



# Healing

When It Seems Impossible

*7 Keys to  
Defy the Odds*

WORKBOOK

Shiroko Sokitch, MD

# Healing

When It Seems Impossible

## WORKBOOK

by Dr. Shiroko Sokitch

**These pages are for you, a place to write down  
your thoughts and observations as you  
move forward on your healing journey.**

Each suggested action in the 7 Keys is an opportunity to learn something about yourself, and to progress on your individual path. This workbook is also a way for you to be able to look back upon the work that you've done and see the progress that you've made! It can be really motivating to remember where we were when we began. This workbook becomes part of the map of your healing.

You may want to do some of the exercises again and again – which is great. You can print out the workbook and put it in a binder (rather than stapling it), so that you can insert pages as needed.

I also suggest beginning a “Healing Journal”. I refer to this on page 30 of this workbook. You can start that anytime, and use it in tandem with the workbook.

The intention of this document is to help you do the work – to inspire, excite, and motivate you as you move through the 7 Keys.

***Remember, you are healing!***





- Simply look in the mirror and tell yourself—“I love you. I love you. I love you” for 3-5 minutes each day. (*Write any thoughts or feelings you have about this practice here.*)

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- Make a ritual with your morning coffee or tea. Do each step of the process with love. Love the spoon and the mug that you are using. Give yourself a few moments each day and make the entire act an act of love for yourself and your life.

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**2. When a part of your body is hurting:**

- Rather than being angry with your body, put your hands on that place and ask what that part of you wants. Listen closely, as if you were talking with a small child who was telling you about her pain. See what you hear, or feel.

*What does your body need? What would make it feel more supported?*

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- If you find that you can't be loving to the part of your body that hurts, find a spot on your body that feels good, and put your attention there. Let's say your left wrist hurts, but your right wrist doesn't. Examine the right wrist and look at all the ways that it's working for you, all the things that are right about it. Instead of focusing on what hurts, put your attention on what is working.

*What feels good in your body? What is working and how does that feel?*

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- Pour love into the painful place on your body. Put your hands on it. Stroke it gently as if you were stroking a child's hair and hugging her. Love will help your body relax around the pain.
- Do things that feel good physically, things that are about the five senses. Wear a soft scarf, have a tasty treat at lunch, light a beautiful candle, buy yourself some flowers, listen to your favorite get a massage. Remind yourself about the good things about being in a body.

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## Healing is your Goal

- When you are ill, shift your focus, again and again, to the notion that your body is working for you. Your body is on your side.
- Create a mantra that reinforces this idea, such as, “My body is on my side.”
- Notice the moments when you feel your body is against you. Does that feeling come in moments when you are in more physical pain, or is it mostly an idea in your mind?

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## 1st Key: 2nd Fundamental – Focus on Love

### 1. Balance your Heart

Below is a technique developed by the Heart Math Institute to balance your heart rhythms so that you can feel better. It's the perfect way to learn to focus on love! They call this process "Coherence". This simple practice can bring harmony to your body, mind, and heart. Try it!

Begin by taking slow, deep breaths. Put your attention on the center of your chest, where your heart is. Imagine that your breath is flowing in and out of your heart area. Then, focus on a "regenerative" feeling, like appreciation, calmness, or care. Try to re-experience the feelings you have when you are with someone you love, or visiting your favorite place.

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### Shift your Focus!

Every time you catch yourself having a negative thought toward yourself or your healing process, force yourself to STOP it immediately. This will take practice since we are in such a habit of having negative thoughts.

Let's say you just thought, "I will never get better." Instead, tell yourself, "I am doing everything in my power to heal." Notice that your words remain true, pro-active, and positive—not demanding. You don't want to say: "I will get better." Your healing is a process and you are actively participating, and your affirmations to yourself should reflect that.

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## 2. Have Fun!

As much as possible, (every day if you can!) do something that's going to make you laugh. Practice silly walks in your living room, or make funny faces at your cat or dog. Watch a funny movie or a YouTube video. Do something totally weird and spontaneous!

*What makes you laugh?*

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## 3. Be Kind

Every week, do something nice for another person. Call or send flowers to a friend who's having a hard time. Buy a stranger a cup of coffee, give a homeless person \$10, smile at the barista when she's really busy. I sometimes buy my grocery clerk a piece of chocolate, or cookie. It'll make you feel good. And remember, that energy is like a boomerang, so it does come back to you. Put out good energy whenever you can.

*Record your experiences here.*

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## 1st Key: 3rd Fundamental – Navigate Fear

### 1. Breathe

Most of the time when we are afraid, there is not an actual threat. Instead, we're anticipating something in the future or reliving something in the past. If you feel afraid, the first thing to do is to breathe. Become aware of being in the present — the right here, right now.

Breathing relaxes your body and helps you calm you down: it literally sends a message to the brain to calm down! It increases the oxygen supply to your brain and resets the parasympathetic nervous system, which promotes relaxation. It also slows the heartbeat and stabilizes blood pressure, "resetting" the fight-or-flight response.

- Whenever you experience fear, immediately take five deep breaths. Breathe in for five seconds, hold for four or five seconds, and breathe out for five seconds. Make sure that you breathe into your diaphragm. Shallow, upper respiratory breath is connected to the fight-or-flight response, so in order to receive the benefits of breathing, you want to breathe into your belly.
- Make a daily practice of deep breathing. You can connect it to a yoga, meditation, or Tai Chi practice, or you could even do it while you're driving to work in the morning. Breathe through your nose and into your belly for even just two to three minutes a day is good. See what happens!

*When do you find yourself needing to breathe? What changes have you noticed with your breathing practices?*

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## 2. Check the Facts

When you experience a new or frightening physical symptom in your body, rather than immediately jumping to alarming conclusions, ask yourself some questions. I call this checking the facts.

***Here are some of the questions I ask my patients about their symptoms:***

- Focus on the sensation you are having: what does it feel like? When you relax your body and listen, is it getting worse or better?
- Always watch how long and how often this symptom occurs. If it's just a brief episode and then goes away, it's probably not dangerous. If it keeps happening, notice when and how does it start.
- If you've had this same symptom before, notice that. Pay attention and see if the symptom is different now. If not, then whatever is going on, you know you've survived it. Take some deep breaths and see if you can get more information about it from your body.
- Is everything functioning properly? For example, if it's abdominal pain, are you still digesting food? Are you able to eat?
- What makes it better? What makes it worse? What was happening when it started?

*Record your observations about your symptoms here:*

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### 3. Single Focus

When you experience a new and frightening symptom or feeling and start to feel overwhelmed or anxious, you can shift the anxiety by, focusing on one sensation at a time. Start by breathing deeply and relaxing your body as much as possible, then pay attention to ONE sensation. Let's say you're feeling pain in your chest, and your heart is beating fast and it's hard to get a deep breath. Start by focusing on the pain; just breathe and notice the pain. Don't let the other symptoms distract you, just keep focusing on the pain. It usually takes a minute or two for the sensation to shift.

Then you can move on and pay attention to another sensation. Usually when we are frightened, we are also overwhelmed with too many sensations. So, by focusing on one sensation at a time, we are able to "reduce the noise," which will help calm us down.

*Notes about your practice of "single focus":*

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## 1st Key: 4th Fundamental – The Essence of Balance

### 1. Create a Garden Inside of You

Anytime you feel your thoughts or your emotions becoming negative, which can spiral into feelings of hopelessness, put all of your effort into creating “a garden” inside of yourself. And just like tending a garden, this requires consistent attentiveness, because our negative thoughts can take root and convince us that we’re never going to feel better. Instead, you can visualize yourself turning away from those ugly thoughts and begin to create an amazing, magical garden inside your heart and mind. In this garden, love flows in the rivers and the sunlight. Imagine your favorite flowers. Imagine fruit trees, and the sunlight coming through and reflecting off the dew on the leaves. Imagine an abundance of beauty and light and sweet scents inside of you. Get creative. Engage all your senses in this oasis!

Then each time dark thoughts arise, remember this beautiful garden that exists inside of you. Its beauty is powerful: it can absorb the darkness in its light. As Anne Frank said, “Look how a single candle can both defy and define the darkness.”

