

**I WAS MOSTLY
MAD
NOW I'M MOSTLY
GLAD**

**50 TUTORIALS
TO TEACH YOU HOW
TO HEAL YOUR LIFE**

MATTHEW W. G. STEWART, PH.D. Author of *Playing to Lose*

I WAS MOSTLY MAD NOW I'M MOSTLY GLAD; 50 TUTORIALS TO TEACH YOU HOW TO HEAL YOUR LIFE

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Foreword

Although I wrote these 50 tutorials primarily for survivors of child abuse, many readers without abuse in their histories have written me to say thank you for the lessons herein that help them in their daily lives.

I know from experience how our child abuse stories seem to totally overwhelm us. Whenever we tell these stories, we talk about how we were victims. We want our intense stories to be heard, to ease the pressure inside. Can we escape them? No. Can we heal them? Yes!

It is not enough to be a survivor and still be a wreck all the time. I want to really live! In order to move past the trauma, we survivors must learn how to tell the stories of our lives as healing stories. We must make that conscious and deliberate choice. Our history does not identify or define us.

Transforming my child abuse stories into healing stories helped save my life. I became a loving and loved human being. Many of my healing stories are woven right into these tutorials, so they can help you transform and save your life too. Through healing stories, memory yields to imagination. We are not trapped by our memories. Your life is what you create. Love is what you create. Let me show you how to come back to life. It comes down to this. Do you want to really live?

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You Can Thrive

Tutorial 1

Gentle Reader, suffering child abuse is no fun. Those of us with child abuse stories need to find our funnybone again, and exercise it, so we can hear the sound of our laughter.

In these first 2 tutorials, I introduce and discuss a funny book that I wrote, to provide a solid art therapy framework for you to work with. After that, I switch gears, and talk about other stuff. Maybe art therapy doesn't grab you, so if you want to skip the art therapy stuff, go ahead. The other tutorials will grab you, so stick around. Now I ask you, can I make it any easier than that?

As part of my Doctoral research, I wrote lots of these funny healing stories. How do funny stories bring healing? When you are laughing and having fun, your anxiety is transformed into excitement, so your fear recedes, your tension eases, and your pain subsides. In the healing moment, which is right now, it is your job to give your body, mind, and spirit "heal" messages, so you can thrive. My funny stories help you to do exactly that. Our child abuse stories have made us cry plenty. Just like each page of this funny story adds up to form the whole story, each moment that you spend bringing yourself joy adds up to form your healing story, your new history of your healing self. This is a great time for you to build up your laughing muscles and strengthen your immune system! Magic!

...a word is precious when it makes no sense, when its power flows from its sound, its letters, and its physical presence. This potent magic may appear strange to us....a word doesn't have to make sense...but as a precious thing in itself, can serve as a vehicle for enchantment.

Thomas Moore, 1996.

The re-enchantment of everyday life. Page 258.

Our child abuse stories often tell how the abuse made us feel like something innocent inside us died. Can that part of us be revived? Yes! These stories are designed to nurture the healing self within you by stimulating your funnybone. When you laugh, you are more alive! More alive is good!

I have written 16 books in this **baw-baw dooP** series. This one, entitled *The Right Time*, is Book 7, and it is 14 pages long. For each page, I provide:

1. Text. The plot or story line in wild new words.
2. Action. I translate the wild words into English so you can draw the story.
3. Emotion. Enough said.

For this and the next 13 tutorials, you get one page per tutorial, to give you time to read, think about, and draw this funny story, one scene at a time. Maybe you don't want to do that. Maybe you would prefer to just follow this funny story because it is actually embedded in my doctoral research as a miniature version

of a much greater, ancient tale that is part of most cultures. I assure you that it is relevant to child abuse and healing. Important even. It merely *looks* silly. I explain it in Tutorials 15 and 16 and you will be glad if you stick with it.

Our child abuse stories include the big lie that we can't do anything right. I'm telling you, instead, that no matter what you draw, you can't do it wrong. Imagine that! You cannot make a mistake! You can only succeed! No two people on Earth will see, hear, or draw exactly what you do. Your interpretation is uniquely yours. You own it. Maybe you don't want to follow the directions I have supplied. Do what you like. After you play, we will talk about what you created while you were at play. Now, grab your coloured markers and draw this funny story. Have fun!

