Pain, Life, Love
A Heart-Felt Field Guide

By

Greg Corwin
Pain is only trying
To guide us Home,
To Life and to Love.
And ultimately,
Pain is Life, is Love.
I hope you’ll allow this book to sink in, to resonate with your Heart, because that is my intended audience — your Heart. Breathe, read and feel. I feel that is the best way to go through this book.

I hope this book helps you gain a new or different perspective on aspects of life we all share and can struggle with, and I hope this can help you experience:

Pain without suffering.

Life beyond birth and death.

Love without cause

~greg
A note to help you navigate:

The capitalizations of Pain, Love and Life are meant to distinguish and not to diminish. They are done to simply make a distinction between what I'm referring to and what is commonly called pain, life and love in everyday life.

Pain with a capital "P" refers to emotional unease and discomfort and the capitalization is to simply there to distinguish physical pain and unease from emotional pain, such as anger, loneliness, sadness and fear.

Life with a capital "L" distinguishes what most people call their life: their job, their name, their friends, their relationships from this, ever-changing, moving, breathing thing we all share, that Lao-Tzu simply calls the Tao (the way).

Love is capitalized to distinguish romantic or material love from Love, a force that connects, nurtures and supports all things, which material or romantic love is only a mere reflection of. I'm speaking about the unconditional and deeply connected feeling we all have intrinsic to us — available inside us — when I use the word Love. This is a Love that includes everyone and everything, but is not for anyone or anything.
What some have said about Pain, Life, Love:

“Really enjoyed reading your booklet! Thank you for making it available! I especially connected with the section on fear.... thank you again!”

-clearr2learn-blog

“Amazing!”

-myrevivalnow

“I loved it so so much, it was a really warm, calming and purifying reading experience. I felt like my heart was reading, not my mind.”

-softsaram
Pain:

*These pains you feel are messengers. Listen to them.*

-Rumi

*All Pain yields to And dissolves in Love
Bring Love to your Pain
Wrap your Pain in Love’s soft, warm embrace
And allow it to dissolve In that gravity.*

*Embrace your Pain As much as you can
Hold that Pain As much as you can And let it dissolve.*

Pain can harden us, make us guarded and fearful. We can spend our whole life running from, numbing our self to and avoiding our Pain, but Pain is simply a part of life. We all feel Pain. Intense feelings and deep hurt are a part of life, a part of being human and a part of being alive. They aren't bad, they aren't good; they simply are. They are just what needs attention.
Emotional pain is like physical pain; it is a sign that something needs attention, something needs to be tended to. If you break your arm, it needs a cast. If you feel Pain, that feeling needs to be wrapped, not in plaster, but in the spotlight of your soft warm attention.

Close your eyes, sit, breathe and feel fully what is in you Now. If there is Pain, don’t deny its life within you and simply change your relationship to it. Pull your labels off it and simply feel it. Be with it and see that it is just there. Sense that it is just in you but not you.

Allow it in. Get to know it. Let it in and let it have your respect for what it can do to you. Go into it. Get to its rawness. Face it. Let it speak to you. Let it break you down and let it strengthen you. Let it burn away what is only holding you back. Let it lighten you. Let it awaken you. Grieve it. Speak about it. Write about it. Give it life.

Build a relationship with it and let it speak to you. Let it expand within you. Let it fill you. When it fills you, when it expands it will contract naturally. This is simply the way of it like a wave, like breath, like a spring — when they expand they contract back in on themselves. Don't delay; time only covers the wounds. They know how to dig their way out.

This is all a natural process, but it won't be easy. Pain is painful. But Pain is painful simply because it is trying to get your attention. Pain's sole job is to get your attention, to get you to turn your attention to it so it can be resolved and unburden you. And it will keep getting better and better at getting your attention.
It will simply keep getting louder and louder and until you honor it, work with it and not against it, begin to respect its power over you and learn to bring Love to it, you'll keep encountering and bringing the same Pain into your life over and over again.