*What does your Garden look and smell and feel like?*

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## 2. Distraction

Sometimes when you're in pain, all you can seem to think about is the pain. One tried and true method for pain relief is distraction, or focusing your energy on something else. Cook a meal, knit a sweater, take a walk, spend time with a loved one, watch a movie, listen to your favorite music, or turn your attention to a project that you're wanting to get done. If you're busy with something else you won't be focusing on your pain.

*What are your best ways to positively distract yourself?*

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## 3. Tree Pose

The tree pose in Yoga is all about balance. If you're unfamiliar with yoga, you can simply try balancing your weight on one foot. Lean against a wall to begin if you feel unsteady (you don't want to fall down!). By focusing on balancing your body, you actually increase your focus and balance in your whole being.

## 4. Dance with Your Own Energy

Many years ago, when I studied Aikido, we would begin our practice by allowing our bodies to move with the energy we were holding. It is a great way to release any emotional energy we have. The practice is called *Katsugen Undo* in the Aikido tradition. Begin to create a gentle movement with your breath to release stuck energy. Remember, pain is caused by stuck energy, so releasing it will help.

Begin by breathing deeply. As you breathe out, bundle yourself in a ball, contracting your body and allowing yourself to feel whatever is coming out. Then, as you breathe in, expand your body, stretch your arms out, expand in every way. Expand and contract with your breath, breathe in and breathe out. Feel the dance that is happening in your



body, and if you want, begin to move your body more. Keep breathing with your movements. As the energy dissipates, you will slowly come to a stop when it is done.

If this feels good to you, try doing this every day for 30 days. See what happens!

*Journal your experiences here.*

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## 1st Key: 5th Fundamental – Community Support

- 1. Talk to people about your experiences.** Be willing to be vulnerable and share what you've felt and learned. Even if it's just with one person, find someone you can trust. When you share your experiences, you naturally begin to observe and gain more understanding for what is happening, and it can be greatly illuminating for both you and your friends and supporters.
- 2. Invite others to share their experiences with you.** Part of the magic of being vulnerable is that you give others permission to be vulnerable as well. Sometimes, when someone is going through something very painful, the listener may feel that they should not talk about themselves. But when the listener shares their own experiences, more *relating* can happen. It also helps take your mind off of what you are going through, and creates a deeper line of connection between you.

*Who do you share your experiences with, and how do you feel after?*

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- 3. Find healers that support you.** You should feel comfortable and have open lines of communication with your healers. Every relationship is unique and has its ups and downs, so every time you see your doctor or healer, it may not be perfect. The important thing is to feel that you can openly share what you are experiencing, and that they understand and can help you feel better.
- 4. Find people who will support you.** Help sometimes arrives in unlikely packages, so be open to some out-of-the-box friendships and support. There are so many online support groups and opportunities to interact —through Facebook communities, online forums, or meet-up groups on healing. There might be support groups at your local hospital.

Maybe your community is not one cohesive group of people, but instead many people from different parts of your life. This is your healing family; let them in.

5. **Hug a tree.** Find a tree near your home that you can go to easily, every day if possible. Hug the tree with your chest against it, or sit or squat with your body touching the tree, or just put your hands on it. Feel the energy of the tree as it radiates into you. You might actually feel that the tree hugs you back!
6. **Re-discover a passion from your childhood.** If you always liked art, take an art class. Do something unexpected. Shake up your world and see what happens. You might find new soul mates by doing the things that you love to do.
7. **Exercise.** Join an exercise class, which will increase your chance of finding other people to connect with. Many of my patients have formed social connections with classmates in their yoga studio, or dance classes.

*Where do you best find support? What works for you? Make a list of the ways you'd like to find more connection and community.*

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# CHAPTER 2

## 2nd Key: Physical Balance and Vitality

### 2nd Key: 1st Fundamental – Triangle of Wellness

- 1. Healthy Living:** There are often very simple, and natural things that you can do to bring your hormones and nervous system into a state of greater calm and balance, which will affect how you feel on every level. Here are just a few ideas:
  - Practice good sleep hygiene: make sure you get to bed consistently on time, turn out the lights, put away devices, make sure your bed is comfortable for you.
  - Eat a good protein breakfast within one hour of getting up in the morning.
  - Practice deep breathing for a few minutes a day, to calm and balance your nervous system.
  - Get outside for a few minutes a day: sun and nature help balance your body.
  - Eat your vegetables! They have all sorts of healing properties.

*What healthy living practices are you implementing in your life?*

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**2. Get tested.** If you suspect that your Triangle of Wellness is out of balance, get tested by partnering with a medical or healing expert. Here is a list of labs that you might want to check – you can keep track of what you’ve had done here:

- Chemistry Panel \_\_\_\_\_
- Cholesterol \_\_\_\_\_
- Blood counts \_\_\_\_\_
- Thyroid panel \_\_\_\_\_
- Other blood tests \_\_\_\_\_
- DUTCH test \_\_\_\_\_
- Stool tests \_\_\_\_\_
- Nutreval test \_\_\_\_\_
- Genetic tests \_\_\_\_\_
- Heavy metals \_\_\_\_\_
- Organic acids \_\_\_\_\_
- Vitamin/nutrient panels \_\_\_\_\_

## 2nd Key: 2nd Fundamental – Finding the Root Cause

### 1. Create a Health Timeline

- a. Journal about your history. Sometimes, if you sit down and write about your earliest memories, your favorite foods, how you spent your time, and any memories of being sick as a child, you might uncover some interesting facts. Or, if you don't like to write, you can sit down with a friend and share some stories. This can become part of your health timeline.
- b. If it's available to you, you can also interview your parents or siblings about your personal health history. Everything that's ever happened to you — when you were born, vaginal delivery or Caesarean section, if you were breastfed, any adverse or traumatic childhood events, and even your vaccination history can make a huge difference in your health issues.
- c. Once you have done your research, write everything down on one document. There are even programs to create timelines (if you want to be high tech about it). You can take this to your doctor when you visit and use this for your own research.

*Birth and experiences as an infant:*

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*Childhood experiences including diet, exercise, sickness, trauma:*

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*Special notes from family; vivid memories:*

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2. **Work with an expert.** In order to locate the root source of your condition, it is helpful to seek the wisdom of an expert. A Functional Medicine doctor, a Health coach or nutritionist, or a Chinese medicine practitioner would be a good place to start.
3. **Research your condition or symptoms.** Visit “Dr. Google,” or buy books about your condition. But remember, though knowledge is power, you also want to leave room for miracles, and for the individuality of your own body and experience. And... don’t let what you read scare you.

*Google notes:*

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## 2nd Key: 3rd Fundamental – Cultivating Curiosity and Exploring Healing Methods

**1. Cultivate Curiosity by asking questions.** When you are struggling with your health you can keep asking questions of yourself that will eventually lead you to answers:

- What makes it better?
- What makes it worse?
- Is there a movement connected to the pain?
- Is there something you can eat or avoid eating that makes it feel better?
- Is it a one-time event? Does it recur?:

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**2. Explore alternative modalities.** If you've been trying one method of treatment and it's not working, see what else might be out there for you. If you've never tried acupuncture, consider having some to see if it might help. Consider a new form of exercise to see how your body would feel with it. Or consider eating differently to see if that would make it feel better.

When you try new modalities, keep track of how they feel. Are they helpful? Does the method or treatment make sense to you? Do you feel like you are getting some relief, or a shift in symptoms?

*What alternative methods will you try and how do they affect you?*

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## 2nd Key: 4th Fundamental – Building Your Relationship with Your Healthcare Provider and Healing Team

### 1. How to choose your doctor or healer:

- Choose a physician that recognizes the importance of balancing your whole body and is willing to see the significance of balancing your hormones, nervous system, and immune system (the Triangle of Wellness).
- Choose a healer who practices a modality that interests you.
- Take recommendations from friends.
- Take referrals from your doctors and healers.
- Find a doctor you can trust, who you feel listens. Then be willing to listen to them and follow their guidance.