Setting: There are 2 characters and 1 creature in this storybook. The characters, Wunkum and Rofklimmer are brother and sister. They are Troll-like and human-like. Not as human as the Flintstones. Not as troll as the Smurfs. Adults are maybe 4 feet tall, they are not chubby like the Seven Dwarfs. They are acrobatic, supple, high-energy, cheerful and mischievous. Their homes are cylindrical structures of various sizes, made of thick, hollow (light-weight) bamboo-like wood, with thatch roofs and walls, the chimneys are just longer and thicker poles. All their homes are single-story. The towns are small, maybe only 20 or 30 homes. Rolling countryside with dome wood bridges over creeks. All the characters, but not the creatures, have wild hair that stands on end, and is very strong. Their hair is about a foot long. They don't wear clothes. No visibly external genitals. Furry bodies like penguins. They can make their hair change shape, hold onto things with it, bounce on it, and generally do crazy things. They all defy gravity. They walk up and down vertical walls. They love to laugh and help each other.

The Right Time. baw-baw dooP Book 7

Page 1

Text: Bynerkrix is a little gwitter.

Character: Bynerkrix has 2 long rubbery arms and 2 long rubbery legs. And a rubbery neck too. He has long rubbery fingers and toes. His eyes are on the end of his long rubbery nose. He holds his chin close to his chest. When he stands up, he's maybe 8 inches tall. He has no hair.

Action: this is a close up of Bynerkrix's face. He's lovable and cute sitting on that freshly husked cob of corn, soaking wet.

Emotion: love

Success is One Small Step

Tutorial 2

Gentle Reader, it is important to respect your drawings. They are your creations. Abusers do not respect other people's stuff, they just try to manipulate and control everything. When we grow up in that horrible kind of environment, we learn to be afraid. I used to be afraid of what might happen, and what might not, and that just about covers it, wouldn't you agree?

Now, if you think I am telling you what to do, you can stick out your tongue and cuss if you like, and that's okay by me. I am trying to give you some suggestions that I hope will help you because they sure helped me. I take good care of my stuff because that is my way of saying "This is mine!" Lots of youngsters came home from school, and their loving parents stuck their art on the refrigerator door. So the kid learned that what they created was valued. That never happened to me once in my life. I made sure I did that for my kids, and I still have a few things they made when they were little, even though I am Grampa now.

I hope that you don't leave your art around on the coffee table for the dog to chew on or somebody else to mark up because that would be no fun. You don't have to show your art to anybody either, if you don't want to. You don't need others to judge your stuff. Let your art be yours. Date your drawings and keep them in a safe place. Maybe in a special folder. I always date every poem I write, and other stuff that I create. It's my way of honouring my art. It's mine!

I encourage you to also keep any interesting ideas that come to you about this process, maybe in a steno notebook. Date your entries, that way, over time you will see that you have created your very own healing journal. I like steno notebooks because they travel well, and are easy to use in the car, and even on airplanes. They fit into my backpack no problem. And I can tear a page out if need be, without doing any damage to the book. Keep in mind that when you are out, maybe at a picnic, and you don't have your notebook with you when you get inspired, just borrow a pencil and grab some paper and scribble down your ideas or rough your drawings, and when you get home, you can tape or staple them into your notebook. That's what I do. That way I don't get frustrated looking for loose papers.

I always have short-term and long-term projects. Writing this BOOK 7, that you are illustrating, was a short-term project. The long-term project was writing 16 of these books in one series, recording them in a professional sound studio, and figuring out how to offer them to the world so they would help others who suffered child abuse like me.

So, your short-term goal is to draw this one scene for page 2. This shows you that success is easy. It is only a small step. Your objective here is to just do this one small thing for yourself. Take your time. No rush. This book is 14 pages

total, so that is your long-term goal. And I will be here encouraging you along the way. Of course if you want to do more than one drawing per page, please do. I often revise whatever I draw or write until it feels right. I find this process exciting! Have fun!

The Right Time. baw-baw dooP Book 7

Page 2

Text: He smunjiz around in Wunkum's breakfast bowl.

Character: Wunkum is a young adult female, fully grown, with big zebra stripes.

Action: Now the bigger picture. Wunkum's bowl is very big, made of thick wood, about half the size of the table, about a foot deep, and it's got maybe 10 whole cobs of yellow corn in it, floating in milk. There are small chunks of fresh cobs of corn in the bowl too. Bynerkrix swims around on his back, blowing a fountain of milk out of his mouth.

Emotion: Silly fun!

Loving Creatures

Tutorial 3

Gentle Reader, our child abuse stories can be easily triggered by even nice things. I used to watch people talk to their cats all friendly, and hug their cats, and buy their cats treats, and take their cats to animal hospitals, and I used to get so envious of those cats! I couldn't stand to see people treating their cats better than I was treated as a child, and I got angry about that. Now I am happy for the cats.

