without clinging to the familiar. The familiar is the past; it’s the known. It’s a prison that keeps you trapped – perpetuating more of the same. The only way we can create a life of true fulfillment is through letting go of the past, forgiving our past if needed and then living in the present. By accepting the feelings that cause us so much angst and
fear and experiencing them directly and courageously; this mere act will bring us into this present moment which is the only path to living gracefully.

I have devoted my life to teaching emotional healing techniques and I what I have come to realize is, when we master our internal emotional state then we can master our lives. When you know the things that have the ability to set you off derailing into negative emotion, you will know your humanity. You can then connect and relate with others who are feeling the same universal feelings that you are experiencing.

What are our triggers you may be asking? Triggers are your habitual patterns, the things that keep you stuck and unable to move forward. They are the relationships that no longer serve you, the patterns of behavior and habits that sabotage your success. The challenge with breaking negative patterns or behaviors is we aren't conscious of when we are engaging in them.

Mindfulness Practice

The antidote or solution to knowing your habitual patterns is cultivating awareness or mindfulness practice. *Everything* depends on how you use your mind; only then will you be able to observe, notice and shift the thoughts that are sabotaging you. The greatest obstacle to your evolution is the stories you create in your mind, most of which are not even true.
The mind of most of us is like that of a headstrong toddler. We can’t just do everything the mind says and give it everything it says it wants – just as we wouldn’t with a toddler. That would lead to a terribly spoiled child! It is very dangerous to act on everything the mind says. Using the metaphor of the mind like a child; it would make sense to be the loving parents, the father and mother carefully watching and guiding the child. If you act like the child, believe everything the child says, if you become the child, you create obstacles and life becomes suffering. More metaphors of the mind: mind is a boat, you are the captain; mind is a car and you are the driver. Learn the waters, watch the road, steer the vehicle, follow the map – letting the mind run haphazardly wherever it wants, captain less, driverless, is the path of unconsciousness. Unfortunately, most people in the planet today are living in this way. Are you?

It takes exceptional care to watch the mind; however, the practice is painless and easy; but what is easy to do is also easy not to do. Watch what would happen if you were to approach your mind the way a spy would approach a target. Spy on your mind - get to know everything about it: what it is thinking, planning, acting out; whether it is working for good or scheming for harm – and then carefully work to interfere when your mind is being negative. In that moment, of awareness shift your thoughts to something pleasing, a thought that will evoke love in your heart.

Have you ever awakened with some depression, anxiety or negative emotion which comes from absolutely nowhere? **It’s your mind** – somewhere floating through your mind if you took the time you would find a thought creating this
malaise in your body. If you sat with the feeling long enough, you would discover that even if you didn’t know the exact story or thought you were having, you could totally have a direct experience of the feeling which is always temporary and impermanent.

Feel the Feeling

Experience the feeling – no matter how strong: fear, depression, hate, despair, rage, shame, loneliness – and notice if you stay with it long enough it will dissipate and dissolve. The obstacle or challenge that prevents you from experiencing relief from the emotion is simple: you are impatient. The feeling becomes so unbearable that you want to bolt, check out, anesthetize and not feel. But you can only heal what you allow yourself to feel! You must fearlessly relate with the feelings directly, and there you will find liberation.

The constant changing of emotions is evidence of the ephemeral nature of life. One moment you feel on top of the world, the next moment you get a phone call, text or someone posts something on a social network site and you are hooked derailing down into your deepest darkest emotions. This is the point you need to stay with the feeling and practice not pressing the send button. Notice in your body where you feel the emotions – see if you can find some distance from the feeling by becoming the observer. And always remember to BREATHE!
Another obstacle in living gracefully in the face of uncertainty is complaining. Complaining becomes the way in which we build stories out of what we are experiencing. We complain about how things are, how they are not, and we think - if we could just get it together once and for all everything will be okay. What you must realize is you are not describing a personal experience but an experience of the shared experience of all of humanity from the beginning of time. Part of our humanity is to feel disconnected and alone – this is why it is paramount you cultivate practices to lift you out of your humanity, and into the truth - we are Spirit clothed in a body suit. Sure, it may feel as though you are the only person on the planet who doesn’t have it all together yet, but it is not the truth.

