



Keeping the *Peace*

Prolonging the benefits of your shiatsu session
(or any mind/body practice!)

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embodygrace.com

Dedicated to the late shiatsu master,
Shizuko Yamamoto, who taught,

*‘Never miss an opportunity to help
someone with shiatsu.*

It will benefit you both.”

And to my clients and readers, who I am
honored to serve in any way I can.



About.



I'm Gina Loree Bryan - shiatsu practitioner and embodied movement teacher.

Hi.

I wrote this in response to a hunch I had (as well as direct feedback) about a frustration amongst many of my clients that their bodywork sessions just never seemed long enough.

While there wasn't a whole lot I could do about that (*because I don't think there would ever be a 'long enough'*), maybe what they were really pining for was a way to maintain that shiatsu buzz once they re-entered the world.

This book is an attempt to distill the basic essence of what shiatsu or similar bodywork, or mindful exercise would provide; the benefits of which then could be prolonged more intentionally, adding greater quality and well-being to the life of my clients.

For those who are not my clients, or even receivers of shiatsu - there is still something here for you.

If you engage in any kind of mind/body practice - bodywork, movement, meditation, or plan to someday, you will find suggestions as to how to prepare and posture yourself during the practice, as well as bring your newfound sense of peace and openness into your daily life and otherwise stressful interactions.

While you are welcome to share this ebook with anyone whom it might help, please share it in full with my name and contact information attached.

Nothing contained within is intended to give or replace medical advice. Nor will everything apply to everyone. Receive what makes sense to you with my best intentions; leave what doesn't.

Now, please enjoy.

Gina



your shiatsu session.

You look forward to it. You luxuriate in it. *You wonder where the last 60 minutes went.*

Before you know it, you're back out in the parking lot, already feeling 'real life' creeping back in.

If only...

- *You could afford it every day;*
- *You could bottle it and take it out to dab a little behind the ears when needed;*
- *You could hire your shiatsu therapist on retainer, or have her move in with you.*

What do people get when they come for shiatsu?

Profound relaxation. Relief from aches and pains.
A break from the kids (..boss...dog...spouse...). Epiphanies. Clarity.
A much needed nap. Emotional release. Comfort.
Skin that fits again. Grounding.

Peace.

Actual words used by my clients to describe their shiatsu experience:

“... takes me to a different place...”

“... so relaxing - able to go back into the world...”

“... relaxed, yet energized...”

“... free to think clearly and positively...”

“... not just a place, but a space where body, mind and spirit can embody well-being...”

Now, who wouldn't want to hold onto **that** a little longer?

And is there actually a way to do that?

Everyone gets something different from their sessions.

That's because everyone brings something different to them.



What I bring:

Safe space. Intention to listen and focus on you and your highest good. Training. Almost tow decades of experience. And sometimes, whatever is going on in my life, if that might be helpful.

What you bring:

Your entire universe. Hopes, dreams, expectations, injuries, victories, habits. everything you've been doing and working on up this point.

All within your skin. Which is where we meet.

“Touch the surface and you stir the depths.”

Deane Juhan, author of “Job’s Body” said that.

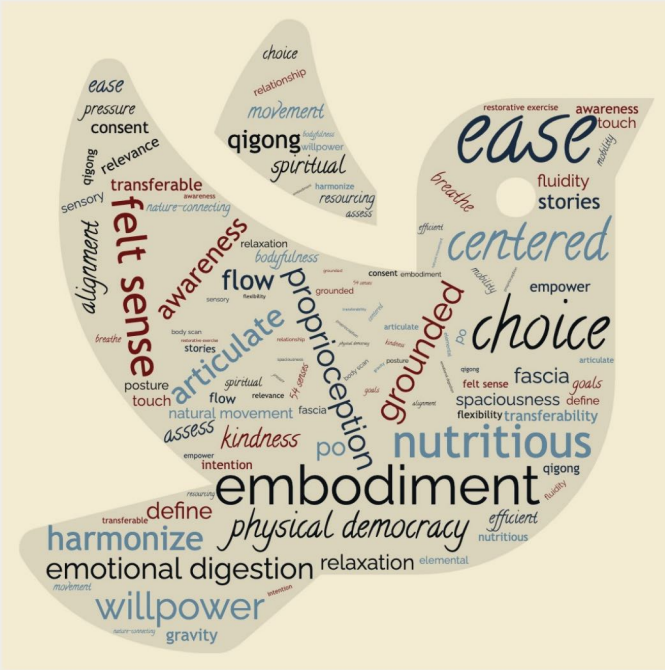
I can only begin to guess what depths get stirred when I touch your surface.

