

I hurt my lower back once. I hurt it slightly during a work out session at the gym and didn't let it heal properly before going to my full fitness regime and kept re-injuring it. After a few cycles my back finally said "Enough is enough!" and gave out. My sciatic nerve in my right leg would, without warning, and with confounding regularity spasm and shoot pain from my hip down to my lower leg. Sitting for as little as 15 minutes caused pain and spasms to shoot down my legs and twist and contort my lower back and hips. Walking was a potential catastrophe and walking upright was pretty much out of the question. I can remember watching people do all the simple tasks we often take for granted, walking across the room, bending over to pick up small objects, and even comfortably sitting in chair, and feeling so removed from them. At times even envious. So separate. So different. My daily activities centered around how much pain I was feeling and how much mobility I had. It wasn't if I would have pain but how much. In an amazingly short period of time my life began to revolve around my injury. I started to become my injury. It was an unwanted companion that was always there and never left my side. Not even for a minute.

That was then. This is now. The pain is gone. My strength is back. All is well. How I got there is a story for another time. Needless to say when I found the key that unlocked the door to my return to my natural state of wellness it a short trip.

You're are, by design, a healthy, complete, individual. You are not designed to be unwell. The pain, disease, or sickness you may feel today is not part of you. Notice I say that "The" pain is gone and "My" strength is back. The pain you may feel does not belong to you. It is not who you are. It is not who you were designed to be. I know it feels that way sometimes - maybe all the time - but I tell you it is not who you are.

Remember how when you were a kid you would be playing at the lake or swimming pool and would take a beach ball and try and hold it under water? It was quite the task to submerge it completely and an even harder one to keep it there. Inevitably it would slip out from your grasp and pop up to the surface and peacefully bob around almost smiling back at you and your failed attempt to confine it. If you could get a couple of your friends to help you hold the beach ball under water is was much easier. If you had enough you could actually keep it there. But as one friend and then another let go of the ball it got harder to keep submerged and before you knew it slipped from your grasp and up to the surface it went.

So you say "If health and wellness is my natural state why am I sick?" The answer is obstructions. Your picture perfect health, wellness, happiness, and peace are your birthright. Your life is not designed to be one of pain and restrictions but one of freedom and growth. Once those obstructions are released your return to your natural state of health and wellness is as simple as the beach ball bobbing to the surface of the water.

When I was enduring life with my back injury I constantly tried different avenues to try recover my health or even to alleviate the symptoms. In a short period of time I had received a host of treatments and a variety of "diagnosis" on what was wrong and what I could expect from each treatment and how close I may get to complete health.

You may have heard this rhetoric before. And you've been trying. And trying and trying and trying. And sometimes you're frankly tired of trying and seemingly getting no where. I know how you feel. I know how it feels to be searching and searching for relief. And each time you're presented with a new therapy or technique you think maybe this is the one. So you try. And you come away maybe feeling a bit better and more often than not with less dollars in your wallet. And you think to yourself "Is this it? Is this the one that will make the difference". And maybe it does. And maybe it doesn't. And you may go through a day or two of relief. And maybe not. And maybe you say to yourself "Will I ever

get better?". And maybe you say to yourself "I'm really tired of trying. Maybe this is how it's going to be. Maybe this is as good as it gets." I have one thing to say to you.

Don't quit. Don't ever quit. It's there. It maybe closer than you know.

I know what it's like. In the whole scheme of things my injuries were ridiculously minor compared to what many of you are going through. But the emotions are familiar.

I finish with the television show "Survivor". The other night I was watched two teams compete in an event where they had a pulley assembly which a large empty bucket on one end and a little platform where someone would sit on the other. The objective was for team members to go fill up little cans with water and come back and dump it in the large bucket. When the bucket got heavy enough it would counterbalance the platform causing it to rise up and allow the person sitting on it to grab a flag and win. Right up until the last small bucket of water the platform didn't move an inch. But when the last small bucket of water was emptied into the large one up the platform went.

Don't quit trying. Maybe you're only one small bucket away from removing that last obstacle and popping up to the surface and the health and wellness that is yours. And always has been. And when you find that key. The one that unlocks the door to your future. It's a short trip to the surface. And you quickly forget the pain and discomfort you felt. But not the experience. Then you can share with others your journey to wellness. And you can encourage them. And you can tell them "don't quit".

It happened to me. At our weekly meditation group I routinely see people release pain and discomfort. I see it in the people that I treat. It's there. It may be right in front of you. You may be only one small bucket away. Don't quit. You are far too important and have too much to offer this world.