

V. contacted me because he had an issue with food and self image he would like to address. 3 years previously he had totally burnt out whilst trying to lose weight and get fit and he had a pattern of sabotaging behaviour. He felt totally locked in a cycle of stress in every part of his life.

He felt consumed by burn out, acidity and negative emotions. He had an understanding that there were parts of him still feeling as they did during the traumas of the past and were influencing his behaviour now.

I asked him to be aware of what he wanted from this work together today.

He spoke of a real fear of moving on, fear of stepping out, fear of taking responsibility, failure means punishment and pain. He has to make a decision about what he wants to do with his life and it feels very, very difficult. So much stress involved and this had a negative impact on his health. He felt stuck in repeated patterns, and still feeling the shock of the burnout. Every time he made the effort to go forward it took him back to the trauma. Even eating a meal is stressful, so every aspect of his life felt stress inducing.

He had a clear conflict between a part that wants to move on and a part that didn't feel safe.

I chose to try to use an exercise I sometimes use with my clients to gauge the state of the nervous system I call 'The Watcher on the Hill'.

Imagine the nervous system as an army. In a healthy nervous system our amygdala, the watchman, is in a state of relaxed expectation.

I asked him to visualise his watchmen. He saw many watchers looking out for danger, more watchers than soldiers.

"Even though there's more watchers than soldiers, they are all looking out for danger, they expect danger, I don't feel safe, there are parts of me that feel really unsafe and they can't relax and they remember a time when I wasn't safe, I want these parts to know, that right here, right now, its over, I am safe, we survived, we're okay"

"Even though parts of me remember the feeling of a time when we were unsafe, that was then, this is now, its a feeling, we remember the feeling and feelings can change, I allow these feelings to flow"

There were still some there but there was less energy running through his head, he had been experiencing adrenaline surges in his head. I asked him to be aware of his soldiers

'Even though the soldiers look tired, they have been ready for danger, ready for action, expecting action for so long that they are just exhausted, they have been working so hard, they need a rest, there is no danger right now, they can rest right now, I give them permission to relax and have some time off'

I asked him what he sensed they needed to recuperate. He realised they needed to have some fun.

'I allow them to have some fun, they can be there when I need them, with the appropriate rest and relaxation'

I explained that we do need our nervous system to be ready and gave him some examples of when we need a little surge of adrenaline.

I asked him to tune into when his nervous system felt like it had to fight all the time.

He said he felt there had been fighting ever since he had got on that treadmill of dieting and overexercising, months and months of stress locked in.

I asked him to get in touch with the part of him that decided it was a good idea to push his body to the limit. He felt really angry with this part of him.

'Even though I am so angry with this part of me, I don't want to talk to him, I don't accept him, I am open to the possibility of accepting that part of me was doing the best it could and I will try to understand him somehow, but right now I AM angry with him.'

'Even though I am angry with that part because....(just wait for answer) it destroyed me. I am open to the possibility that the part of me who did that was doing the best he could. I am open to the possibility of understanding him somehow.'

I asked him to tune into his feelings now, he felt not so angry but upset with the fact that so many years of his life have gone into managing this situation, going from one doctor to another, getting some success, falling back, constantly struggling. He wanted to be free and enjoy a good meal and laugh instead of having to micromanage his body.

I invited him to just acknowledge how hard this has been (the following language was taken from Betty Moore Hafters excellent Tapping Secrets parts protocol and inner child protocol material)

'Even though I have these problems with food, and I have had to try and manage things and manage these problems I love and accept myself with kindness and compassion.'

'I acknowledge how difficult this has been, it has been really hard for me, it has been hard, its really hurt, there's been so much trauma, so much pain, I honour these young parts of me, the must have felt (I asked how they might have felt) so lonely, frightening alienated.'

'I acknowledge how hard I have been on myself, I choose to be kinder to myself, I hold myself in kindness and compassion.'

