

# *"Turning Pain Into Passion"*

As you will read in the Turning Pain Into Passion workbook, it has not been to an editor. Originally I created this workbook and facilitated the workshop at Vanderbilt Medical Center for a group of people that have been or are still affected by a neuroendocrine disorder.

I volunteer as a public speaker, workshop facilitator and patient advocate and I have a full time job in outside sales; therefore, I was under tremendous pressure to get this workbook written and written well in a very short period of time. I worked diligently in the evenings and on weekends because this particular conference was extremely important to me. As you will read in the workbook that I personally suffered for a very long time with a Neuroendocrine pituitary tumor and I nearly lost my life but my unfortunate experience has turned into one of my biggest blessing and I hope you will be able to turn painful experiences into blessings as you work through the exercises.

Unexpectedly halfway through writing this workbook I was hit with some huge challenges at my job and I had to drop everything and spend many of my evenings working to finish a project before I could take time off to go to Vanderbilt. At one point I really felt there would be no way to fulfill my commitment and finish this workbook let alone to actually facilitate the workshop. I finally decided to call the organizers of the conference and let them know I just could not be there.

Letting anyone down especially myself was out of my nature and this decision would have let a lot of people down especially me. So I started really reading what I was writing. What I was writing is what I truly believe and is what I know works in my life so I never made the call. Instead I lost some sleep and worked late at night but I stayed focused and I completed something I am very proud of.

Because I did not have time to get the workbook to an editor I felt extremely uncomfortable about presenting it to those attending the conference. The good news was I did not have the time to be perfect and I had to let go and do what was best, not what was ideal. I decided it was more important to get the workbook finished and go to the conference than to try and be perfect. It is better to show-up in life's game and do the best you can rather than not play at all.

I have decided to keep the workbook just like it is and not take it to an editor because I hope as you work through the exercises and read my grammatical errors you will remember life is not about being perfect but about doing your best with what you have to work with. I hope after working through the workbook a few times you won't even see the mistakes because you will only see the love and passion in which it was intended.

By the way I had a blast at the conference and what a blessing! The attendees personally thanked me over and over with such loving gratitude. I am so grateful I didn't miss it!

# *Turning Pain Into Passion*

By: Sharmyn McGraw



**Today Is The Day I Live My Dreams**

# *Turning Pain Into Passion*

## Workbook

By: Sharmyn McGraw

*Turning Pain Into Passion workbook* is designed to help guide you to discover inside of yourself passion for living your life far beyond your own expectations.

This workbook is based on the author's personal experiences and is not to replace any medical treatments. It is designed to help you break through personal blocks and discover inside of yourself a more passionate life.

*Suggestion:* This workbook maybe more affective in combination with a professional therapist or a life coach, always consult a medical professional whenever necessary.

- ❑ My Life Is About Me
- ❑ Getting Started
- ❑ Questioning Your Reactions
- ❑ Watch Your Mouth
- ❑ Grateful For Our Mistakes
- ❑ Gratitude, Gratitude, Gratitude
- ❑ Breaking Through

*“What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.”*

*~Oliver Wendell Holmes~*

## “My Life Is About Me”



“Life is not a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside, thoroughly used up, totally worn-out, and loudly proclaiming –  
WOW--What a Ride!”

By the time my parents were 24 years old in the early 60's they all ready had four children under the age of six. My father left his home in North Carolina at 16 years old because of physical and mental abuse from his alcoholic father. Dad was barely 17 years old when he moved to Las Vegas, Nevada. He trained and shod horses, he rode bulls and charmed most people he met. Wearing his white v-neck T-shirts, rolled-up sleeves, worn blue jeans and dirty cowboy boots, he should have been the Marlboro man. In 1957 he fell in love with Miss Las Vegas-my mom. At seventeen my mother won the Miss Las Vegas beauty pageant and just a few months after her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday she gave birth to my oldest sister Taryn and married my dad. After my second sister Kristyn was born my parents left Las Vegas and moved to sunny Southern California. I was born in March of 1962 in the only hospital in the small quaint town of Lompoc just fourteen months after my brother Sean was born; now I was the baby of four. We all lived in a two-bedroom Spanish style home built in the forties and we still refer to it as “The Little Pink House.” Just like other kids we had a rusted red metal swing-set in the backyard and we got to wear our pajamas to the Drive-in Theater. The four of us kids would cuddled with blankets and pillows eating jiffy-pop popcorn brought from home in the back of our old blue station wagon to watch the movie until we drifted off to sleep one-by-one.

Then one afternoon at the very young age of just two in a half the unthinkable happened, I was so small no one thought I would understand so spoke freely in front of me. Unfortunately I understood more than they thought and I can still remember that day. That was the day my mother decided it would be best if she sent my brother and I to live with our grandparents, she said she would try and keep Taryn and Kristyn in Lompoc with her but Sean and I needed to go. I remember my dad getting very upset about her decision but my Grandparents agree with their daughter and because they paid most of our bills dad really didn't try and stop them, so off Sean and I went in the back seat of the White Buick with all our clothes and toys even my pink plastic vanity table I had gotten for Christmas.