If you feel rage and act it out blaming others, it is you who suffers – sure the people who are the target of your rage suffer, albeit briefly. We act out because ironically we think it will bring us some relief. Often there is some relief but only for a moment. It’s the same if you have an addiction and you fulfill that addiction there is a moment you feel some relief – but then the nightmare gets worse. So it is with intense negative emotions. You give someone a piece of your mind, and you may feel pretty good for a while, but the sense of righteousness and judgment grows, and it hurts you. There is a saying, “holding onto resentment is like taking poison and expecting the other person to die.”
Whenever you are hooked, triggered, reactive or provoked the key is to catch it in the earliest stage before it spirals out of control. Knowing our triggers teaches us about ourselves; it teaches us where we need to grow. At this time, we need more than ever to understand what keeps us feeling alone, separated and apart. We must pay exquisite attention to what keeps us in *us vs. them* mentality. We are all interconnected with the fabric of life, so much so that what we do to the rivers in South America affect the entire planet. Everything is inter-related including ourselves this is why it’s paramount to make friends with ourselves. This is the key to raising the consciousness of the planet.

**Start Where You Are**

So where to begin? Start where you are. This is extremely important. Right now you may not have it all together, and you may not be the person you know you could be or want to be. You may be the angriest person in the world, and that is a perfect place to start. You may feel like you are the most depressed person in the world or the most addicted and jealous person in the world. You might think there is no one else in the world who self-loathes as much as you do. All of that is a good place to start.

Just where you are that is the place to start; that is the first step in living fearlessly.
TRY THIS:

Practice: Notice & Ease Tool by The Heartmath Institute

Step 1: Notice and admit what you are feeling.

To gain more insight about your emotions, you will need to become more aware of what you are feeling. Noticing and admitting what you are feeling requires slowing down and taking stock. Periodically, throughout the day simply pause and notice how you feel. It takes only a few seconds to ask, "What am I feeling right now?" Don't judge whatever you are feeling. Instead, observe what’s flowing through your emotions. You'll discover new things about your emotional patterns and what triggers less desirable emotions in you.

Step 2: Try to name the feeling.

Simply by naming the feeling to yourself, whatever it is – worry, anxiety, frustration, anger, sadness, hurt, resistance or even a vague disturbance – will help you admit what you are feeling. Being honest about naming what we are feeling helps regulate our emotional energy, slowing down the emotional energy running through our system and giving us more power. We can then redirect emotional energy to work for us instead of having it leave us feeling drained throughout the day.

Step 3: Tell yourself to e-a-s-e …

As you gently focus in your heart, relax as you breathe and e-a-s-e the stress out. As you tell yourself to ease in your heart, relax and ease the stressful emotion out, feel as if the unwanted emotion is leaving your system. Don't force it out; ease it out. Befriend the reaction by holding it in your heart, and then let the feeling ease out of your system. If you try to fight your feelings or push them away, they will gain energy. Befriending your feelings will help you clear.

Keep using the Notice and Ease™ tool for one minute or longer, until you feel something lighten up, even if you don't get an immediate, complete release. Quite often you can experience so many feelings within just five minutes. Don’t let this confuse you. Don’t even try to figure out why. Just keep practicing the Notice and Ease tool until your
energies come back in balance. Then listen to the intuitive guidance of your heart on what to do next.

Feelings are like a code that contains information. You have to name and befriend your feelings to decipher the code. Admit the truth of your feeling world and allow new intuitive perceptions to come to you. Observing our emotions and then practicing Notice and Ease helps change our emotional feelings, giving us a new ability to reduce the drain of negative emotions and replace them with emotions that are more renewing.
Infinite Possibilities

You are what your deep, driving desire is.
As your desire is, so is your will.
As your will is, so is your deed.
As your deed is, so is your destiny.

~ Upanishad IV.4.5

In the history of the collective as in the history of the individual,
everything depends on the development of consciousness.

-- Carl Jung

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We live in an abundant Universe. Everywhere we turn we find evidence of this truth. Gravity is the weakest force in the universe, yet it is in perfect balance. It is all simply the miraculous. The more knowledge we attain, the more we see how involved, and yet delicately designed is the planning and order of the known Universe. It is astounding to think that we know only four percent of the Universe – all else is dark matter and dark energy. It is all a thrilling mystery. Albert Einstein one of the most brilliant minds of our time said, “A human being is part of the whole called by us universe, a part limited in time and space. We experience thoughts, our feelings and ourselves as something separate from the rest - a kind of optical delusion of consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from the prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty. The true value of a human being is determined by the measure and the sense in which they have obtained liberation from the self. We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if humanity is to survive. He also said, “No problem can be solved from the same state of consciousness in which it was created.”

