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Healing Unexplained Pain: Six Ways to Face, Embrace, and Replace Your Hidden Fears

Sad, anxious, or “blah” . . . and not sure why? Susan Apollon, an intuitive psychologist and author, says you’re feeling the fearful residue of past losses. Here’s what you can do about it.

Yardley, PA (November 2005)—*Lethargy. Moodiness. Anxiety. Depression.* We all have these feelings from time to time. Sometimes, there’s an obvious reason for these unpleasant emotions. Other times (particularly when the days get shorter and we must face the stress and forced gaiety of the holidays) angst seems to rise out of nowhere. You know you feel “bad” but you’re not sure why. According to intuitive psychologist Susan Apollon, negative feelings *always* have a root cause . . . and actively dealing with them is the key to healing.

“At the heart of all unexplained pain is fear,” says Apollon, author of *Touched by the Extraordinary: An Intuitive Psychologist Shares Insights, Lessons, and True Stories of Spirit and Love to Transform and Heal the Soul* (Matters of the Soul, 2005, ISBN: 0-9754036-4-8, \$19.95). “Some event that you barely notice—maybe hearing about a natural disaster in another country or seeing a homeless person begging on the street—triggers a memory of a loss in your own past. The fear that rises to the surface can take many forms, from an undercurrent of free-floating anxiety to a tidal wave of debilitating grief.”

We’ve all lived through past losses, says Apollon: a childhood trauma, the death of a beloved pet, a miscarriage, a haunting experience in Vietnam. And the fears associated with these losses—particularly those that were never properly grieved and resolved—are apt to resurface at odd times in our lives. The good news is that we can deal with those emotions in a productive, healthy way.

The key, says Apollon, can be summed up in one word: *awareness*. Becoming aware that you’re not feeling good—whether you label that emotion as anxiety, fear, or sadness—is the first step in healing yourself. As she tells her patients, any time you notice a negative feeling stirring around, you must “face it, embrace it, and replace it.” She offers the following suggestions for doing just that:

• **Become aware of not feeling good.** Ask yourself some honest, soul-searching questions: *Why am I feeling so bad right now? What am I thinking? When have I felt this way before?* Apollon says this questioning is the hardest and most critical step, because part of you wishes to not deal with the issue. Your Higher Self is the part of you that strives for enlightenment, peace, and well-being, and it's from that part of you that you need to be operating.

• **Find a way to explore and express your fear.** Just sitting in a quiet room and reflecting doesn't always yield the answer you're seeking. Sometimes, you have to explore in a more visceral way. Apollon says that exploration may take various forms—talking it out with a friend or psychologist (including replaying a troublesome event as you would like for it to have gone) or even intense, focused exercise—but one of her favorite techniques is journaling. “I suggest writing about your thoughts and feelings every day,” she says. “Write a letter to God, Jesus, Buddha, a deceased loved one, your inner child, or your Higher Self—whomever you feel comfortable addressing. Writing forces you to articulate what's hidden inside, and profound insights may come pouring out. It provides a release of pain and enables a new clarity of thoughts and feelings.”

• **Allow yourself to feel fear or grief or terror, but don't get mired in it.** This is the “embracing” portion of Apollon's three-part formula. Yes, you have suffered losses in your life. They are painful. They deserve to be grieved. In the letters you write, in your talk therapy sessions, or just in your mind, comfort yourself. Address your inner child—for that's the part of you that's come wailing to the surface—and assure him or her that you will take care of him or her. When you're ready, release your feelings of fear or sadness. “Grieving is essential, but don't grieve any more than you have to,” says Apollon. “Balance your grief with humor, levity, and/or joy. Realize that what you focus on is what you attract. By taking in a good movie, listening to music, or thinking about something that makes you laugh, you will create positive energetic vibrations that are very healing.”

• **Let your stored “feel good” moments come flooding in to replace your fear.** Just as your cells store fearful memories, they also store joyful ones. By deliberately reliving occasions in your past when you felt happiness, elation, and contentment, you also relive the well-being associated with them. “Breathe in slowly; then breathe out even more slowly,” advises Apollon. “Visualize your connection to whomever your Higher Power may be. Ask that Power to fill you with peaceful energy. Intend to gently push out everything negative as you fill up with love and peace.”

• **Focus on your intent to feel good.** The fears you have stored for so long have almost certainly affected your life in limiting ways. You have devoted so much energy to suppressing them that you've forgotten how to really live. Once you process these fears, you can take control of your life and shape it into whatever you *really* want it to be. “Be clear regarding your intent of achieving specific wishes, dreams, and goals,” Apollon urges. “When you intentionally replace your fear with love—and get excited, positive, and enthusiastic *in the moment* about what you want—you can literally create miracles. Visualize what you want: a new job, a new degree, more money flowing in, a renewed marriage. The secret is to feel excited and joyful about your visualized intention . . . and the rest will follow naturally.”

• **Pray. It can't hurt.** “Always ask for help, verbally or nonverbally,” says Apollon. “I have done extensive research regarding the effectiveness of prayer. My research has shown me that prayer works. The shortest prayer is *Help me, please*. Why not go for it? You have nothing to lose by asking and possibly everything to gain.”

“If you don't process your pain now, it will keep coming back,” asserts Apollon. “Un-dealt-with pain leads people to abuse substances, to overeat, to overwork, to seek salvation in unhealthy relationships. We try to numb our pain and squelch our fears, but in the process we suppress our capacity for love and happiness. Life is too precious to spend mired in negative emotions. Your feelings are a gift. Open yourself up to the entire spectrum. You will feel some fear and sadness, sure, but it will be temporary . . . and it's the only way to get to the joy.”

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About the Author:

For close to twenty years, Susan Apollon has worked as a psychotherapist, psychologist, and healer, treating children and adults who are traumatized, diagnosed with cancer or other life-threatening illnesses, dealing with death and dying, and those who are grieving. She brings to her patients a gentle blend of warmth, compassion, and wisdom gained from surviving her own illnesses and losses; her expertise and training as a wife, mom, teacher, psychologist, researcher, and student of energy, mind, and consciousness; and finally, her own intuitive development.

Coming from a family of physicians (father, brothers, aunts and uncles, and daughter, Rebecca), Susan's intent is to heal (emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually), but at the level of the soul—and always with love and compassion. Focusing on the many blessings each of us has, she guides her patients to the recognition that we are here to live life in joy and peace (to be happy) and that the resources for this are within each of us. “Intention is everything,” she often tells her patients. “With love, clear intent and choice, transformation, healing, and very often, spiritual awakening, become our reality. And when this occurs, everything feels wonderful.”

Among Susan's most treasured blessings are her husband, best friend, and partner, Warren, a practicing orthodontist in Langhorne, PA, whom she has known and loved for more than forty years, and her two grown children whom she respects, honors, and adores—David, a marketing consultant, and Rebecca, a third-year resident in emergency medicine. She has been in private practice in Yardley, PA, since 1991.

About the Book:

Touched by the Extraordinary: An Intuitive Psychologist Shares Insights, Lessons, and True Stories of Spirit and Love to Transform and Heal the Soul (Matters of the Soul, 2005, ISBN: 0-9754036-4-8, \$19.95) is available at bookstores nationwide and from major online booksellers.

For more information, please visit www.touchedbytheextraordinary.com.