Live Fully, Live Well

October 13, 2016 By Matt Starr

I was hit with a bombshell this morning. I was at my medical clinic, receiving acupuncture from my gifted practitioner, when I asked about my friend, the clinic's founder. She had left work two years ago to heal from a cancer diagnosis. My acupuncturist asked, "Oh, you didn't hear?" I immediately knew she had died. Overwhelming.

This woman influenced many lives in her 60 plus years on this earth. She was brilliant, deep, a visionary, a powerful force for change, and just plain nice. And, she did all the right things for herself. She ate fresh, healthy food. She understood holistic medicine more than most of us will ever come close to, including me. She used and recommended mainstream medicine in combination with herbs and alternative treatments when appropriate. She used energy work and deep spiritual connections to inform her work with others and tapped into roots that ran very deep. She was all this, and much more.

She did all the right things to be healthy through her life. She was a passionate, peaceful, powerful healer, a change-maker, and a healthy person. But, she had a genetic predisposition to cancer, and although she lived much longer than her genes might have indicated, she eventually got sick, and, this summer, it finally got the better of her.

Those who knew her learned limitless lessons. After the shock waves lessened, I thought to myself that we can all learn from her life and her death, even those who never met her.

She lived fully, and lived well. She lit up the world while she was here. She appreciated living, which she did with grace and gratefulness. And you can do that, and I can do that. Right now.

Hell, just breathing is a miracle. Take that in. Sit somewhere quiet, and focus on that miracle. If you can't access a quiet place, drop into your breath at the coffee shop, or in line at the grocery. You don't need incense and a meditation cushion. It's always a miracle to focus mindfully, through the breath, in any setting. Embrace that. Appreciate it. Be grateful for it.

It's grounding, it's healthy. And research on the brain shows that, when done consistently, it's even healing. Deep regions of the brain, the amygdala, are activated and act to reduce stress and promote healing.

There are so many other ways that are right at your fingertips. But start with just one thing, and build from there. You can find them yourself, or with the support, education, and inspiration from someone who's been there. It took me a decade to put together a healing program for myself from

hep C and a liver transplant. I'd be honored to help you get there faster.

A couple of other simple no-brainers. Get outside, and revel your place. Walk in nature, walk the streets, sit under a shade tree. And, if that's not possible for you right now, find a sunny window to bask in. Live in grateful appreciation of it all.

Smile at strangers. Tell a friend you love them. Look into the eyes of your loved ones. There are so many common sense ways to live in appreciation, in wonder, in grateful mindfulness, even if your illness has pulled the rug out from under you and things are difficult.

I can learn, and you can learn, how to live with deeper purpose, and know that even when we do all we can, we all eventaully pass away from this physical body. So, live it fully. For you, for those you impact, and for your loved ones.

To the memory of my friend, and to you, this poem by Rainer Maria Rilke:

Go to the Limits of Your Longing

God speaks to each of us as he makes us, then walks with us silently out of the night.

These are the words we dimly hear:

You, sent out beyond your recall, go to the limits of your longing. Embody me.

Flare up like a flame and make big shadows I can move in.

Let everything happen to you: beauty and terror. Just keep going.

No feeling is final. Don't let yourself lose me.

Nearby is the country they call life. You will know it by its seriousness.

Give me your hand.

-Book of Hours, I 59

Anything is Possible,

Matt

PS – Join me to go deeper on this and other themes for health and healing with liver, and other chronic disease, on my webinar, Live Well, Live Fully with Chronic Illness. Click here to check out when and what will happen.

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