So, the thought of suggesting a ‘formula’ to bottle up your bottle up your bodywork experience and send it home with you posed a challenge.

In my years of practicing shiatsu, and working with hundreds of people who bring as many similarities as differences to their sessions, I concluded that there are three foundational characteristics common to almost all of them which manifest as the unique experience each takes away.

So, pulling back the veil and turning off the fog machine for a moment ...

... we're going to look at these foundations more closely, so you'll be able to carry a little more of your inner peace with you as you go back into your life - blessing you and blessing those around you.



Sound good?

Let's go...!

1. Relaxation

Pretty much everyone agrees they come away from a bodywork session feeling much...more...relaxed.

This is a Very Good Thing, and a quality - though we recognize it as highly desirable - still is not a priority for our health in our culture.

We tend to equate 'relaxing' as something opposite or separate from the rest of what we do in life. As in, a *state of inactivity* - and therefore, a luxury when there is clearly **So Much Stuff I Have To Do**.

True relaxation, however, is meant to be the default state of our physiology.



What does that statement mean to you?

Who are you (or think you must be) before you get bodywork?

Who are you afterward?

Is it possible for relaxation to permeate your life, rather than be felt in elusive moments between the noise and haste?

Could it actually become the posture in which you attend to your daily activities - instead of as though everything is a crisis and in demand of your attention?

When those fleeting moments are too few and far between, and this state goes on too long, the body doesn't know how to disengage. This can sometimes result in illness or some other kind of breakdown, if that's the only way it can slow you down. Or, it just slowly burns you up from the inside.

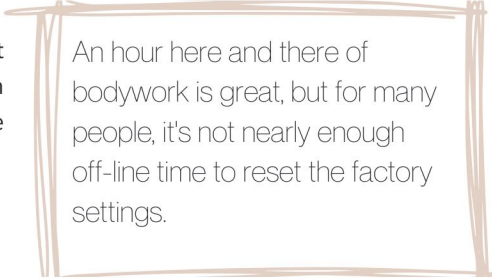
You might not even realize it's happening until you do get a break, or get bodywork, and you get a chance to feel (or remember) what it's like to have your muscle tension relieved, and take full, deep breaths again.

This is not just a feel-good.

Your body needs down-time to do repair and replenishment work. The shop needs to close up once in awhile to take inventory and allow for the clean-up crews.

I think the aspiration for most people is to be able to maintain that peaceful state when in the midst of daily chaos.

To be our better selves.



An hour here and there of bodywork is great, but for many people, it's not nearly enough off-line time to reset the factory settings.

To respond with our wits about us and cooler heads, rather than dragged along or assaulted by everyone else's agenda and drama.

Or, just remember to breathe.

2. Movement

During your session, for the most part, you're just lying there.

Depending on the person, what the session calls for, etc, I will move body parts around, too... all with the intention of 'moving the ki'.

For our purposes here, let's define 'ki' (the Japanese version of 'qi' or 'chi') as 'flow'.

Flow. As in, blood, lymph and other fluid, information/sensations, and bioelectric current. It feels good to feel this flow, because your body needs it, which it doesn't get as much as it could, as our habits of movement tend to narrow over time.



It's like living in a house slowly being taken over by clutter and dust.

It starts in the corners and the less-traveled spots, then overtakes the walkways and then whole rooms.

As long as we can still get around, we tolerate it – we get used to the diminished range of motion... it happens so slowly.

When you finally reclaim a little space, it's amazing the effect it can have on your energy level, isn't it?



The most basic of movements - contracting and stretching the muscles - facilitates flow (*remember flow?*) ... which is necessary to nourish the tissues in the vicinity of those muscles.

During a shiatsu session, I may encourage your body to go beyond its usual repertoire of motions, which is going to create more pathways for this flow.. thereby affecting more tissue.

