

Gifts of the Heart's Wisdom

By Diana Rankin

In our culture, we don't like pain. Whether our pain is emotional or physical, our goal is to move through the pain as quickly as possible and get back to our *normal* life. But pain, by its very nature, transitions our lives into a new normal. What the new normal is depends on how we respond to life during the time of pain and transition. If, in the depths of our pain, we are able to experience our lives through the heart's wisdom, we will find the gifts of our situation and move with grace and grit to a deeper connection with ourselves and a greater spiritual connection with all life. This is not an easy task we ask of ourselves. The spiritual path is not for wimps; healing is tough work. I know of what I speak.

While lying on the side of the road in early September, waiting to be Care Flighted to the hospital, I came to better understand physical pain, and I didn't like it. Gravel took my motorcycle and me down in a curve. I didn't want to go to a hospital by helicopter; I didn't want to go to a hospital. That meant I was hurt, and I refused to believe I could be hurt. I liked my life the way it was. I had too much to do, animals to take care of, editors and deadlines, bills that only get paid if I work, and a motorcycle to ride.

But, I had no say in that moment in time. All I could do was just be. People were all around me, asking me questions that I heard myself respond to, but mostly I drifted off, away from the pain. *I would deal with my life later, when I got home that night*, I told myself, but it would be two months before I returned to my home. I spent eight days in the trauma unit at Miami Valley Hospital, nearly a month in a rehab/nursing home, and three weeks staying with friends. During this time, I had to constantly find the gifts in my situation. It was the only way I could remain sane.

Many of the gifts came easily. Friends and family gave me so much—flowers, books, food, money, a laptop small enough I could lift it, friendship, and sincere ways to help. Friends from around the world started sending me prayers and healing energy. Family came from as far away as Florida and South Carolina. One friend took care of my animals, another my motorcycle; my brother called clients and associates to cancel appointments and meetings, radio shows and speaking engagements, and promised articles. I was amazed how much people did for me, wanted to do for me, how much people gave to me, how generous they were with their gifts and themselves.

With my every need met, all I had to do was heal. I believe “accidents” have a purpose, so I constantly asked myself how to use this situation to serve my life and that of others. I found joy in the deepening of friendships and happiness in that which I had never given thought to before. I never thought about tying shoe laces, until I couldn't, or about opening doors from a wheelchair, or how the brain stops sending signals to unused parts of our body that need to be coaxed back into performing they way we expect.

The list of miracles was long and ongoing, and I knew that I was blessed, and I was grateful. This is enough. Still I knew there was more. In the days of healing, I came to understand the physical pain of my hurt body and the emotional pain of my life being turned upside down was for the experience itself, and the experience would take me where I needed to go, where Spirit meant me to go, my heart's wisdom guiding me.

During my days and nights in the hospital and then the rehab/nursing home, I witnessed the difference between health-care professionals who use their intuition coupled with their

medical knowledge and those who used only their medical knowledge. I witnessed the lack of alternative medicine and the lack of holistic health care in the traditional medical centers. I felt called to be an instrument of change.

As I made the commitment in my heart, doors opened. Sometimes they were heavy, other times they flew open. All I had to do was walk through. I expanded my thinking and career. While still healing, I was asked if I would talk to groups of health care professionals. I created “Intuitive Care”, a program designed to guide health care providers to develop their intuition for the betterment of their own lives and the better care of their patients.

I also felt called to create a model for a healing center where both allopathic and alternative medicines are used to treat the patients; where music, art, color, visualization, meditation, and theater, are combined with exercises and body movement; where every patient has an advocate to talk for them when they cannot talk; where a foundation of private funds cover costs when insurance companies fail; where the patient’s care is put before the staff and administration’s egos; where healing is encouraged and patients are allowed to take responsibility for their own lives.

I don’t know how all this will unfold. I only know that my job is to put one foot in front of the other and listen, listen carefully to my heart’s wisdom. It will guide me to the truth of why I came into this life. This I can trust.

In our culture, we don’t like pain, and I am no exception. We excuse it, refuse to look at it, and are often even cruel in the name of helping the less fortunate when a friend is in pain or, when we infer that if they were in right alignment with life, they would not be having this pain. When we are able to look at pain—ours and that of others—from the heart’s wisdom, we are able to come to the understanding that pain is not because we were incorrect, or even in dis-ease with ourselves (although this can be part of our pain), but for the experience itself. Pain may be a wakeup call, or it may be a calling to a new life in which we understand that life always seeks to balance itself, and that if we can see pain as merely a part of life, not something separate that must be avoided at all costs, we can use the enviable pain that comes with being feeling, breathing human beings. Then we are able to experience the pain that comes into our lives as a way to enrich and deepen ourselves and a way to find the truth of why we came into this life. Perhaps our pain will open us to the gifts of love our family and friends have for us, and this is enough. Perhaps, though, our pain will lead us to become instruments of change in a way that the greatness of our creation will live long past our pain and help to heal not only ourselves, but others as well.

Diana Rankin is deeply grateful for all the healing energy and prayers that are sent her way during her healing process.

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