

Return to the Light

ARLENE GAY LEVINE

The wound is the place where the Light enters you.
—Rumi

Crawling in the sand toward the ocean, a toddler cuts her knee on a shell. A teenage boy's heart breaks when the object of his admiration refuses a first date. Deep depression grips an older scientist whose grant application, probably his most important and perhaps his last, is denied. Nations grieve at the news of the latest incident of violence. What do all of these and a myriad of other hurtful situations have in common? They are all wounds of one sort or another. Whether to the physical, emotional, mental or spiritual vehicle, some injury, harm, damage, distress or offense has occurred and now requires the exact opposite: healing.

What does it mean to heal? In Old English the word was *hælan* (to make whole, sound, and well), and from the same etymological root arise the adjectives *hale* and, most interestingly, *holy*. So how do we accomplish this transformation from suffering human to fully integrated individual, awake to our Higher Self? In essence, each of us needs to become a shaman, one who, through some personal crisis, has learned to translate their pain into the power to heal themselves and others.

We must start right where we are, in the now, which is the sacred ground of the present. What thoughts are we thinking? They become the language we use to describe ourselves, and what we believe to be our reality. These words then create our character and eventually, for better or worse, write the story of our life. When the narrative hinges on faulty information, it requires editing, literally conscious restructuring, to allow the truth to shine through.

As an example, let us take our injured toddler, who while having fun at the beach, cut her knee open on a shell. Bleeding and frightened, she starts to cry. If her guardian is healthy and whole in spirit, she will pick the child up and comfort her, wiping away the blood and

fear with soothing hand and comforting expressions. However, suppose this person is carrying unresolved wounds from long ago.

Perhaps she will grab and scold the child. "How stupid and careless you are. Look what you have done!" Now this false thought planted in the child's mind will surface next time an accident occurs; she will use these terms on herself. A pattern of self-hate has formed instead of a paradigm of compassion and forgiveness for one's mistakes.

Words are tools; they work in invisible ways to create visible results. Fortunately, we can learn to direct this cause and effect process. By tuning into our Inner Teacher, who ushers us into the bridal chamber of our hearts, where all opposites are transcended, we take what can be a weapon and transform it into the salve. We need to examine and revise our belief systems. This will connect us with both the roots of our resistance to growth and the unlimited energy of our true potential.

The writer James Moffett believed that the fundamental aim of education and living is spiritual growth. He said, "Writing is hauling in a long line from the depths to find out what things are strung on it." Take some personal time and be willing to do just that. Have a notebook and pen ready. Make yourself comfortable, close your eyes, and center yourself with a few deep letting-go breaths. When you have connected to the silent place within, sense yourself safely transported to the place where memory takes you.

Spend as much time as you need reviewing scenes filled with colors, sounds, smells, tastes, and textures. When you feel ready, open your eyes, and create a chart with three headings: People, Places, and Things. Under each category, begin listing associations that occurred from your visit to the past. Flow on without stopping to question or analyze any of your responses.

Now appraise each list as if you were mining for gold. When the entry you are intuitively encouraged to explore jumps out at you, you will have excavated your golden nugget. Write it in the center of a circle in the middle of

a clean page in capital letters. You may wish to take a few more deep breaths as an aid to enter the moment with mindful awareness. Concentrate on your nugget, and as ideas about what you have written emerge, draw a line from the circle, letting each idea branch off and trigger a new thought or memory. Use no more than a few words to write it down. Return to the golden nugget for fresh inspiration and repeat this process until your page is full.

Take time to study the treasure map you have created. Hopefully, your nugget word has helped you unearth many connections that over the years you forgot or unconsciously repressed. For you as a child, they may have been too painful to handle. Use the map as a guide to what must be released, reclaimed, or revised in your current life. If you need to dig deeper for this information, do an “interview” with your person, place, or thing. Record your questions and the responses. Review them carefully for succinct clues to where healing still needs to occur in your life.

It is beneficial to do the Treasure Map meditation at least several times for optimal results. Repetition will provide a smoother journey to territory that requires exploration. Each time, move closer to the beauty of who you really are. Revising the story of your life can change you and the world you inhabit in powerful and positive ways. In fact, the treasure you will discover is the birth of the Light where there once was a wound. ■



Author, poet, and educator, **ARLENE GAY LEVINE**, M.A., is a graduate of New York University. Her poetry has found a home in many venues, and new work will appear in the anthology *Earth Blessings* (Viva Editions, 2016). She is the creator and facilitator of Logos Therapy, a transformational writing process from which the Treasure Map meditation in this article is adapted. Her website is <http://www.arlenegaylevine.com>. “The Journey” was originally published in *Serenity Prayers* (Andrews McMeel, 2009).

The Journey

A day begins; there are no promises.
Maybe the sun will shine, or not.
No one can be sure who is around that corner
or what news this next call might bring.

Seasons arrive like clockwork but how
they will turn out is a mystery. Still . . .
One day we will slip from our bodies
and slide into the Light; this we know.

Perhaps to rouse from sleep and put aside
the fear that hunts our hearts,
we could live each day
as if the Light was already ours.

Listen: The heart hears a deeper truth
than the head. Even the loneliest
one is never alone on
the winding journey home.

—Arlene Gay Levine