The thing is you don't know what is going to trigger you, so what is a safe topic? Jello? Over time, I learned that the trigger wasn't external. It wasn't in a topic, or in a place, or in how somebody treated me. It was always inside me. I was always hair-trigger. I would be enjoying a lovely Thanksgiving dinner with my friends and suddenly I was spewing my intense child abuse stories all over the place, wrecking things.

In therapy, I began to know that I was being heard by the right person. By that I mean the helpful person who was compassionate. So the more I went to therapy the easier it became for me to keep my child abuse stories for my therapy sessions instead of anywhere anybody anytime. I have a tool box, and I keep my screwdrivers all in one place, and my pliers in another place, and my spanners in another place. I like knowing where my tools are when I need them. The more I went to therapy, the easier it became for me to take out my child abuse stories, look at them, cry or holler or be sad or all of the above, and then put them back in my tool box until my next session. It was too dangerous to be driving on the highway and crying or being in a rage at the same time.

It's amazing, though, how your emotions can sneak up on you, like a wolf. One time, when I went to see my therapist Dr. Bill with my ladyfriend Christine, I was feeling okay. It was a bright sunny day. We walk in, say hello, sit down and I burst into sobs. Where did that come from? Deep inside me, that's where. I cried for the whole hour. Releasing my sorrow. He was so kind. He just let me cry. I was safe enough to cry from the middle of my broken heart and he heard me. He said, "I'm sorry." Other than hello and goodbye, that's all he said for the whole session because I was crying so hard. He meant that he was sorry that I had suffered so much. Nobody else ever said that to me. I will never forget. I don't have a clue what it is to be loved by my own parents, but I do know what it is like to be treated with compassion and respect by a therapist with a good heart. It is wonderful. Liberating.

Dr. Bill had a cat. And when his cat died, he told me how one minute his cat is purring in his arms, and the next minute his cat is lifeless. And he just holds his dead cat in his arms for a while, stroking his fur, saying goodbye. I figure this guy loves his cat. This big world is full of creatures to love. Some are real and some

are imaginary. Some of them are created for you already and some of them you get to create. Have fun!

The Right Time. baw-baw dooP Book 7

Page 3

Text: but Wunkum won't eat him.

Action: Wunkum is so much bigger than him, looking at him in her bowl. She holds a big spoon (that she eats with), made of wood, in one hand. She smiles.

Emotion: I like you.

Speaking Truth

Tutorial 4

Gentle Reader, I used to be so reluctant to go to parties or other events because I believed that I had only one story to tell: my child abuse story. And no matter how hard I tried to not speak, eventually these stories bubbled out of me. You know how it goes. People make small talk, and I would play along, and try to keep a lid on my inner turmoil. I would smile and be polite and feel like I was a total fake because I could not be who I was. Always the same questions. Where are you from? How many kids in your family? What do you work at?

After I left my wife and kids, and started University and therapy, that was especially difficult. Why? Well, because I wanted to meet women, that's why. I was as lonely as a chunk of mangled meteorite. I was still young and frisky and wanted somebody to like me. I mean for who I really was. This created a big dilemma: tell the women the truth and scare them off, or lie. I'm not a good liar, and I hate being lied to. That's a really important thing about suffering child abuse. The abuser is a liar, pretending to love you and hurting you terribly, lying to himself and you and the whole community.

I had a relationship with an older woman for a long time, and when I started to write my autobiography, she told me that if I continued, she'd leave me. She said she just couldn't stand seeing me being suicidal while I was writing my story. So I tossed my manuscript in the trash. About a year later, I started it again. Again she threatened to leave me. Again I trashed it. The third time I started it, I believed that my story, my truth, was more important. True to her word, she left me for another guy. That hurt. It took me one whole year to write 64 typed pages.

I moved into a log house in the bush. I just kept at it. One word at a time. I finished the book. It took me 3 more years, working full time. I remember very clearly, working away, about page 200 of the manuscript, and I suddenly understood something important: as long as I told the truth on the page, I no longer had to fear becoming like my parents. Speaking or writing the truth makes me different from them. It makes me who I am. That revelation filled me with hope. I had found something immensely valuable to me: my own voice.