### 2. Questions for your new doctor or healer. Depending upon your insurance, ask the questions below at your initial visit. Alternatively, you can request a free or inexpensive opportunity to talk to the person who will be treating you. It is your right to see if someone works for you, before you begin to invest in them.

- Explain your health problems, and ask if they have previously handled your health problems.
- Ask how they would approach your type of problems.
- Be cautious when someone who says: “Yes, absolutely I will fix you,” because nothing is guaranteed.
  - Ask yourself: How do I feel talking to the doctor? Am I comfortable, or more agitated after seeing them?
  - Are they treating me the way I want to be treated? Do I feel better? Do I feel supported?
  - Do I feel a connection with this person?

*List specific questions and concerns you have for your doctor:*

*Have you previously handled my type of health problem?*

*How do you plan to approach my health problem?*

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*After your initial visit, write down your thoughts and feelings about your doctor or healer and what questions you might want more answers to:*

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# CHAPTER 3

## 3rd Key: Choosing Your Unique Lifestyle

### 3rd Key: 1st Fundamental – Preventive Healthcare

#### 1. Prevention — Do it before you get sick!

- Take the time to put together your healing team, including acupuncturists, nutritionists, chiropractors, trainers, etc. before you get sick. This will give you more body awareness, and allow experts to be acquainted with your body. In that way, you are more likely to discover a serious illness before it becomes serious, or avoid it altogether.
- Find practitioners that will support your life and lifestyle, who listen to you, and with whom you can communicate.
- See an integrative medical doctor or Functional medicine doctor.
- Prioritize your lifestyle health: diet, exercise, sleep, and stress level.

*My Healing Team:*

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Keep up with early detection testing (as indicated).

- Breast exams \_\_\_\_\_
- Colonoscopy \_\_\_\_\_
- Sigmoidoscopy \_\_\_\_\_
- Mammograms \_\_\_\_\_
- Investigate early detection tests and list here \_\_\_\_\_

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## 2. Review Your Genetics

If you have a family history of a particular health issue, find ways to live preventively. You can usually find lifestyle options that will help prevent most genetic imbalances from occurring. For example, if you have a family history of heart disease, you can do things that will make you less prone to the problem: begin a program of eating a Mediterranean diet, exercise regularly, and engage in active stress management to ensure that you can keep yourself healthy.

It's never too late to start a lifestyle overhaul. Do research on your genetics and then create a plan to prevent the problems. It should be noted: this is something that can be helpful to do with a practitioner who understands this process, such as a nutritionist, or doctor who understands genetics.

*My family history of health issues and actions I can take to prevent problems:*

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## 3. Make sure that you feel financially secure to take care of your health

- Plan for it financially.
- Make sure that you have coverage for serious health issues (health insurance).
- Prioritize supplements, medication, and other modalities in your budget (understanding that it will save you money, expenses, and loss of work in the long run!).

*Brief budget for medication, supplements, doctor and healer visits:*

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## Create a Schedule to “Pay Yourself First”

People often tell me they don’t have time to be more committed to exercising or eating a certain way. If you don’t “make” time, you certainly will never have it. In the financial world, we are famously told to “pay ourselves first.” In other words, put aside a reserve of money for emergencies and savings before paying all the bills. Usually, about 10 percent of our gross income is recommended to set aside. You can do the same thing with your lifestyle.

Create a schedule with time dedicated to take care of yourself. No matter how busy your life is, give yourself a little time. Even if it’s only ten minutes during the day to do a yoga pose or jumping jacks, or five minutes to meditate, make a start, and it will begin to make a difference.

### My Self-Care Schedule:

*DAILY (including exercise, breathing, relaxation)*

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*WEEKLY (including fun, classes, healer visits)*

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*MONTHLY (healer visits, pedicures, massage, etc.)*

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## 3rd Key: 2nd Fundamental – Discovering Your Unique Path

### 1. Eat Protein for Breakfast

One thing that most people can benefit from is eating a high protein breakfast within one hour of waking up. Your hormones will be more balanced from eating breakfast and you'll feel better right away.

*Think outside the box! What proteins can you eat for breakfast?*

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### 2. Experiment

- **Add one healthy item to your diet.** Adding something new, rather than removing something is preferable for most people. For example, you can add one large portion of green vegetables to your diet every day.
- **Change one food that you eat a lot.** If you eat bread often, simply removing that from your diet will require creativity and exploration into new and different food options.
- **Change up your exercise habits.** Start with something that you like to do. Find an activity that you've always wanted to try and go do it. Dance. Try Tai Chi. Take an urban hike. Join a Meet-up group. The benefits will probably go way beyond your physical health.
- **Go to bed by 10 PM.** According to Chinese medicine it is best to go to sleep by 10 or 10:30 PM and to sleep until around 7AM. In that time, the organs repair process, and replenish your energy, so you can awake ready for the day!

*Diet, Exercise, & Sleep Schedule Experimentation Notes*

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### 3. Keep a Journal

- **Buy a special journal to keep track of your experiences as you explore your lifestyle.** All of the exercises below can be included in your Healing Journal. Set aside a specific time each day, and have your journal become a part of your healing routine.
- Have a section for each area of experimentation: diet, exercise, supplements, sleep, etc.
- Write down all the changes that you are making, and include any noticeable differences in:
  - your physical appearance \_\_\_\_\_
  - your energy \_\_\_\_\_
  - your emotions \_\_\_\_\_
  - your mental clarity/concentration \_\_\_\_\_
  - etc. \_\_\_\_\_
- When you find what makes you feel better, stick with it!

### 4. Building New Habits

The challenge to creating a new lifestyle habit is that it takes 90 days to really establish. If you don't do something new for at least 90 days, it might not become embedded. For most people, 90 days can feel like a lifetime when you're trying to change something!

In order to overcome this initial obstacle, I usually commit to trying something new for a couple of weeks in order to decide if it's good for me. Once I know that I like it, or see that it's working, I step into committing to it as a lifestyle change. For example, when I first started Barre Class a couple of years ago, I went a few times in the course of two weeks. I realized that I liked it, so I began to work it into my schedule regularly.

Don't just do something one time and decide it's not for you. Below are some possible ways to begin a new habit.

## 1. Diet

- If you are a person who skips breakfast, try eating breakfast every morning for a week and notice how you feel.
- Without changing anything else in your diet, try adding lots more vegetables. Make half your plate low carb vegetables (green vegetables are mostly low carb) every day for two weeks and see how you feel.
- Basic good diet habits include not eating any processed foods. Can you eliminate one processed food that you like a lot (like white sugar) for a month and see how you feel?

## 2. Exercise

- Start with one new exercise that you haven't tried before, even if you usually exercise a lot. Try something new, like a yoga class, or Pilates.
- Do something you love.
- Have fun when you exercise. Join a team or a dance class.
- Break it up into do-able projects (20 minutes, 30 minutes, at home, etc.).
- Remember that you are giving to yourself and you are helping your whole body and your whole health.
- Find a partner
- According to Chinese medicine principles, certain exercises are most beneficial at certain times of the year:
  - **In winter**, you want to do more gentle building exercises like yoga.
  - **In spring**, try running and doing more cardio—push your breathing.
  - **In summer**, exercise should be outdoors during the cooler times of day.
  - **Late summer**, you want to incorporate more weights and strengthening exercises into your routine.
  - **In fall**, include more breath work with your regular exercise.

***Print an extra copy of this list and put it on your fridge to remember to switch up your exercise routines throughout the year!***

### 3. Find at least one support person.

Finding someone who encourages you, and who you feel accountable to, can really help as you are trying to change your lifestyle habits.

- Find a partner or buddy who will do this with you, or find someone who is willing to support you as you make changes in your life.
- If you cannot think of anyone to support you, check my healing support group on FB “Healing When it Seems Impossible”.

*Notes and observations about building new habits.*

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## 3rd Key: 3rd Fundamental – Reduce the Noise

### 1. Elimination diet

There are several ways to do an elimination diet. The idea is to eliminate all possible triggers for three weeks and then slowly add one item at a time back into your diet and see how you feel.

