

THE
MASTERY
of
CHANGE



*Choosing Mental
& Emotional
Wellness*

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EMBRACING PEACE™

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About The Book

This book and its accompanying 30 Day Wellness workbook seeks to answer the following questions...

- ❖ **Why do patterns of negativity persist in ourselves and in the world?**
- ❖ **What would it take to break free from the patterns of victimhood, illness, depression, and fear?**
- ❖ **What practices encourage neurological and biological evolution in ourselves, and how do they work?**
- ❖ **What steps can I take right now to start a process of massive transformation?**

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Photo Credit: Michelle Grove

The Author

Hi, I'm Sean Morgan. My mission in life is to give hope to people who are looking for it. In the past, I've worked with anxiety, panic disorder, depression, depersonalization, and extreme illness. I was hospitalized and medicated as a teen for panic disorder. The medication actually made things worse, and I found wellness through healthy lifestyle choices.

In my twenties, I suffered from chronic Lyme disease and depression. It put me on a journey to discover as many healing practices as possible for my body and mind. It was only through the destruction of a precious relationship with my fiancée that I was willing to take responsibility for my mental health. I realized that I am 100% responsible for my own circumstances through my thoughts, feelings, and actions. Now I'm happy to say that I'm healthy in body and mind. If I could have just one wish for people struggling, it would be to experience the same life-changing revelation regarding responsibility.

I always wanted to “make a difference”. I tried to become powerful by studying business. Then I realized that my vocation was to work directly in a caring profession. I became an Americorps volunteer and an inner city school teacher in the worst performing district in Pennsylvania. Then I worked for several years as a counselor for at-risk youth in an adventure therapy program. This job taught me so much about self esteem, goal-setting, and reaching people with disempowering beliefs.

My materials are particularly helpful for people who think too much. Direct teachings of mindfulness (focusing on the present moment) are great, but some

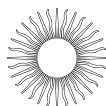
people require a methodical understanding of the process of letting go before they are willing to do it. For me, moving toward wellness using multiple healing practices was more effective than following a single path. We all have to follow our own intuition, intelligence, and interest to find what works for us. If the information I am releasing is helpful to you, I encourage you to challenge yourself in a gradual and self-loving way through the Darkness To Daylight 30 Day program. If you would like to correspond with me, I offer free half-hour phone and Skype sessions when I'm available. If you would like to receive weekly positive wisdom, you can sign up for my email newsletter.

Disclaimer: I am not a licensed therapist and any information I offer is from my own personal experience:)



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Introduction

The path of negativity is a path toward death. You may be in the thick of darkness right now. I know how it can be, that's why I'm writing this message right now. I had a wrong-minded view of the world, and I suffered as a consequence. I was mostly functional, meaning I could still take care of my minimum responsibilities in the world, such as school and work. Yet, at times I would go into darkness to the point of suicidal thoughts, especially in the winters.

Sometimes I would spend over 10 hours a day on the computer. After I tried to find the answers to life by trying marijuana, I developed panic disorder and a dissociative disorder called depersonalization/derealization. I was hospitalized and medicated. The anxiety and depersonalization attacks were very traumatic for me. Earlier in my life, I couldn't imagine that it would have been possible to live in such terror. I didn't want the answers to life anymore...I just wanted to feel normal again. The medication caused more problems such as rage attacks. Later, my medication was taken off the market for minors because it was shown to cause suicidal thoughts. Luckily, I had enough of a sense of autonomy to take myself off of the medication, even before this was known.

Social anxiety and introversion have always affected me, making it difficult for me to connect with others or "put myself out there" in social situations. As a result, I went through college without a social life. I spent hours a day alone in my room singing songs with my guitar. Even though music was cathartic for me, I also romanticized the victim story of myself through the sadness of the music. I went through cycles. Times weren't always bad. I met an amazing woman, but we argued a lot. Then I became infected with a debilitating case of chronic Lyme disease, and it reinforced the victim role I had carved out for myself. Some days I couldn't walk, and I developed a more chronic form of depression.

I had always wanted my girlfriend to play the nurturing role for my victim story. She wanted me to help myself. I refused to take antibiotics because my research had confirmed that it made things worse for many people. Looking back, I was clinging to my illness as a way to keep my victim story relevant. Luckily, after a

year of hell I began to change, grow, learn, and take responsibility. I took antibiotics and was cured within weeks. Although antibiotics cured my Lyme disease, it seemed to make my depression a lot worse. How ironic that as I escaped physical pain, I started to feel terrorized by mental pain. Slowly, through healthy lifestyle choices, I fully recovered and started to feel normal again. Sometimes you don't realize how depressed you really are until you begin to feel like a normal balanced person.