The emotional Pain you feel Now is an echo of your past Pain. It is as if you have a tuning fork in you that is tuned to the vibration of that past unresolved Pain, and anything in your current life that resonates with that Pain strikes an internal chord and activates that internal tuning fork.

\[ \text{And that Pain alone} \]
\[ \text{Is what needs your attention.} \]
\[ \text{That Pain alone} \]
\[ \text{Is what needs your Love.} \]

* 

All is here to help you, guide you, awaken you and support you. Even that Pain you feel is truly here to help you and to support you. And ultimately, your Pain is your guru. Listen to it, for it is wise. Respect it, for it has control. Make peace with it, for it is only Love trying to reach you.

All things change; this Pain will change as well. It will push you to change it and in the end, you alone save yourself from your Pain. No one can do it for you. No one will truly understand your Pain.

Many can show you the way, hold your hand and point you in the right direction, but your Pain is your Pain. It has your signature.
You know it and you have the relationship with it. You have to go into it and you have to heal it. You have to get the message and keep it from festering and turning into suffering. That is the path. That is where you walk.

You are truly stronger than your Pain, and you have all the strength and all the courage inside you to begin to heal Now. That is why this Pain is getting your attention Now. It knows you are strong enough to heal it and it is ready to be healed.

This Pain will heal, but you won’t be how you were before the Pain. You cannot go back and this Pain will change you. It will pull things out of you and push you farther. It will guide you to your strength, to your inner resilience and to peace: bliss.
Life:

A great silent space holds all of nature in its embrace. It also holds you.

-Eckhart Tolle

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This is it
Breathe, feel, be
This is all there is
This is Life
You are living it
And it is living you.

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Life is not something outside of you that you live. Life is your very fabric, your very nature. Life breathes you, beats your heart and fills your lungs. Life supports you. Life loves and nurtures you as its only child.

Always has; always will.

Feel — pay attention to how it feels to be here and alive. Sense your aliveness, sense within you the very undeniable fact that you are alive, here and connected — bound to all. That aliveness is Life. Get in touch with it. It is through your inner body, your feelings, sensations and emotions, that you connect with and be Life.

Feel how it feels to be in contact with something. Feel how it feels to be hot or cold, sad or happy, at peace or uneasy, in pain or relaxed. Walk outside barefoot, use all your senses, feel the sun's embrace and feel how it feels to simply be alive
and to walk. Simply sense that you are alive. Feel the solidity, the grounding of it all; feel the fullness of your Heart. Feel all that you feel and don't overlook those feelings. Value those. They are how you connect with something very great and very powerful. They are how you realize you are something very great and very powerful.

To do this, you don't need to be anywhere special. Life surrounds you always. You carry it with you always. There is as much Life at your office, your job or your school as there is in a Monastery, in a Chapel, or on a mountain top. So through whatever you are doing or wherever you are, just simply be, feel and pay attention to Life that lovingly encompasses you.

Just breathe. Just simply breathe and feel the rhythm of the in-breath and the out-breath. The same force that sustains the rhythm of day and night, the rhythm of the seasons and the rhythm of the tides sustains all the rhythms in you, and you can get in touch with that force by just breathing and just being.

Be brave. Life has moments that require bravery from us all. In those moments, be brave. Move through fear, for fear is the doorway to Life, growth and expansion. To expand and to accord with Life you have to push past fear, be brave and fall into the nurturing support that is already there for you just past the fear you feel.

Be at ease, relaxed and reverent. Life is always at ease and relaxed as it lives and guides all things. Relaxed and doing, humble, at ease and flowing you accord with Life.
Be patient. Have patience with resolve. Life takes time to mature itself. A Redwood Tree that would take a huge crane to lift was once a seed that would fit on your fingertip.

Find balance. Balance is the way of Life. Life effortlessly and spontaneously balances itself. Nothing exists without being balanced. Everything created spontaneously creates its own balancing force.

Go farther — always farther. Life is always going inexhaustibly farther. Life is always furthering itself, creating new, destroying old and moving forward. Feel and take time to honor the fact that you will never be truly done; you’ll never be finished. There is always more growth and the natural ability to simply go farther.

Adapt, be flexible. When you are fixed and rigid, Life will show you to your soft, flexible nature by breaking down and wrecking your fixed nature again and again.

Let things rise, fall, expand and contract. Relax to your place in all of this and let things play out naturally, without clinging to a past or wanting a specific future.