I'm going to describe the most simple and strict way to do an elimination diet. This allows the greatest potential to see what is working for your body or not. **You can print out the lists on the next two pages for easy access!**

Being on the elimination diet for a few weeks can lead to changes in your taste buds and a greater level of sensitivity about which foods cause changes or symptoms in your body. Symptoms that are currently a problem are likely to improve during the elimination diet, although there can be an initial period of worsening symptoms because of detoxification.

After the initial phase of the elimination diet, where you remove all of the trigger foods, there is a reintroduction phase. As the avoided foods are carefully brought back into an eating plan, patients can see which foods trigger the symptoms they experienced prior to the elimination diet. Overall, after the elimination diet, patients will notice that they are much more in touch with their body's response to food.



**Here is a list of all the foods to eliminate for three weeks and the foods to eat.**

## **FOODS TO ELIMINATE**

*(If you feel like this is too much, then just stay away from gluten and dairy for three weeks and see how that feels.)*

**Dairy**

**Gluten**

**Sugar, including alcohol Chocolate**

**Eggs**

**Peanuts**

**Corn**

**Soy**

## **FOODS TO EAT**

**Game meats (lamb, rabbit, bison) Poultry**

**Fish**

**Dairy alternatives**

**Gluten free whole grains (quinoa, amaranth, millet, teff, wild rice, brown rice)**

**Legumes (except peanuts) Healthy oils**

**Seeds**

**Nuts (except peanuts) Vegetables**

**Fruits**



After three weeks of eating the elimination diet you will be ready to introduce foods back into your diet.

Here is how you re-introduce foods to your diet.

To help identify potential problem foods once the Elimination Diet has been completed, foods that seemed associated with symptoms (“challenge foods”) should be reintroduced into the diet, one at a time in two-day intervals. See the above foods to avoid and start with the food that you missed the most during the elimination diet. Many people start testing with dairy, or gluten.....

1. On the first day of the reintroduction phase, choose whatever food you missed or craved the most, or choose the food that you had previously eaten most often. The order of which foods you reintroduce first is not critical.
2. Eat a generous amount of that food throughout Day One (two or three average-size portions), while continuing to eat foods on the Elimination Diet. Observe your body to see if you feel any return of old symptoms, or if you develop new ones. If you do not experience symptoms, continue eating the “challenge food” on Day Two, continuing to observe your body.
3. If there is no reaction to the food during this two-day period, keep that food in the food plan. Stay on the elimination diet otherwise for two days, so now you’re on day four of observing. On day four, reintroduce a second food. Watch for any new symptoms on Day Four and Five. If there is no reaction, keep that food in the diet and add the third challenge food, and so on.

If any food provokes symptoms, stop eating that food immediately, go back to the baseline elimination diet until the symptoms clear, then reintroduce the next food.

4. After testing all of the challenge foods, try the problem foods again (the ones that made your symptoms return) using the same procedure (one day of eating the food and noting symptoms during the following two-day period).

After you’ve done the elimination diet you will know more about how your body feels with various foods. Then you can decide how you want to live. Knowledge is power, and when you know what your body reacts to, you have the power to choose how to live.

The whole point of this intensive exercise is to learn about your body and to feel as good as possible.

## 3rd Key: 4th Fundamental – Moderation

### 1. Review your Lifestyle

On a scale of 1-10 where do you feel you are doing things either excessively or not at all? One (1) being not at all, and ten (10) is thinking about or doing something all the time.

- How much do you exercise? \_\_\_\_\_
- How much time you spend sitting each day? \_\_\_\_\_
- How much sugar do you eat? \_\_\_\_\_
- How much caffeine do you drink? \_\_\_\_\_
- How much alcohol do you drink? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many hours of sleep do you get each night? \_\_\_\_\_
- What time do you get up in the night? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many portions of vegetables do you eat each day? \_\_\_\_\_
- How much water do you drink? \_\_\_\_\_
- How stressful is your job? (1 being not stressful, 10 being extremely stressful)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Next, think about how you might change one thing — perhaps add five minutes to your exercise routine today. Or, go to bed ten minutes earlier. Or, set your alarm to get up a few minutes earlier.

*From the questions above, where does your life feel imbalanced and how can you adjust your lifestyle to create more balance?*

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## 2. Mindfulness

Take one thing that you do every day, and slow it waaaaaay down. Let's say you make a cup of tea every morning: slow down your movements so that it takes up to 30 seconds for your arm to move one foot. Do the slow motion exercise for two minutes a day. When you slow down your movements, you become aware of the elements involved in your behavior. It allows you to be aware of when you are hungry, when you are taking something just for the heck of it, and when you really want it. If you do this while eating, chewing a bite, and putting your fork down before the next bite, you will notice when you are full, and won't eat as much.

*What did you slow down, and what was your experience?*

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## 3rd Key: 5th Fundamental – Stagnation and Flexibility

### 1. Practice Flexibility

Do a few stretches every morning: gentle stretches that improve your physical flexibility will also improve your emotional flexibility. If you feel like you're too stiff to stretch, try just very gentle stretches every day for five minutes (that don't induce pain) and within one week you will notice that you're more flexible. First thing in the morning do gentle stretching — not pushing beyond your limits, but pushing to the edge.

You can start by stretching in bed. Lift arms above head, feet side to side, rolling from side to side.

*What is your stretching routine? You can also add this to your Healing Journal.*

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## 2. Get Unstuck

Think about one area of your life where you feel stuck. Perhaps you feel like you can't move forward on a project, or you're having trouble losing weight. What action can you take to change your experience of feeling stuck? Remember that small seemingly unrelated actions can help you with changing. Here is a short list of ideas:

- If you feel stuck with your diet, change one thing that you eat.
- Visit a new neighborhood.
- Call a friend you haven't talked to in a long time.
- Clean a closet or file drawer that you haven't even looked at in ages.
- Drive a new way to work.
- Go out to dinner in a nice restaurant alone.
- Try a new exercise class.
- Eat something that you've never eaten before.
- Plan a trip to a foreign country.

*Where do you want to "Get Unstuck"?*

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### 3. Spring “Cleaning”

Twice a year, in the spring and in the fall, I host a cleanse. This is a time when you can re-boot your body’s system so that you can start the season out fresh. It can be used in any way you like; you can just follow a cleansing diet and take the supplements that support liver detox, digestion and kidneys. Or you can use it to review your entire life.

Being willing to change a habit at least once a year, even if it’s just a temporary change, gives us more resilience and flexibility, which is an essential part of maintaining health and illness prevention.

*What habit do you want to change? Where, in your life, do you need “a spring cleaning”?*

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## 3rd Key: 6th Fundamental — Attitude

### 1. Practice Gratitude

Science shows that gratitude is the best way to generate positivity. When you have a practice of being grateful for your life, it helps change your attitude and move you toward positivity.

*Name 10 things that you're grateful for!*

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### 2. Do An Attitude Adjustment

If you have a situation in your life that is bothering you, but you feel helpless to change it, you may begin to feel frustrated. It may be the hours that you work, or how much you have to drive your kids around, or when your husband comes home from work. A lot of times these situations are marked by our feeling of not being in control of that event. An attitude adjustment takes you to a different place, where you can feel in control of what you are doing. It can be as simple as recognizing that you agreed to work for this company that gave you the hours you work. Or you want your children to be good at something so that's why you're driving them around.

For example, when I was going to acupuncture school, I was also working in the ER, so I always got the night shifts and weekends, which no one else wanted. Initially my attitude was one of anger, that I didn't get better shifts. But then I did an attitude adjustment, and I realized that I wanted to be in acupuncture school, so my availability for the job was the hours I was being given, and, at least I had a good job!

*Right now, where do you feel the most frustration in your life? How can you adjust your attitude to see it from another light?*

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### 3. Walk a Mile

We all have particular ideas about people or places we've been. We can't help it; it's a natural part of our existence. Often in our everyday lives there may be a person or group of people who provoke us to feel a certain way, or upset us for some reason. I use an exercise called "walking a mile" in someone else's shoes to help me be more understanding toward that person. There are several ways to do this.

