

CHAPTER ONE

THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSONAL SPIRITUAL HISTORY

The Birth of a Model

Life is difficult. Our problems are deep, complex, and severe. Often, we find ourselves caught in a web of pain. We don't know how we got there, and we don't know how to get out. Because we manage our pain poorly, we find ourselves in more trouble; poorly handled problems are a source of untold difficulty.

We need help. We need to learn more about the origin of our suffering so we can manage it more skillfully. Then, instead of dragging us down, our problems become a source of strength and peace.

I have a passion for learning how healing power acts as an antidote to pain and devastation. I have studied with the teachers, masters, and gurus of psychology, psychiatry, and spirituality, searching their models with a fine toothcomb, looking for elements that strengthen our ability to heal. The ten-step model described in this book is a composite of healing principles and methods I have extracted from the great wisdom traditions and organized into cognitive-behavioral practices. These techniques are designed to help the reader transform any troubling problem into spiritual power.

In this chapter, I will describe some of the key events in my life that led to the birth of the ten steps. See if you can find yourself—and, if you are a healthcare professional, your patients—in this story.

BRUTAL REALITY AND THE ILLUSION OF SAFETY, SECURITY, AND IMMORTALITY

In May 1943, I was a seven-month-old fetus. Of course, I don't remember what it was like, but I imagine it was a good place to be: warm, quiet, peaceful, safe, and protected. One day, in an instant, the feeling of safety and the quiet vibrations of motherly nurturance were replaced by fright, flight, and freeze.

My parents went out for dinner. A neighbor was babysitting Suzanne, my twenty-month-old sister. The neighbor left Suzanne on a table and walked away. She fell. When my parents came back, they discovered their baby daughter running a fever and convulsing with seizures. They took her to the hospital, where a spinal tap revealed blood in her spinal fluid. She had a type of brain damage that causes muscle spasms, a permanent condition known as cerebral palsy.

Suzanne's life was one of severe and chronic disability. She had difficulty walking and often fell; loud crashes could sound in our house at any time. My parents and I would run to her in fear of what we might find. Would there be a broken leg, a cracked skull, blood? Due to muscle spasms that inhibited her ability to swallow, she would often choke or gag on her food, banishing in a flash the camaraderie of our family supper.

She was a beautiful person, physically and spiritually. I never saw her angry. She was pure love. Despite her beauty, she remained homebound, isolated, and lonely because her disability prevented her from keeping up with her peers.

At age twenty-four, a sudden loss of eyesight compounded her problems. Over a few short weeks, she became blind; no physician could diagnose the cause. She went to a school for the blind, where she learned braille and met the love of her life, a wonderful man who was also blind. It was her lifelong dream to get married, and, at twenty-seven, she did. On the weekend of her honeymoon, she got sick. Six weeks later she was dead. The same mysterious neurological disease that caused her blindness had destroyed her nervous system.

Each of us has to deal with brutal reality—perhaps not as early as the seventh month of fetal life or, in Suzanne’s case, at twenty months, but eventually the time comes. Brutal reality is defined in Step 2 of the ten-step model as death, pain and suffering, and the unknown. In this work, we will study how our ability to manage brutal reality determines whether we move forward, slip backward, or stay stuck in this life.

THE CHEESEBURGER EFFECT

I was born on July 14, 1943 to a middle-class family of Conservative Jewish faith. Conservative Judaism lies between the Reform and Orthodox branches of Judaism. The tradition includes a strong sense of tribal identity and solidarity, a profound emphasis on taking care of family, support and encouragement of higher education, a great sense of humor, excellent food, the expectation that you marry in the faith, the discipline to follow certain dietary laws, and more.

I followed the rules and customs faithfully until age twelve, when I was in downtown Chicago at an athletic club my dad belonged to. I was there on Saturday morning to work out. It was time to go home. Back then pharmacies had lunch counters where you could get a sandwich. All of my non-Jewish friends were eating cheeseburgers, but I wasn’t supposed to due to the kosher laws. I wanted to see what it would taste like. I ordered a cheeseburger, French fries, and a shake. There are several sins here: the meat was not kosher; you don’t mix cheese with meat; the fries may have been made in pig fat; and, I chased it with a shake, which added more milk to the meat.

I ate the whole thing. Then I knew why other people eat cheeseburgers. It was delicious. I loved it, but there was a problem. Since God was watching and didn’t approve of my lunch, I thought I would be punished—swiftly and severely.

The mind of a little Jewish boy who breaks the law for the first time works something like this: The Jewish superego says do not eat a cheeseburger. The id, or pleasure principle, says, do it. The result is guilt. I thought, “I am going to get run over by a bus because God is angry with me.” But I got home safely. That night, I thought, “This is really cool. If I can eat a cheeseburger and not die, what else can I do?”

I call this seemingly harmless little event the “Cheeseburger Effect.” It marks a profoundly important factor in my understanding of how belief systems work. More about this in a moment.

TERROR AT THE ABYSS

Move the clock forward to the University of Michigan. I am nineteen years old and taking courses in preparation for medical school. I am one of forty-five thousand students from all over the world. This was a period of intense study and intellectual conversations. A little white wine on Friday night and all of the big questions are on the table: “Why am I here?” “What is the meaning and purpose of life?” “Why is there so much suffering and evil in the world and what can be done about it?” No idea was immune to examination. Is this complex world of good, evil, joy, and suffering accidental or designed? And the ultimate question for me: “Does God exist?” One night, the answer: “I don’t know.” Between the cheeseburger as a twelve-year-old boy in Chicago to my loss of God as an undergraduate, I lost the rites and rituals of my belief system of origin one by one. Enter existential anxiety, or “terror at the abyss.” I still had my values, but I no longer had a story to tell me what it is all about, a story to help me manage the suffering of brutal reality.

Think of a chess game as a metaphor for belief systems. The cheeseburger is a pawn. Other concepts, images, rites, and rituals are represented by the rook, knight, bishop, and queen, all of which are there to protect the king. I lost a pawn when I ate the cheeseburger. I proceeded to lose one piece after another, until, one day, I wasn’t sure of God’s existence. There was a meltdown of the entire system. When the king went down, I experienced the unknown, the abyss, the great mystery of life, untempered by my inherited religious story.

This abyss is a difficult place to be. The loss of a belief system can be devastating. Belief systems provide us with meaning and purpose, story and metaphor, inspiration, protection, guidance, truth, healing, community, service, and expansion of spiritual qualities such as love, compassion, understanding, and forgiveness. Whether we stay in our religion of origin or not, belief systems are monumentally important.

HEALING THE PAIN

In my early adult years, my terror at the abyss—combined with my fair share of character defects—left me lost, confused, and overwhelmed much of the time. My relationships weren’t working, and I wasn’t sure of myself at work. I could not figure it out myself. I knew I needed help, so I sought out psychotherapy. I had several therapists, but none helped until I met Dominick. He looked like Pavarotti. He was a jolly, fabulously brilliant, psychoanalytically oriented psychotherapist. Ours was a direct relationship of face-to-face conversations. I did not lie on his couch. We did not dwell in the past. We looked at problems and solutions in the here and now. I would walk into his office in pain, twisted like a pretzel. I walked out feeling better. Sometimes I went with my wife, Sharon Whitney. We would enter his office frustrated, angry, and stuck, but right after the session, we would be able to eat breakfast in friendship. How does that work? I started to think, “Pain and healing. Pain and healing.” I was fascinated with it. What did Dominick do to help us feel better?