We usually think of movement and bodywork on the muscle and tissue level, but drilling down to the basics, ***it's all about the cells.***

Each cell is like a microcosm of our whole body.

They need nutrients, waste removal and information/communication to survive.

The muscle movement brings this flow to the area of the cells, but it's the variation of loads placed on the cells themselves that determine how this flow is processed.

This may be a little complicated to understand at first, but suffice it to say:

Movement is very much like our diet.

We need a wide variety of 'foods' to provide all the nutrients necessary to thrive.



3. Awareness

When we move or are moved in ways other than what we're used to, the orthosympathetic branch of the nervous system (“fight-or-flight”) wakes up and pays attention.

It's tracking whether or not this touch or that position is going to pose a threat to the body, so it can react accordingly.

Within a certain range, this is not a bad thing or even an unrelaxing thing. In therapeutic conditions such as a bodywork session, where an environment of trust and safety has been established, it helps you develop greater body awareness. New neural pathways are laid down. You may notice more, become more attentive, and even more creative.

Of course, you may also become aware of tender or sore areas that you weren't aware of before you came in. ;)

There is a mind-boggling degree of inter-communication that goes on within the body/mind relationship.



Imagine your body with sensory outposts located at all the muscle attachment sites (where muscles/tendons attach to bones) – each one feeding information back to the central nervous system and the brain as to where everything is moving in relation to everything else, all within space and the force of gravity.

And this information exchange is being facilitated by the movement of your muscles!

Can you now get an idea of how bodywork can help you develop greater awareness and a feeling of 'being present in your body'?

But. This is all happening largely with you as a passive receiver.

And again, possibly only once in a while.



So, how do you prolong these effects on a more active, participatory level?

How can you maximize or draw on these experiences outside of the treatment room?

Let's look at each of these a little more closely.

Relaxation + Movement + Awareness =
Peace.

Back to relaxation.

I know. If you could relax in your daily life, we wouldn't be having this conversation.

Let's take a sec to get clear on what relaxation means.
Or more to the point, *what does it mean to you?*

Picture this. If you could bring your peaceful, calm, zen-y self back into your workplace, your home life, wherever you feel stress, what would that look like? Feel like? Is that what you're hoping for when you come for bodywork?

Or, would it be enough just to be able to turn off when you get home, away from the stress of work and get a good night's sleep for once?

What's your ideal?

Where and when would you most want to feel relaxed?

And why?

(Feel free to make some notes for yourself)

Next, if you feel relaxed during your session (or at other times in your life), what do you think facilitates that?

Is it the space? My saintly, calm, peaceful presence? ;) Is it the pressure on your body relieving muscle tension or removing your shoulders from your ears? Is it knowing that you have a whole hour or so where you don't have to answer to anyone else, but can just be on the receiving end of a little TLC?

Is there something(s) here you can recreate in your life – even on a small scale to help you feel more of yourself and at ease?

And so, what happens when you leave my office? At which point do the feel- goods begin to wear off?

What is it that triggers the tension and brings you out of the bliss?
Is it a sudden shift, or a diminishing one over the next few hours or days?

The reality is that tension is a part of our physiological makeup.

And for good reason – it keeps us out of trouble, and it's a build-up of potential energy. The problems arise when the feedback loops become unconscious and chronic, and the energy does not get released.

We may also have an unexamined belief that relaxation is a lot more conditional than it actually is – that we have to wait for a cause or our circumstances to change in order to finally relax.

Getting clear on what relaxation feels like to you – *when you're feeling it!* - and then noticing what triggers snap you out of it that will begin to help you maintain your responsiveness (rather than reactivity) and composure.

Keep the flow flowing...

As I mentioned earlier, our tissues – our cells - rely on our movement for nourishment and input.

One reason bodywork may feel so good to you is that areas of your body that aren't normally receiving that rush of oxygen and lymph flow and nerve sensation finally are.

Like opening up windows after a long dark winter.

So, this seems like a no-brainer. Just exercise more. Right?

Partially. But first, a little Chinese Medicine perspective....



Generally speaking, optimal health is a balance between the properties of yin and yang in the body.



Yang processes can be described as the more active – those that strengthen, create tension, facilitate transformation and generate heat.