Just try to soften to Life and experience that every past event was there to assist you and every future situation will be there to support you. Embrace and surrender to Life within you and experience that Life will always lovingly embrace you through the ups and downs, like a grandma embraces her only grandchild.
Love:

Love is the inner light
in everyone and everything.
-Ram Dass

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I've gone:
Minutes without breath
Days without food
And years without Love
And in their absence
I've found strength
And in their absence
I've found their necessity.

Without Love you only
Feel its lack
Without Love you
Feel incomplete
Unworthy and un-whole
You feel stranded on an island
In a vast ocean
It is Love that rescues you.

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Just as all water flows from and returns to the ocean, all
Love flows from and returns to you. You are the source of all
the Love you feel. Although it may be hidden, hardened, beat
up or ignored, the source of all Love is within you — within
your Heart.
There is no Love outside of you; all outside love is a reflection of your inherent Love. Things and people can pull Love from you, but that is a mere reflection of the source within you.

Who or what you love is like moonlight. Moonlight is simply reflected sunlight. Without the sun there is no moonlight; without you there is no Love.

You had Love within you before you loved someone and before you even knew what it was called. You knew this Love; you knew it before there was anyone in your life to Love. This Love can be returned to. This Love can be recaptured. You simply need to renew the relationship with it.

Don’t take my word for this. Experience this source within you. Seek this source out. Follow your breath to your Heart and live there with your attention.

Go to Love’s source in your chest and live in Love. Soften to Love's origin within you and return your wandering mind again and again to that warm full place and let that Love radiate out and fill all.
Breath:

*Breath is the bridge which connects life to consciousness, which unites your body to your thoughts. Whenever your mind becomes scattered, use your breath as the means to take hold of your mind again.*

-Thich Nhat Hanh

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*Breathing in and breathing out
I am Home
Simply breathe,
And return Home.*

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We are a species stuck in our thoughts, in our beliefs and in our heads. It is breath alone that guides us back to our Hearts and to Love.

It is breath alone that brings us back to our Self, brings us back to our aliveness and marries us to this moment Now.

Breath is your doorway to peace, your bridge to your Heart and your inner body. All you need for peace, to feel the Life that you are, is to enter the doorway and cross over the bridge: breathe and pay attention to it. Make this a habit. Make this a practice.

The breath physically sustains you like nothing else can. Treat it as you would your only child. Give it your most prized possession, your attention, your awareness, your being.
The breath never leaves you. It is closer than anything you can possess. It is there when you consciously are not. It is an ever-loyal companion that asks nothing and brings you everything.

Take slow, gentle, deep breaths. Feel them fully. Feel your breath enter you from the space around you. Feel it as it travels down into your chest. Feel your chest and abdomen expand with it. Then relax and gently return it to that space around you.

Pay attention to the space and the stillness between the in-breath and the out-breath. Follow your breath in and your breath out. Let it lead you to your Heart and your inner body. Breathe, just feel, just be. Be with it and relax to it. Reside in it. Be it.

*Just breathe.*

*To just breathe is to be content, full, simple and whole. To just breathe is to be both bound and free. Just breathing you are bound to Life and simultaneously you are free, free from all troubles and liberated from all struggles and concerns, not because they disappear, but because they lose their hold on you.*
Stillness:

Stillness is just simply here
Feel it and touch it

When thoughts don’t pull
And feelings don’t push
There is simply stillness.

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Stillness is our natural state, our Home, the state we enter when all else leaves. Stillness is beyond, underneath and around all the back and forth, ups and downs and ins and outs of our lives.

Build a relationship with stillness. Give your attention to it whenever you can. Stillness surrounds you and envelops you. Simply try to let it in and build a relationship with it.

Stillness truly cannot leave you. You leave it; you break off the relationship with it unknowingly. And if you feel un-still, find that stillness again. Look, feel, breathe and return to the stillness that surrounds you and contains you. It is always there, patiently waiting for you to return to it. Like a loyal dog, it waits patiently for you to return Home.

Stillness of the Heart and stillness of the mind are the greatest gifts you can give yourself, for all things of true value flow from that stillness. From stillness beauty, awe and perfection unfold before us. Stillness is simply their mother. Stillness is the portal through which all creativity, newness, wisdom, inspiration and insight come and are born out of and into this world.
Change:

*If you realize that all things change, there is nothing you will try to hold on to.*

- Lao-Tzu

*Stop, observe, look and see
All is change
All is simply playfully dancing.*

Change is the one thing that cannot not be. All is changing. Nothing truly ends or begins; all simply and spontaneously changes.