Without much explanations or understanding the next day Sean and I started our new life in San Diego, California without our mom, dad, and most of all our two older sisters.

Sean and I were glued at the hip we never let the other one out of sight, we were afraid to be without each other. Although all of us kids had always spent a lot of time with our grandparents it was difficult for them to start over raising small kids at 45 years old full time. On top of which Sean and I were lonely and we missed our other family. It was horribly painful for me to watch my big brother's heart break; he cried a lot and acted out for attention so at the young age of two and a half I took on the roll of his caregiver to keep him from getting grandpa's belt.

My grandpa's drinking often drove my grandma to bitch and my grandma's bitching often drove my grandpa to drink, so it soon became my full time responsibility to make everyone happy.

Months went by and one day Grandma told Sean and me we were all going to the bus station to pick up Taryn and Kristyn because they were going to live with us too! Sean was beside himself with excitement but by three years old I had already learned to hide my feelings, making sure Sean got all the attention I thought he needed. I had very little control in my life but feelings and emotions I could control and that gave me comfort. As my two sisters stepped off the bus, my brother screamed with joy but it was obvious my sisters had also learned to hide their feelings so without much enthusiasm all six of us crawled back into the car and headed home to our new life once again.

Although it was never talked about obviously my mother and father had gotten divorced. Mom soon had a new life with her new boyfriend but came to visit on occasion. My mother's choices for her life and especially for men rapidly went from bad to worse. Dad stopped in whenever he wasn't working or to ask my grandparents for money. His visits were disruptive and always caused more havoc than good but my brother and sisters loved to see him, me on the other hand preferred to keep life simple so I could keep peace among everyone because by now I had taken on the responsibility of caretaker for my entire family.

When I was seven my dad showed up one summer afternoon unannounced and said he had gotten remarried and had a new baby. I had become an expert at hiding my feelings and controlling my emotions but like always my brother was thrilled to see our dad but devastated to hear he had a new family. Dad said his unexpected visit was because he wanted to surprise all of us with the news of his new family and to take "his kids" on a vacation. By this time my grandparents had our legal guardianship so my dad had to ask their permission. Oddly he asked only to take my two sisters and brother back to his home in Las Vegas for a week's vacation. My dad told me it was best I stayed home with my grandparents? I wasn't sure why he didn't

want me to come along and I was devastated but I showed no emotions either way. My grandparents were against the vacation alone with my dad but offered to take all of us to see him in a few weeks. But before they knew it like always dad had charmed his way into getting what he wanted and off they all went to Las Vegas without me.

It was about midnight when the phone rang, we were all sound asleep packed and ready to leave first thing in the morning to drive from our house in Huntington Beach, California five hours to Las Vegas to pick-up my brother and sisters, the week was up and it was time for them to come home! All week I looked forward to picking the kids up from my dad's; I just wanted us all to be together. But unfortunately the unthinkable happen again, the midnight phone call was from my dad, he said he was not giving my brother and sisters back and he was keeping them for good. The address we had in Las Vegas was a fake and we had no idea where he was hiding the kids. My grandparents were completely devastated as they tried to explain to me, my own father had kidnapped my brother and sisters and they would not be coming home at least for right now.

Wasting no time my grandparents hired the best attorney Las Vegas had to offer but because the laws were different in Nevada my dad could not be charged with kidnapping. Over the next few months my entire life was turned upside down with very little hope of ever being normal.

Soon we figured out my dad was involved with some very bad people. They tapped our phones, shot at our car and knew our every move as well as our attorney's. Finally at last our first big break, dad called our house to tell my grandparents to stop their search because he wasn't giving up, but my sister Kristyn managed to sneak to a back bedroom and picked up a phone and bravely screamed into the receiver, "We are hiding at the Las Vegas sheriff's house. Come get us!" That was the lead we needed and the authorities were able to force my dad out of hiding and the court returned the kids back home. Unfortunately no one realized until it was too late the horrible mental state my dad and his new wife were in and while my sisters and brother were with in Las Vegas there was a lot of mental and physical abuse. The abuse was never dealt with so unfortunately our lives were never the same and WE ALL paid the price. And for the next 25 plus years I dedicated myself to living everyone's life but mine.

Years of therapy, codependency meetings, and deep soul searching finally got me to the next level in my life, deeper denial! Once I figured out I only had myself to blame for the way my life was going I had to BE EVEN STRONGER, EVEN MORE PERFECT, FUNNIER, MORE OUT GOING, and MORE PEOPLE PLEASING, because I did not know how to stop doing what I had always done and done so well, to live other peoples lives.





I was always the life of the party, dating and socializing with a very in crowd and more wonderful friends than any one person could ever hope for but not knowing who I was left me always searching for more, nothing or no one was ever enough.

At the age of 31 when all my girlfriends were planning their weddings and starting their families the unthinkable happened one more time. I began to gain weight!

I lived in Newport Beach California where there was no such thing as being too rich or too thin and anorexia is a compliment not a disease. So you can imagine when I went from a “socially fit” dress size two to a “what the hell happened to her” obese size 22- I was devastated.