Metabolism, exercises that build muscle ... even emotions create 'heat' in the body.

Emotions? Well, as the ancient Chinese saw it, emotional states create tension in various organs – for example, anxiety or excitability in the heart, worry in the stomach, anger in the liver, grief in the lungs, stress in the bladder or adrenals.

If these emotional states lingered too long, the 'heat' would begin to affect these organs adversely.)

Even though these emotions and conditions are a part of life, too much heat eventually leads to breakdown of the organs, and early aging.

(Sounds a bit like chronic inflammation, yes...?)

 **Yin processes refer to the more nourishing, cooling, flowing fluid aspects** – movement of blood, lymph, interstitial fluid, even the breath.

Practices that facilitate this flow were seen as essential to keep heat from building up... whether it was physical movement like qigong, or meditation (to release 'stuck' emotional states) or dietary/herb practices, bodywork or acupuncture.

(Yes... one can be deficient in heat, and too 'yin'. We won't be covering that here.)

In our culture, our approach to physical activity, and really, a lot of stuff concerning our bodies, is very yang-heavy. And not particularly mindful.

Lift. Run. Stretch. Push. No fear. No limits.
No pain, no gain.



There is a place for this.

But many people reach for this type of exercise after sitting long periods of time (which creates tension), while immersed in prolonged mental and emotional states (which creates tension) and then turn to short bouts of intense, repetitive, muscle- contracting, heat-producing activity to try to relieve the tension.

I've been told by some folks that going for a run or attacking the elliptical feels good.... helps to blow off steam, raise endorphin levels, but often they'll eventually hit a plateau and a rate of diminished return – and the daily stress really doesn't decrease.

There's a few reasons for this, but suffice it to say, it
may be due to a lot of yang on top of yang.
Fighting fire with fire, as it were.

We, as a population, don't engage in a lot of 'cooling' and 'flowing' activities that gently stretch and open and mobilize all the joints and the connective tissue, or coordinate the breathing and the mind in order to shift stuck emotional states.

Then, of course, there is the larger picture – **which is that we just don't move in nearly enough varied ways throughout the day.**

Our manmade environments simply do not encourage to us to move or be challenged in all the millions of ways that it would be in a natural setting.

In fact, our surroundings – homes, workplaces, shopping centers, cars, shoes, baby strollers - are designed as much as possible to avoid challenge – emphasizing comfort and ease instead.



To get that kind of movement, we have to consistently take the initiative and get creative.

At the very least, to keep the flow going just to avoid getting stiff and breaking down - but ideally, to keep all the tissues nourished and healthy.

There's another compelling dimension to movement, or lack thereof, and that is **self-expression**.

Much of how we learn to move (or learn to inhibit our movement) is culturally informed ... and often repressive.

Take dancing for instance.

Do you feel comfortable getting up and dancing? Just moving your body because it feels good? Even alone?
Why or why not?

There's so much weirdness we learn and pass down about moving our bodies – judgement, shame, performance anxiety, what parts on which gender are more appropriate than others to let loose.

Many of us learn at a very early age to start locking down our physical forms, and quite to our detriment.

If you believe that your body not only houses but is an expression of your soul, how fully are you living your purpose if your body cannot move or participate in life?

How many rooms of
your house are locked
and boarded up?



Yes, life deals us blows and injuries and limitations. It's not *all* by choice.

But as one restriction leads to others, we eventually lose memory of how it all started, or what it was like to move freely.

Shiatsu is a gentle companion to walk with you through your house.

Not for busting open doors, but jiggling the knobs a bit to see what will open.

Some rooms don't feel safe to enter. Others open up more easily than you expected. *And there can be great relief found within.*

One technique I often use is rocking.

There's something about being rocked that makes it hard to hold on to tension (though, for some folks, not impossible ;).



It feels particularly good along the back as it introduces fluidity throughout whole spinal structure, which is, again, something that doesn't happen as incidentally in our modern life as it once did.

Freeing up the vertebrae, facilitating flow of the spinal fluid, and releasing restrictions on the nervous system can bring about some of those euphoric experiences you have during a session. (Or when you dance. Or do qigong.)