Life spontaneously changes and moves without effort or anyone’s volition. No one particularly wants all these changes, but change just is. It is just here.

Because we don’t choose all of these changes, they can be painful and cause us unease. It is those feelings of unease that result from changes that we don’t like.

Simply turn your attention to those feelings. Feel those. Feel all the feelings that change brings to you. Be with them fully and try to sense that under them is a stillness, a calm, full, still center. Feel and take refuge in that stillness and the calm fullness inside you. Feel your settled nature inside you; your rootedness in all of this change that is under all the feelings that come and go.
You are truly the unchanging in all the changes. Try to sense that. Feel that. Feel deeply that you cannot be changed; feel that change just happens and you are always here and Now, solid, rooted and grounded.

Change can pull you and push you. To be at ease with change we have to flow and move with it, feel, be gentle, love and dance with it.

Like water flowing over smooth rocks, hold but don't clench; grasp but don't cling. This is to be Life and to join the playful dance of it all.

If things are bad, they'll change. If things are good, they'll change. This is summed up in the old statement: this too shall pass. Good, bad — all things spontaneously change.

Know that like a silty-bottomed lake, things get stirred up, but they always settle. Things stir up again and again, but they settle again and again. They always settle. They settle not how it was before the stirring, just settled. New and expanded, but settled.
Perfection:

Absolute perfection is here and now, not in some future, near or far. The secret is in action - here and now. It is your behavior that blinds you to yourself. Disregard whatever you think yourself to be and act as if you were absolutely perfect – whatever your idea of perfection may be.

All you need is courage.
-Nisargadatta Maharaj

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All is perfect
Perfection illuminates all
And fills all space.

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This is a deep truth: nothing is out of place. Nothing has ever been or will ever be out of place. There is a part of you that knows this. There is a part of you that resonates with this. Get in touch with that part of you, that part that sings because it knows everything is perfect. It sings because it knows it’s always been and always will be perfect. Rest yourself in that place. Breathe and be that place. Perfection is felt; it is not a thought.

If you search for perfection with your mind, you’ll never experience it. You cannot find a glass bottle with a metal detector. Feel it, sense it. It is here; no seeking is necessary. Just look, just breathe, just be, soften and feel: all is flowing perfection.
This perfection unfolds before you. Soften to and bring in the imperfections you find, and the beauty of perfection will illuminate your life naturally.

Your thoughts and beliefs about how it should be or how you should be shield you from the perfection that is all-encompassing. Those are walls that wall perfection out and wall you in.

Question your beliefs or be open to them not being 100% true. Remove your labels, feel, just sit, just breathe and just be. Experience Life and its perfection directly.
You, I, Self:

You are here to enable the divine purpose of the universe to unfold. That is how important you are!

-Eckhart Tolle

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You: Love wrapped in Earth
Energy dancing in human skin
Just here
Just alive
Simple changeless awareness.

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Ultimately, you are not small, insignificant or unworthy. There is nothing too small or too big for you; there is nothing you cannot take hold of or handle.

There is nothing out of your grasp and nothing is unachievable. You are not limited or contained. You are the One, the All, the still-alive ever-changelessness, that which cannot be added to, subtracted from, improved upon or diminished. Timeless, birth-less and deathless, you are simply the totality — all there is. No more, no less.

You are the space that fills all you see. You are the leading edge of expansion and growth. You are the out-breath of awareness as it fills the Universe.

You are a puzzle piece with infinite edge extending out in all directions, seamlessly interlocking and overlapping with all others.
You fill, embody and express all of existence with each act and each breath. The Universe has life because of you.

Out of you all things flow and are created. You create all without effort, unknowingly and spontaneously. You have an infinite source of creation in you. You are that still-alive bridge between the created and the yet to be created. Creating is the one thing you cannot stop doing. You breathe, flow and create. Always.

Built from the past and recycled in the future, all that has been has led to you and all that will be flows from you. You are a monument to the past and you are the foundation for the future.