My sons were having some trouble with the street and drugs. I went to Alanon, which didn’t work, so I tried Alcoholics Anonymous. I would identify myself as Phil and state

why I was in the room: “Although I am not an addict or alcoholic, we all have problems, and I have addiction in my family, so I would like to stay and just listen.” Since the meetings were open, they would accept me and carry on. Again, I would walk into the meeting in pain and walk out feeling better. What is this healing power? How does it work?

Psychotherapy was good and AA helped, but I needed more. I was still in great pain. My search for solace and healing expanded to the spiritual domain. I mined the great religious field for pearls. My studies included Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Native American spirituality, Judaism, Zen, and others. I reviewed the lives of the saints, sages, teachers, masters, and gurus. I studied Jesus, the Buddha, and Krishna. Sacred texts described heroic and courageous events, gentle acts of quiet, humble service, a promise of healing, and higher states of consciousness. I thought, “What do I know? Maybe I should listen to the masters.”

But whom do I follow? What is spiritual truth? In the vast array of spiritual books and teachers, there are a variety of conflicting ideas and beliefs. Where should I place my trust?

THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD IN METAPHYSICS

In my search, I instinctively resisted a “my way or the highway ” approach. But if the teaching I was exploring said, “There are many ways to climb the mountain—try this method and see if it works; you can prove it to yourself through direct personal experience,” I relaxed because it appealed to my sense of scientific inquiry and respected my needs and individuality.

To verify spiritual truth, I accept no idea on blind faith. I decide for myself via experimentation. My laboratory is human experience. My test tube is the body. My tools are the built-in equipment of the body: consciousness, energy, reason, feeling, intuition, and direct personal experience. I use these tools when I practice any of the spiritual disciplines described in this work, and I recommend you do the same.

We can decipher the difference between spiritual fiction and fact even without test tubes, lab tests, and X-rays. We can take life’s profoundly important questions and put them to the test. For example, saints proclaim that compassionate service to humanity gives peace of mind and strength, that meditation works, that higher states of consciousness exist, and that the body harbors the actual God of the universe. Are their claims true or false?

Each of the spiritual methods described in this work gives us an opportunity to test new ideas in the laboratory of personal experience. We can prove or disprove a new idea by developing a spiritual practice. This is the scientific method in metaphysics. It appeals to scientific agnostics. True believers and true non-believers may find not be able to use this method.

I practiced a variety of spiritual methods for years. Contemplation, affirmation, progressive muscle relaxation, prayer, meditation, mindfulness, service, yoga, breathwork, and the transformation of emotion proved especially helpful. I started to feel

better, became a better person, and experienced a variety of the wonderful superconscious states I had been reading about.

A MODEL EMERGES

In 1980, I worked as a staff psychiatrist at Harlem Hospital, in a fully funded psychiatric rehabilitation program similar to the well-known and highly successful Fountain House in New York City. This was no ordinary psychiatric job. There was so much devastation: racism, poverty, mental illness, substance abuse. A popular street drug at that time was Angel Dust, or PCP. To take this drug is like playing Russian roulette. Experience ranges from euphoria to permanent brain damage and horrible, atrocious acts of violence toward oneself and others.

I decided to call a meeting and focus on substance use. People came. We were just trying to understand what was going on. There was no model. An agency in another part of town heard about this group and thought I knew what I was doing with dual diagnosis: mental illness combined with substance use. They invited me to give a talk and I accepted.

I look back on this incident with wonder. How could I accept this invitation and not have a model? I chalk it up to the male ego, which cannot refuse an invitation. Like a peacock, it wants to show its gorgeous tail and feathers. What feathers! I didn't have any to show. About four days before the talk, I thought, "You'd better get some feathers!"

I took out my trusted clipboard and jotted down some notes. I reviewed with fascination the relationship of pain and healing: Dominick, the analyst; AA meetings; a host of psychotherapy healing models; the lives of saints and sages; spiritual practices. Thanks to this psychospiritual technology, I was feeling better, becoming a better person, and experiencing higher states of consciousness.

On the other side of the coin, I met brutal reality. On the same morning that I experienced a superconscious state in meditation, I walked the streets of Harlem. The devastation of mental illness, substance use, racism, and poverty were in my face.

In my notes, I lined up pain and healing and tried to connect the dots. After about four days, I saw a model in those pages. The day I gave my talk, I presented "Brutal Reality and the Illusion of Safety, Security, and Immortality," a model describing four universal domains where we can work to expand healing power and manage pain more skillfully. It was well received and has lasted all these years as an effective method for understanding the intimate connections between pain and healing. Now, it forms a stand-alone platform for the ten steps described in this book.

Before we get to the model, let me ask you a question. You are in pain. You go to your doctor. The doctor makes an accurate diagnosis and gives you the right medication, diet, and exercise program. You follow the instructions, but you still have pain. You may go back to your doctor or pursue alternative care. Now, assume you have reached maximum benefit from traditional medical and complementary and alternative remedies and still have pain. This can be any pain of body, mind, or soul. What do you do now? How do

you try to heal your pain in the psychological, social, and spiritual domains? See Figure 1.

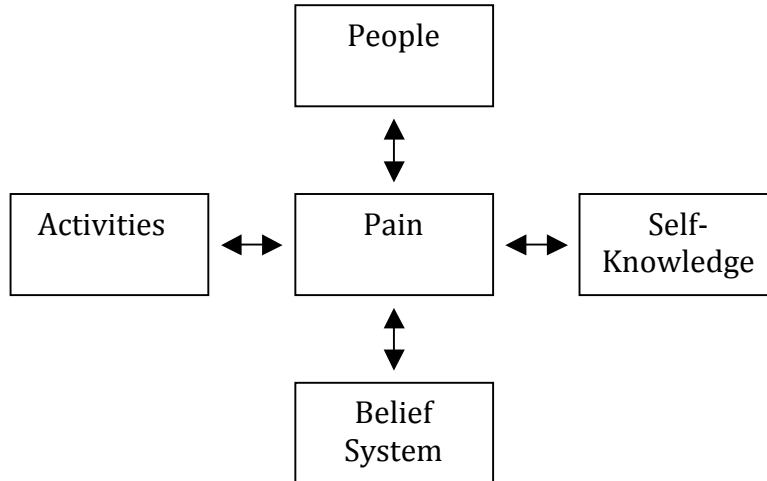


Figure 1

To heal our pain, we work in four domains. Here is an example of how this works.

PEOPLE

I lived in New York City for nine years and Alaska for two years before I came to the polite society of Oregon. New Yorkers and Alaskans are a little more expressive, and I may have been a carrier of that “assertive” vibration. People at work notice. Feeling something different, they might say, “Phil, you are a little too New Yorky.” I am sensitive to criticism of any kind and feel bad. Fear, insecurity, worry, and doubt replace my peace of mind. I think, “Relax, these feelings are the natural human reaction to criticism.” I ruminate. I can’t seem to shake it.

The first thing I do when I get home from work is talk to my wife, Sharon Whitney. She is my best friend, a genius, funny, the goddess of culture, and a muse. She helps me. I tell my story. She might say, “Don’t worry. Once they get to know you, they will enjoy you more.” This helps, and I feel better. But she could say, “They are right. You are that way.” Sharon could be telling me the truth, and I just need to suffer more to see the light.