He realised how hard he has been on himself

'Even though I have been hard on myself, I wanted results, I wanted my body to be fixed and to heal itself fast, I wanted it to be done fast and my body has been through alot, it needs time and space and kindness and compassion. Right now I am opening the doors for healing, its time for things to change, its time to bring healing to these parts. There are some parts that need healing with kindness, compassion and patience. I am ready to allow something to change, I give myself permission to take all the time it needs, I allow all parts of me the time and space to heal, I can let these feelings flow and let it go in the timing thats right for me'

I asked him to tune into this and his response to this and any possible conflict that might be present. He felt there was a part that was really keen to let go and shower himself with

kindness but there was a part that was very stubborn, the punisher, like a taskmaster that said 'No, you can't do this'

I asked him now to take the part who was willing to be compassionate and to help him communicate with the taskmaster part. I told him that I need all these parts to know that I know they were doing the best they could, they were trying to protect themselves, and were stuck in a pattern and that I also understood they might not trust me right now but I was also doing the best I could to help my client and them. I knew that this was communicating to all parts of V's subconscious mind, some of whom might not feel they can trust me at all.

He realised this came from being a child, his parents left from India and left him at home for 2 months at home with his grandmother. There were people around but his safety was gone, he felt threatened by this. Later his mother went through many operations and went missing from his life by being in hospital, so there was a lot of stress and separation continually. It felt like there was no security or safety, that's why he has needed so many watchers. He would keep talking to himself to calm himself down. (Separation from the mother in early childhood is a common trigger for dissociation)

I asked him to be aware if his baby self felt safe with his mother and he was initially but when they left it broke his trust and he couldn't express his anger, and also felt guilty for this. When his mother got sick the anger increased and also anger towards his father. He couldn't handle these emotions he became rebellious and seemed self-destructive. He had no remembrance of clarity of why he was so angry.

I asked him to get in touch with the little boy who was left at home when he was 3. He could picture himself in his parents room, very confused, what has happened, where have they gone? What have I done?

Even though my three year old feels confused bad and guilty, I love and accept my young self without judgement

Even though I am three and feel so guilty and bad its time for this heal.

Even though your three and you feel so bad and guilty and confused I want you to know its not your fault, there is nothing wrong with you, your just a little boy' its time for this to heal. Tuning into his little boy now he still looked angry.

I asked him to let this little boy know we wanted to help him. He was not happy we were there to help at all.

"I know you don't trust us, I know your feeling angry, I accept you, I take your feelings seriously, (he still doesn't believe me) I know you don't believe me, I know you don't trust me, I understand how angry you are feeling right now, and you don't know who I am, I am willing to give you some time, what do you need to feel better, what do you need from me? I take you seriously, even though no one understood what you were going through, I do understand, and I am with you now. I know how painful it was for you, I take your feelings seriously. Someone should have helped you then, nobody did, but I am here to help you now.'

V. now felt there was a part of him that was resisting this experience. It was angry with him for doing this process and angry with me for leading him through this process. A part that doesn't want change.

I asked that part to talk to me and tell me how it was feeling. He said it was a violent abusive part who is angry and doesn't trust women and thinks women will inflict pain of some sort. He sensed it was all coming from this child.

I acknowledged that I as a woman might not be helping. I told him that I understood he would be angry, his mum left him, that wasn't fair, every time she left, he didn't know if she would come back, it made perfect sense to me.

My client was able to see this angry part that was angry, didn't like me and was resisting this process. I asked him how he felt about this part. He felt he had made peace that he had a part but up until now was afraid of the power of it and what it could do. Now he realised it was just a part that has been through trauma, is begging for help, but can't accept help when it comes.

I assured him I understood this. He said it all came from a sense of detachment and from this has come guilt, anger and rage. This part grew into becoming rebellious and mistrustful, but I mentioned that this was just like any other child trying to get his needs met.

The child wants the love, wants the acceptance but also wants to prove a point.

I explained that when a child is trying to get his needs met even through rebellious and difficult behaviour, and the parent is frightened and feels unsafe, this does not bring security to the child. Similarly for us if we are afraid of our own parts, this does not bring safety to us. If my client felt afraid of this part of himself the part would feel unsafe.

It felt a very big move forward for my client to accept this parts existence and influence with any kind of compassion.