As I wrote about my child abuse stories, I learned that they fit into a bigger context that included stories about my grandparents, my brothers and sisters, my children, moving across the country, etcetera. Making these connections helped me to not feel quite so isolated. Child abusers try to isolate and destroy. My truth-telling was a way of saying "I want to live!" Going to therapy was a way of saying "I want to live!" Continuing to be a father to my kids after the breakup of my marriage was a way of saying "I want to live!"

What a great relief to have the story told. But writing a book and getting it published are two very different things. Eventually, I found a publisher with the guts to do the job, and my book was published in 1995. I became curious how my child abuse stories fit into the larger context of families around the world, so I went back to University to learn about that. The more connections I made, the more I realized that I actually belonged in this world with about a zillion other people who struggle with their child abuse stories.

Then I met a lady with heavenly eyelashes. I baked her a pie and I put my book in her hand and I said, "read this, and if you still want to be my friend, okay, and if not, okay." She called me a few days later. She really liked the pie. We have been together 18 years. We have baseball stories. Sailing stories. Cooking stories. Going to University stories. Graduation stories. Going to therapy together stories. Skating stories. Being grandparents stories. Working on the house stories. Gardening stories. Going places together stories. Healing sex stories. Many of our individual stories overlap and many do not. For example, she has a circle of friends, and I go roaming in the forest alone. She loves to watch figure skating on TV, and I'd rather write tutorials for you. In case you are wondering, she loves my wild baw-baw dooP stories too. Here's another page for you. Have fun!

The Right Time. baw-baw dooP Book 7

Page 4

Text: She fimjumble with him.

Action: Wunkum stirs the contents of the bowl vigorously with the long straight handle of her spoon. Bynerkrix is being swooshed about.

Emotion: Fun!

Hello Wolf

Tutorial 5

Gentle Reader, notice how each picture you draw for this book actually takes time to do. Sure, you can scratch out something in a minute, but will that hold any meaning for you? I doubt it. You already know from experience that when you are careful with what you create, it turns out better than if you rush it.

Drawing this story one scene at a time, provides you with the time to think about how you want to proceed. Nobody is rushing you. No pressure. And nobody around to control or judge you or your art. I provide you with a nurturing story, and you are always free to respond however you like. That's a relief, now, isn't it?

It's the opposite of our child abuse stories, that feel so concentrated inside our being that we often feel panic. In cases of extreme abuse, such as what I endured, that panic is directly connected to our physical survival. We are constantly on guard, trying to protect ourselves from imminent attack. And even when the attacker is out of the country, we know in our brains that we are safe, for the time being, but we don't know that in our bones. If we knew we were safe in our bones, we should be able to relax, right?

How do we learn to be safe? I learned to trust my therapist, and he helped me learn to trust myself, so instead of me always looking for a safe place, I became a safe place. Most people, if you ask them where they live, will tell you they live in a building of some type. That may be true, but this is more true: we live inside our bodies, inside our skin. My body is my home. Of course, you know that. But when you really know that, you start to appreciate your body in a new way. Your body is your home.

Child abusers don't have any respect for your body. You must learn to respect it and take good care of it. How do you do that? By slowing down and actually living inside your body, instead of keeping yourself in a constant state of panic by going fast fast fast. I used to think that if I slowed down, my interior child abuse movies would fill my head constantly. Maybe you know how to drive a car. And maybe you have driven in snow, and maybe you know what it feels like when your car is sliding toward the ditch. What do you do? You steer into your skid. That's how you straighten out the car.

In therapy and writing my autobiography, I learned to slow down, steer into my skid, and tell the story. When panic takes hold of you, it's just like that wolf is chomping on your butt. Instead of trying to stop the panic once it has set in, or trying to prevent it, I learned to just slow down and look it right in the eye. I say, "Hello Wolf, how ya doin?" If I run from it, it gets me. I cannot outrun it. Every time I face it, I gain a little more confidence. So I practice practice practice. When you try this, you will see the wolf in context. He is part of the bigger world

of fish jumping in the lake, and a rainbow, and birds and butterflies and flowers and bumblebees and porcupines.

Suffering child abuse makes you narrow your focus to what is close and immediate and no fun. Healing means you get to see the bigger picture, and you learn to appreciate that you are still alive to enjoy your life. Healing is not a one-time thing. It's an all-the-time thing. Like breathing. I am still sometimes surprised that I survived, and I am thankful that I did because I really love having fun. Now it's your turn. Have fun!

The Right Time. baw-baw dooP Book 7

Page 5

Text: Until his mroogs and hofrees are all rakkilfroy.

Action: Bynerkrix's arms and legs are all tangled up around Wunkum's spoon like spaghetti.