For the next seven years I not only fought socially unacceptable obesity but I fought depression, anxiety, mood swings, hair loss, and the list went on and on. My stomach looked as if I was pregnant with twins and the more I exercised and the less I ate the more weight I gained. I gained as much as 11 pounds in four days; my personal fitness trainer was shocked.

Doctor after doctor insisted there was nothing medically wrong with me –nothing some good old dieting and exercise couldn’t fix. Many offered prescription drugs and others told me I was a compulsive overeater with a mood disorder. The most devastating diagnosis however was from those doctors that were convinced my laundry list of complaints, were all in my head.

My entire life changed, no more socializing, no more dating, even some good friends fell by the wayside. My health and my life for the first time EVER were all I could think about. I was so sick I was finally forced to live in my own little world with no room for taking care of anyone other than myself.

Year after year the symptoms got worse, I slept less, got more fatigued, more depressed, loss more hair and gained more weight but surprisingly everyday I became more and more who I really am. I really started to look at life and dreams and hopes and having passion instead of dread.

Everyday was a huge challenge just to go to work and keep my roof over my head and with no support from my wacky family I figured out I had two choices. One was to just give up and have my obituary read, “Obese woman dies of unknown causes.” Or fight like hell and because everyone that grows up in an alcoholic home knows how to fight..... that’s what I did!

However, instead of getting angrier and more hateful about what was happening to me, I became more grateful for the things in my life that were good. Just waking up every morning grateful God had given me one more day to smile and be kind to people made life bearable once again. My focus was no longer on what I couldn't do but now it was on what I HAD to do-find out what was wrong with me and take my life back.

The more grateful I became for everything in my life the more God gave me to be grateful for. I even found in my heart a deep gratitude and appreciation for all the years of painful dysfunction in my past. I was so very ill by this time but I had an indescribable comfort and understanding that I could have never made it the past seven years without the strength and courage those dysfunctional pain filled years had taught to me.

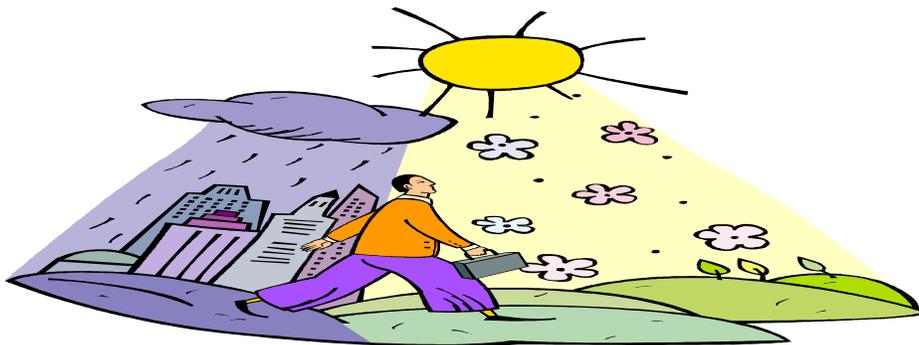
Soon just like my attitude my life was changing for the better. People were coming into my life like angels with more joy, more love, more support and I was grateful for all of them.

Finally with a lot of hard work and persistence I diagnosed myself via the Internet. I had Cushing's disease a secondary disease caused by a pituitary micro-adenoma. The search was over and God soon blessed me with doctors that for the first time in seven years not only gave me hope I could have my life back but they encouraged me and supported me in getting my WONDERFUL life back and more.

It has been five years since my surgery to remove the tiny little tumor that raised so much havoc in my life. And who would have ever guessed I would be saying; how grateful I am the darkest parts of my life have given me the brightest most wonderful parts of my life.

“My life is about me, about my past, about my thoughts, about my actions and your life is about you. Our past can show up in our refrigerator, in our bank account, in our bed, in our health, we invite people and situations into our life and we can certainly invite them out.

This workbook is designed to help guide you to find within yourself passion for living life far beyond your own expectations. These are some of the tools I use in my life that help me to keep my life about me and living it with passion instead of painful habits from my past and I hope by doing the work it will do the same for you.





Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up. ~ Pablo Picasso ~

After my surgery I was excited to start the process of getting my life back and what I found in my life most disturbing was I had forgotten how to dream. I wanted more from life but I had no idea what that was. I found when I asked other people what they wanted from life many of them did not know either. So I decided I needed to start by allowing myself the freedom to dream freely without rules or fear that my dreams may never coming true. I decided my dreams defiantly wouldn't come true if I never allowed myself to dream but I have a very good chance if I did.

**Wayne Gretzky says, “You miss the shots 100 percent of the time you never take.”**

My aim with this workshop and workbook is to empower those that choose to participate to reach higher levels of their own potential. Those that chose to participate can discover in themselves the passion and ability to exceed far beyond their own expectations. With the right tools and willingness to succeed I believe anything is possible.

Working these principles in my own life has changed my life and I continue to work these principles to keep changing and growing in my life. I hope the same for you.