I continue to be inspired by the words of Einstein, the father of modern physics and one of the most prolific intellects in human history. Another brilliant man of our time was Joseph Campbell. Campbell was an American
mythologist, writer and lecturer, best known for his work in comparative mythology and religion. His work is vast, covering many aspects of the human experience. His philosophy is often summarized by his phrase: "Follow your bliss."

At the end of Campbell’s long career, when Bill Moyers asked him about the meaning of life, Campbell replied, “it isn’t meaning people have been seeking down through the ages but something he called “the rapture of being alive.” After many years of research, he affirmed that each human being – whether from ancient Greece, or tribal Africa, or modern America – is not really craving for a special vocation or an Earth-saving mission. Rather what we want are energetic, satisfying experiences of being alive. Remember the line from Titanic when Leonardo DiCaprio’s character shouted from the bow, “I’m king of the world”? People resonated with that line – something inside each of us woke up momentarily and wanted to experience that same feeling of liberation.

Authenticity

If you have a desire to make a difference, to serve humanity or to find God, and that desire comes from a place within that is pure and authentic without any attachment to the results – then you will bear fruit. However, if you try to love or lead, or create or serve, from a barren place, or from a place of feeding your ego then you will serve an inedible
cup to those around you and never live the life you were given.

Gratitude

The key to living the rapture of being alive as Campbell so eloquently said is through *pure gratitude*. Most people get so intense, so fierce, and so belligerent in their positions whether it is political, religious or something as benign as what they are cooking for dinner. We can work to ease the problems of the world, and at the same time love the world with all of its ugliness and beauty. We can learn to follow our beliefs without being so uptight about what we oppose.

Pure gratitude when flowing freely through your body, heart, mind and soul allows you to weather any storm in life and attract all the goodness you seek. The world suffers more from unhappy, stagnated people *trying* to do good than it does from those who are simply content within themselves. The challenge with the former is the *trying* – try not and just DO.

The gift in the unhappiness, the sorrows of being a human that, through our personal journey of healing and transcending the negative emotions situations and circumstances in life, we find that we come home to ourselves. In the end, it is the people who are comfortable in their own skin – people who have faced their fears and encountered all that is most terrifying in the world, they
are the ones who move mountains and are called out of themselves and into making a difference in the world.

Each one of us can be that person – each of us has the ability to leave this lifetime with a legacy of love, compassion and contribution. The founders of the world religions were such people. Their ability to heal and awaken came from their personal experience of being wounded and feeling the pain of being human.

Every great hero or heroine – past and present took difficult journeys of self awareness before finding their true path. When you face your inner demon, the negative voice within that whispers you aren’t worthy, not good enough and you will never make a difference – when you confront that voice with fearlessness - you find our true Self. Our true Self is beyond the confines of this world – when we meet the real essence of who we are, we begin to experience infinite possibilities.

Forgiving

Before we seek to go out into the world and right what is wrong, we must first seek to right that in our own hearts and in doing so we gain humility and authenticity. Once we go into our darkness – into all that we judge in others and accept it within ourselves and forgive ourselves for our humanness and our imperfections – we can emerge with the rapture of being alive – we emerge with an open heart and compassion for everyone. To the extent you judge
yourself, you will judge others; the opposite is true as well, to the extent you can forgive yourself and be gentle with yourself; you will offer that to others.

It’s ironic to think that when we resist what is painful, we experience more pain, but if we embrace what's within us – if we peer fearlessly into the darkness – we stumble upon the light. What is keeping you from seeing your own light? I can promise it’s not found in a lighted room – it is only in darkness that you can you see the stars. Learn to embrace the dark times in your life and find the lessons that they teach you. Carl Jung, the Swiss Psychologist, said, “The gold is in the dark.”

If you are weary, my hope is that you find refuge and rest, so you can be full of passion and purpose. If you are bitter and blaming, my hope is that you discover forgiveness first for yourself, so you may be sweetened by hope and laughter. If you are afraid, my hope is that you are surrounded with angels protecting you, so that you may discover you are bold and courageous. If you are lonely, my hope is that you find staring back at you in the mirror, your best friend and attract the same love and friendship you give yourself.