You are the fullness of the Heart and the emptiness of the mind. You are the "I am" feeling in the chest, the source of consciousness as it radiates out and fills all. You are simply the simple, the full and complete:

I AM.

You are you; you cannot be anything else but you. You are unique and different from everyone and everything and yet, no different from anything or anyone.

You are no one and no thing and you are everyone and everything. You are the contradiction, the paradox, the anomaly:

You just simply are.
Strength:

*Look well into thyself; there is a source of strength which will always spring up if thou wilt always look.*

-Marcus Aurelius

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No matter who you are or what you believe about yourself, there is strength within you.

You don't have to be anyone or have anything to feel strong; be as you are and uncover the strength within.

You are as strong and brave as any warrior or any solider. They don't have something you lack; they don't lack something you possess. They simply have found the strength and courage — the will to push forward and go farther, no matter the cost and the fact that they're always ok, no matter what — within themselves that you have yet to discover.

This strength is your muscle when you feel weak and your ally when you feel lonely. This strength is a motivating and pushing force. It says "you can" when you believe you cannot. It knows that no matter what you think about yourself, you can go farther, you'll always be ok and you are stronger than you think.

Make it a habit to go into your body whenever you can and sense the solidity of strength within your chest. Sense the natural power your body holds.

Breathe and simply feel the culmination of a deep sense of courage and bravery assemble within your chest. Try to sense
that that strength is simply there waiting for you and is just beyond all your doubt and fear. Try to simply sense the pull of strength and the powerfulness of that courage within that is there when the doubt and the fear are run through.

Remind yourself: you’re strong, you’re healthy and that you can take on all of life’s challenges with the strength and courage of the bravest warrior, for that warrior resides within your Heart. Just gently remind yourself these things, weekly, daily or hourly.
Fear:

Too many of us are not living our dreams because we are living our fears.

-Les Brown

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Fear is a wall we run into that hides the mystery, the wonder and the awe of Life from us. Fear is simply the hill we climb to get to greener pastures. Fear is our prison walls. Like a fence, when we feel fear it shows us our boundaries; it shows us how restricted we are and how separate we feel. Fear keeps our words in our throats and our song in our Hearts. Fear binds us, constricts us, keeps Love from expanding and saps our motivation.

Fear is the advice to contract and retreat. Fear is the balancing force to expansion and growth. Fear is retraction and gravity. But fear shows us where we can expand and grow. It shows us where to push out and what to push against to find growth and true security. To see where you need to expand, simply find and meet your fear and it will show the way to expansion: through it.

Fear is Love trying to reach you. Fear is Love in wolf’s clothing. Fear is here for you, even if you shut it out or wish it away. Fear is here to help you, to push you farther and to show you where to expand. Feeling, sensing and realizing this, fear loses its meaning. There simply is no room for fear. There are just intense feelings trying to push you to grow.

Turns towards it again and again. Go into the fear you find in life again and again and you'll grow; you'll expand.
Like waves beating  
Rocks into sand  
The relentless overcomes  
The stubborn  
Constant exposure overcomes  
The built-up intensity.

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Fear is a mirage. When you look closely, it vanishes. Bring your awareness to it, investigate what you fear. Find the beauty and necessity of what you fear and the situations you find fearful. In truth, all has necessity and all has beauty. Find the beauty and the necessity of what you fear and fear will simply begin to vanish, fall away and crumble.

You are stronger than those fears. No fear is stronger than you. Know this. Feel this and run head-first into all the fears that constrict you and wall you in, and you’ll be shown how Life grows through you and lovingly supports you. Heed the advice of fear, but know that you can move beyond its walls and expand into Life.
Surrender:

If you want to say that all religions and spiritual teachings share a core truth, it can only be this: Surrender is victory.

~Jed McKenna

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Leave those old ways behind
Leave the perceived safety of
The jagged cliff
For the free-fall into
The cool water
What you thought was safety
Was just a crutch.
What you thought
Was a parachute
Was a rock
Leave those all behind.

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I lay down my shield
I lay down my sword
They were only there to
Give false hope
I lay down
My everything and let
Everything support me
I lay myself down with
The faith that when
I’m ripped apart
I'll be put back together again.