## Getting Started

Make two copies of the following questions. First answer each question before doing the work in the workbook. Answer each question from your heart, your answers are just between you and your hearts desire so no one ever needs to read them so go BIG. Then put the question & answer sheets away and complete the workbook. Without reading your first set of answers, now answer the same questions after completing the work suggested in the workbook. Compare your answers and see where your life has grown and become more passionate and less painful.

“We make a living by what we get, but we make life by what we give.”  
~ Winston Churchill ~

### LIFE

1. What are your strongest skills?
2. What skills do you want to learn that will help you enhance your life?
3. What are your greatest strengths?
4. What does it feel like you don't have enough of in your life?
5. What does it feel like you have too much of in your life?
6. What part of your life do you feel you have given up for others?
7. Up to now what kind of life have you created for yourself?
8. What would you like to change or improve about your life?

### COMMITMENT

1. What are you currently committed to in your life?
2. What are your most meaningful commitments you have?
3. What commitments do you have that support your dreams?
4. What does it mean to you to break a commitment?

### CONTRIBUTION

1. What has been your greatest contribution to society?
2. What aspect of society bothers you the most?
3. If you could change the world instantly, what would you change?
4. Where is your greatest passion to serve?
5. What is your fondest memory of helping someone else?
6. What did you do today to contribute to your community?
7. Who are your greatest roll models and what do you admire about them?
8. What would it take to make a difference in the world?
9. If you had no limitations what could you do to help thousands of people?
10. Just as you are what could you do to help thousands of people?

“I started concentrating so hard on my vision that I lost sight.”  
~Robin Green~

DREAMS

1. If you could have anything at all what would it be?
2. What is the most meaningful dream you have ever had?
3. Where do your beliefs reflect your dreams?
4. What can you do to dream BIGGER?
5. What are your biggest blessings in life?
6. What dream or dreams have you stopped dreaming and why?
7. What stops you from going after your biggest dreams?
8. What would you dare to dream if you knew it couldn't fail?
9. What can you change to have the life of your dreams?
10. What can you dare to do for yourself if all your need were met?
11. What would you dream if you had all the money you ever needed?
12. What is one thing you could do today to move closer to the life of your dreams?
13. What are you most grateful for in your life today?
14. What does your ideal life look like, sound like and feel like?

“Men are not prisoners of fate, but only prisoners of their own minds.”  
~ Franklin D. Roosevelt ~

“A life spent in making mistakes is not only more honorable but *more useful* than a life spent doing nothing.”  
George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950)

Fun

1. What is your idea of fun?
2. What about having fun is important to you?
3. Do you have fun everyday?
4. Are there areas of your life that need to be more fun?
5. List five reasons having fun in life is healthy?
6. Where are you most playful?
7. What makes you laugh?
8. How often do you laugh so hard you almost cry?
9. What brings you happiness?
10. Who is the funniest person you know?
11. What is funny about the way you live your life?
12. What is the funniest thing you have ever seen?
13. What is the funniest thing you have ever done?
14. Does something in your life stop you from having a lot of fun?
15. Does someone in your life stop you from having a lot of fun?
16. What was your last outrageous fun filled experience?

“You can’t laugh and feel pain at the same time. You can’t laugh and feel anger at the same time. Laughter is our safety belt in life.”  
~Jerry Lewis~

“My Superhero is Clark Kent, the one that shows up as himself knowing he doesn’t have super powers but makes a difference anyway. Because being bullet proof is easy when you are bullet proof.”

~Declare Yourself~

### HAPPINESS

1. What is happiness to you?
2. What can you do to empower yourself and others?
3. What are you truly grateful for?
4. What in your life makes you the happiest?
5. What means the most in your life?
6. What limits you in life?
7. What do you fear in life that holds you back and why?
8. What would you do if you weren’t afraid?
9. What are you most proud of in your life?
10. What is the most meaningful experience you have ever had?
11. What triggers your positive feelings?
12. What triggers your negative feelings?
13. What did you learn today that could empower you in the future?
14. In what area have you grown this week?
15. In what ways are you a better person today than you were last year?
16. What happiness did you create in your life and your family’s life today?

Creativity is a gift from your God self to your human self.  
If another person chooses to see your gifts is really not the reason to create; it's just a part of their blessing if they do. ~Unknown Author~

# “Questioning Your Own Reactions”



As a small child first learning to walk falling down and having to get right back up was just part of this wonderful new adventure we were on. And although some days the cuts and bruises were somewhat painful they were never so painful that we sat down for good vowing to never walk again.

As a child we moved on quickly. We hadn't learned to hold grudges or to take things personal and at the end of the day we were worn-out and fully exhaustion but fought to the very end to stay awake so not to miss-out on what might come next.

After a good night sleep we are back in action and without any expectations we were ready to start another day. We didn't worry if the day was going to be good or bad we just wanted to go for it!

Unfortunately as we grew older falling down started becoming more and more painful, soon we began to worry what others thought of us and soon falling down was just not acceptable any more.