Emotion: He really enjoys this game!

Creating is Power

Tutorial 6

Gentle Reader, I know that suffering child abuse makes some things feel like they are absolutely impossible. When we are severely traumatized, we don't even know how to imagine that we can heal. It feels like we are just stuck in the never-ending pain. And the pain is so loud inside that we just want to switch it off. But there is no off-switch. We want the pain to stop! That's why so many desperate people commit suicide. They totally lose hope. They cannot imagine an end to their suffering. I tied the noose around my own neck too, so I know how hard it can be. The good news, however, is that we don't just carry our child abuse stories, we also carry precious gifts around inside our bones. When we are in pain, we forget our precious gifts.

When an abuser causes you pain, he expects that your fear of pain or death will make you obey him. And maybe you do obey for a while, until you can get out of that situation. Abusers think that they have power because they can hurt others. But that isn't power. That's bullying. Any idiot can bully and beat up kids. Abusers think that they have power because they can destroy things. Any idiot with a sledgehammer can destroy a beautiful home in minutes. That isn't power. That's stupidity. People who bully and destroy stuff are just having huge temper tantrums. If I deliberately and maliciously stomp on a cricket, for fun, then I have just killed some innocent part of myself. I love the sound of crickets in the garden in the dark in the summertime. They just keep chirping, "I'm alive! I'm alive! I'm alive!"

Bullies get their jollies from hurting others, and lots of us who've suffered child abuse are afraid of anger. We think that anger means getting yelled at and being beaten up and treated like garbage. I used to think that too, but not anymore. Anger is energy that is not harnessed. And my question to any person with anger issues is this: are you angry enough to do something intelligent, or do you just want to have a tantrum? Those of us who have been abused have good reasons for our anger. I respect these reasons. I have learned how to use my righteous and intelligent anger in the most productive ways possible. I funnel my energy into creating really neat stuff. Creating. That's power.

You have the power in your bones to create something. Everybody does. And you can choose what to create. When you engage your heart, and create something with love in it, no matter how humble, this deliberate act of creation heals you a little bit. It is exciting, and fun, and it brings you happiness and you can feel your creative power. You feel more alive! Power is the on-switch. More alive is the on-switch. Happiness is the on-switch. Love is the on-switch. Fun is the on-switch. That is 5 on-switches.

You can keep trying to find the off-switch for your pain, or you can recognize that your on-switches are in good working order. Now, flip your creative on-switch and have fun!

The Right Time. baw-baw dooP Book 7

Page 6

Text: Then she shmam Bynerkrix out the window.

Action: Still sitting in front of her bowl, Wunkum whips the spoon over her shoulder with such force that Bynerkrix slides off it, still all tangled up, cartwheeling out through the open window.

Emotion: Fun!

Nurture and Nourish

Tutorial 7

Gentle Reader, one unfortunate truth that our child abuse stories bring into the light is how little we know about how to nurture or nourish ourselves. Nurture. Nourish. Aren't they lovely words? I like to say them slowly. Nuuuurr-tuuurre. Nouuur-iiish. These lovely words nurture and nourish you a little bit just by saying them, don't you think? It's hard for me to imagine how my life would have unfolded had I been nurtured or nourished as a youngster. When our role models are abusers, we do not learn how to be kind to ourselves from them. We learn the opposite.

For many many years I felt a deep sense of loss for the loving childhood that I never had. I longed for just one happy Christmas with my brothers and sisters. Every time my birthday rolled around, I craved a peaceful, joyful day. I felt like I was starving inside. During therapy and the writing of my autobiography, I finally let myself mourn. It took me a long time to learn that my happiness was my own responsibility, and nothing would ever bring back what was gone forever.

When people that I love immensely die, my grief feels like a huge heavy weight inside me. I honour that. Grief takes time to process. Some people would rather stay angry at God or Life or Death than face their own broken heart. I don't blame them. It is hard work to learn how to heal and embrace life again. At some point, after you truly mourn what you have lost, things begin to shift inside, and you can move on. That's what I learned.

Well, you may have noticed that this BOOK 7 is just slightly silly. My childhood died a painful death. Okay. I accepted that. What could I do about that? I decided to create a new, loving, fun childhood for myself. Because the kid in me is alive and wants to really live. So I'm doing all I can to nurture and nourish this kid in me, and by doing that, I help others like you learn to do that too. Now isn't that a neat trick?