- You can ask the person why they behave in a way that provokes you. Most people have a reason for what they're doing: all you have to do is be curious enough to ask them what's going on. They will probably tell you, with great clarity.
- You can try to understand their history: what might be contributing toward their behavior? Perhaps a woman was abused by her parents, which made her feel really insecure, or a man who grew up in another country, might have different customs which make him behave in a way that doesn't make sense to you.

*Is there someone in your life where it would be helpful to "walk a mile" in their shoes?  
What is your experience when you do?*

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# CHAPTER 4

## 4th Key: Listen to Your Body

### 4th Key: 1st Fundamental — Observation

#### 1. Observe Your Sleep and Hunger

Make a practice of observing your hunger. Ask yourself these questions:

- When does your body signal that it's hungry? Is it the same time every day? If it's different, did anything different occur in your life that may have affected your hunger level (i.e., Did you wake up earlier? Did you work out harder? Was it a warm day or a hot day? Etc.).
- Are you able to stop and eat when you are hungry, or do you only eat at the appointed times?
- How do you feel before you eat? How is your mood? How do you feel after you eat?
- Are you craving certain foods?
- Do you know what your body likes to eat?
- What foods fill you up quickly? Do you get hungry again shortly after?
- Are there any other observations you notice about your hunger?

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Simultaneously, you can observe your sleep patterns.

- When does your body tell you it is sleepy?
- Are you most energetic in the morning or in the evening?
- Do you get the afternoon doldrums?
- How do you feel after a good night's sleep, or after a poor night's sleep?
- Do you feel that you sleep enough? Does the alarm always wake you? Do you have to drag yourself out of bed?

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It would be best to do this exercise for a week, but at a minimum, three days will give you an indication. Write down what you notice in your Healing Journal. Writing things down helps you slow down and truly observe your experiences. Pay attention to one thing at a time so that you don't get overwhelmed. Keeping a journal also allows you to look back at your observations. You may be surprised by what you learn.



**2. Take a deeper exploration of your symptoms. Go back to each symptom you listed above and ask yourself:**

- When did it start?
- How bad is it—on a scale of 1-10?
- How often does it happen?
- What makes it better?
- What makes it worse?

If you don't know what makes it better and what makes it worse, try taking action so you can begin to understand what might help or hinder the pain. For example, is it worse at night or during the day? Or all the time? Does it get worse when you walk? Or when you sit for a long time? Or when you dance? When you eat a certain food, does it make you feel sick? Do you have trouble breathing? These are all important observations.

**3. Gain awareness in your body**

If you have recurring pain in your body, the next time your body hurts, don't take a pain-killer, don't get angry, don't do whatever it is that you would normally do. Instead:

- Describe the pain: is it sharp, is it dull, is it radiating, is it throbbing...?
- Does it feel like it is connected to any other parts of your body (i.e., when your shoulder hurts, do you also feel it in your thumb, etc.)?
- How do you feel emotionally? Are you upset, sad, angry, worried?
- What were you thinking about immediately preceding the onset of the pain?
- If you woke up with the pain, what were you thinking/experiencing when you went to sleep, or did you have any odd dreams?
- Are there any recent changes in your diet, exercise, physical reality (did you recently change jobs, change homes, etc.)?

*You can also do this in relation to other physical symptoms like nausea (not just pain)*

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**4. Explore where emotions might be stuck in your body.** The location of where you experience emotional pain in your body, or where the physical pain is, can help indicate what might need attention.

- When you feel emotional, pay attention to how your body feels. Write down where the emotions are showing up in your body. For example, if you are feeling pain in your chest, it may be your lungs, which is related to grief in Chinese Medicine. Is there something that you feel that you've lost?
- In your Healing Journal, write down where you physically feel pain, and describe any emotions or memories that come up in connection to the pain.

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## 4th Key: 3rd Fundamental – Symptoms and Organ Systems

### Actions for Strengthening the Heart

The heart meridian starts in the armpit and extends down the inner part of the arm and ends at the pinkie. Therefore, arm exercises can be particularly helpful to strengthen the heart. Try clenching your fists: sit up straight and allow your hands to rest comfortably between your thighs. Then, slowly make fists, exhaling while clenching, inhale while loosening. Do this 6 times.

**Clean your teeth!** It has been recently shown that the physical heart can be damaged by gum disease and tooth problems.

**Red:** The color associated with the heart is red, so red foods nourish the heart (like tomatoes, cherries, beets, apples and rhubarb).

*Notes about Heart Exercises:*

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### Actions for the Lungs: Deep Breathing

Breathe in deeply through your nose. Fill your lungs and belly as you count to five. Then, hold your breath for a count of five. Exhale all of your air slowly through your nose, again counting to five. Once fully empty, hold again briefly before you begin the process again. You can do this process five times, or set a timer and do it for two minutes or longer. Try to do this at least once a day and note the effects!

**White:** The color associated with the lungs is white, so foods like white meat, tofu, radish, and mushrooms can benefit the lungs.

*Notes about Lung Exercises:*

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**Actions for the Spleen: Chew your food!**

One thing that you can do immediately to help your spleen and stomach is to chew your food well. Chew it slowly, and don't be distracted while you're eating. Make your food a pleasurable meditation, and see what happens to you emotionally.

**Yellow:** The color associated with the spleen is yellow so yellow foods (including bananas, squash, peppers, oats, beans) can all benefit the spleen.

*Notes about Spleen Exercises:*

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**Actions for the Liver: Acupressure for the Liver!**

There is an acupressure point that you can massage to unblock the liver qi. The spot is right between the big toe bone and the second toe bone on both feet. Using your thumb, or the heel of your other foot, massage this point on both feet every day. If it is sore, that means it is blocked, and you are hitting the right spot!

**Green:** The color associated with the liver is green, so eat your green vegetables to maintain liver health!

*Notes about Liver Exercises:*

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**Actions for the Kidneys: Rub your kidneys**

In order to support your kidneys, or help if you are feeling fear, rub your kidneys. Your kidneys are located on your back, below your lowest ribs (not your low back as many people think). Rub them in a circular motion 49 times. (Seven times seven is an auspicious number in Chinese culture.)

**Black:** The color associated with the kidneys is black, so eating black foods (like black beans, black rice, black lentils and blackberries) is beneficial for the kidneys.

*Notes about Kidney Exercises:*

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# CHAPTER 5

## 5th Key: Emotions And Your Body

### 5th Key: 1st Fundamental – The Impact of Emotions on Your Health

#### Releasing Emotions

The actions for the 1st Fundamental are all about learning to process and release your emotions quickly. This helps them move through your body and promotes balanced Qi and good health. Below are a few basic techniques that can help.

#### **Immediate Release:**

Crying, laughing, shouting, and singing are all ways to immediately move energy and re-establish balance in your body. Don't be afraid to express yourself. And, whenever possible, do it immediately upon experiencing the emotion.

#### **Creative Release:**

Look for creative ways to process your experiences. Your anger may turn into an amazing workout session. Your sadness may turn into a beautiful poem or a song. Your joy may become an offering of a meal or gifts to loved ones. Your fear may motivate you to find the tools that you need to navigate stressful situations. Tap into the energy that your emotions give to you and do something with it.

#### **Talking It Out:**

Expressing how you feel, without blame or becoming a victim, is a very healing way to become more self-aware of your feelings. Talk to your friends and family. Find people who have had similar experiences and who can relate to what you are going through.

#### **Distraction:**

Have you ever used distraction to manage an energetic child or a romping pet? You can try the same thing on yourself! Sometimes, a little distraction is exactly what you need to shift from feeling bad to feeling better.

**Focus On It:**

When you experience an emotion, don't run away from it. Instead, allow it to happen. Focus all your attention on experiencing that feeling. You can even try to hold onto it! You may find when you do that, it will dissipate more readily.

*How do you release your emotions? Name 3 things you can do this week to help facilitate more emotional release.*

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## 5th Key: 2nd Fundamental – Emotions and Organ Systems

### HEART

- Smiling stimulates the heart. Watch a funny movie so that you can laugh. Or, just laugh for no reason. Make other people laugh. Try to laugh every day.
- Put your hands upon your heart and just feel it beating. Bring your awareness to the power of your heart.
- There are a few yoga poses that are particularly great for opening the heart: Cobra and Upward dog are two poses that expand your chest and heart center, Another good one is to clasp your hands behind your back and bend forward from the hips and hang like a rag doll with your arms moving toward the floor.