As adults our lives are much more complex, fear, doubt and worry become part of our everyday life leaving very little room for living life as a passionate adventure.

As adults we tend to judge situations with either a good feeling or a bad feeling. The good news is there are over 72 known emotions/feelings so only choosing to feel good or bad is cheating our self from a deeper passion for life's unexpected experiences.

Could it be that a bad experience is uncomfortable because of the way we are thinking about it, and what it reminds us of? Is it possible that we could change the experience if we were able to change our thoughts about it?

Our subconscious thought, our subconscious mind, our way of subconscious thinking creates our emotions and our emotions create a response or an action or in most case a reaction.

*“Nothing is good nor bad but thinking makes it so.”  
~ William Shakespeare ~*

Turing painful experiences into passionate experiences starts by being aware of our thoughts. When we take time to question our reaction we can begin to see that there is a relationship between thought and experience.

Unlike when we were too young to worry about falling down and getting right back up as adults we have a lot of HISTORY, BAGGAGE, STORIES, MISTAKES and the list goes on and on making it much more difficult to fall down and just simply stand up and go on to our next exciting adventure. But it is possible!!!!

Reconditioning our thoughts takes awareness, time and practice but mostly it takes the willingness to do it.

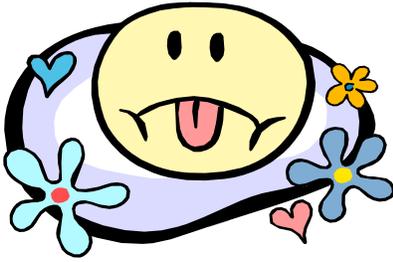
### *Turning Pain Into Passion: Step One,*

1. Make two lists, one labeled “GOOD” the other labeled “BAD”.
2. For the next week take a few minutes each day to write down if someone or something made you feel good and how did you react and why. Then write down if someone or something made you feel bad and how did you react and why.
3. Remember Shakespeare’s quote that *“nothing’s good nor bad but thinking makes it so.”* Look at your list. For each item under “Good” place a star or a happy face or something of honor next to it to reward yourself-great job! On the “Bad” list rewrite the situation anyway way you’d like as long as you rewrite it with a good feeling and a different way of looking at it. It’s your story, make it fun and make yourself the hero. Now reward yourself with something of honor-great job!
4. Throughout the week, whenever you notice yourself labeling something or someone good or bad, gently ask yourself the question: Is there any other way I could be thinking or feeling right now?
5. Remember there are over 72 known emotions/feelings: Peaceful, happy, sad, loving, kind, angry, excited, etc. takes time to add to the list and make sure you include passion.

*Life is our personal story and we are the authors so for GOODNESS sakes lets write ourselves the hero!*



# “Watch Your Mouth”



“Your word is powerful. Choose it wisely”  
~ Adapted from Native American wisdom ~

Our mind is what creates our reality not circumstances. How we think about the circumstance is what makes it a reality.

There is just one mind. Although we talk of the unconscious and the conscious mind as if they are different there is no separation from the two, they are one with different capabilities.

Our unconscious mind takes care of breathing, our digestive enzymes and producing our immune system cells, and other automatic responses. The unconscious mind is the part of our mind we don't have to be aware of at any given time. Our conscious mind however is the part of our minds that thinks, creates logic, and prompts us to make conscious decisions. Because our unconscious and conscious mind is one it is essential we empower ourselves with positive thoughts so not to allow our unconscious mind to turn negative thoughts into high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, disease, etc. Remember our unconscious mind doesn't do our thinking, it can only respond automatically.

Ronald Glasser, M.D. writes, “It is the body that is the hero, not science not antibiotics, not machines or new deices. The task of the physician today is what it has always been, to help the body do what it has learned so well to do on it's own during its unending struggle for survival-to heal itself. It is the body, not medicine, which is the hero.”

Studies show it is those with a conscious creative mind, which are most likely to recover from an illness. Remember in our previous section, thoughts create feelings, which create a response or an action/reaction. Happy, positive thoughts promote healing!

We must pay attention to our behavior including our actions, lifestyle, thoughts and spoken words. Most of us don't consciously choose to be ill but unfortunately most of us are oblivious to the power we give our unconscious mind.

Can we make a difference when it comes to guiding our inner intelligence that controls our automatic responses? Is it possible to have some control over this creative process that maintains our level of health or disease? Can our inner creative intelligence operate on our behalf, rather than allowing disease to attach to our body's cells?

To a great degree the answer is-yes. Good health is in part largely up to us. We must take responsibility, and make conscious choices about the way we think, speak, and behave. We can choose to be angry, sad or depressed about a circumstance, allowing the circumstance to control our entire body. Or we can choose to empower ourselves with positive thoughts, and beneficial actions to resolve the situation.

There are many ways in which we make poor word choices and most of them we are not even aware of. For example: A friend of mine is a family therapist, she was counseling one of her patients about his son's drug problems. Her patient said over and over in their sessions how it broke his heart to watch his son do this to himself. Her patient appeared to be in good physical shape, he ran several times a week and worked out with a personal fitness trainer. But one afternoon the therapist received a call from her patient's wife explaining her husband had a serious heart attack and would not be coming back to therapy at this time. Ultimately her patient's heart was truly broken just as he reiterated over and over in their sessions but it wasn't his son's drug problem that broke his heart but it was the way he chose to express his feelings about his son's problems.

