



My Story

The big awakening in my life occurred in my late 20's after 7 years of being in an unsupportive relationship and overworking myself at a job I loved.

For years I felt mildly depressed and wondered, "could this be it for my life?" I remembered happier times in my childhood and spent years journaling the same sad story. Finally, it became more and more unbearable to live this way but I didn't know how to change. Did I need to leave my relationship? Did I need to leave my job? I loved my work but it stressed me out. I always felt half out and half in my relationship... most of the time it was fine but I had a recurring feeling that it wasn't what I wanted. This led to occasional drama, breakups and periods of doubt.

To get more clarity, I began to wake up early each morning to journal with my cup of coffee. When I got the "I can't stand to be in my house or in my body" feeling I went for a long run or walk in a nearby canyon. For a feeling of connectedness I learned to seek out nature or read Tarot cards and palms. I sometimes knew that I should leave my relationship but then I would feel differently later. Eventually, I got so stressed out that my headaches got worse and more frequent and I had moments of confusion and panic at work. When the head of our non-profit whom I had modeled my work-life after had a breakdown and was gone for 6 months, I realized that something was really wrong. I felt headed in the same direction.

So I listened to this internal guidance (finally!), quit my job and signed up for a 10 day silent meditation retreat, telling my boyfriend of 7 years that I would probably leave him upon my return. That retreat still stands today as the hardest thing I have ever done... and the most radically transformative. I meditated for 16 hours a day, facing and "staying with" all my physical pain and mental/emotional fears. It was a mix of terror, excruciating pain and the most unbelievable mental liberation I have ever experienced (although now I feel this deep peace and clear-mindedness on a regular basis!).

Since this time I have learned a lot about "listening" for and acting on internal guidance. I understand now that the "still small voice" I was hearing over and over again to leave my relationship and learn to work in a more moderate way was my internal voice, my Divine Guidance. Because it was asking me to do something I didn't want to do, I ignored it and my body-mind got more tense, painful and unbearable by

the day. These were actually messages meant to guide and direct me! Because there were a LOT of ways that I was not aligned with my values and I had not yet learned some important and difficult life-skills, these first years were the most difficult... but my aliveness and peace of mind was back. Because I was now listening, the learning came quickly. Life circumstances arose that gave me opportunities to learn to communicate difficult emotions to friends and family, to not do something unless I could do it with love and graciousness, how to seek romantic relationships with men I admired. Each of these growth opportunities came from my daily life, simply acknowledging that something was not right, listening for Guidance on what action was needed of me and then acting on this Guidance, despite the difficulty. Looking back now, the key step was the first one. I finally broke my childish willfulness ("I want to have my cake and eat it too—be happy yet not listen to my inner guidance"). In a desperate hope to feel happy again, I threw myself into the hands of the unknown by following my internal guidance—going on that meditation retreat, quitting my job, moving and leaving my relationship. Since I had just taken the hardest step and was so desperate to be happy again, I was truly committed to listening for and acting on my Guidance, knowing it was directly related to my peace of mind and physical health. My growth was then steady and quick as I would hear Guidance that I needed to communicate something and then had to figure out how to do it when my heart was pounding in my chest! Integrity came first and personal difficulty came next. But the reward was aliveness, a clear mind and a healthy body.

It has been 10 years since I've lived my life like this... constantly saying yes to life's new lessons, to improve my posture and my diet, to deepen my honesty and relationships, to refine my communication in some nuanced way. I continue to meditate 45 minutes daily, journal, do yoga 2 times per week, walk everywhere and listen to my moment to moment intuition about my diet. Coaching fulfills my Purpose of empowering people to live courageous, joyful lives. My normal state is something I could never have imagined 10 years ago... peaceful, relaxed, filled with love, vision, forgiveness, abundance and the urge to give. This path also lies ahead for you.

**"Take the first step in Faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase,
just take the first step." ~ Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

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