### LUNGS

#### Deep breathing exercises

- Try alternate nostril breathing, which is a powerful Yogic breathing practice. Simply take your right hand and close your right nostril with your thumb. Exhale slowly until all of your breath is released. Then, inhale slowly, keeping your thumb on your right nostril. Once you are at the top of your breath, release your thumb from your right nostril and close your left nostril with your ring finger. Exhale slowly, then inhale, keeping your left nostril closed and filling your lungs and belly completely. At the top of that breath, switch back to your thumb and right nostril. Try doing this for just two minutes a day. See how your emotions, your nervous system, and your body feel when you are finished. After one week, notice if there is a difference in how you feel emotionally.
- If you have recently lost a loved one — either through death or separation — try spending some time each day, for a few minutes, in reflection. I think of the Jewish ritual of sitting Shiva for a week after someone has died, which allows a family to process the grief together. If you have suffered a loss, I recommend spending some dedicated time to allow the grief to run through you. It might help prevent physical issues in the future.
- Yoga Pose for the Large Intestines: There's a yoga pose called the Garland or Malasana pose, where you sit on your heels with feet slightly wider than hips width apart, and squat down, resting your elbows on the inside of your knees, with your hands at your heart. Do this for one minute a day; it will help connect you to the earth, open your pelvis, low back, and sphincter muscle, increase hip flexibility, and becomes a great resting pose.

## **SPLEEN**

- To support the stomach and spleen, eat cooked, warm foods. It is easier to digest cooked food. Smaller, more frequent meals can also be less taxing on the stomach and spleen. Interestingly, if you have a weak spleen, raw food will not be good for you (even though it seems so healthy!) because your body won't be able to properly transform it into energy.
- If you tend to worry a lot, certain foods are good for your spleen: sweet potatoes, butternut squash, steamed carrots, cinnamon, dates, and lentils. Eating them can help you feel calmer.
- High quality protein in your diet will also help you feel more grounded and better because it helps balance your blood sugar and keep it more stable.
- Yoga poses to counteract worry and anxiousness:
  - Tree pose (connecting to the earth)
  - Boat pose (arms and legs in a V, working abs)

## **LIVER**

- Sweating and exercise aid in liver detoxification, so the best thing that you can do when you are angry, or dealing with a liver imbalance, is to be diligent with an exercise routine. To immediately release feelings of anger you can do 50 jumping jacks or 20 push-ups. This is a quick and drama-free way to move anger out of your body.
- Yoga pose for Anger:
  - Warrior I (lateral and medial parts of the body)
- Leafy greens are good for the liver and when you want to support it, you can eat a lot of them. If you are having anger or liver symptoms, you can avoid drinking alcohol, and eating fatty, processed foods.

## KIDNEYS

- If you feel a lot of fear, especially fear for no apparent reason, try doing something a little scary. Maybe go to a class by yourself: stretch beyond your comfort zone. Take small steps, but try to do something that's a little frightening at least once a week.
- This is a helpful meditation to help you relax your fear:
  - Inhale, and imagine yourself surrounded by love and light.
  - Exhale, and imagine you are exhaling your fear.
- Yoga pose for Fear:
  - Bow pose (laying on your stomach — massaging kidneys)

*Were any of these exercises particularly difficult for you? Did any feel particularly good? Lean into both – the hard and the good. Pay attention to the emotion that's connected to the more difficult exercises.*

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## 5th Key: 3rd Fundamental – Stress and Your Health

### 1. Replace!

You can't just eliminate your negative thoughts. To do so, would most likely be denying very real emotions and thoughts. The point, instead, is to work to replace them. For example, if you find yourself thinking "I'm never going to heal. This is never going to end." Say to yourself "My body is my friend. My body is capable of healing."

*Is there a negative thought or phrase that you find yourself repeating? What can you replace it with?*

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### 2. Look at the negative thoughts — really look at them.

Make a list of the reasons why you think you'll never heal, why you feel afraid, what makes you feel hopeless or angry. Give yourself time for this exercise - spend a week or two really exploring the part of you that doesn't think you can make it, that feels that it's unfair, that feels betrayed, that wants to give up. Then, figure out what you really want, and move toward that goal.

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## 5th Key: 4th Fundamental — Awareness — Cultivating the Observer

### 1. Practice being the observer

- As a meditation, set a timer and spend 3-5 minutes a day observing your thoughts.
- Do not judge them, do not attempt to stop or change them, just watch what you are thinking and feeling. Allow your thoughts to move through your mind, like a movie.
- This practice helps you realize that your thoughts and feelings do not define you, they are just a part of you. You can watch them, and thereby learn to take charge of them.

### 2. Be your own hunter

- Recall the last time you had a strong emotional response to something or someone: how did your body feel? Where did you feel the emotion in your body?
- What did you do to deal with those sensations in your body?
- What did you do afterward? Did you verbally express yourself? Did you exercise? Did you eat? Did you turn on the TV? Did you have sex?
- Did it bother you the next day or did it remedy itself in the moment?
- What did your self-talk sound like?
- Did the emotion start out as one thing, and then turn into another emotion? Often, sadness turns into anger upon contemplation (or vice versa).
- Keep a journal about these experiences and insights. Notice any patterns and make note of successes!

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**3. Exploration:** What foods do you crave and when do you crave them? What are your thoughts around certain emotions? What memories and smells do you connect to specific emotions? Are your thoughts a part of your conditioning or are they coming from someplace deeper inside of you? How do you feel — right now? You can learn so much about yourself, just by taking the time to observe.

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## 5th Key: 5th Fundamental – Taking Charge of Your Emotions

*Remember to keep track of all of these exercises  
in your Healing Journal.*

1. **Exercise:** Think of exercise as medicine. Hiking along a nature trail, bicycling down a winding road, visiting the gym, or dancing to a favorite song will raise your heart rate, generate endorphins, and remind you that there is a larger world outside your inner turmoil.

When you are feeling emotional, try moving your body physically to discharge the energy. You can try jumping jacks, push-ups, or climbing a big hill — anything that gets your body moving and your blood pumping. If you are in an environment (like work) where you can't drop and do 20 push-ups, try clenching the muscles in your hands, butt, and/or perineum, and then relaxing those muscles. Repeat as necessary.

2. **Sleep:** Like exercise, sleep clears the mind, opens up channels of understanding, and facilitates mental clarity. When you are rested, you may be better able to understand how you feel, and where your emotions originate.
3. **Breathing:** Deep breathing works wonders for relaxing your body and releasing pent-up emotions. Coughing is also a great way to release emotions since so much emotion has to do with grief. So if you find yourself laughing to the point of coughing, you are doing more than just working out your lungs — you are actually releasing old emotions!
4. **Diet:** What you eat largely influences how you process emotions. Many people are negatively affected on an emotional level by sugar and carbohydrates. Therefore, if you eat in a healthy way, with lots of vegetables, protein, and healthy fats, you may find that you are more grounded and stable on an emotional level. You may be less likely to be triggered and irritable. Eating healthy foods doesn't specifically help you process emotions, but it lays the foundation for your whole body to be able to function with greater ease.
5. **Supplements:** You can also support your body with supplements. Hormones and neurotransmitters (the signaling chemicals from your brain) have a huge effect on our emotional state, and both can be greatly influenced by taking daily supplements. There is now a simple urine test that allows us to measure chemicals produced by

the brain, and with these results, we can take natural supplements to help the brain achieve better balance.

**6. Mentally Track Down the Root of Your Emotional Distress:** If you are unsure why you are feeling a certain way, or maybe you don't understand what you are feeling, try looking at your emotions from a mental standpoint. Why are you upset? What triggered it? When did it begin? You may find that the roots of many of your painful emotions are connected to the same basic trigger. For example, you may have an old pain connected to rejection, or the pain of being left alone.

Once you discover the logical root of your emotions, you may find relief and release of that emotion, as well as more compassion for yourself.