Shortly after my Lyme disease recovery, my girlfriend and I got engaged and went on a long-term trip to Puerto Rico. We continued to have problems, and I continued to blame her because I felt unloved. My neediness became too much for her to bear, and she shut down her affections. I had created a monster, which made it easier for me to blame her more. The blame finally ended the engagement. The lack of independence, self sufficiency, and responsibility for my emotions ended a beautiful love story. After we broke up, I continued to blame her and play the victim for the following months. Being alone forced me to sink or swim. I chose to swim. I chose to better myself and challenge myself. I changed my diet and fitness routine, took dance lessons, and challenged myself to be social. I worked with the loneliness and neediness inside myself. I applied myself professionally and gained financial independence and power. The healthier I got, the more the victim story crumbled. Finally, I let go of the ignorant mental disease of blame and resentment.

Today, I'm happy to say that I feel even better than "normal". I feel joyful every day and I have the confidence to achieve things I never dreamed for myself before. I still have challenges in my life and I have experienced anxiety and depersonalization attacks pretty recently, but now I am ready for them. I know that I have the tools and the strength to meet them if they visit me. In fact, the more challenges I meet, the stronger I get. Being a master of change is not about being the best, it's about being courageous and smart enough to dance with life instead of against it.

I've been in the thick of darkness, and now that I've seen the light I want to share it with others. I've spent years discovering the most effective methods for self-transformation and empowerment. It didn't matter where it came from; if it worked I would use it. I learned from resources including many religions, traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), Ayurveda, Reiki, massage, yoga, inquiry, hypnosis, Western research, and many wonderful teachers. Using my intuition and intellect, I

created a lifestyle with habits that deliver. Only recently have I begun to understand why the practices work. I have connected the dots to the point where I can now explain them in a holistic model. I hope my model can give you a framework for understanding why every action you take makes such a huge difference. You are powerful, but you may have been using your power against yourself. You have the power of your consciousness, which is your attention and focus. Perhaps you have just been pointing it in the wrong direction.

At the end of *The Mastery Of Change* is a workbook, which will allow you to put the practices you learned about into action. I call it *The Darkness To Daylight 30 Day Challenge*. It is designed to take someone with low energy and low motivation to a place of achievement and happiness.

Thank you for reading my story. We all go through a sort of “hero’s journey”. The further into darkness we slip on that journey makes the light of day that much sweeter. May your journey through this book and through your healing be exciting and rewarding. As the Navajo blessing goes... May you walk in beauty:)



In The Beginning

It might seem that we are born into a cold and dangerous world. Our first emotion may be terror from the traumatic change of going from womb to alien environment. At first we are defenseless and dependent creatures. Some children suffer and some die. But that is not what usually happens. We have mechanisms to deal with crisis. We are beings of resilience because there is a vast intelligence within us. We have genetic programming to nurture our own and others' offspring. Nature's intelligence strives toward life.

Our genetic programming gives us instincts. Some of them are useful for our particular environment and some of them are not. Luckily, we have been endowed with the capacity to adapt. We can consciously choose behaviors even if they run counter to our genetic programming. Modern science is now realizing that we are more adaptable than we first assumed. Neuroplasticity is now an accepted phenomenon, but to relegate adaptability to the brain would be shortsighted. We operate as whole beings.

We are easily influenced by our environment and programmed by our caregivers and community. Just like genetic programming, some of this programming is useful and some is not. The useful conditioning encourages wellbeing. Wellbeing is toward life, health, happiness, growth or homeostasis. Unhealthy conditioning is toward death, pain, suffering, and danger.

One exception is the pain (discomfort) of rapid change for the purpose of adaptation. This is where our conscious mind really comes in handy. Our bodies have a strong survival response to protect us. However, sometimes it is triggered when we aren't really in danger. One example is the common fear of public speaking. Our conscious mind can override our survival response in order to adapt to our environment in the way we see fit.

Changing ourselves takes resources from our being; therefore, there is a natural resistance to it. It can also trigger our survival response to a certain degree. As an example, tearing too much muscle in a short amount of time in weightlifting would be damaging. Pain is a sign that we need to change, but it also protects us from

potential danger. If we resist the perfect amount of challenging weight, we experience some pain (discomfort) but not to a dangerous level. We use resources such as energy to lift a weight, and we tear muscle to build it. In the end, a somewhat painful process allowed us to adapt and gain a layer of protection in times of crisis.

