

A meditation to keep your heart open to those who have hurt you



One of the biggest challenges we face in a relationship with those we love is the occasional misunderstanding or conflict that results in an emotional wound. We are wired to seek connection with others, and it feels so good when we find it. When we feel the rift of

disconnection separate us from those we love, even if it is just for a moment, we can find ourselves wanting to close our hearts and retreat into ourselves. Allowing ourselves to be vulnerable means that we allow ourselves to get hurt. It seems like a paradox. On one hand, we work hard to treat ourselves well and expect the same from others; and yet, we know that by consciously allowing ourselves to be hurt by others, we often experience our greatest growth.

There is not a single person alive today who does not know what it is like to have their feelings hurt by someone who he or she loves. We all have various coping mechanisms when this happens, and some of us are better at moving forward than others. How we deal with it depends on the person who hurt us, the degree of hurt we feel, and the nature of the hurt. Often, our suffering comes mostly from our own minds and attachments to what we think another person's intentions are. Our egos can use moments like this, when we feel vulnerable, to rise up and reinforce certain illusions like "I am not worthy", "Why does everyone end up doing this to me", or "I should have known better". We then project intense feelings of bitterness or disappointment onto the person who has hurt us, often out of

proportion to their true intention. It is so important to catch ourselves in these emotional states, because we can lash out or withdraw from the person we love to such an extent that we in turn hurt *them*.

So the question becomes, how do we keep our hearts open to someone we love, who has hurt our feelings?

For those of you who are regular readers of this blog, the answer will come as no surprise. It is to simply breathe. It's a hard thing to remember when we are caught up in our emotions, but becoming aware of your breath when encountering hurtful situations will help you get through them. Taking even, deep breaths during these times might even feel like you are actually breathing in the hurt, and this is ok. In fact, allowing yourself to breathe in the hurt, to feel it fully in your whole being, is the first step in letting it go. Breathe your way through the conflict, and then when you can take some time to yourself, consider the following meditative practice.

The Buddhist meditation called '*tonglen*' focuses on breathing in your suffering, and breathing out your happiness and blessings to others. This might feel counterintuitive at first, but it is a way of connecting yourself to anyone and everyone who might be feeling just as you are in the moment. And I can assure you, there is no hurt that you have ever felt where you have been alone. Someone, somewhere out in the world, has felt the exact same thing. In the depths of any suffering you might be experiencing, *you are not alone*. Ultimately, the situations that hurt us the most with others are the ones that make us feel suddenly severed from them, cut off from the warmth of their understanding and love. Whether this occurs in a new friendship, or with a spouse of fifty years, the nature of the hurt is the same. It is rooted in disconnection. While their words or actions might legitimately have caused us pain, it's the feeling of disconnect that comes from it that creates the emotional wound. Practicing *tonglen* during these times is difficult, but reminds us we are not

alone. We are never truly disconnected from anyone; we only perceive that we are.

Therefore in order to bring rectification in these entire phenomenons's you need to [levitra without prescription](#) that carries the efficiency to oppose the body disturbances created as a reason behind autism. The body [viagra generic discount](#) will start with the process of serotonin (neurotransmitter) reuptake in the brain to delay orgasm. The <http://robertrobb.com/irresponsible-hyperbole-from-dewit-and-martin/> cialis no prescription impact of such stimulation lasts for 4 to 6 hours that is sufficient for the men to enable them doing sex better. This is the best way, which would make [cialis 20 mg](#) you familiar with the practical knowledge for maintaining these motors in an advanced way to keep it long lasting and active for years without creating any problem. Below are the steps you can use to keep your heart open during times of conflict with a loved one:

- 1. When you feel the familiar sting of emotional pain, acknowledge its presence.***
- 2. Identify where you feel the pain in your body, and then take a deep breath in.***
- 3. Breathe in the pain, deeply, visualizing it entering your heart.***
- 4. Breathe out from your heart your blessings to everyone feeling as you are right now.***
- 5. Allow any emotions to arise, and any physical reaction you might have to them, such as crying.***
- 6. After several breaths, give thanks for yourself and the courage you showed in allowing yourself to be vulnerable.***

As you work towards staying vulnerable and open, especially when you want to close yourself off and retreat from the world, be kind to yourself. It's important not to judge yourself and your reactions, but to merely observe them. By practicing vulnerability in the face of emotional wounds, you are actually opening yourself up to feeling deeper levels of

joy and love. This is ultimately the gift in our pain – it is the key that unlocks the hidden rooms deep in our hearts that have been empty and gathering dust, simply because we didn't know they were there. Keeping yourself open to those who have hurt you will allow you to consciously inhabit your own heart.