People may help the pain or make it worse, and, sometimes, they are just wrong. Examine any network closely enough and you will find good, bad, and ugly. Networks heal and create pain. The idea is to have the best possible network. We all need love, compassion, understanding, patience, kindness, and humor.

But no matter how good the network, even if it is perfect—and none of us has that—it is still incomplete. There is no way to eliminate all of our pain in the network. To try to do this creates codependency and more pain.

People are like medication. When we find the right people at the right dose, we get the most pain relief and healing. We can approach the “right people dose” and then turn to the second universal healer: constructive meaningful activities.

ACTIVITIES

Constructive meaningful activities include work, training, volunteering, culture, the arts, hobbies, sports, and recreation. I turn to my activity program for healing and pain management. I get my Walkman and listen to rock and roll as I jog in the city streets. I go to work and serve humanity. I come home and eat dinner while I watch TV or go to the movies and eat popcorn. I run on the track of activities that exist on the physical plane from the beginning of my day until I reach exhaustion and, finally, sleep. Sometimes this works, but not always, and even if my activity program is perfect, there will be residual pain.

Most of us get into trouble with bad habits because we try to eliminate the residual pain with unhealthy painkillers. All too often, people resort to substance, sex, and food abuse, gambling, materialism, power trips, and a host of other activities in an attempt to reduce or eliminate their suffering. This is described in more detail in Step 4 of the ten-step model and in the chapter on habit transformation.

Activities are like medication. When we find the right activities at the right dose, we have more healing power and our ability to manage suffering improves. When we approach the “right activity dose,” where the most healing and pain management occur, we can turn to the third universal healer: belief systems.

BELIEF SYSTEMS

I lost my religion of origin, my Judaic belief system. Looking back on that, I came to understand in a deep and personal way what belief systems provide for us. It is staggering that working with belief systems is not part of mental health training. How can we even think about recovery unless we include meaning and purpose? Meaning and purpose are at the heart of the healing process.

Positive thoughts lead to positive feelings and vibrations that promote the healing process. Many people go to church, synagogue, or mosque for positive thought, worship, support of like-minded people, committee and charitable work, and more. I turn to my belief system: yoga, meditation, mindfulness, prayer, affirmations, and contemplation of sacred texts. These powerful tools stimulate healing power and reduce my pain, but it still hurts. Now what? There is one more thing I can do: ride the pain waves.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE

I spend time alone with the pain, without people, activities, or help from organized religion. I just sit with the pain and let it teach me. By going deep into the center of the pain, I discover my issues, problems, solutions, and strategies. This is self-knowledge, that part of my personal story *that can only be discovered if I ride the pain waves alone.*

For complete healing to occur, we need introspection, or self-analysis. To succeed in introspection, we need to learn to successfully navigate our way through painful emotion. Painful emotion is a teacher that bears the gift of self-knowledge.

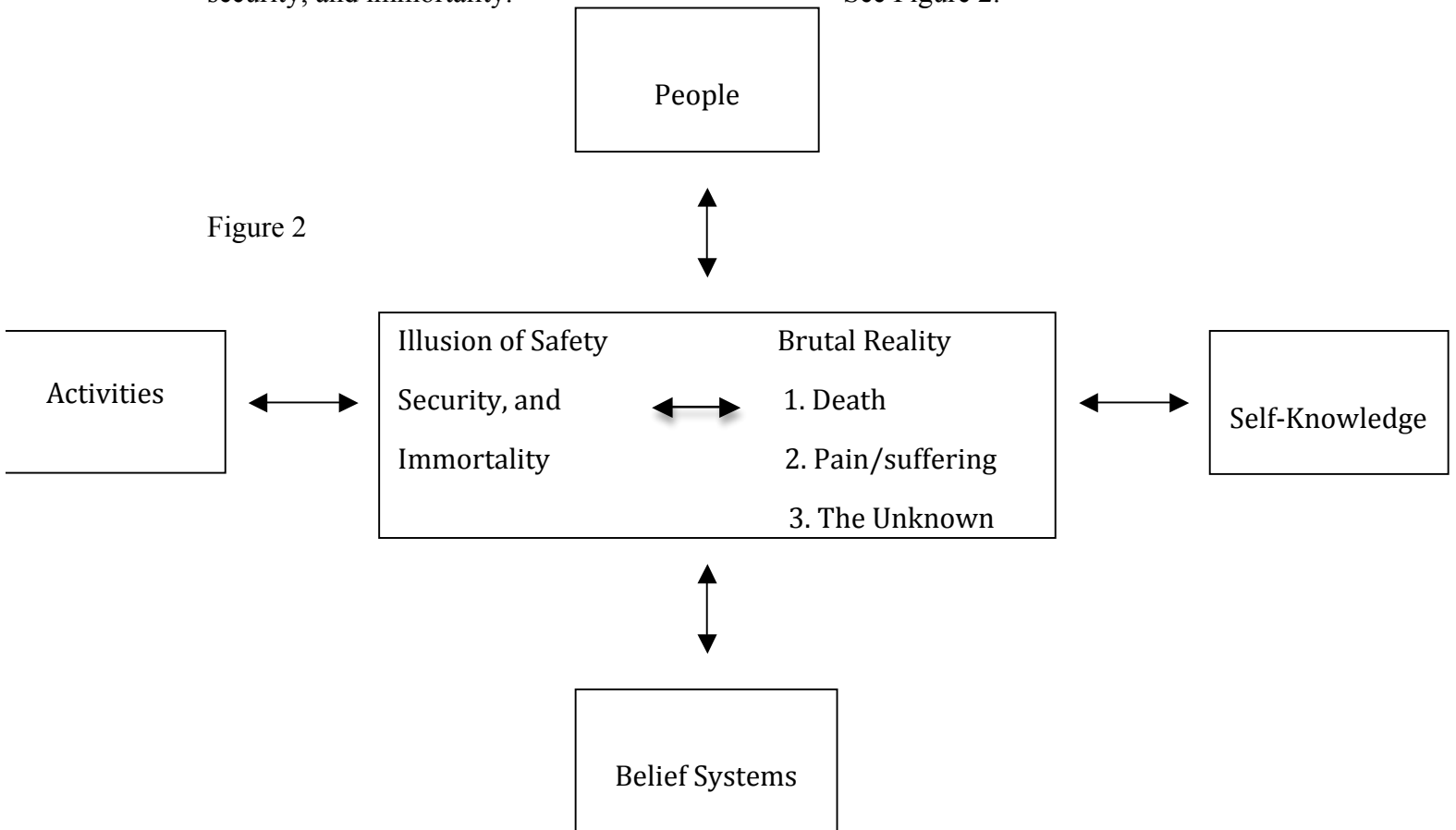
There is a lot going on inside of us: thoughts, attitudes, emotions, and desires drive our choices, behaviors, and habits. Introspection allows us to see our strengths and our limitations. If we don't review and understand what is going on inside ourselves, we are more likely to make unwise choices that lead to trouble.

All of us experience emotional pain in response to ordinary daily events. Emotions are intelligent—they carry meaningful information about our story. We need to unpack that story, for it is there that we can find our problems and our solutions. Peace and strength live on the other side of every painful problem; you will learn more about how this works in the lesson on Transformation of Emotion.

