

Why I Stopped Trying to Fix Myself and How I Healed by Doing Nothing



By

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“Everything in the universe is within you.” ~Rumi

When I was twenty-three, I lost my job through [chronic illness](#). I thought my life had ended, and I spent the next few years an anxious, panicky mess—often hysterical. Eventually, I took off to scour the globe for well-being techniques and searched far and wide for the meaning of life and how to become well again.

If you’re chronically ill, like I was, whether physically or emotionally, you’ve probably experienced the same misunderstanding, the same crazy-making “well, you look okay to me” comments, the same isolation, depression, and frustration that I felt.

You've probably been on a bit of a quest for self-recovery. And so, you've probably also felt the same exasperation when trying to figure out which self-help theories actually work. It can be overwhelming, right? I thought so, too, but I came to find it was actually really simple!

Searching the Globe for Self-Help Techniques

So many people are full of advice: *"Try CBT/ tai chi/ astrology/ vitamins/ rest more/ exercise more/ zap yourself with electricity/ eat better/ stop being lazy (always helpful!)/ do affirmations/ yoga/ meditation/ wear purple socks..."* Okay, so no one ever actually recommended trying purple socks, but there were so many weird and wonderful recommendations that I found myself lost, which might explain why I went away to find myself!

I traveled far and wide with my illness, training in every holistic therapy there was (which I loved; I'm curious, and well-being is my passion). But I was always searching for a 'cure' for my brokenness. I connected with yoga, meditation, and mindfulness on my journey, and I heard the very familiar Rumi quote: *"Everything in the universe is within you."* This served only to confuse me even more as I struggled to analyze what it meant!

In Bali, though, I felt I had found a home in yoga, meditation, and [mindfulness](#). I felt connected to myself. I felt like I understood that all I needed was within. My anxiety had gone, my panic had gone—and my chronic illness had gone, too! Then, I came home to the UK, and it immediately returned.

I was disheartened. I still lived yoga and mindfulness—I loved it and I taught it at home—but the joy had gone from what I had once thought of as *the answer*. So, how was I absolutely okay in Bali and not at home? Was I a fraud? What was going

on? There was so much thinking...

What I Learned About Being Human

It wasn't until a year later that I discovered why when I heard something different. A colleague introduced me to a mentor who shared some profound insights about how the world really works.

She explained the basic underlying reality of humanity: that underneath all of our thinking about "how to be happier" is a healthy wholeness and perfection that is already innate—without having to do anything. You see, the reason that I had felt any anxiety or panic at all was that I had just forgotten the truth of what it is to be human.

The Power of Thought: All You Need Really Is Within

Our human reality operates entirely through thought at the moment. Everything we feel is a result of our thinking. If we feel anxious, it's because we are experiencing anxious thinking. If we feel happy, it's because we are experiencing happy thinking. Our entire reality, therefore, really does come from within! It is an inside-out world.

When we were born, we were perfect and whole, and not anxious. Then, when we gained the beautiful power of thought, we learned that the external comfort blanket was super comforting, because "it made us feel better," right? Wrong. A blanket is an object, with no capacity to make us feel anything. One hundred percent of the comforting feeling came from our own thinking about the blanket. It's the same with all of life.

So, when I was in Bali, I thought I was okay because I was enjoying yoga and meditation, which I loved with all my heart. Thinking that the external *could* impact me, I felt 100 percent

whole. I returned from Bali and my thinking about the external changed; it felt like I wasn't happy because I *thought* that I needed to be back in Bali. But the thinking came from me: happiness or unhappiness was all dependent on my thinking in each moment.

I didn't remember this, so I attributed my happiness to the external. But it wasn't, because we are always living in the feeling of our thinking at any moment. Everything comes from within.

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