It is not just our own mouth we have to control but we have to watch-out for others that we choose to associate ourselves with as well. Television, music and the types of books we read all play a part in our everyday health and well-being.

Family and friends can be our biggest supports or our worst offenders. Isn't it funny when you tell a friend, "You know- I hate my job, I hate my life and I am so depressed" and your friend say, "Oh girlfriend- I know what you mean, I can relate but I am worse off than you because I am flat broke on top of it." Some people feel better when they can one up you even when it is sad and depressing.

But what if you were to tell a friend, "You know- I am getting smarter, happier, healthier and more financially secure everyday and I love it!" Some people may ask you what you've been smoking, are you nuts? Because some people don't want to see good in anyone or anything, but that's their choice and it doesn't have to be yours.

Author Don Miguel Ruiz writes in his book, *The Four Agreement*:

*Your best is going to change from moment to moment; it will be different when you are healthy as opposed sick. Under any circumstance, simply do your best, and you will avoid self-judgment, self-abuse and regret.*

*Speak with integrity. Say what you mean. Avoid using the word against yourself or gossip about others. Use the power of your word in the direction of truth and love.*

*Find the courage to ask questions and express what you really want. Communicate with others as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, sadness, and drama.*

With just this section “Watch Your Mouth” you have even more powerful tools to turn old painful experiences into a new passionate way of living so congratulations!

Reconditioning our mouth/words takes awareness, time and practice but mostly it takes the willingness to do it.

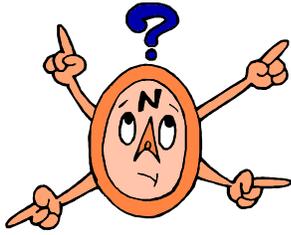
### *Turning Pain Into Passion: Step Two,*

1. At the end of each day, take time to write down in your notebook the three things you spent most of your day talking about. Example: emotional, frustration about someone or something, enthusiasm about someone or something, etc.
2. Then ask yourself if there was any connection between what you spent time talking about and the things that happen to you that day. Write down any positive situations or negative situations.
3. Then ask yourself if your word choices help to create harmony and good health for you as well as for others?
4. Double-check yourself to see if your conversations, T.V., music, were truly beneficial to you and to others. Make sure if you were spending your valuable time talking about someone else that you spoke with integrity even if the other person you were talking about would never know what was said.
5. And most importantly celebrate and honor yourself for the work you are doing to improve your passion for life.



Word Power

# “Grateful For Our Mistakes”



*“Mistakes are part of the dues one pays for a full life.”*  
~Sophia Loren ~

As we talked about in the first section: *Questioning Your Actions*, while children are learning to walk they have no fear of failure or of making mistakes, they are not ashamed to fall down and to get back up. Even though small children get frustration trying to figure things out they don't however blame themselves when they fail, instead they try again and again and eventually they master the task. They are not concerned with what people think of them nor do they conceive the idea of being embarrassed. Instead most young children grow stronger, become smarter, and more ambitious in the process from learning to crawl, to walking and there is no stopping a child once they learn to run! Children don't limit themselves from trying something new because they aren't concerned with doing is right or wrong. But as adults we know we have to teach children to understand they have limitations. Unfortunately most of our parents taught us our limitations by instilling fear of physical pain to keep us from running in front of a car, touching a hot stove, getting too close to the side of the pool or whatever it was that could possibly harm us. It was our parents or guardians job to teach us about limitations and consequences. The fear they instilled in us usually derived from the fear their parents or guardians instilled in them and so on and so forth.

Fear of failure or making a mistakes, being ashamed of yourself, being embarrassed of something you did, is learned behaviors. Somewhere along the line, we learn to be ashamed of making mistakes and learned to take it personal. Soon we began to focus more on the errors we made instead of the positive learning experience we gained.

A South African proverb teaches us: *“Don't look where you fell; look where you tripped.”*

As adults we have to take a look at our fears and limitations from a much different perspective, we know better than to touch a hot stove or to step in front of a moving car. We need to take an honest inventory of our fears and what kinds of limitations do they instill in our lives today. We need to look at our fears and decide if they are actually our own fears or are they fears instilled from old circumstances long before we could make our own rational decisions.

*Do we truly have limitations or are they just part of our limited thinking?*

*"The fishermen know that the sea is dangerous and the storm terrible, but they have never found these dangers **sufficient reason** for remaining ashore." Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890)*

In the book: “Building Your Field Of Dreams” by Mary Manin Morrissey she tells a story about eight men that go golfing. They brake up into two groups of four. The first four men finish their round of golf and return to the clubhouse to wait for the others. So much time past that the first four men began to worry something may have happened to the other four golfers. The men waited a few more minutes and finally here comes three men from the second group. These three men are just a total wreck. A man from the first foursome asked, “My gosh what happened to you guys?” One man responded, “Oh it was just awful. On the second hole Harry had a heart attack. After that, it was hit the ball and drag Harry....hit the ball and drag Harry. The only good thing was Harry was a horrible golfer.