This completes a brief summary of the four healing universes: people, activities, belief systems, and self-knowledge. These four offer a potent combination of healing and pain management. Pain management and healing are maximized when we get these four universes balanced, at the right dose.

To complete the model, we need to bring back brutal reality and the illusion of safety, security, and immortality. See Figure 2.

Figure 2



BRUTAL REALITY

Brutal reality is death, pain and suffering, and the unknown. It has ultimate power. No one escapes. It asserts itself in the life of anyone, anytime, in a seemingly endless variety of ways. It manifests as illness, disability, and trauma and includes other kinds of loss as well, both on an individual level, and—in the case of events such as war, earthquakes, and economic depression—at a cataclysmic, global level. Ultimately, brutal reality manifests as the death of both individuals and of large groups of people.

At death, we go somewhere or nowhere. Often, we have trouble with small changes, let alone a radical transformation into the mysterious unknown. We don't like this power arrangement. The ego is about control—we want to be in charge, but we're not. Brutal reality has the ace in life's deck of cards. We can get as many cards as possible, but we can't get the ace.

We try not to think about this part of reality. It is so difficult to understand and accept. But avoidance leads to even more trouble. If we're not prepared, if we don't have a plan or a program, we can easily get overwhelmed when life gets rough. Remember this: *how you manage your pain determines whether you move forward, slip backward, or stay stuck in this life*. We need an antidote for brutal reality. What can we do?

THE ILLUSION OF SAFETY, SECURITY, AND IMMORTALITY

We have a need for absolute safety in order to function, but this is impossible on the physical plane because brutal reality has ultimate power that transcends the material plane of existence. Safety on the physical plane is temporary and limited, but we often take it for granted or regard it as permanent—this attitude creates what I refer to here as the illusion of safety. We need as much of this illusion as we can get. When we feel safe, we have peace of mind. With peace of mind, we can function at our best.

We get this feeling of safety by thinking we have more time. Immortality, in this case, does not mean life after death; it is the sense that we have more time. If you have an appointment later today, a dinner plan for tonight, and an expectation that you will have a tomorrow, you are most likely living within an illusion of safety. But what happens if a gunman walks into your building at work or if the building shakes from an earthquake? The illusion of safety—and your peace of mind—is replaced by brutal reality and fear.

Safety is everything. We have to have it for our families, our communities, our organizations, and ourselves. It is the drug-elixir of life. And how do we get the illusion of safety? Through people, activities, belief systems, and self-knowledge. We can skillfully manage brutal reality and create the feeling of safety through positive action in the four healing universes. The illusion of safety, security, and immortality is the universal balm we all use to try and cover up our universal phobia: brutal reality. To make our balm, to do the covering up, we use our support network, activities, belief systems, and self-knowledge.

The central theme in this model is that people, activities, belief systems, and self-knowledge offer a four-pronged defense against brutal reality to create the illusion of safety, security, and immortality. The ultimate goal is to utilize the four healing universes to create peace of mind and to hold that peace while facing death, pain and suffering, and the unknown.

There are six components in this model:

1. People
2. Activities
3. Belief systems
4. Self-knowledge
5. Brutal reality
6. The illusion of safety, security, and immortality

I still use this model and continue to teach it to patients, clients and professionals. It can stand on its own, but its components are also the building blocks for the ten-step model described in this book.

MIND-BODY MEDICINE TRAINING

In 2002, I attended a conference on “Spirituality and Healing in Medicine” sponsored by Harvard Medical School and led by Herbert Benson, M.D. This was a professional-life-changing experience. On day one, a variety of speakers focused on the data: there is now ample scientific evidence that people with an active faith system have better outcomes in medicine, surgery, mental health, and addiction. On day two, religious leaders—including a rabbi, a priest, a Hispanic Pentecostal, a Hindu, a Tibetan Buddhist, and an Islamic teacher and professor—described the healing principles of their great faith traditions. Day three focused on integrating the healing principles of Western science with religious healing traditions for the benefit of professionals and their patients.

This was exciting. I had arrived at the same conclusion experientially and intuitively. I knew the importance of belief systems in healing and pain management from direct personal experience and empirical observation. Now, there was proof. In parallel evolution, my little story was a part of something much bigger. My little molecule was part of a big chemistry set.

My theory that belief systems impact disease and healing was confirmed. We can extract and organize healing principles from the great wisdom traditions into cognitive-behavioral or mind-body medicine practices, practice these ourselves, and teach them to our patients.

The stage was set. After the conference, I returned to my work at the community mental health clinic in downtown Portland, Oregon, where a confluence of events ultimately led to the formation of the ten-step healing model described in this work.

SPIRITUALITY GROUP AT MY CLINIC

In public mental health, we are almost always functioning with precious, limited resources, and, sometimes, even those are subject to budget reductions. When I returned from the mind-body medicine training in Boston, the clinic was dangerously underfunded. We had funding for crisis intervention, medication management, and, as needed, case management, but there was no outreach, no groups, no classes, and minimal counseling. Each case manager worked with between one hundred and one hundred and fifty patients, and an additional two hundred patients remained unassigned in a float pool served by the case manager of the day. Most of the case managers were young, relatively inexperienced, and confronted with some of the most complicated problems in mental health. This was a dangerous and frightening time. Eventually, some resources were added. New staff were assigned to the clinic, so we had the opportunity to reinstate some programming, such as a group or two.

We didn't know what the clients wanted, so we sent out a survey offering thirty types of groups and asking clients to give feedback on what additional groups they might want. The number one choice was a group on spirituality and healing. This option was listed along with mental illness education, medication and symptom management, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and other traditional options.

It seemed people wanted more than knowledge of illness and traditional treatment. They wanted to know something about their illnesses, but in a greater context. People want to discuss life's big questions and how those questions related to their personal struggles with disease and disability:

1. Who am I?
2. Why am I here?
3. What is the meaning and purpose of life?
4. Why is there so much suffering and evil in this life?
5. How do I understand suffering?
6. Is there a God, and, if so, what is its nature?
7. How can I find peace, love, and joy in the face of suffering and evil?
8. How do I get through all of this?

I was known as the “meditating doctor” or the “spiritual doctor,” so the clinic program manager asked me if I would do the group. I accepted the offer and created a manual of universal healing principles, methods, and qualities from the great faith traditions. Another staff member joined me to facilitate the group.

We formed the group and read the manual. We discussed and practiced affirmations, meditation, mindfulness, breathwork, and other methods. We emphasized universal human and spiritual principles: you are not your illness; your higher self is composed of wonderful qualities such as compassion, love, understanding, and kindness; you are a human being equal to all others. This was manna from heaven, water in the desert. People loved it. They said, “As mental health clients, we have never felt so respected.” This was exciting. The success of the group was invigorating and inspired me to write this book. I wanted to share my experience with a wider audience.

THE TEN STEPS

To create the ten steps, I deconstructed each religion into discrete pieces. I took out dogma, ritual, and other nonessentials. I extracted and organized essential healing principles into doable, practical steps and tools designed to help the reader transform any pain or problem into spiritual power.

The first five steps have to do with suffering and the last five steps, healing. Those who follow the ten steps will learn how to expand healing power, become more skillful pain managers, and evolve spiritually. There will be a corresponding shift in the locus of control from without to within, and a new understanding will emerge: that the peace, love, and joy we seek in the outer world can and ultimately must be found within.