It was not easy to change. Something had to be destroyed in order for something new to emerge. Change is awkward. The pain and resistance we feel is the physical experience of rewiring our being. It may seem easier not to change when we meet a challenge, but if we don't change and grow, we will inevitably suffer.

Free will is our ability to consciously participate in the evolutionary process. To choose when, where, how, and how much to challenge ourselves to change for the better or for the worse. Some change happens automatically, such as body temperature regulation, but we also have the conscious choice to wear warm or cool clothing or build a shelter.

I propose that the world is a nurturing place that supports our survival and happiness. Most children are happy by nature and grow to an important point: The point of conscious evolution. This is the point when we begin to take responsibility. That's when the greatest opportunity arises if we have the grace to recognize it.

All of this seems obvious, but it is not. If we were all aware of our free will, we would choose not to suffer. Yet suffering can be one of the greatest gifts of life because it is through its unignorable alarm that we can be notified that we are not in the flow of nature. It's the way we can tell that we are not adapting toward wellbeing. You could also look at it as God's call to us that we have missed the mark (the literal translation of sin). It notifies us that we have taken a step toward death and away from life.

Let's say that you normally feel great after you eat pizza. If you get sick every time you eat at Tony's pizzeria, you would be crazy to continue the pattern. If you get sick with suffering every time you think negatively about your body, why would you continue to do so? Humans continue to consume the poison of disempowering beliefs and negative emotions even when they are easily seen in predictable patterns. This is all due to lack of awareness and habitual behavior.

This book's purpose is to bring hope that you can choose to be happy. There are many paths, but the basic message is to notice the patterns in your life that bring pain and notice the ones that bring joy. Choose to be kind to yourself and those

around you by embracing positivity. Changing from a victim to a responsible being takes focus and effort. It doesn't always feel comfortable, but it is the only path of sanity. Notice that virtually everything is in constant change. Any attempt to hold onto anything will stagnate the flow of life's energy through you. This stagnation of energy is what causes pain and suffering.



The Emotional Body

Our understanding of emotions and unseen bioenergetic fields is very basic. In this book I create an imaginary model and use metaphors to demonstrate how I understand emotions in my personal experience. These models, much like the models of atoms first created by Niels Bohr and others, are not accurate. They are educated guesses to explain how the universe works. I do not ask that you believe these models just because I suggest them. I would encourage you to use the exercises and see for yourself if these models accurately predict how energy flows in your body and your life. New age people as well as scientists throw around the word energy quite a bit. According to science, everything is made of waves of energy, including matter. I use the term to describe any wave that cannot be seen.

Through a physical regimen that includes a diet of water, nutritious food, and moderate challenge to our bodies (exercise), we develop strong bones, tissue, fat, and muscle. These become our physical resources that we can use to live off of in times of crisis. It is a wonderful system for resilience. We also have an intelligence within our bodies that discards toxins, which are substances we ingest that do not serve our survival.

Another layer of our being is our “emotional body”. The result of how our system responds to the total of all input at any given point is our emotional state. Our being filters the energy in our field including food, sound, thought waves, and all other stimulus. The result of this filtration of energy is a physical response which ranges on a spectrum from positive and life-giving to negative and life-destroying, with neutral in the middle. We have many words to describe what it feels like when energy is flowing freely, elegantly, and efficiently through our bodies, feeding our

organs and body parts. They are the positive emotions. There is also a lexicon for the overall feeling we get when sluggish death-causing energy stagnates within our being. They are the negative emotions. Yes, negative emotions cause disease. In fact, according to Lett et al, depression could be a causal factor for heart disease (2004).

Clinical neuropsychologist Dr. Mario Martinez does fascinating research on cultural programming and emotional causes of disease. In one of his papers, he demonstrates that women in different cultures experience menopausal symptoms differently depending on the cultural beliefs about them. You can access his research at Biocognitive.org.

We know that we have to bring in fresh, clean nutrients and cleanse ourselves of toxins through elimination processes to be physically healthy. We know that we have to build our bodies through moderate challenge. Although we can try to blame genetics and others if we are fat, the truth is hard to deny. We do have free will regarding what we put into our bodies and how much we challenge our bodies through exercise. I encourage you to take a stance of responsibility for your emotional body as well, for it is indivisible from your physical body.

You must feed your body with positive emotions on a daily basis. See the reference section of this book for research linking positive emotions and physical health. You must eliminate toxic negative emotions when they come up as well. Every behavior in which you engage has an emotional result. Through awareness you will know which behaviors are emotionally healthy and which ones are not. Just like exercise, building a healthy emotional body takes effort and can be uncomfortable. When you make the conscious choice to change from a negative pattern to a positive one, the change itself is uncomfortable but has an undeniably wonderful result. This book has exercises that you can practice to build a healthy emotional body so that in times of crisis and intense challenge, you have the inner resources to adapt, survive, and thrive.

