

# Growing Up — Beyond Blame

As an acupuncturist, I am privileged to hear a large number of life stories. I have a number of different filters, or paradigms that I can use to frame and explain the occurrences that lead a person through my door and on to the treatment couch.

Many people expect the process of receiving an acupuncture treatment to be one of passive acceptance — that the therapist will take the battered body and somehow instill wholeness into it. As if the role of the patient is to lie there and have things fixed, like sitting in the driver's seat while the mechanic tunes the engine.

But we are each the driver of our own vehicle (our body), and we imbue the framework with who we *think* we are, based on all our subconscious responses, and our memories of trivial as well as substantial events.

The angst, the inability to relax, the lack of direction, the sense of pointlessness that drives us to seek comfort in habitual behaviours, eventually show themselves as physical breakdowns. They are all symptoms of the stress we feel when our stuck beliefs and assumptions are challenged.

But we have created our own lives, and are therefore responsible for our own reactions.

As with a game of chess, the outcome may have been decided many moves before. Every unkind thought, word and action, especially against ourselves, has an effect on the tableau we call 'Life'.

But having created it, we can equally uncreate it.

## Learning to let go

It takes courage and humility, and willingness to let go of a part of who you think you are. And that part is probably the one that felt justified in doing whatever you felt you needed to do to help you maintain the perception you wish others to have of you.

But what if it was you and your beliefs and long-held resentments that were stopping your body from functioning properly? What if *you* were the cause of the problem that you expect the acupuncturist, or other therapist, to 'fix' for you?

And what if 'getting better' was as easy

*Heather Bruce explains how, by learning to take responsibility for our own health problems, and letting go of the need to be 'right', we can regain both health and happiness.*

as simply 'letting go'? Letting go of the need to feel 'right' in any given situation.

What if it was simply a matter of choosing between being right and being happy? And what is 'being right' anyway? Isn't it just that someone wins and someone doesn't?

What if you stopped recounting your side of the story to everyone? What if instead you spent that time in reflection, really exploring what the individual responses tell you about yourself? And what if you then altered *yourself*? — really changed those aspects of yourself which at present you would do anything to hold on to?

*"The magic ingredient for permanent change is Conscious Choice . . . and a sincere desire to discard our resentment . . ."*

What if all you had to do to really make a positive impact on your own health was to alter who it was, or is, that you thought you were?

## Taking responsibility

What would it be like to take responsibility for everything you have ever believed, thought, or said, and then to go further and take responsibility for the way you act on those beliefs? To be accountable for everything you have been to date. No secrets, no shading the story so that you and your actions would be seen in the most favourable light.

Once you have accepted this responsibility, you can move on and accept that you also have free will and free choice. This means you can move away from the need to justify your previous position and say instead, "That's where I was then, but now I chose to be here."

The major component in the interplay between the players — in this case the acupuncturist and the patient — is for the person who wants a change to occur (the patient) to accept that they themselves need to make some changes in order to be able to walk out the door with a new Self.

Sometimes a change will occur during treatment and you may feel amazing for a few days. But then you may start to feel ordinary again.

Why did the change not hold?  
Because you were still yourself.

## Making a permanent change

The magic ingredient for permanent change is Conscious Choice. There needs to be a sincere desire to move on and discard the baggage, and the resentment, which may be stopping the liver energy from allowing the various aspects of yourself to go about their natural tasks.

It is who we were, and who we allow ourselves to be, that reflect every aspect of our functioning. Any condition, feeling, disease, or deviation from what we accept as 'normal' is a reflection of ourselves and our responses. Any inability to return the magic organism





we call our body to balance, is an indication that our body, which houses our spirit, is telling us to take heed. It is letting us know that we are getting in our own way.

And how exactly do we 'get in our own way'?

Usually by getting into habits that are detrimental to our reason for being here. Like treating ourselves as though we were indestructible and pushing ourselves to the limit. Being disrespectful of ourselves, and forgetting that physical bodies need 'down time' in order to recover. Forgetting to have fun.

Ultimately we start to feel stressed, or feel we can't cope.

Or we feel as though our physical body has let us down.

Our monthly periods may be horrendous. Why? This remains a mystery if we stay in the framework of hormones and science, but the answers become clear when we open up to the possibility that there are other explanations of body functions.

### Changing our belief systems

Everyone eventually comes to the realisation that things are not as they would like them. Some discover that the quick fixes offered over the counter, or by a therapist of whatever persuasion, are only temporary. As soon as the remedy or therapy is withdrawn, the 'problem' returns (if it ever went away),

and then the question needs to be asked, "Is it because we ourselves are the problem?" Could it be that the body is trying to point out that some aspect of who you are is not at peak performance? That the belief systems which frame what you believe reality to be might serve you better if you were more open, more accepting, more forgiving, and more able to recognise your own part in all the scenarios in which you feel a victim?

The confronting part of all this is to separate yourself from your righteous indignation and your need for others to see that you are 'innocent', and to realise that you are a powerful being who has drawn a particular

scenario to yourself yet again in order to do it differently this time. Open yourself to the possibility of exploring options, of moving on from a belief system that might have been the only one available to you at three, or whenever it first appeared, but which is no longer appropriate.

Take time for some internal spring cleaning.

### We need to look at the 'sub-plot'

Looking from the outside, a set of 'facts' (or symptoms) may present themselves. But underneath all of that, what is really going on? And what is it that you really want? The power you felt was never yours? The need to manipulate others so you get what you think will make you happy?

What you need to pay attention to is the 'sub-plot' — your personal belief system — not the sore back, the allergies, the lack of motivation. The question to ask yourself is, "What is it that BEING these conditions, does for me?"

If you reflect on every single incident, every conversation, every dream, every chance meeting, as a gift which will help you decode the 'life' that you think you are living, and learn from it, major shifts can occur. Don't waste time on gossip, recriminations, grudges, resentment, and blame (especially of yourself).

What have you got to lose?

Only your headaches, your infertility, your inability to be yourself — and enjoy yourself. . .

### Life is a Mystery School

Why is taking responsibility such a scary concept? If it is we who are accountable then it is we who can change things.

Look at your life as though every day were a day in your own Mystery School, an opportunity to get back to who you are.

What is it that you want? If this was your last day on earth before moving on to other realms where you would be accountable for all your thoughts, words, and deeds, what would you most wish you had attended to?

Jot these down, because you might do them later. And at some future date when any option might seem preferable to the mess you perceive yourself to be in, these suggestions will pop up like life-rafts.

*"Look at your life as though every day were a day in your own Mystery School — an opportunity to get back to who you are . . ."*

But what if 'later' was now?

What is the one thing you would most regret not doing or saying if you were no longer here, right now? And how would you feel if you were given the opportunity to come back and do that one thing? How would your life change for you now if you had done it at a different time?

What are the consequences that lead on from your choosing one course of action over another? And can you forgive yourself for the hassles you caused yourself through being one way rather than another?

If you can see every experience that has ever irked, bothered, upset or shocked you as a gift to help you grow, lovingly presented to your conscious self to hasten you on your journey towards greater understanding of every aspect of your being, then you will feel whole and rich, and it is likely that the need to be on anyone's treatment couch will disappear. ■