That first book, *Healing Power: Ten Steps to Pain Management and Spiritual Evolution*, was published in 2005. This work is the sequel to that book. Here you will find all the information from the original book, as well as some new material. In this work, you will find the material broken down into smaller, bite-size pieces to make it more accessible to the reader.

EXERCISES

1. Following is a quick assessment of the four healing zones:
 - a. People: Who is in your life that you can really talk to?
 - b. Activities: What is your day like?
 - c. Belief systems: Do you have a spiritual activity such as church, prayer, or a personal belief system?
 - d. Self-knowledge: How do you handle emotions such as anger, depression, fear, and guilt?
2. Describe how the six components listed below weave the fabric of your life. Focus on how you use people, activities, belief systems, and self-knowledge to shift from brutal reality to a feeling of safety.
 - a. People
 - b. Activities
 - c. Belief systems
 - d. Self-knowledge
 - e. The illusion of safety, security, and immortality
 - f. Brutal reality
3. If you are a healthcare professional, describe how the six components drive the lives of your patients.
4. How do the six components drive the lives of your family, friends, strangers, even enemies?

In the next chapter, you will find a discussion of the ten-step model and its place in the world of traditional, integrative, and mind-body medicine.

CHAPTER TWO

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this book is to help people accomplish three important goals:

1. Expand healing power: for body, mind, and soul
2. Become more skillful pain managers: for any pain, problem, disease, or disability
3. Evolve spiritually: feel better, become a better person, and experience higher states of consciousness

To guide the reader toward these goals, the book will outline fifteen proven methods—from ancient wisdom and modern science—designed to help the reader transform any painful problem into a source of strength and peace.

I have been a practicing physician and spiritual seeker for forty years. My medical practice has been in community psychiatry, working with people who have profound and complicated problems: major mental illness, substance abuse, physical illness, homelessness, poverty, unemployment, and broken families. As a spiritual seeker, I have studied and practiced a variety of methods from the world's great spiritual traditions. In each of these fields—medicine and spirituality—the goal is to expand healing power and eliminate suffering.

In the beginning of my career, these two tracks remained separate. Bringing any spiritual teaching into the medical realm was impermissible. There was no scientific proof. It would have been considered inappropriate.

This attitude has changed with the advent of mind-body medicine. There is now ample scientific evidence that those with an active spiritual belief system have better outcomes in medicine, surgery, mental health, and addiction.

It is now possible to combine the healing principles of both the medical and spiritual fields. To this end, I have developed a ten-step, self-help model that I use myself and teach to my students and patients.

The book is written for patients, colleagues, and the general public. Specifically, those who may profit from this work are:

1. Healthcare consumers looking for help in managing any painful problem, symptom, disease, or disability
2. Healthcare professionals interested in helping their patients increase their pain management skills and heal (the model supplements the healing practices of all medical specialties, including physical medicine, mental health, substance abuse, and alternative health care)
3. People in crisis struggling with severe problems
4. Beginning or advanced seekers of psychological and spiritual knowledge
5. People who want help with any pain or problem
6. Spiritual counselors and chaplains

7. Yoga teachers and practitioners
8. The intellectually curious

Those who follow the ten steps will learn how to:

1. Expand healing power
2. Become more skillful pain managers
3. Evolve spiritually

We can tap into an expanded reservoir of healing power when we learn how to manage our pain more skillfully. Skillful pain management not only expands our healing power; it also helps us to evolve spiritually. Spiritual qualities such as love, compassion, understanding, and forgiveness grow. We feel better, become better people, and experience higher states of consciousness.

THE INHERENT HEALING WISDOM OF THE BODY

To understand healing, let's start with the intelligent power that operates every cell in the body and see how that relates to current medical practice.

Healing power is unfathomable! To contemplate even a tiny aspect of this Omniscient Power breeds awe and respect. Reflect on its brilliance. A cut heals. In response to bacteria or viruses, the body creates precisely designed antibodies which hunt down and destroy the invaders. The body knows how to transform food into energy and materials for repair of damaged cells. Cells in the body are like construction workers with specialized jobs. Some build. Others tear down. Some transport. Still others eliminate debris.

Every cell in the body forms two thousand proteins per second and sends these proteins where they need to go. The human body has seventy-five trillion such cells working together in near perfect harmony so that we can stand, walk, think, decide, see, hear, touch, taste, feel, love, play, help others, and enjoy beauty. When there is an imbalance disrupting these functions, the intelligent power goes to work to fix it and does so brilliantly. At some point, however, the incomparably wise healing power needs our help.

THE MEDICAL MODEL

The wisdom of the body, however brilliant, cannot fix everything on its own. Some pain or problem gets past the body's inherent protections and breaks through as a symptom that won't go away. A new lump, an unfamiliar pain, or a lingering discomfort disturbs the routine defenses that give us a feeling of safety.

The flicker of a single thought, such as, "This could be serious!" creates anxiety. An alarm goes off. "Am I okay? Am I safe? Or am I going toward what I fear the most—intense suffering, disability, or even death—with its associated fear of the unknown?"

With symptoms and associated fear in hand, we go to the doctor. The doctor makes a diagnosis and treatment plan, which most often involves the use of medication. The medicine in some way helps the healing power do its work. If it works completely, the

symptom, pain, and associated fear are gone. Back in our comfort zone, we feel safe and move on.

But what happens when the symptom persists? We go back to the doctor and place the painful problem and fear back on the table.

Doctors do all they can within the constraints of the medical model, but some illness is chronic and there will always be residual symptoms, pain, and fear. Well-intentioned doctors and patients, looking together for pain relief and healing, often get caught up in unhealthy polypharmacy.

Alternatively, the physician knows the limitations of the medical model and does not continue to prescribe medications. In this scenario, the patient is left with unmanageable suffering and may as a result resort to unhealthy painkilling devices such as substance use, codependency, and a variety of other addictions that only lead to more trouble. Enter integrative, mind-body medicine.

INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE

The medical model has great power, but, alone, it can be reductionist, focusing on symptom management without getting to the root cause of disease and healing. Integrative medicine includes biological, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects. We can look for the root cause of disease and healing in each of these four domains.

Integrative medicine looks at the whole person. You still go to your doctor and get your medication but now *you will learn how to heal yourself* in the psychological, social, and spiritual realms.

Integrative medicine defines four evidence-based healing universes:

1. Biological: a healthy body free of pain (this includes traditional, complementary, and alternative medicine)
2. Psychological: a strong, positive, calm, focused, resilient mind ready for solving problems and shaping meaning
3. Social: giving and receiving love and engaging in constructive, meaningful activities
4. Spiritual: finding meaning and purpose, your higher self, and your place in the world

For complete healing and skillful pain management, we need comprehensive treatment planning with interventions in all four zones.

MIND-BODY MEDICINE

The Spiritual Aspect of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy

Recent studies in the field of mind-body medicine have shown us that people with an active faith or belief system have better healthcare outcomes in medicine, surgery, mental

health, and addiction. These studies have included patients with cancer, heart disease, strokes, high blood pressure, asthma, mental illness, addiction, and other health problems.