When my grandson Miles and I play together, monster trucks fly, giraffes are purple, we catch fish from the couch and cook them and eat them over and over and over, airplanes land on my head, he is Larry the Lion, and "Grampa! You got broccoli in your ears!"

Here's hoping you find your funnybone. Have fun!

The Right Time. baw-baw dooP Book 7

Page 7

Text: Bynerkrix lands on his ener in the orfulspoz,

Action: Splat, Bynerkrix lands on his bum on a tall mound of porridge made from pumpkins in the garden. The porridge goes everywhere...

Emotion: Fun!

More Brains

Tutorial 8

Gentle Reader, wouldn't it be nifty if you could just hit the Delete key every time one of your child abuse memories surfaced? A really hard thing for me was figuring out how to deal with the abuser's verbal nastiness. I hope you appreciate this polite language; I assure you I do know how to swear. Growing up, I was called stupid so often maybe my parents thought that was my name. The thing is, I never believed them. I thought they were stupid for being mean and beating up little kids, and in fact I told my father that to his face one day when I was just a kid and, well, his response was super nasty, to be polite about it.

When people in authority insult you all the time, how can you fight back intelligently? It was important to me to prove my parents wrong, that I wasn't stupid. Off I went to University. I had just left my marriage, I had 2 young kids, and my health was in the trashcan, so my life was quite stressful. In addition, I am by nature a night person, and I do my best writing at about two o'clock in the morning. As you know, young kids wake up way too early and lots of University courses start way before lunchtime. Any morning that I thought about not going to school that day, I heard my father's voice inside my head. "Stupid." My feet hit the floor. "I am not stupid."

After a couple of years at University, I didn't need to prove that I wasn't stupid any more. All the positive feedback from my professors outweighed my parents' lies about me. Many people did not have a clue of what I lived through, yet they acted like they were so much smarter than me. You know how it goes. I'll show you my paper if you show me yours. Okay then, show me the A+ you got. Maybe they had more money, but money doesn't get you A+ now does it? Brains gets you A+. Feeling bad from being called stupid turned into feeling proud for being smart. Who do you want to fly the plane when you go for your holiday? The pilot who got C- or the pilot who got A+ at flight school? Who do you want to fix the brakes on your car? Who do you want to captain the ship when the waves are thundering over the bow? Who do you want to operate on your heart? Who do you want to help you heal from child abuse?

So you see, it is possible for you to turn hurtful words to your advantage by using them as motivation. Then when you don't need them anymore, toss them in the trash where they rightly belong.

There are other words in this big world. Beautiful words. Magical words. Silly words. Inspiring words. Brand new words. Nurturing words. Nourishing words. Here are a few more for you. Have fun!

The Right Time. baw-baw dooP Book 7

Page 8

Text: Right where Rofklimmer fmirb.

Character: Rofklimmer is a young adult male, fully grown with spots like an African leopard.

Action: Rofklimmer is almost entirely covered in the orange pumpkin porridge. He grins a big grin.

Emotion: Now I'm gonna getcha!

Authority Issues

Tutorial 9

Gentle Reader, after being forced to obey child abusers for many years, how do you think I respond to people who expect me to obey them? Right. Obedience is just not that easy. Besides, even though I was forced to obey as a kid, I found ways to say no. For example. My father said "Be home by 9:00." I rode my bike to the end of the street, and let the air out of my rear tire. I waited until I was sure it was after 9:00. Then I picked up my bike and ran home with it. Sure, he was waiting. Sure, he got really nasty on me. Sure, I needed to be hospitalized, but I wasn't. Here's the thing: I valued my freedom more than my skin and bones.

If you are going to say no, you've got to be willing to pay the price, and you cannot predict what that exact price will be. That takes courage. It was worth it. I defied my abusive parents with every breath. And I felt guilty but that didn't stop me. Then one day I look up the word defiant in the dictionary and it means brave. And no more guilt. I love my brave self. Obey sounds a lot like "do as you're told."

Well, I've learned that there are people in this world that actually know better than I do, and it is wise for me to do as I'm told. As you might guess, I had to learn this the hard way, because I thought that everybody who told me what to do was just trying to boss me around, and I had enough of that.

In order to learn how to drive a car I first had to recognize that the instructor knew more about driving than me, and it was a good idea to let the instructor be the boss. Okay. In order to learn how to drive a big truck, the same basic strategy. Okay. But when I started therapy, I let the therapist know right from the first minute that he wasn't the boss. Exclamation mark. Of course he recognized that I had some serious authority issues, and we worked on them for a long, long, long, long, long, long time. I basically had to learn a new way to relate to people in authority like my employers or teachers or the police, or the tax collectors, etc., rather than always reacting to them as if they were my abusive parents about to punish me for disobedience.