You don't need to uncover specific emotional traumas from the past in order to understand the origin of your hurt feelings. Childhood memories are just memories — it is the way that you feel that needs attention. An experience or some sort of conditioning from your past can cause you to respond to situations in a certain way. By recognizing these deep and long-held reactive and default thoughts or emotions inside of you, you can bring more consciousness to your present experiences, and have more choice about responding, rather than reacting.

*Find the root of an emotional trigger. Why are you upset? What triggered it? When did it begin?*

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# CHAPTER 6

## 6th Key: Patience and Persistence

### 6th Key: 1st Fundamental – The Yin and Yang of Patience and Persistence

#### 1. Search for alternative solutions

- Look at what you have done already. If it's not working, what else could you do? What other options are there? Do you need a new practitioner, a new modality?
- Have a conversation with your caretaker, doctor or healer. Let them know that you feel stuck, and that you need help with ideas to move forward.
- Initiate productive experimenting. Think outside the box (when the downside is not disastrous). Get online. Widen your perspective.
- Try many things, and then commit to what works!

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#### 2. Go back to the drawing board. Reexamine the first 5 Keys:

- Do you feel cared for? Are you focusing on loving your body? How can you bring more love into your daily life? (1st Key)
- Make sure that your Triangle of Wellness — your immune system, nervous system, and hormones — are in balance. If you are struggling with staying focused and moving forward, you may want to get these checked. (2nd Key)

- Review your recent lifestyle choices and see if there are any changes that you've made that might be affecting you. What can you do to give your body more support? (3rd Key)
- Listen. What is your body trying to tell you? Look at your symptoms to find answers. (4th Key)
- What emotions are you feeling when you feel stuck? Is it anger? Sadness? What can you do to feel better emotionally? (5th Key)

*How balanced do you feel in the first 5 Keys? Is there an area that needs more attention?*

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### **3. Stop Talking About Your Pain**

- Sometimes, the more you talk about something, the more it's in the forefront of your experience. See what happens to your body when you stop talking about what is bothering you. Try to not complain for a whole day, or a whole week.

Write down the date of the week that you did this. How was it?

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### **4. Remember, Random Occurrences Aren't Random**

- One thing can lead to the next. You are on a heroic journey. You are healing!

## 6th Key: 2nd Fundamental — Never Give Up!

### 1. The best way to never give up? Stay busy!

- Keep busy! Consider Newton's Law of inertia: an object in motion tends to stay in motion; an object at rest tends to stay at rest. Don't allow lethargy or passivity or despair take over. Continue moving forward, even if your movement feels small or unsure.
- Set small goals that move you toward your healing. This can be something as simple as taking your medication on time, or exercising, or making sure that you eat green vegetables every day. Each week, make a short list of goals that you can complete. This sense of accomplishment will help increase your motivation.

*What is your list of healing goals for this week?*

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### 2. Make decisions about your healing.

- Don't wait and put it off.
- Figure out what you want to change and make it happen!

*Name one thing that you've been putting off. Then, do it!*

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### 3. Patience for the Hard Times

Even though so much of the 6th Key is figuring out how to move forward no matter what, it is also important to have patience with yourself — for the ups and downs of your journey. When you go through something intensely painful, either physically or emotionally, it can be difficult to stay motivated and moving forward on your path. In those moments, it is okay to not push yourself. In those moments, you don't actually need to do very much, you just need to survive. Focus on what you need to feel OK.

Then, once you have moved through that moment, you can pick yourself up again and begin moving forward again.

*Could you be practicing more patience with yourself? Take a moment to notice the work that you are already doing...*

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## 6th Key: 3rd Fundamental – Divine Timing

- 1. Practice:** Developing timing is about learning the balance between patience and persistence. The yin essence of patience brings quiet questioning, and patience to hear the answer. The yang essence of persistence pushes to find the right information, the right doctor, the right medication. Like a baseball player, we can learn to know when to act, when to refrain, and how to follow through. We can learn to sense when something has been played out, when it is time to stop. These timing skills are developed through trial and error, through practice, through paying attention to your body at each step of the process.

*Was there a time when you experienced divine timing? What elements allowed that to happen?*

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- 2. Seek Guidance:** It can be helpful to seek expert guidance in order to gain a sense of timing. An expert will know when the steps are leading in the right direction or not. Our perceptions and understanding are sometimes not as clear when we are going through something painful or traumatic. Also, during the healing process, you might feel worse before you feel better, or you may not know why you're feeling a certain way, or what you can do to help yourself. Your doctor, or a specialist, can hopefully help you understand what is happening and lead you in the right direction. You can also talk to other patients who are having similar experiences, or find a support group.

*Do you need help figuring out what to do next? Who can help you?*

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- 3. Don't be too attached to your plan:** If something is not working it's wise to recognize that and shift. Sometimes we hold onto something because we've been doing it for so long and we don't want to admit defeat or failure. Be ready to let go of your idea of how something is going to work and change depending upon the results and the circumstances. The ability to adapt and be flexible leads to success in all things — including your healing.

*Is there anything that is not working that you are holding onto?*

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## 6th Key: 4th Fundamental — Believe in Miracles

We usually only think of miracles as these huge things that happen. However, if we pay attention to the little, everyday miracles in life, it helps change our perspective and become more open to the miraculous.

**Flowers:** Flowers are so incredibly beautiful and interesting — their variety, their amazing colors, their ephemeral nature.... If you look closely, each one can seem like a miracle! Go for a walk in the botanical gardens, or in nature, or buy yourself some flowers. Their presence is a reminder of an everyday miracle that you can see and touch

**The Miracle of Life:** Read about how an embryo develops. From the moment of conception, there are millions of things that have to go right in order for a normal human baby to be born. When you learn how much could possibly go wrong, you will look at every life as an absolute miracle.

**Miracles in Your Own Life:** Think about all the things that have happened in the last week: can you think of any miracles? There are big miracles, like saving a life, but there are also miracles that seem smaller, but still full of wonder. Every day that you make it safe through freeway traffic, every moment you have with a loved one, when you make a new friend (even if it's a momentary friendship), when you have an amazing meal, the beauty of nature...each of these things is a miracle. What are the miracles in your life?

**Alternative News:** Read the news today with miracles in mind: look for the good stories, the acts of kindness, the willingness to love, the people whose lives were altered in a good way. If you can't find any through normal channels, browse through Facebook to see the good stories. Put a big "Love" on them!

*Do each of these exercises for one day and record your experiences of the miracles.*

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## 6th Key: 5th Fundamental – Hope

### Build your Hope

- The nature of hope is to seek something that you don't already have. That is why, on your healing path, it is important to set many goals and to have many hopes. Once you have achieved one thing, set another goal. This keeps you moving forward.

*What are 3 goals you can achieve? Focus on making them happen!*

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- Hope can be triggered, but not forced. Wherever you feel hope, go there and focus on that. If you've been told a story that feels hopeless, look for something that makes you feel hopeful.

*What makes you feel hopeful?*

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- Go to a practitioner that believes in your healing. Surround yourself with people who are supportive of your healing journey. If you are having trouble claiming your power, and believing in yourself, get a friend or support person to advocate for you. There are times on the journey where we need assistance to get back to those places of hope.

*Who holds your hope when you can't find it?*

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- A quality of hope is believing that you have the power to make your hopes your reality. Explore what is going to make you feel powerful. Maybe it's your faith in a higher power. Maybe it's your love for your children or family. Maybe it's your belief in your own strength and destiny. Whatever it is, build on that.

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- Remember that you are not just your illness or your pain. Make sure that you are also maintaining your identity outside of your illness. Identify with your children, your career, your creativity, your passions. Look at yourself and ask, "Where and who am I in this process?"

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- When illness seems purposeless it feels hopeless. Find a purpose that makes sense to you.

*Describe one possible purpose for your condition, one thing that you've learned and continue to learn.*

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# Chapter 7

## 7th Key: Trusting the Process

### 7th Key: 1st Fundamental — Dealing with Pain

Remember, if your pain takes over, don't worry about doing anything. Trying to do more when you are experiencing overwhelming pain can just create more struggle, more pain. All you need to do is survive it — and that is heroic.