It's difficult to talk about the emotional body, the physical body, and the mind with its thoughts and beliefs because they are not separate. The scientific world tends to categorize and compartmentalize phenomenon that is actually connected. Even so, using words and concepts with which people are familiar will help me to illustrate a more integral understanding.

In the same way that we cannot survive without food, we need positive emotions to survive. Furthermore, we cannot survive with only negative emotions. That would be like eating a diet of poison and never eliminating it. The experience of negative emotions in our lives is inevitable, in the same way that the experience of toxins in our environment is inevitable for our physical bodies. Physical health is so straightforward; you just eat clean natural food and have regular elimination of toxins. But what about emotional fitness? How do we build our emotional body so that we can endure times of crisis and starvation of emotional nutrition?

Emotions are not the subject of as many scientific studies, so we have to work with limited understanding and create a mental model of how they work. It's hard to imagine a problem with being too happy, too kind, or too positive. But drug, sex, and food addiction come to mind as ways that people seek to feel positive emotions in an unhealthy way. This is where the conscious mind has to step in and recognize that the initial positive emotion is just masking a longer-term negative effect.

A negative emotion is one that you would prefer not to feel. How do we release them? When you realize that you are feeling a negative emotion, that's a good thing because you've taken the first step toward releasing it, which is realizing that it's there. Here comes the counterintuitive part: the trick to releasing it is to keep your consciousness on it and feel it moving inside you. Follow it with your mind. Feel the breath slowly encouraging its release. Breathe into the area of your body where you feel the contraction, and consciously relax there.

Reflect:

When do you feel positive emotions such as contentment, confidence, and joy?

What do they feel like in your body?

Which emotions do you feel victimized by?

When do you feel these emotions?

What does it feel like in your body when you experience them?

How do you deal with negative emotions?

What positive strategies do you have to work with negative emotions?
(ex: I count to ten when I experience a strong emotion instead of refueling it with my thoughts.)

What are the strategies you use that make things worse?
(ex: I yell at my son when I feel angry.)



How Beliefs Relate To The Emotional Body

Beliefs are pathways that allow energy to flow through our beings. It is a whole-body pattern, but I'll talk a lot about the brain in this book because there is more scientific evidence available for it. How the flow of energy feels to us is called an emotion. If you believe that being alive is something to be grateful for, then you will feel a positive flow of emotion upon waking because you will realize that you are alive. If you believe that you have to go to work to survive and you don't enjoy work, then you will feel the opposite way when you hear the alarm clock.

When I had depression, I had many beliefs that kept happiness at a distance or caused me pain. I remember when I first learned that we have the power to deconstruct our own beliefs. It was a major breakthrough for me. I started to watch my own thoughts and laugh at how unhelpful they were. Specifically, I remember

when I got up the energy to go for a run. Even though I rarely exercised and I was finally doing something helpful for myself, I had repetitive thought patterns about how I should be running faster and should be able to run longer. I was abusing myself with these thoughts. As soon as I realized what my belief was and deconstructed it, I could run in peace. If the word “should” is in your thought, it is a clue that your thought is resistant to reality, and is therefore causing pain.

Take responsibility for the belief. It may stem from genetic predisposition or environmental conditioning, but the choice is now yours to tear down the pathway and build a better one that takes you straight to the destination of happiness. Just releasing a negative emotion is like taking an aspirin for headaches. Headaches are often relieved from headache medicine, but headaches are never caused by lack of medicine. It is YOUR belief that caused you to feel the negative emotion. By all means, take a pill to take care of the symptom, but then cure the disease! Many headache medications contain vasodilators that allow blood energy to flow more. You will see this trend repeatedly. Constriction causes pain. Relaxation causes happiness. Of course life is a balance between the two, but most people are too tense!

A belief is a strong pattern through your entire being. In Hindu tradition, the term is samskara. A compartmentalized way of looking at it is a pathway through your brain. Every time you use a thought pattern, it becomes more engrained and your brain gets better at using the pathway. When other pathway options come up, your brain likes to choose the highway because it is an easier, more familiar and well-trodden path.

Reflect:

Write down the top ten beliefs that bring up the most emotion for you (positive or negative). You can keep the positive and you can deconstruct the negative.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

My strongest limiting belief about myself is:

My strongest positive belief about myself is:

My strongest limiting belief about my body is:

My strongest positive belief about my body is:

My strongest limiting belief about relationships is:

My strongest positive belief about relationships is:

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