Meanwhile I had a paradoxical truth brewing inside me, and here it is: in order to write a poem or story, it is necessary for the writer to write what the poem or story wants to say, rather than what the writer wants to say. The job of the artist is to first be open to the vision. That could be called the first draft. Then the re-vision and re-vision and re-vision until the piece of art tells the artist that the work of art is done. That means the job of the artist is to listen. And obey. I create sculpture too, and I must submit. It might sound kooky, but being an artist is like being the vehicle for the art that wants to get born through you. I also have a lovely flower garden, and I've learned that some plants thrive in this part of the garden, and they wilt in that part of the garden. I don't know why. But I know it's true. So if it starts to wilt, I move it and it's happy.

Now here's the amazing thing about obeying your plants: I planted a huge amount of sunflower seeds and up they came. Sunflowers over 6 feet tall. Then one day, I'm on the front porch and down swoops a wee flock of Goldfinches. Whoosh. They were dancing and singing and munching and partying in my sunflowers for hours! So you see, you don't always reap what you sow. Sometimes, you plant sunflowers and you get Goldfinches. I am tempted to say good plan Batman but I won't. You can if you like. Have fun!

The Right Time. baw-baw dooP Book 7

Page 9

Text: Rofklimmer awgreez Bynerkrix seven times,

Action: Rofklimmer twists Bynerkrix in his hands like you'd wring out a wet towel. Bynerkrix looks like a thick twisted spaghetti noodle. Even his face is all twisted up.

Emotion: Fun!

A Healing Space

Tutorial 10

Gentle Reader, how do we find a healing space when we were raised in an abusive home? First, we need to learn what a healing space is. All learning takes time, and this means that our definitions of a healing place change as we grow. Our needs and wants are different when we are 40 years old than they were when we were 20. Probably the most important factor in a healing place is knowing that we will not be ambushed. We must know that the abuser cannot get to us, so our physical survival is no longer threatened.

As a teenager, I felt safer on the highway, hitch-hiking in the dark, than I did in my abusive family home. I *felt* safer because I knew I *was* safer. Why? Because normal people driving along would not have hit me deliberately. In my family home, I could not escape my parents. Hitch-hiking away from them was my escape route to my own life.

Outside there is so much space. I love that. In large part due to my upbringing, I still don't like confining spaces like small offices. Cubicles are okay for toilets at the bus station but that's about all. I really like my privacy, but I hate being boxed in. The best place that I have found on this planet to satisfy me deeply is the forest. I go there often to nurture and nourish myself. I park the truck and walk for miles, Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. Dead trees are everywhere, and life teems. In the forest, I let my feet take me where my heart leads rather than follow trails made by others. I don't attend church anymore. Instead I go to the forest. There I can sing and dance and curse and cry and pray and just shut up for a long time and only the forest spirits are my witnesses. When I stay still long enough, a deer comes by. I have gleaned some amazing pieces of trees from the forest for my sculpture. I am always thankful for the generosity of the forest, so sometimes I go on a clean-up mission and haul away tires and surfboards and televisions and paint cans and beer bottles that stupid tossed there.

The day my good friend Julius died, I went to the forest. I took my axe, walked only a few hundred feet, and I sat on a tree that had already fallen. I am confident with my axe in my hand. If I meet an unfriendly black bear or wolf, well, there's going to be fight. I use my Fox40 whistle as I trudge along, if I sense an encounter might be likely, so they know where I am. That way, we don't have to meet unless they are particularly hungry. I am in their territory, after all. This day, though, I sat still for maybe 10 minutes when a feeling of lovely quiet calmness came over me. It was like I was in a different zone. Maybe it was peace. Maybe serenity. Now there's a lovely word. I'm generally about as serene as a bulldozer in gear, so that's why I'm not sure if that's the right word or not. That's my healing space. I hope that you find the healing space your heart seeks. In the meantime, have fun!

The Right Time. baw-baw dooP Book 7

Page 10

Text: and swallows Bynerkrix down whole, easy as spornch.

Action: Rofklimmer smiles as he licks his lips. Maybe his belly is swollen with Bynerkrix inside, and orange goop on his lips.

Emotion: Fun!