Most of our daily spinal movements are reduced to flexed (bent forward), unflexed, and stationary. We may get some extension (bent backward) - usually when trying to work out the stuckness of being bent forward for long periods.

With 24 vertebra, our spines possess a lot more potential for twisting, sidebending and wave motions.

Some suggestions for gentle movement:

- My restorative movement classes, courses, and videos;
- Your local Yin yoga class;
- Dancing. And I actually mean, dance like no one is watching. Turn off the light if you need to. Just let your body move where it wants. It may be hard at first. But, *it's not life-threatening.* :)
- On that note, check out 'Surrenderwork'.

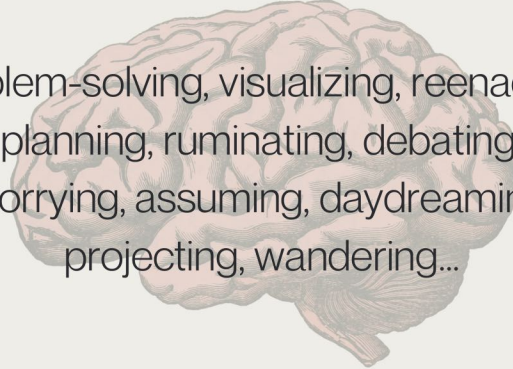
If all begins with awareness...

The previous two points are going to both require and expand on awareness.

Bodywork, and in particular, shiatsu, brings you back into your body.

But what does that actually mean? *Where else would you have been?*

Well, we spend a lot of time in our heads.



Problem-solving, visualizing, reenacting,
planning, ruminating, debating,
worrying, assuming, daydreaming,
projecting, wandering...

We can go through most of our day lost in thought, while we get dressed, brush our teeth, kiss spouse on the cheek, drive to work (possibly while eating), you get the idea ... all kinds of activities that involve our bodies but don't really require our full mental participation.

Our physical actions, our habits, our postures - especially the unhealthy ones - creep up on us without our realizing it.

Or, we ignore the nagging hints until they become loud enough to make us stop what we're doing.

During a shiatsu session, I don't really know where people go :).

Some say they go to 'another universe'. Some go in and out of here and wherever, some just doze off. But most all will notice that I am contacting them (especially if I hit a tender spot).

An invitation arises to become aware of your body at those points of contact ... especially if they're areas not typically contacted. Remember the outposts? Ah! A distant country heard from! This is good! Communication is established, filling in a broader picture in your mind's eye about the landscape of your body.

There's a saying in Qigong,

"The yi leads the qi."

The *yi* ("ee") is your mind, your awareness, your intention. And the *qi* is your energy ... or more specifically, your bioelectric current.

Biomechanics tells us that contraction and expansion of the muscles facilitates blood, lymph, information and electrical flow. Qigong tells us that there's this added influence - your own thought life.

Picture it. When your thoughts are scattered, hectic, all over the place trying to keep track of everything, your energy is as well.

You know what that feels like, right?

When you settle into a posture of relaxation, when your mind is focusing on and tracking pressure placed on various points of your body in a methodical manner, where is your energy going?

Why might you feel centered after a session? Or after your yoga practice? Or even after sex? Or anything truly physical that involves reining in your mental hyperactive puppy to focus on your breath and your body for a period of time?

Back to the landscape of your body.

With less movement in this sedentary lifestyle we lead, it means less information about our surroundings is coming through about where our body is in relation to space and its environment.

We're basically becoming numb, or leaving a much larger burden to our brain to inform us about our reality, and, as you know, the brain can be very tricky.

Not to mention exhausting.

When your nervous system has been stimulated by touch, and by unfamiliar movements (especially in a safe setting), it wakes up, takes notice, makes new connections, and creates a more detailed and expanded view of your world.

Your **proprioception** (*that function of the nerve/muscular/brain relationship that is constantly noting where your body is in space and adjusting accordingly*) registers and emphasizes micro movements.

Tractioning and releasing your spine may allow for expansions between the vertebrae only hundredths of an inch, but you suddenly feel taller. The smallest of gains in range of motion will feel huge.

This information, even the tiniest bit, can create wide ripples in your perspective your life circumstances.