So who or what is your Harry? We all have a Harry we drag around with us throughout our lives slowing us down causing us to play the life game poorly. Harry is our deadweight, something we don't need to carry around with us but we are afraid to let go of. Just like in the story, instead of addressing the issue that Harry had a heart attack and taking care of what needed to be done they continued to play the game even though Harry was literally deadweight. The only good news was Harry was horrible golfer; however Harry had enough fortitude to show up to play the game anyway-at least he died trying.

Making mistakes in life can be painful but never trying something new or stepping out of your comfort zone is more painful. How we choose to deal with the pain is up to us. Making mistakes can also be a huge blessing as long as you remember to focus on the positive learning experience you gained.

Stop dragging around Harry; let go of limited thoughts. Making mistakes are part of life but turning them into a blessing is a choice. Always show-up to play life's game but don't carry around deadweight.

### Turning Pain Into Passion: Step Three,

1. In your notebook this week write down anything you considered a mistake.
2. Next rate each mistake from 1-10, (10 being very bad) based on the answer to the following questions.
  - How important is this to me?
  - How important is this to other people?
  - How important will this be in 5 years?
3. Write down all the positive learning experience you gained from this.
4. Write down what a blessing this experience has become.
5. On a separate piece of paper write a brief note explaining the mistake and turn the paper over and write in big letters HARRY and take the paper tear it up and through it away.
6. Say out loud, “Mistakes are a blessing because it means I am taking chances and living my life with more passion. I learn from my mistakes and move on.”

# “Gratitude, Gratitude, Gratitude”



“A grateful mind is a great mind which eventually attracts to itself great things”

~ Plato ~

I have worked in the building industry for the better part of eighteen years. The motto for most new Homebuilders has always been, LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION! The location of the land being developed drives sales, the more desirable the location the higher the demand from the buyers.

In our everyday life we can use the same example with GRATITUDE, GRATITUDE, GRATITUDE. The more we develop an attitude of gratitude for everything in our life the more desirable our lives become. The more we are grateful for the things in our lives the more we have to be grateful for.

Gratitude is also a learned behavior. We have to recognize an experience and consciously be grateful for it or we may miss our blessing completely. We must discipline our conscious mind to be grateful for everything in life until it becomes an automatic response from our unconscious mind. When we focus our thoughts on appreciation we are consciously choosing to see good in our life, creating more and more good everywhere we look.

Now we are all aware that some days seem just down right rotten and nothing at all seems to go our way. Those are the days we need to make sure to increase our conscious awareness of what is good in our life and stay focused. For those really challenging days we may have to start off by just reminding ourselves that we are grateful to be a live and we are a special gift from God and that in its self is really terrific!

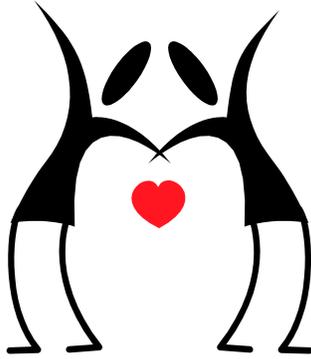
Over time this practice of appreciation and gratitude is a powerful force and soon you will begin to see the good in everything and everyone.

Over time the practice of appreciation and being grateful will move into an automatic response through your unconscious mind and before long not only will you remember to look for the good in everything but you will begin to feel the goodness, the passion, the love, and the peace in everything. Remember there are many, many positive emotions/feelings to experience in our daily lives. We no longer feel just good or bad but now we are empowered to express ourselves with, joy, love and passion for life!

“I was discouraged because the holes on the soles of my shoes made it difficult to walk but as I began to be grateful for my feet I suddenly realized God had already given me wings to fly!”

~Sharmyn McGraw~

*Don't miss your blessing.*



### Turning Pain Into Passion: Step Four,

1. Every morning write down at the very LEAST three things you are grateful for.
2. Everyday at least three times a day, stop and FEEL grateful, joy, peace, love. You don't have to think of any particular situation just dream about it and feel it deep in your soul. Laugh and sing with enthusiasm over absolutely nothing!
3. Throughout the day remind yourself to tell others in your life how much you appreciate them. When someone says to you, “How you are?” Remember to say, “Grateful-thank you for asking!” Say it like you mean it EVEN if in the beginning you don't feel very grateful for anything, because remember first it is a conscious thought but eventually it will become an unconscious feeling.
4. And at the end of EVERYDAY write down everything and anything that you appreciated about someone or something and all the things you are grateful for in your wonderful life. Fall asleep to thoughts filled with joy, love, peace and your dreams will become your reality.

