

# An Invitation

*An essay from Lauren's forthcoming book, Restoring Your Immunity*

*When we deny our stories, they define us.*

*When we own our stories, we get to write a brave new ending.*

*-Brene Brown*

## Illness

Trapped in a cycle of confusing symptoms destroys any trust we might have in our body's ability to heal. It also steals the joy out of everyday living. When every bit of focus and energy is directed at physical symptoms and creating our own storyline, we totally lose sight of the bigger picture. With this hyper-focus we can't possibly see past our own suffering. We vacillate between bewilderment regarding past symptoms and the fear of what might come next. This is an awful place to live. I know that because I have been there. We might have had different symptoms, plots, and characters in our story but the felt sense of hopelessness is our common ground.

## A Path to Healing

I'd like to invite you to join me as I share my own story and the path that unfolded as I sought to restore my own immunity. I have grown familiar with my own plot as a health coach as I hear it day in and out. It goes something like this: girl ( or boy) gets sick, girl takes medication, medication causes new symptoms, girl takes more medication, medication causes

anxiety, girl can't sleep, girl becomes depressed, girl feels exhausted, fearful, and sick all of the time. Maybe your storyline isn't quite this extreme or maybe it is worse, and I am very sorry if that is so. You, your struggle with your health are the reason for my writing and my work. I want to help you ease your suffering if even just a bit.

Although I would love to claim my work holds all of the answers needed, and that if you simply follow the steps I did you'll be strong, vibrant and healthy. That, unfortunately, would not be true. What is true, however, is that you will take away a nugget or two that will help move you closer to your goal of feeling better. You will learn something that will allow you to access the joy in your life and open your eyes to what's really important to restore immunity. Of these things, I am very sure.

## **Laying the Foundation**

So where to begin? While we are completely programmed to take an action step, that won't be the case here. Doing so would actually bypass critical groundwork. There is a hierarchy for restoring the immune system, and I have some surprising news for you. The first step is not a liver detox or any organ detox for that matter! The very first step is to tap into your own belief system.

Let me explain why. Self-awareness is THE first step in a change process. Through life experiences, you have shaped your own belief system about healing. Without an awareness of these beliefs, it's impossible to advocate for your needs or know what is in alignment with your truth. You will find yourself adrift and lost. By connecting with yourself first you are able to develop your inner compass. This compass will come in handy in the future as you seek to improve your health. A good inner compass will sound alerts when you veer off course, make

decisions that are not congruent with your beliefs or hear something that just doesn't feel right.

## Reflection

So our very first step is to consider these simple yet profound questions. I suggest taking a quiet moment to reflect upon these questions and write out your answers in a journal for safekeeping.

- What have you come to believe about your own body and its ability to heal?
- What lifestyle have you created for yourself to support your beliefs?
- What is your role in your body's healing process?
- What informs the decisions you make about your own health?
- Where do you receive your guidance in making those health decisions?

Let your answers sit for a day or two and then come back to them. Ask yourself:

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Is there anything that needs to be dropped?

Can you take your answers and create a few sentences to form your own healing vision statement?

Consider beginning with, " I believe my body....."

Write this up and keep it somewhere where you would connect with it daily. Perhaps set it on your nightstand, tape it to your bathroom mirror or to the inside of your journal.

Getting clear and connecting with your own truth is required to find your way back home, back to a state of well-being. I am looking forward to supporting your work. Let's connect again next week to see how Gemmotherapy fits in with all of this.