I spoke directly to the part here. I told him that I had not been through his experience, had not been through what he had been through but I did know he was doing the best he could. We weren't here to fight or judge or force, we were interested in understanding it.

My client asked me what did I think his part need, it was asking for something. He felt the child had a passion, his passion was to be creative and he felt trapped.

I suggested that he did what many of my clients do when they meet these parts, allow them to do something the child part would enjoy. Agree to do something the child part would enjoy.

He realised the child part would love to paint, bicycle.

I encouraged my client to be aware of his parts presence and fill its needs when possible.

He realised his part didn't want to be here, in Goa, he hated his fathers business and had never wanted to work for his father.

'Even though this part of me doesn't want to be here, and hates working for my father, I want this part to know that I want to be get out of here too, I am not comfortable, but there are better ways to deal with these feelings'

'Even though your angry because you don't want to be here, I want you to know I do understand and I do want to make change, I want change too and if all my parts can work together, we can change things, we can all work for the same purpose'

He understood now his child self never wanted to work for his father. He realised he had taken on the role of victim and created this situation where he couldn't leave and he ended up feeling secure with his father, becoming dependant, like an addiction. This part was angry because of this,

I encouraged him to communicate to this part and say

"I am sorry, you didn't want to work with dad, and thats what I am doing now, I am sorry, forgive me"

His little boy self looked alot happier and more relaxed.

I encouraged him to let this part of himself communicate his feelings, to give him permission to express himself, to tap on whatever feelings come up. He realised he was now expressing things to himself that he never had done before. He realised that coming out of the office today his soldiers would be fighting and he was saying to himself, 'I hate this, I hate working here'. He realised this was the part of him expressing itself. I encouraged him to tap on whatever feelings were coming up, as his parts express himself, 'I hate working here etc."

At this point he realised I understood his experience of dissociation, that he had parts of himself which felt and behaved seperately to the others and were in conflict with each other and also with him and his adult decisions, such as being married and working for his father and was grateful to talk with someone who understood this situation.

He realised he had come to a place of insight and he was learning to allow his parts to express themselves, he didn't know what these parts were at first, he had felt possessed at one point, hearing voices, feeling like he was going insane. However he started looking for solutions, outside his comfort zone and realised he had dissociated parts through all his research. Only recently had he got to the place where he could face his parts or even admit to their existence but there were some he didn't not want to meet. He realised there were just parts not the whole of him, but sometimes it feels like the whole of him when they took over.

He felt like something shattered and each part took a life of its own, and they all went on their own way, but all part of the same energy system. It works great as a survival system when you need it but was a disorder now, and it was backfiring. However he had found EFT to be of great benefit in reducing the overall feelings of stress and could now see how applying EFT in this way can ease the internal communication and be used to specifically heal the parts that were still hurting, who did not realise that the trauma was over.

I encouraged him to be patient with these parts and give them the time and space to express their hurt and pain.

Now he understood he has to be brave enough and courageous enough to hear what his parts need to say. I encouraged him to be aware of his own feelings about the fact that his parts need to communicate and use EFT for any fear or discomfort this brings, creating a safe place in his mind to meet these parts. We can acknowledge the feelings of our parts, sometimes they disagree with us so much and the decisions we make, and we can allow these parts to express their feelings WHILE we tap. However we can communicate with them and help them to see that we have more resources now and things can be done differently.

I got an email after this session.

“Just to let you know that I'm grateful for the session we had and the insights you gave me. I used the watcher and the soldiers and was able to see the internal structure that existed. That along with other things I coupled and the grace that I received led me to one of the most if not the most sacred moment in my life ... the encountering of my self and the truth set me free.

For years I had been so ANGRY with my SELF and I hated myself for I had so many false beliefs about me . From that deep hatred for me came my deep hatred for my parents, my family, my world really and I used shame and blame . Gillian it was such a truly blessed moment to come to, to see my "self" that I was avoiding and shift that final stone. I cannot explain it ..I can only say what it felt like and even that is pale .

I am a new person today. I feel different. Like I've never felt before. A certain freedom .

With much gratitude and love,
V.