Your creativity (meaning, your ability to see and/or imagine patterns, connections, solutions, beauty, etc., where you may not have been able to previously, and that is singularly unique to how others see...) can be ignited, initiating a much more enjoyable, fulfilling experience of your life.

And **that** is how I believe we were meant to live.

Putting it all into practice.

What to do before, during, after and beyond your session.

Before.

 **Have a clear intention for why you're coming.**

I mean, I guess most people do, but try playing with something specific that you'd like to receive from the session. Not just what you want to go away.

It can be related to your body, but it could be something going on in your life. Sometimes amazing insights can come when you step out of your routine for a little bit.

Also, it may be hours or days after your session that an insight will occur, but I believe setting the intention puts the process in motion.

 **Refrain from eating (at least heavily) at least an hour or two before the session.**

I usually include this suggestion with brand new clients, but I'll state it again.

The reason is that if you're digesting, your nervous system is engaged with those organs and the senses are little dulled.

When you're a bit hungry, the senses are sharper, and awareness is heightened.

Obviously, if being hungry creates greater discomfort (like low blood sugar) then please, *dowhatchagottado*.

Or bring a snack with you for afterward.

During.

I'm not too legalistic about what people should or shouldn't be doing during their session.

If you want to talk, talk. If you want to take a nap, go for it. I meet folks where they are, and your body will usually lead the way.

Having said that, there is this wonderful but tricky balance to walk between the mind being aware (read: awake) enough to 'lead the qi', and getting too involved - asking a lot of questions, or helping/resisting with some of the stretches and movements.

Note: I don't mind questions - it depends on whether that engagement is taking you deeper into the experience or keeping you more on the surface.



If you're wanting to get more out of your session, try to engage more with what's happening in the moment.

The sessions can be very much like a meditation - your mind being present and merely observing what comes up. Allowing. Being curious. Noticing.



And, of course, keep breathing.

No special way is necessary... just breathe how you breathe.

And, if your mind starts wandering, bring it back to noticing your breath... just allow your mind follow it.

A word about deep pressure, stretching, and discomfort...

Challenging barriers and limits has a therapeutic place in bodywork, exercise or other physical disciplines.

Relief that comes from a trigger point or tight muscle being released can also follow you home and stay a while.



However, deeper, harder, further does not always mean 'more effective'... and in many cases, will not lead to the longer-lasting effects you seek – in fact, may have the opposite effect.

Many people come in bearing a more, um, adversarial relationship with their bodies, and need the heightened intensity in order to push past their pain gateways so they feel ... *something*.

That's a lot of extra work for me. :)

But seriously, bodywork should not be an endurance test.

It's your deep, relaxed, full- bodied breathing, not your wincing and toughing it out, that's more indicative to me that your body is responding positively.

My motto (Hat tip to one of my teachers, Leo McElroy):

“Encourage movement – Respect boundaries.”

After.

I usually end a session by saying, “Take your time before you get up.”

I've noticed this can mean anywhere from 5 minutes to 5 seconds or less, depending on the person.

Again, not being legalistic here. But if there's any point in this whole process where you can most maximize your session, this is it.

You've just spent an hour or so immersing your body and mind into a state that it probably doesn't get to too often throughout the rest of your day-to-day - so, *why not luxuriate in that for a bit!*

Your body has just received a bunch of information about how it, *how you*, can feel.

Your nervous system and all the rest of it needs time to integrate this information.

Can just a couple extra minutes be enough to do that? Well, it won't hurt, and I suggest, at least give it a try!

When I teach *qigong*, I encourage people to resist the urge to straighten out the shirts, or fix the errant strands of hair after doing an exercise... to just 'let the qi settle'.

Imagine attending to the diminishing ripples in a pond, or the resonance of a bell fading into silence.



It's hard! I know!

But these are your unconscious habits wanting to kick right back in. What we are trying to do is train ourselves to pause between stimulus and response and forge new, more relaxed and deliberate pathways.



Take 3-5 extra minutes (or 12 -15 - 20 + gentle breaths) to just lie there before you move.

Notice what you feel, notice the sensations and think about what you would like to take with you when you leave the room. *Or just breathe.*

Say a little prayer. Stretch your body. Ease slowly back into the world.

It'll be fine without you for a few minutes.