To surrender is to relax fully, deeply. It is to empty yourself fully. It is to let yourself collapse into yourself. It is to expose your rawness, to stand naked amongst the clothed. It is to leave yourself behind. It is a free-fall into cradling arms. It is to die and be reborn over and over again until there is less and less of you left — until you are gone.

Ultimately, to surrender and let Life that loves you, cradles and supports you, live you is the only lesson. It is the supreme teaching and the ultimate teacher. It is the simplest action, but the hardest lesson.

We fight and we resist surrender, but it is natural; it is as natural as breathing. All of nature, each animal and every plant surrenders with ease and without struggle. It is the habitual momentum of our minds that doesn’t like the taste of surrender and if we get out of our controlling minds and embrace it, we can free-fall into the embrace that all of nature knows but we have to fall into and discover.

Just lie down, get comfortable, relax fully and let what’s already trying to happen happen. Let those natural processes take place. Let surrender pull you to places your mind cannot get you to. Dissolve and let Life bring you to itself. Embrace the softness and discover your true invulnerability.

Surrender is a paradox. You stop fighting and you go forward; you lay down your weapons and you find lasting victory. Surrender is the Hail Mary, the desperation move. The thing you do when you have no other options.
It is only when you are at the end, broken and defeated, that you turn to surrender. It is only when you have tried all other means, tried all other resources and cleverness and exhausted all the power the mind can offer you that you surrender.

It is only then that you let the infinite wisdom that the mind is only a small fraction of and that is already running your life, take you over and pull you to back to Life, to freedom and the fact that you cannot ultimately be defeated or beaten.
Exercises: Bringing unconditional love, Love into your Heart:

Visualize what you love. Get a good picture of that person or of that thing that you love in your mind. Let that love appear to you and let it enter you, usually into your belly or chest.

Feel the love bubble up in you and feel the warmth and the fullness of it.

Now let that image go, let that person or thing drift away and simply feel the warmth and the softness that is still there.

Hold onto that and feel that.

The person or thing is gone, but the feeling is still there. Love is still there. This is love without attachment. This is love without a cause. This is Love.

The visualization is only needed to pull it from you and you can, with practice, pull it out of yourself without the visualization.

Now, once you have that Love in you, you can let it flow around inside you and direct it to places. Let it flow to your unease, your tension, your hollowness and your active mind. Let it flow into those areas and let it change them. Let it transform them.
A meditation exercise I call: The Practice:

Set a timer for ten minutes and simply lie down some place comfy, your bed, the couch or the floor if it is comfortable for you.

Just lie there. No matter what happens, unless it is an emergency, just lie there. No matter what your mind tells you, lie there.

Breathe and lie there until the timer goes off.

Gently breathe and feel your breath fully. Follow it in and out.

If your mind wanders, return it to your breath, the sensations of your body and just simply lie there.

Do this for ten minutes a few times a week or as often as you have time.

This practice will change your whole day and will give you a solid base to return to when life shifts and changes.
Deathbed Surrender:

This exercise in surrender is longer to do. It takes about half hour to an hour, but it is more changing and more transforming than the two previous exercises.

Surrender is the elevator to the different layers of this thing we all share: Life and Love. It simply is the way to gain insight and realization. This is not glamorous; this is real and this is, from my experience, very transformative.

Lie on the floor (Shavasana, if you’re familiar with yoga) and relax. Relax all of your being; relax to your very core. Let what is in you take you over and just breathe.

Keep relaxing and relax as if it is the only thing you can do. Relax fully; relax everything and float.

Let the powers that are already living you embrace you and love you. Relax and embrace it all, each feeling and each thought.

Just simply acknowledge and accept your own smallness, your own inability to control this.

If you find tension after a bit, relax the tension and take note of it. Do this for a half an hour to an hour when you feel stuck or feel there is a wall you cannot climb over or get past. Do this when you feel drawn to it, and it will allow change, insight and realizations to come. It’ll simply allow you to take the elevator to another level.
Thank you for taking the time to read this. I hope you’ve enjoyed this small but deep book I’ve put together. I hope it will help guide you through your life and be a reminder that you’re not alone in this: we all feel Pain, we all struggle and have Love within us, and we are all the one Life; flowing and beautiful.

Much Love,

~greg