#### 1. Ease your nervous system

Healing isn't always about making your pain go away, it's also about finding a way to be OK when you are in pain. Often pain is an overwhelming sensation that seems to grow out of the location in your body where it started, and it takes over. If you are dealing with pain, try to do everything you can to ease your nervous system.

- Do things that give you pleasure. Feed yourself food that is nurturing. Take a hot bath. Move your body in ways that feel good. You may even try pushing against the places that feel pain — and show your body that it can move, that it is healing.
- Quiet your body down. Take some deep breaths and begin to listen to the places you feel the pain. Keep breathing and listening. Follow the sensations with your mind and just observe. If something is particularly painful, search for a position that will ease the discomfort. Do this with a sense of curiosity — i.e., if your knee hurts, try straightening it out to see if it lessens the pain. Then try bending it in a different way. Make your movements gentle and patient. Keep breathing deeply and listening to the sensations you have. Do this for at least two minutes a day.
- Another nervous system calming action is to gently stroke your skin, this can be anywhere, but if nothing else, stroke your arms up and down. Do this with a very light touch, like a feather. You can do it along your legs, and belly or where ever it is easy for you to reach. Light butterfly touches relax your nervous system.

*What do you do to calm your nervous system and feel good?*

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## **2. Asking the right questions**

When you are focused on the wrong question (like “Why is this happening to me?”) you don’t get the answers that will open doors for healing. Instead of thinking of all the things that aren’t working, or feeling bad about what you can’t do, ask: “What do I need right now?” “What is my next step?” “Is there something I can say or do that will make it better?”



## 7th Key: 2nd Fundamental — From Fear to Faith

### 1. Focus on What is Working

If you are busy wondering why, or beating yourself up for something that you may have done that caused your condition, or hating God, or looking for somewhere to place blame — those thoughts suck your energy and do not bring relief. Focus on what is working, on what is possible. It is a decision, but it is as natural as breathing.

*List 5 things about your body that are working well:*

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### 2. Test Your Faith

The best way to build your faith is to test it. When you live as if the worst thing is going to happen at any moment, there is a tendency to make your life smaller. I used to be afraid to do new things, so I began to build my faith by doing small things that scared me.

You can start by doing something small. Let's say that you are afraid to go out by yourself, and you don't have anyone to go out with. Try going shopping by yourself, that's usually easy to do. Then, go have a cup of coffee alone, in a coffee shop. Again, not too difficult but will increase your courage. Then go to breakfast by yourself. Slowly, you can begin to do more and more things alone, and you will probably notice that you are not so afraid. Maybe you'll even meet some new friends by doing it.

*How is fear limiting your life? What can you do to push yourself beyond it?*

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### 3. Check the Facts

This was an exercise that I introduced in the 1st Key (Love), and it is equally important to do now, with the 7th Key.

Often when we don't have faith, we actually have faith that something bad will happen. Sometimes we live entirely in our heads and don't check the facts. Ask yourself if what you are thinking is really true.

Let's say that you are about to go meet your mom for lunch. She always criticizes how you dress. Think about all the times she's done that — has it really been every time you meet her for lunch? Even if there's one time that she didn't, maybe you can let yourself have faith in a different outcome?

Many of my patients forget their symptoms after they've gone away. As they evolve in their healing, they sometimes develop new symptoms, or some of the old ones don't go away. They will say, "I'm not any better." At that point, I go through a checklist of symptoms and ask them to think about each one. Usually, they find that many of the symptoms they had in the beginning have gone away! Checking the facts is a simple way to reinstate faith in your process.

*Review your Healing Journal and the list of symptoms from page 45 of this workbook (4th Key). Have your symptoms changed? Describe the differences, and if your expectations met what was recorded.*

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## 7th Key: 3rd Fundamental – Acceptance and Surrender

### The Worst Case Scenario Exercise

Imagine that your greatest fear comes to pass. This happened to me many years ago when my therapist suggested that I take a month off from my surgical residency. I was so scared that it would cause me to lose my position in the program because there was so much competition around it. My therapist asked me to imagine the worst-case scenario. Of course, my first thought was that I'd be fired. Then she asked me to imagine what would happen if I was fired. I realized that my life would be okay if that happened.

Think about your health challenge, and imagine that the symptoms you have now will never change. Imagine they even get worse. Take yourself through a life where you will have these symptoms ongoing. What would you do? How would you live? How would you make your life work?

When you do this exercise, you will find a flexibility inside of yourself that will allow you to open up to new solutions. Initially you might feel hopeless, but after you really think about it, you will see new possibilities for healing that you never saw before. This can only happen if you come to a certain acceptance of where you are now.

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## 7th Key: 4th Fundamental – Seeing the Big Picture

### 1. Notice Beauty

Pay attention to beauty. Whether it is flowers, or music, or food, or another person, notice the beauty in your life. This practice also naturally builds gratitude.

### 2. Connect to your Spirit

Whatever works for you, whatever you find that supports you — it is important that you make a practice of connecting to your spirit. Dedicate yourself to it. Keep it in your awareness. Maintaining the connection between your body and spirit and the world around you will help anchor you when times are tough.

Here are some ways that you can do this:

- Some find that meditation and prayer offer the greatest solace and peace of mind to their spirit.
- Be in nature
- Yoga, or exercise can create a union between the body and spirit.
- Intimacy, support groups, and sharing your feelings and thoughts with friends can be wonderfully balancing and cathartic.
- And then there are creative endeavors; whether you are an artist or not, you can create something through words, or colors, or sounds, or even food, that helps express what you are experiencing.

*How will you make a practice of connecting to your spirit?*

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### 3. Wash a dish slowly

Take one dish that needs washing and hand wash it with a sponge. Cover every millimeter of the dish, and pay attention to each detail as you wash it. When you begin to rinse it, let the water run all over the dish, and make sure that each part is completely clear of soap, and that all soap is off your hands. With this method, it can take up to five minutes to wash a bowl! It teaches us to slow down, to be in the moment, and to vividly pay attention.

## About Dr. Shiroko



Dr. Shiroko has a dream – to help her patients have miracles of healing in their lives. Her quest to find the best answers to healing led her to integrate the best of Western Medicine with Chinese Medicine. During her second year of surgical residency – she realized that she couldn't provide the care she wanted to give by being a surgeon. While still in surgery she fell in love with Chinese Medicine and decided to pursue her education as an acupuncturist. She worked as an Emergency Physician for 10 years while studying Chinese Medicine and creating her dream medical center.

Dr. Shiroko opened Heart to Heart Medical Center in Santa Rosa, CA in 1993. Combining modern technology and advancements in Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy with the ancient remedies of Eastern Medicine has allowed Dr. Shiroko to realize her passion for helping her patients live the best lives they can. She is an expert at helping you navigate the understanding of Western medicine in combination with alternative medicine. Her unique perspective will help you understand what your soul and body are trying to communicate to you.

She is quite excited to be the only doctor of her type in the area. Since January of 2000, she has also written an alternative medical advice column in three local Sonoma County Newspapers. In May of 2009, she and her friend Sivan Garr, spiritual teacher, decided they wanted to help a larger audience with their work. They began filming Perspectives on Healing, a public access television show which they did for 2 years. It is still airing in several cities in California.

In her office, she specializes in listening closely so that she understands your health concerns and is able to guide you to finding the best treatments. In addition to acupuncture, she works with craniosacral therapy, herbs, nutritional supplements, specific diagnostic tests, exercise and diet to help you find the best balance for your

body. Her extensive understanding of the spiritual/emotional connection to your physical problems will help you to heal at a greater depth with more lasting results.

There is no one size fits all medicine here. Each person is an individual with unique responses to treatment and each needs a personalized approach. With Shiroko's 100 Percent Healing approach, you will learn about each element of your healing path.

If you have questions about any health concerns, Shiroko will spend time with you to help you understand it and find your way to wholeness.

To inquire about Dr. Shiroko's CE programs and keynote speeches please contact: [drshiroko@hearttoheartmedicalcenter.com](mailto:drshiroko@hearttoheartmedicalcenter.com) or call 707.524.9640