Trust that there's a whole lot of processing going on, rearranging, etc. on a cellular level.

At some point you may even begin to really notice this.

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**Note:** I do try to schedule enough space between sessions to allow for this.

*Unless I inform you otherwise, you have plenty of time. If it helps for you to pay and reschedule before the session so as not to have to do all that left-brained stuff - or even deal with me at all - that's an option!*





**Take some time to walk around afterward if it's nice outside and you have time, to get grounded in 'reality'.**



Breathe in the air. Notice life around you before heading into your car. Drink some water. Keep your senses open as long as possible.




Visualize how you would like to 'be' when heading to your next interaction. Calm? Steady? Composed? Energetic?

If negative expectations pop up, ask yourself why you expect it would be that way.

Allow for the possibility of your interactions being positive and in alignment with how you are feeling in that moment.

*You might be surprised...*

## Beyond.

-  **Practice relaxing.** Be more curious and inquisitive about when you aren't feeling relaxed, how you know you're not and why.
-  **Stay hydrated.** This is not just about taking in water, but your body's ability to assimilate it, and transport it through your tissues. Again, wide variety of fluid movement is key here.
-  **Pay attention to how you nourish yourself.** Same as above. Actually, nutrients are the 'thing' we take in, 'nourishment' is how and if our cells use those nutrients. Keep in mind that movement also provides nourishment... how you move affects the cells and their ability to give, take, communicate, and replicate.

If you're not sure how or what to eat, **begin by being more conscious of your food when you are eating.** Not in the car, or in front of your computer (like I'm guilty of :). Really pay attention to your food. Ask your body if this will help you to feel as good as you would like to feel.

**On that note, become aware of all the input** - images on tv and your other screens, what people around you are saying, doing. Notice what you are giving your attention to (remember your mind leads your energy... where is your mind going? Where is it leading you...??)

We seem to be very caught up in a culture of fear... it's on the lips of many people around us. Become vigilant about how this affects you, and if what you're hearing is really true or necessary for your wellbeing.

Compare how you feel after your shiatsu session or other practice with how you feel when you're watching the news, or listening to your co-workers complain.

Which do you prefer? *What now will you do about that?*

## 👉 Develop a spiritual/fasting practice.

Continuing on with the previous point, *what DO you do with all this input?*

Does it bring you down, make you fearful, or prompt you into action? If you have a need to stay informed, a spiritual practice can help you direct your energy toward something positive in response.

Or, perhaps, fasting - making a conscious decision to turn off the news, or stay away from input that causes you to feel tension and pulled away from your center. Try it as a mental cleanse, or an experiment to see what really happens if you take your attention away from drama for a bit.



Please don't underestimate what this continual barrage of input does to your mind, body and tender soul.


## 👉 Laugh.

Humor is a sign that you still have the ability to be objective about your situation... *whatever it is.*

And if you can maintain objectivity, you're still in control.

When my clients come in with their stuff, I may make jokes, but it's not to make light. Well, it is to lighten. It's an invitation to step outside of the heaviness of the moment, and get 'bigger than what's bothering you'.



 **Lastly, be more with nature.**

Preferably barefoot. This will complement and enhance all the above points.

There's a way of being with (more than just 'in') nature that helps us validate the reality of its goodness and nourishing inter-relatedness, much like when we spend time internalizing the feel-goods after a bodywork session.

I have found the practice of nature-connecting (referenced on the last page) to be instrumental in expanding my sense of self beyond the restrictive identities and values of our society, helping me to feel more 'natural' more of the time.

And, that, I believe, is really what most of us are  
longing to feel:

At ease in our own skin.



# In conclusion.

I hope you enjoyed reading this...

... and that it gave you some food for thought.

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## **Links and referenced resources:**

- **Surrenderwork**  
[surrenderwork.com](http://surrenderwork.com)
- **“Get bigger than what’s bothering you”:**  
[FocusingResources.com](http://FocusingResources.com)
- **My YouTube videos**  
[youtube.com/@ginaloree](http://youtube.com/@ginaloree)
- **My classes, current and upcoming courses:**  
[embodygrace.com/classes-events](http://embodygrace.com/classes-events)
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Blessings & Peace.  
*Gina*

