

Developing Purpose

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

If we wish to live well in the world, not just amble along through life without any examination of our being, then we must engage in the effort to find meaning in our lives.

—Eido Frances Carney

What I have learned personally and in my work as a family health coach is that change requires motivation, and motivation must be supported by a purpose. In the post, Restoring Immunity from the Inside Out, I shared a bit about the personal purpose behind restoring my own immunity. However, please indulge me with a few more minutes of your time. I believe it's important to have a sense of just how weak I was, both emotionally and physically, seventeen years ago when my own journey began.

Imagine me then, a 41-year old breastfeeding mother of a 3-month old. Although this was my first child, I was fearful and exhausted as I sat in the Heidelberg, Germany, practice of my MD homeopath. I was still trying to regain my strength post-C-section and suffering under a dark veil of postpartum depression. It had been just 7 months from surgery to remove melanoma cancer, and I had faced two back to back staph infections in the past twelve weeks. As if all that weren't enough, I had a sinus infection and was barely managing 2-3 hours of solid sleep a night. I was teaching high school full time and juggling the emotional highs and lows that two teenage daughters can offer.

My practitioner looked at me from across the room and saw a

woman headed full speed toward a physical, mental, and emotional crash. When I looked in the mirror I don't even know if I saw someone looking back. I had become that disconnected with myself, emotionally and physically.

While logically I knew the conventional treatment methods used over my lifetime were no longer successful, I simply did not possess the bandwidth to imagine a different way of caring for my health. But that's exactly what my homeopath proposed to me: a radical change that would require self-awareness (at least enough to be able to report my experiences back to her) and to eventually discover a purpose for healing.

I stared across the room at her, thinking that she must be out of her mind. Could she really be asking me to do one more thing than I was already juggling? Impossible. And yet I had no better alternative. Here I was, a complete mess. Going back to conventional treatment didn't make sense as that had contributed to my current state. Doing nothing wasn't working either. My options weren't looking good.

In truth I just wanted all this to go away. I knew so little about my body and how it worked, and what I did know was just enough to scare me. From my perspective, I had a body that had betrayed me, and I lacked any trust in what it might do next. My hope was for the magic pill, which she wryly stated did not exist. On quite the contrary my practitioner expected me to learn how my body worked and to make lifestyle changes that would support my health rather than undermine it.

Oh dear heavens!. Now I was certain she was crazy.

She later shared with me, that (at the very same time I was sure she should be committed for insanity) she was considering whether she could get through to me in time because she knew my clock was ticking.

With small practices and protocols, my work with my practitioner allowed me to reconnect with my true self and

discover the joy of everyday living. Once my self-awareness kicked in I began to realize that I always have choices – even in very limited situations. I could choose thoughts and actions to support my health or just as easily I can choose those that damage it. When I was exhausted, stressed, and overwhelmed I couldn't see the choices, and I felt condemned to continue along the path I was on.

Making positive choices is liberating, and one step toward liberation leads to more.

Once there was enough distance from my emotional and physical suffering my purpose for healing began to emerge. While I was born with a family tendency for cancer and addiction it did not have to be my story. For myself and my three children, my daily purpose would be to change my own narrative about my health (and that of my family's).

It didn't happen overnight. It happened by being mindful of the choices I was presented with one at a time. These choices are there for you as well in every waking moment. They provide an opportunity to open the door to living your life at its fullest – the life you were born to live.

Ready to take the first step together?

Take some time to reflect and write down your answer to these questions. Through this simple exercise, your purpose may just emerge.

What would you like for your health today?

How will your life be different when you have that?

What are you willing to do to make it happen?

Complete this statement:

I aspire to a life that _____ and I am willing to do _____ to achieve that life for myself.

Add this to your belief statement you wrote keeping them both

as visible reminders of where you want this path to lead you.

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