The data demonstrates the essential principle that there is no separation between mind and body. The mind is connected to every cell in the body through electromagnetic and chemical waves. In some yet-to-be-determined way, thoughts have leverage in the inner workings of certain cells that effect disease and healing in the body.

Mind-body medicine teaches us how to apply the power of belief to healing. The discipline is emerging as a major force in health care. The burgeoning appeal of mind-body medicine is due to its scientific validity as well as its cost effectiveness; it is ultimately a self-help program. In his book, *Timeless Healing: The Power and Biology of Belief*, Dr. Herbert Benson estimates that mind-body techniques are the treatments of choice in 60–90 percent of all doctor visits and have positive effects no matter the illness.

We can harness the untapped power of the mind to expand healing power, control pain, and cultivate spiritual qualities. This book teaches readers how to do this in the comfort of their own homes, at work, while doing chores, or during leisure time.

EXPAND HEALING POWER

The scientific connection between spirituality and healing has been made; when we activate or intensify our spiritual belief systems, our healing powers expand. A magnificently intelligent healing power operates every cell in the body. We know how to make it grow. We know the leverage is in our very own cells. The key to expanding our healing power is in how we manage our pain.

SKILLFUL PAIN MANAGEMENT

To tap into the expanded reservoir of healing power, we must become more skillful pain managers. Remember: *how we manage our pain determines whether we move forward, slip backward, or stay stuck in this life.*

We cannot control the inevitable suffering of life, but we can control how we respond to it. We are afraid of suffering, disease, disability, the unknown, and death. This mental distress slows down the healing process and makes the pain worse. When disease persists, we can learn how to slow down and relax so we stay in charge and get our lives back.

Often, we cannot take disease away, but we can always help with pain management. Pain is both physical and psychological. All pain is experienced in the mind and can therefore be modulated by the mind. We can contain and reduce or expand and magnify the pain. You can control pain so pain does not control you.

CULTIVATE SPIRITUAL QUALITIES

If we manage our pain skillfully, healing power expands and we evolve spiritually. Spiritual qualities such as compassion, understanding, forgiveness, courage, patience,

peace, love, and joy grow. We feel better. We become better people. We experience higher states of consciousness.

SELF-HELP AND SKILLS TRAINING

Much of the healing in the psychosocial and spiritual domain is accomplished via self-help. Self-help can be done through skills training: classes, groups, DVDs, CDs, books, manuals, the Internet. We can teach people how they can increase their healing power, become more skillful pain managers, and evolve spiritually at home or during the day while performing their routine activities. This is very good news, but how can we enter the spiritual domain as healthcare professionals and patients without getting into trouble? There are many barriers to entering the territory of spiritual belief systems.

PROBLEMS ENTERING THE SPIRITUAL DOMAIN

1. We don't work with Spirit.
2. We are not comfortable talking about religion.
3. We have no language or map.
4. We ignore or refer to spiritual counselors.
5. We lack training.
6. Belief systems are personal, intimate, and complex.
7. Many individuals and groups have a traumatic religious history.
8. Belief systems are often protected from changes by defensiveness and fierce feelings.
9. Levels of commitment to working with Spirit vary enormously.

GUIDELINES FOR APPROACHING BELIEF SYSTEMS

Following are the guidelines I used to address these barriers as I developed the ten steps. These guidelines were designed to help patients and professionals work with belief systems to gain the benefits of expanded healing power, skillful pain management, and spiritual evolution:

1. Access: provide safe, efficient, and effective access to the territory of belief systems, including a map on how to properly access these systems
2. Language: provide a common language that enables us to talk to each other about religion and spirituality without getting into trouble
3. Universal and inclusive: include universal or near-universal spiritual principles, methods, and qualities that can work for as many people as possible (atheists, agnostics, spiritual people, and religious people)
4. Individualize: support people to stay in their religion of origin and expand their practice, or to build their own program; there must be a cafeteria of options so people can take what they need and leave the rest
5. Root cause and solution: include the root causes of and solutions to our deepest suffering
6. User-friendly: while looking at our deepest suffering, the model should be as user-friendly as possible

7. Self-healing: design a set of healing methods that can be practiced anywhere, anytime—at home, at work, or at play

Following these guidelines, I created a self-help model in four stages:

1. Deconstruct the religions into discrete pieces
2. Eliminate dogma, ritual, and other nonessentials
3. Extract the healing principles we can use in health care
4. Organize the resulting principles into doable, practical steps and tools

TEN STEPS, FIFTEEN METHODS, ONE HUNDRED QUALITIES

The model has ten steps, fifteen methods, and one hundred qualities. Its purpose is to help readers expand their healing power, improve their pain management skills, and cultivate spiritual qualities.

- **TEN STEPS.** The first section of the book describes the ten steps. The first five steps describe the evolution of suffering. Here you will see how we mismanage the inevitable suffering of life and make it worse. In the second five steps, you will learn how to transform suffering into spiritual power by developing a spiritual practice.
- **FIFTEEN METHODS.** The middle section of the book is devoted to spiritual practice. Here you will find a description of spiritually oriented cognitive-behavioral methods proven over the ages to be effective tools for cultivating healing qualities. Detailed instructions explain how these methods help us cultivate love, peace, strength, and courage in response to any pain of the body, mind, or soul. Continued practice of the recommended methods helps us manage any difficulty life brings.
- **ONE HUNDRED QUALITIES.** The final section of the book describes spiritual qualities. We certainly need to work with our issues, problems, illnesses, and flaws, but these are not who we are. Labels obscure our true selves. Rather than brand ourselves with labels or identify with our problems, we are encouraged to see our true self as a composite of healing qualities adding up to Love. The center of our being is Love. From a list of one hundred qualities, ten are chosen for detailed study. Here we learn how to use our current problems as a springboard for discovering our true identity as Love, compassion, warmth, and kindness. Love is more powerful than any pain or problem. It is the Great Healer. It is a fundamental solution to all of our problems. It is who we really are. I capitalize the word *Love* to emphasize its divine nature.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- The medical model alone often leaves the patient with unmanageable pain from persisting illness and consequent excessive use of painkilling medications. The

healthcare practitioner and the patient need to know how to heal and manage suffering in the psychosocial and spiritual domain. There is evidence that healing takes place in each of these domains.

- The time has come for medicine to embrace four important areas in the study of disease and healing: the biological, psychological, social, and spiritual. We can find the cause and cure of disease in these four areas. Until recently in the West, our focus has been on the biological, with some emphasis on the psychological and social realms. Now, however, the scientific connection between spirituality and healing has been made, giving healthcare professionals, patients—and, indeed, everyone—access to an expanded reservoir of healing power that can be achieved by activating their spiritual belief systems.
- There is no one right way to do this work. The ideas and practices in this book originate from a wide variety of disciplines and teachings. There is no quarrel in the fundamentals of all great faith systems; rather, they complement each other. There is an abundance of inspiration to be found in their myriad expressions. Here you will find the principles of modern science and the pearls of ancient wisdom in a potent combination aimed at healing body, mind, and soul.
- We lack a common language for spiritual discussion. We can do this work together if we solve the problems of language and toxic reactions to religion. This work is not about religion. It is about the healing principle extracted from religion, which we can apply in health care. Here you will find the essential healing principles of the great faith traditions translated into the universal language of mind-body and cognitive-behavioral practices.
- The ten steps are designed for atheists, agnostics, religious, or spiritual persons. Anyone can play in the expanded field of healing power.
- An omniscient healing power operates every cell in the body. The good news is that we know how to make it grow—the healing power can be exercised and increased by choosing a belief system that fits.
- Healing power is brilliant. As part of the inherent wisdom of the body, it does its work humbly and quietly, without our awareness. If we pay attention to it by choosing our thoughts carefully, we can help it do its work. We have more healing power when we find beliefs that work for us. Positive thoughts lead to positive feelings and vibrations that promote the healing process.