If you are lost, understand we are all lost, yet we are guided by an invisible force that once you recognize it and acknowledge it, your life will be completely transformed. May you follow that invisible force – for that is the way – the way to live gracefully in uncertain times.
Resources

The Heartmath Institute
The Institute of HeartMath is an internationally recognized nonprofit research and education organization dedicated to helping people reduce stress, self-regulate emotions and build energy and resilience for healthy, happy lives. HeartMath tools, technology and training teach people to rely on the intelligence of their hearts in concert with their minds at home, school, work and play.

www.heartmath.org

Barbara Marx Hubbard

http://www.barbaramarxhubbard.com/site/
In 1945, when she was 15 years old, the first atomic bombs were dropped on Japan. This terrible act prompted Barbara to ask the fundamental question: “What is the meaning of our new power that can be used for the good? And “What are positive images of the future equal to these new powers?” This defining moment propelled her life’s quest to find answers to these questions. The insights she has gained has led to her definitive message of hope that “Our crisis is a birth” of a more universal human and universal humanity.

Awakening the Dreamer

http://www.awakeningthedreamer.org/

Awakening the Dreamer is a worldwide initiative that has inspired thousands of people to realize their tremendous
potential as agents of change. Our workshops equip you to take on the challenges and opportunities of this moment in history, make a positive impact on your community, and live a fulfilling a life.

**Tom Shadyac**

In his latest project, a documentary entitled I AM, Shadyac asks some of today’s most profound thinkers, two questions – What’s wrong with our world, and what can we do about it?


Deepak Chopra, M.D. and David Simon, M.D. opened the Chopra Center for Wellbeing in 1996 to help people experience physical healing, emotional freedom, and higher states of consciousness.
Daily Practice

Meditation – Mindfulness – Contemplation

Call it by whatever name you choose – the important thing is to do it! This is the most powerful spiritual practice you can engage in to refine your consciousness.

What meditation is...?

Meditation is simply noticing you are thinking. Our mind never stops! Meditation isn’t about trying not to think or possibly wanting a uncommon experience. It is simply sitting comfortably and observing your thinking – learn to watch the mind notice when it’s distracted and come back. A focal point is helpful. I teach mantra meditation, which is a simple sound you repeat in your mind – or you can easily follow your breath.

Diana Adile Kirschner, Ph.D., a Philadelphia-area clinical psychologist, sometimes refers her clients to learn meditation and has seen firsthand how helpful it can be. "Not only is meditation an absolutely marvelous de-stressor, it helps people better relate to one another," she says. "I can tell when clients are following through with meditation. For instance, I had a couple who consistently bickered. After they start meditating, they became less angry, more self-reflective and more loving."

So why aren't more people taking up the practice? "Because it puts us in the middle of ourselves, which is not always where we want to be" - "Often, we want to fix things rather than accept them the way they are. Many of us feel as
though we can't afford the time and energy to meditate, when, in fact, we can't afford not to."

Experts feel that meditation's effectiveness has to do with putting aside attachment to one's ego. They say, "When you look directly at a star at night, it's difficult to see. But when you look away slightly, it comes into focus. I find it to be the same way with the ego and meditating. When one zeroes in on a sense of self through a practice of meditation, the self-important ego paradoxically becomes elusive. You become more aware that you are interconnected with other beings, and you can better put your own worries into their proper perspective."

Try This:

Sit comfortably with your feet firmly on the floor. Close your eyes so that you are not potentially distracted. Begin by breathing consciously and relax. Use the simple mantra SO-HUM – breath in thinking SO – exhale thinking HUM. Anytime you notice you are thinking rather than repeating the mantra – simple label it ‘thinking’ and return to the mantra.

Continue practicing a minimum of 20 minutes twice a day (morning before activity and evening before dinner)
The Benefits of Meditation:

- Reduce Anxiety
- Improve brain functioning
- Lower blood pressure
- Focus
- Creativity
- Equanimity
- Increased Happiness
- Harmonious Relationships
- Peaceful

Meditation requires no specific equipment and is not complicated to learn. It can be practiced anywhere, at any given moment, and it is not time consuming. Best of all, meditation has NO negative side effects. Bottom line, there are only positives to be gained from it! With such a huge list of benefits, the question you should ask yourself is, “what is it costing me to not meditate?” Think in terms of health, peace of mind, creativity, intuition.
Sources Cited

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