First Steps - Compassion

November 4, 2016 By Matt Starr

Many of you have followed me for a while now, while some of you are new to my work with Starr Wellness Coaching and are just beginning to explore ways to find deeper health. Regardless, based on the fact that you are reading this, you probably realize that some changes are needed to become healthier. Maybe something has sparked from deep inside, but so far it is only a spark, not a fire.

What you are doing is good. You want more, you want better, and you know it's time to roll up your sleeves and get to work. Good for you, be proud of that. A lot of folks aren't up to it. Apparently, you are.

Look, I understand how you feel. I was very sick with hep C, liver disease, and the effects of pre and post liver transplant surgery with active hepatitis still on board, for longer than I like to recall. Last year, Harvoni finally cleared me of that stubborn hepatitis. But well before that, I came to understood that to get what I wanted I would need to take it on myself, open my heart and mind to healing, step into the unknown, trust my instincts and believe that if I gave my body the chance, it could help me heal from the inside out.

What can you do? Where do you start? How can you go from being underwater, to treading above the surface, before starting to swim?

Before adopting your menu of strategies and actions that I talk a lot about, you've got to work with your heart and mind. When they are engaged more deeply, this spark can be stoked and become a raging fire of determination, belief, and health.

Developing compassion is a place to begin. Compassion that guarantees a happy and peaceful mind is the best thing to help us at the time of serious illness. When we give, we receive. We can use our sickness for spiritual growth, resulting in the development of compassion and wisdom. This is a state of healing.

The first step in cultivating compassion is to develop empathy for your fellow human beings. Many of us believe that we have empathy, and on some level nearly all of us do. But many times we are centered on ourselves (I'm no exception) and we let our sense of empathy get rusty.

Try this practice: Imagine that a loved one is suffering. Something terrible has happened to him or her. Now try to imagine the pain they are going through. Imagine the suffering in as much detail

as possible, and send thoughts and prayers of help and hope to them. After doing this practice for a couple of weeks, you should try moving on to imagining the suffering of others you know, not just those who are close to you. Later, you can spread that compassion to all who suffer, those you don’t even know in your town, your country, the world.

Give, then receive.

Next week I will write about another early step, finding your life purpose.

You’re on the path now, though maybe just at the trailhead. Keep walking, one step after another. Compassion. Keep walking.

Anything is Possible.

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