- There is no separation between mind and body. The mind is connected to every cell in the body through electromagnetic and chemical waves. Thoughts affect disease and healing in our cells. The connecting link between one's beliefs and the healing power they stimulate is always waiting to be tapped, free of cost.
- There is an intimate relationship between healing power, pain management, and spiritual evolution. These three move forward or backward together depending on how you manage your pain. If you manage your pain skillfully, healing power expands and you evolve spiritually. If you manage your pain unskillfully, healing power shrinks, and you devolve spiritually.

In the next chapter, you will learn how to use this book to expand healing power, become a more skillful pain manager, and evolve spiritually.

CHAPTER 3

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

HEALING WISDOM FROM RELIGION APPLIED TO HEALTHCARE

The ten steps do not declare answers to life's big questions, such as why we are born, why there is so much suffering and evil, whether there is a God, and where we go after death. However, we can apply the wealth of healing wisdom in the great faith traditions to help us manage our pain and heal.

To take advantage of the healing principles embedded in the religions, we need to solve the problem of toxic language and traumatic religious history. There is a way to do this. We can design healing models that serve people of all persuasions: Baptists, Sufi mystics, ethical humanists, scientific atheists, true believers, true non-believers—all of us have the same magnificent healing power in every cell of our bodies, and we know how to make it grow.

SPIRITUAL ACTION AND HEALING WITHIN YOUR PREFERRED SYSTEM

The aim of this book is not to convert readers to a particular faith tradition, but rather to incite them to spiritual action and healing within their preferred system. For those readers building a personal spiritual program, this work offers a variety of ideas and methods to explore and practice. Other readers brought up in one of the world's great traditions, such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, or Buddhism, may be interested in exploring other universal spiritual principles and methods that will enhance their established belief systems. In either case, whether you are building a program of your own or working from within a particular religion, spiritual practice will augment and intensify your healing power's ability to do its work on your body, mind, and soul.

THE CLIMB

Spiritual work is like climbing a shining mountain. The mountain sparkles with higher states of consciousness and spiritual qualities. Though inviting and attractive, it is not an easy climb. You will need some equipment—some spiritual tools—to help you get a grip and keep your balance. This equipment must fit comfortably. It will vary according to your individual desires and needs.

All too often, people argue about the equipment and the pathway. When the argument starts, climbing stops. The trails of history are populated with tragic stories about confrontations concerning the “one true way.” When spiritual seekers become belligerent, or even violent, not only does progress stop, but the combatants slip, slide, and ultimately fall off the mountain.

In this work, you are encouraged to build your own program in the spirit of “take what you need and leave the rest.” This stance avoids controversy and debate while honoring individual preference and need. The book offers principles, methods, processes,

affirmations, quotes, and homework assignments. If an idea or method is useful, pick it up and work with it. If it is not, modify it or skip it, and move on until you find something that works for you.

GUIDELINES

Before you explore the ten steps, please review the following guidelines. If we follow these suggestions, we can extract the essential healing principle from religion and apply it in healthcare.

- a. The model is a composite of universal healing principles from the great wisdom traditions. It does not push religion. It does try to equip persons of all persuasions with the essential healing principle embedded within the religions.
- b. The model is for any person: atheist, agnostic, spiritual, or religious.
- c. The model is for any problem: physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual.
- d. The methods can be practiced anywhere and anytime: at home, at work, or at play.
- e. There is a cafeteria of options. You can add these options to your current belief system or build your own program.
- f. Take what you need and leave the rest.
- g. One person's traction device is the next person's gag reflex. Don't let language stop you. For some people, even the word spirituality is a problem. Nuke offensive language and substitute your own. For example, you might substitute Higher Power for God, higher self for soul, higher for spiritual, healing qualities for spiritual qualities, or cognitive-behavioral practice for spiritual practice.
- h. Some chapters in this book speak to those who believe in a God of Love. Other chapters are more universal. If you don't believe in God, let alone God as Love, substitute with words like spiritual qualities, healing qualities, qualities, The Tao, The Way, The Great Spirit, Creator, compassion, or any other term that gives you traction. The universal goal is to become a more skillful pain manager, expand healing power, and evolve. As you proceed, use whatever term is most acceptable to you.
- i. Stay in your own lane.
- j. Reform yourself and not others.
- k. Do not proselytize.
- l. Discuss without debate.

SKILLFUL PAIN MANAGEMENT: 15 METHODS

You may not be able to get rid of all your pain, but you can change your relationship to it. You can become a more skillful pain manager. Here's how. There are two layers of pain: the inevitable suffering of life, and our reaction to it. We cannot control the former but we can control the latter. When you practice the techniques described in this book, you reduce reactivity, the add-ons to the inevitable suffering of life. You cultivate strength and peace no matter what your body or the world throws at you. You become a more skillful pain manager and your quality of life improves accordingly.

This book describes fifteen methods for healing, pain management, and spiritual evolution.

Horizontal Axis

1. People
2. Activities
3. Belief systems

Vertical Axis

4. Affirmations
5. Habit transformation
6. Progressive muscle relaxation
7. Breathwork
8. Contemplation
9. Meditation
10. Prayer
11. Mindfulness
12. Practicing the Presence of God
13. Service
14. Yoga
15. Transformation of emotion

These are the methods we can turn to when doctors and other healthcare professionals cannot solve our problems or relieve our pain completely. These methods are complementary to physical interventions such as medication, acupuncture, massage, diet, exercise, herbs, vitamins, minerals, and so forth.

These methods help us manage the inevitable suffering of life and our reaction to it. They do not require professional attention. They are self-help, self-healing methods. We practice them on our own.

A comprehensive healing package includes external and internal practices. Methods 1-3 are external. Methods 4-15 are internal.

EXTERNAL WORK: HORIZONTAL AXIS: OPTIONS 1-3

Options 1-3 describe our work in the external world of people, activities, and belief systems. When you are in pain, you can spend time with family and friends for solace and comfort. You can engage in constructive meaningful activities: work, school, training, volunteering, recreation, sports, culture, hobbies, and so forth. You can go to church, synagogue, or temple for traditional worship, or to a group like Alcoholics Anonymous for support and wisdom. All of this helps and may be enough for some people. Others need to do some additional work on the vertical axis.

INTERNAL WORK: VERTICAL AXIS: OPTIONS 4-15

Many people make the mistake of trying to solve all of their problems on the horizontal axis of people, activities, and belief systems. Some problems can only be resolved by doing some inner work. If you try to use the horizontal axis to solve problems that must be resolved internally, you will become frustrated, angry, depressed, and anxious. Some people develop codependency, bad habits, and unhealthy attachments. Many become hyperactivity junkies, immersing themselves in activities from morning to night, trying to avoid the work that must be done inside. To avoid adding fuel to your fire, you can practice methods 4-15.