Numbing the pain is the antidote to joy



I want you to think about your vices. What do you turn to during times of discomfort, that have become habits in your life? These are things that generally provide temporary pleasure at the cost of your long term goals. It might be eating

“comfort” food, shopping for something you don't need, self-medicating with drugs and alcohol, or spending hours in front of the TV. Your rational mind tells you these things aren't a good idea, but some other, stronger, force takes over and you engage in these behaviors anyway. Usually, after you are done, you don't feel too good about yourself. And what's worse, the emotional discomfort you tried to run away from not only sticks around, but it often gets a lot worse.

“Numbing the pain for a while will make it worse when you finally feel it”

J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire

Why do we repeat this pattern over and over again? The answer is that we are engaging in emotional numbing. Emotional

numbing is a concept that Dr. Brene Brown discusses in her book, [The Gifts of Imperfection](#). She describes this action as something we all resort to as an attempt to escape emotional pain. Think about your vices again. Can you identify triggering events that lead to the behavior? Maybe it was a stressful day at work that you coped with by going on an online shopping spree. Or it was being cut off in traffic and nearly getting in an accident that preceded going home and ordering a pizza, that you ate by yourself. Our numbing behaviors are mechanisms we have developed in order to cope with difficult emotions. This, in and of itself, isn't the problem – it's the behavior we choose that becomes the problem, often leading to long term unfavorable outcomes with no resolution to the original pain. Not only that, the process of emotional numbing limits our experience of joy in our lives.

This last point is especially critical to understand. Dr. Brene Brown's research has shown that *we cannot selectively numb our emotions*. If we numb the bad, we numb the good. By trying to escape our feelings of being overwhelmed, scared, hurt or fearful, we also end up escaping joy, love, fulfillment and passion. We become numb to life. Emotional numbing is a vicious cycle we get caught up in. It's a positive feedback loop for the destructive numbing behaviors. We feel bad so we numb with a behavior; we can't feel as good as we want when something good happens, so we supplement the experience with the behavior as well. Pretty soon, our lives are the ebb and flow of our numbing addiction.

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Emotional numbing is not something over which to be critical of yourself. We all do it. It's the mind's way of coping with extreme discomfort. The thing is, usually what is triggering the numbing behavior is an area of your life that needs your attention, ultimately for your greater good. Emotional pain, like physical pain, is meant to be an awareness mechanism for deep healing, and if you are open to it, spiritual growth. If you sustain a physical wound, you know that you need to take measures to make sure that wound heals and doesn't become infected. Small wounds can heal on their own. Larger wounds need your help, otherwise you risk much more damage to your tissues. Similarly, emotional wounds need to be addressed and cared for, otherwise they will fester. Ignore a bad gash on your leg, and you might need an amputation. Ignore a bad gash on your heart, and you might amputate your ability to feel love and joy. We must understand that pain of all types has a higher purpose.

"Pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our consciences, but shouts in our pains.

It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world."

C.S. Lewis

The first step in stopping the numbing cycle is to be aware that it is happening. When you find yourself engaging in your numbing behaviors, stop and consider what event triggered your feelings of discomfort. That emotional pain is demanding your attention for a reason. Use your [tools of self-compassion](#) to heal the emotional wound. Figure out what behaviors you can engage in that would actually make you feel better about yourself, not worse. Acknowledge your feelings, and even though your instinct is to escape, be with those feelings intimately. [Breathe](#). Accept what the moment is giving you with courage, knowing that what you are feeling are *growing* pains. It is by feeling these difficult emotions that joy can become a greater presence in your life.