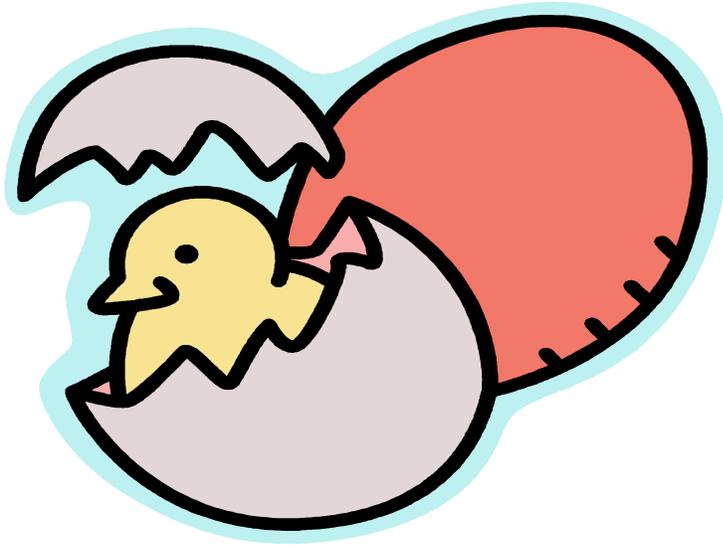
In Wayne Dyers book: “The Power of Intention” he includes Anthony de Mello’s observation in *One Minute Wisdom*:

“Why is everyone here so happy except me?”

“Because they have learned to see goodness and beauty everywhere,” said the Master.

“Why don't I see goodness and beauty everywhere?”

“Because you cannot see outside of you what you fail to see inside.”



Breaking Through!

## Congratulations!

At seventeen years old I was officially labeled severely dyslexic. Dyslexia at the time was the best diagnosis doctors could give me for what they called my learning disability. For years I had gotten in trouble at school for bad grades, not paying attention, not participating, and the worst was being told I just didn't care or I would do better. But I did care, I cared a lot but reading, writing, spelling and math just didn't make sense to me at the time. Art and Physical education were the only two subjects I aced other wise at best I could pull off a low C but often I received D's and even a few F's. And in those days there wasn't much to offer a person that learned differently than other students other than putting them in special educational classes that were good for nothing, in my opinion. Elementary school and college were both extremely challenging for me, so I focused on what I did best: My Art!

Since my recovery from Cushing's disease I have been blessed with many wonderful opportunities to serve others and to make a powerful and positive impact for those suffering with a pituitary disorder. However my biggest challenge was overcoming my fear of writing and spelling because I had also labeled myself dyslexic therefore I would NEVER write anything someone else would read. And remember not everyone had or has a computer with spell check. I would not leave someone a note or write a note in a card, I would literally get sick to my stomach if I was asked at work to write a letter. But as I started getting more involved with pituitary disorders I realized I had to write letters, e-mails, articles, etc. to help more people. Soon my passion for helping others became stronger than my fear of writing and that's when I reevaluated my fear. I had used dyslexia as an excuse for not doing many, many things in my life for so many years I had to look back and see if it were actually true or not?

Looking back over the years I realized most of my inability to learn was not due to me having a learning disability but it was partly from poor schooling and mostly because of my home life.

At five years old because my grandmother worked nights so she could be home with us kids before and after school I took on the roll of the mother of the houses while she was at work. I got up many mornings at 5:00 a.m. and made lunches for all of us including my grandpa. Grandpa and I often times would have coffee (mine mostly milk and sugar) before he left for work at 6:00 a.m. then I would go crawl back in bed until 7:00 a.m. when it was time to get ready with the other kids for school. By noon I was so tired I could not pay attention in class. As I got older and the yelling, screaming and fighting got worse the more responsibility I took on for my family's well being. With very little sleep and so many problems I needed to fix at home it became extremely difficult to do well in high school.

So when I look back I realize I was not dyslexic but the doctors had to label me something and in those days they couldn't label me, "Just plain dysfunctional due to poor parental guidance and a messed up family life." But that's exactly what it was, I had all the smarts I needed to learn I just didn't have the right opportunities.

Wow- what a relief and now I take writing classes and I share my work with other extremely experienced writers, I am a member of a writers group, I have had articles published in national and international magazines, I speak publicly, I hold seminars, I lead a support group for pituitary patients, write and design brochures and workbooks, and I have many more wonderful opportunities ahead of me also.

Writing for me is just one of my fears that has turned into a huge blessing by doing the exercises in this workbook. The exercises help me break through many of my fears, key word THROUGH. Because most of the time we need to go through something extremely painful to achieve greatness but it is worth the journey.

Your last assignment for this workbook is to write down a fear or fears that you have and go back and see if you are now ready to look at the fear for what it really is and reevaluate it and see if you can **BREAK THROUGH** to greatness! Start now! Big or small and free yourself to living your life with more passion and less pain. Live your life filled with more blessings and opportunities.

Here's the best part: You **MUST** celebrate **ALL** your successes in life big or small because it is important to reward yourself for the work you do to improve your own life and well being because in return it is improving the lives and well being of others all around you.

*Congratulation for completing this workbook and don't forget to celebrate your success!*

Peace and Blessing,  
Sharmyn

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