Methods 4-15 describe the work we can do internally. These are the methods of the vertical axis. When you have done everything you can in the world of people, activities, and belief systems, and you are still in pain, there are twelve additional methods you can use to help you with your painful problem. You can practice these methods for any problem of body, mind, or spirit. Here you will learn how to use your pain as a stimulant for the cultivation of courage, strength, peace, compassion, understanding, and a host of other healing qualities. These qualities are the jewels of this life. They will help you broker and buffer the pain of this life.

LOCUS OF CONTROL

If you spend most of your time in steps 1-3, your locus of control is primarily outside. Most of us start here. When life presents overwhelming problems, it is often necessary to do some inner work. As you begin to practice methods 4-15, your locus of control gradually shifts to the inside. As qualities such as courage, peace, and strength slowly grow, you become less dependent on the outer world of people, activities, events, and things.

A balanced healing program includes work on both the horizontal and vertical axes. When you integrate the methods on both axes, you will become a more skillful pain manager. You will feel better and become a stronger and better person.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

If you choose to do this work, you will learn:

1. How to increase healing power for body, mind, and soul
2. How to skillfully manage any pain or problem: physical, mental, emotional, social, or spiritual
3. How to become a better person through the cultivation of healing qualities such as Love, compassion, forgiveness, courage, strength, peace, wisdom, and joy
4. How your pain can be the route to healing through the cultivation of spiritual qualities
5. How to find peace and strength within, despite the painful conditions of life
6. How to recover lost territories in the realm of people, activities, belief systems, and self-knowledge

7. How to exercise and strengthen the mind
8. How to transform painful emotion into self-knowledge
9. How to transmute bad habits into peace, strength, and contentment
10. How to reduce hyperactivity and build stillness into your program
11. How to use stillness as the doorway to higher states of consciousness
12. How to reduce the negative side of your ego and replace it with the highest healing qualities
13. How to lock Love, compassion, peace, and strength into brain grooves so that these healing qualities become your new mental habits
14. How to view your body as the carrier of higher states of consciousness as opposed to a source of fear and trouble
15. How to become increasingly able to help others on their journey toward healing and recovery

AN INSTRUCTION MANUAL

This is an instruction manual. Each chapter starts with a description of healing principles. It then gives step-by-step processes and examples that bring spiritual concepts from the lofty penthouse to the ground floor of the daily routines of life. While this manual is packed with powerful spiritual ideas begging for contemplation, it is no less rich in its practical, down-to-earth, how-to approach. The sacred wisdom of the ages requires ongoing study, contemplation, and practice, so for some readers, this book will be a lifelong resource. The meaning of a true pearl of wisdom is often well beyond the reach of most us and may take years or decades of contemplation to realize its full significance.

GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL USE

The model is for group or personal use. Healthcare professionals and physicians can teach the ten steps to their patients in hospitals and clinics. The model is also suited for self-help groups in the community or individual study and practice.

EDUCATIONAL FORMAT

I teach the steps in a group format using a style that is primarily educational. We read a short passage, then discuss and contemplate its significance. This teaching method is appropriate for discussion groups run in clinics or hospitals, as well as in self-help groups independent of healthcare institutions.

Our group does not focus on personal problems that require individual counseling. We do not try to fix other people's problems, nor do we ordinarily give advice or counsel. While all of us need advice or personal counsel from time to time, we always need the universal knowledge of how to expand our healing power, manage our pain more skillfully, and cultivate spiritual qualities. Groups should focus on spiritual practices that transform pain into spiritual power. However, we do not need a group or teacher. We can do this work alone at home.

THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD IN METAPHYSICS

In this work, you are encouraged to follow the scientific method in metaphysics. This method speaks to our ability to decipher spiritual fiction from fact even without blood tests and X-rays. In the laboratory of life, we can put profoundly important questions to the test of direct personal experience.

- Does compassionate service to humanity give peace of mind and strength?
- Does meditation work?
- Do higher states of consciousness actually exist?
- Does the body harbor the God of the Universe?
- Is Love more powerful than any pain or problem?

Listed below are the steps you can follow to prove or disprove such theories:

1. Test a theory by practicing a spiritual method.
2. Assume the agnostic position.
 - a. Do not accept or reject the theory.
 - b. Stay open and receptive.
3. The body is the test tube.
4. The experiment is on the life force itself: consciousness, energy, thought, feeling, desire, and behavior.
5. Prove or disprove the theory through direct personal experience.
6. If a method or concept works, keep it, and, if you are a healthcare professional, teach it to your patients. If not, discard it.
7. Trust your ability to tell the difference.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- There is a magnificently intelligent healing power that operates every cell in the body. We can help the healing power do its work when we have a balanced healing program including work on both the horizontal axis of people, activities, and belief systems, and the vertical axis of the twelve spiritually oriented cognitive-behavioral methods. All of us need:

1. People: a support network of loving, kind, courageous, strong, forgiving, and humorous people
2. Activities: a day filled with constructive and meaningful activities
3. Belief Systems: positive thoughts and wisdom

There is ample scientific evidence that each of these has a role in healing body, mind, and spirit. This scientific evidence is reinforced by my personal and professional experience. I have been impressed with the power that people, activities, and belief systems have in helping people manage the harsh realities of life.

- Individuals who fill their lives with positive people, activities, and belief systems have a much better chance of holding their ground when the world gets rough. There is pain relief and healing readily available to them. Although problems may not

magically disappear, they become more manageable. On the other hand, when these three healing zones are dormant or abused, the problems of life tend to linger and grow.

- The elegant essence of religion is Love. Love is a composite of the one hundred healing qualities described in Step 7. Love is the greatest healer. It is part of the solution to all of our problems. We know how to make it grow. When we develop a spiritual practice, we cultivate Love, which helps us contain, reduce, or eliminate suffering. This work describes a variety of practices to make it grow. I encourage you to practice these methods so you can prove this to yourself through direct personal experience.

The next 3 chapters, Chapters 4-6, elaborate the ten steps.

Chapter 4 introduces the ten steps.

Chapter 5 describes steps 1-5: You will study the inevitability of suffering and how we make it worse.

Chapter 6 elaborates steps 6-10: You will discover the link between skillful pain management and the expansion of healing power.

Chapter 7 introduces The Universal Healing Wheel, the essential healing principle of the ten steps and any psychosocial or spiritual healing model.

Chapter 8 reviews the ten steps and how to skillfully manage the anxiety of change.

Chapter 9 introduces a universal healing method for any pain or problem.

Chapter 10 elaborates on the profound importance of the serenity prayer every step of the way on the recovery and healing path.

Chapter 11 defines key points for starting and maintaining a successful spiritual practice.

Chapters 12-23 describe in detail the twelve internal methods of the vertical axis.

Chapters 24-34 elaborate ten profound healing qualities.

Chapter 35 describes a balanced healing program.

Appendix A describes the guidelines for having a successful ten-step study group.

Appendix B defines some of the key terms used in this work. You might want to review these definitions before you begin your study of the ten-step model.

Appendix C gives an example of how the ten-step model can be used to stage disease and recovery.

The next section of the book describes the ten-step model. You will learn how to use the inevitable suffering of life to cultivate peace, Love, and joy. The result is a shift in the

locus of control from the outer world of people, places, and things, to the inner world of peace, power, and strength: a world of our own definition.