The Murky Depths

Tutorial 11

Gentle Reader, all kinds of people will tell you about the ripple effect on the pond caused by the thrown pebble. Not me. I don't care about it that much. The reason is this: the focus is only on what happens on the surface. I am much more interested in what is going on in the depths. That same pebble falls all the way through that pond, down down down sending underwater ripples too. Then it lands gently fwoop, because it's a pebble remember, on the head of a turtle. The turtle shakes his head, and the pebble falls. The turtle kicks up some mud with his hind legs, and swims away. Inside the mud that the turtle kicks up is a small rock. This small rock is propelled by the turtle's kick inside an old black rubber boot that is lying on its side on the bottom of the pond.

That's how healing works. You make connections. Therapy gave me the opportunity to explore the depths of my self and I learned to speak from being in a grounded place. When I started therapy, I'd shout and be enraged about this or that child abuse story.

Then one day, I say quietly, "I'm very angry about that."

My therapist Dr. Bill nods. "Authentic," he says.

He means I'm not being all dramatic.

Drama is like you are really hungry, and you put the skillet on the big element on the stove, and set the knob to high and flop your fish into the skillet and you burn it black. Now you've wasted it, and you are still hungry. So are you going to settle down and make yourself a sandwich or throw the skillet through the window? Drama is good for movies and TV shows, but not much good for healing. That took me a long time to learn. My abusive parents were really dramatic. Throwing things and busting things and screaming like insane jackals and beating kids bloody. Who needs that crap?

I used to worry that I'd never get past my rage. After I finished writing my autobiography, I moved from the bush to the city. I went back to University, to crowded classrooms. I tell Dr. Bill how I miss the forest, and I am fighting with my ladyfriend Christine. He nods and says, "You're just grumpy, go to the forest." Wow. In this healing moment, I graduate from rage to grumpy. The healing moment is always right now, while I have this very breath in my lungs. We do not know for sure that we will be alive 10 minutes from now.

That session with Dr. Bill was many years ago, but some words, like those few healing words, linger around a long time because they just work. Grumpy was like a present. These days, when I'm all snarly because I feel like my eyeballs are going to melt from working on this computer, Christine tells me "You're just

grumpy, why not go to the forest?” Those are kind words to me. So I pack up my lunch and my axe and head out to the forest. Grumpy. What a lovely little word.

Most people talk about the ripples on the pond to demonstrate cause and effect. I've learned that life is much more complex than cause and effect. I explored the murky depths of child abuse to the most remote and dark corners that I could reach in my Doctoral research, and I am still learning, still making new connections that surprise me.

Our past does not determine our future. At best, our past only hints at our future. Because we are not simple cause and effect beings. We make choices all along the way, and there are other factors that influence our lives that we cannot possibly see coming. Life is like always going fishing. You need to go find the fish. And the fish needs to find you.

Next week a girl will be fishing from a canoe on that pond and she will hook that old black rubber boot and bring it up to the surface. She will find that rock inside it. She will put that rock in her pocket and take it home with her. And she will show it to her dad the next morning at the breakfast table and he'll say, "Honey, this is no ordinary rock. This is a chunk of real gold." Healing is like that. Have fun!

The Right Time. baw-baw dooP Book 7

Page 11

Wunkum fludle Rofklimmer at the right time,

Action: Rofklimmer is lying on his back, still in the garden. His belly is on fire. Wunkum jumps up and down on Rofklimmer's belly amid the flames.

Emotion: Fun!

Busting Stuff

Tutorial 12

Gentle Reader, sometimes it feels so good to bust stuff. When we moved into this house, there was a big slab of concrete that filled the space between the house and the garage. I don't really like walking on concrete because it feels so unforgiving. Now there's a hard word. Unforgiving. This old house has squeaky wood floors that I like. They are forgiving. What a lovely word. Forgiving. They yield a bit. Did you ever stand in one place for a few minutes and make the old floor squeak squeak squeak just for fun? No? Well there's a bit of homework for you.

I got out my sledgehammer and I busted up that concrete slab. Of course I wore goggles. My granddaughter Ayasha came over to visit while I was working, so I got her a pair of goggles too. Then I grabbed a club hammer from my tool box for her, and I showed her how to bust up some smaller chunks. At first, she was a bit timid. But soon, she was busting stuff with great gusto.

Sometimes you need to bust up the old ugly unforgiving stuff to make room for something new. When I was writing my autobiography, I was working on the scene about getting beat up because I accidentally broke a china cup. I got so angry. I drove around the neighbourhood and I stopped at a garage sale and bought a box full of china cups. I got my goggles and drove to the dump. I carried that box full of china cups down a gully where there were lots of rocks. As I hurled each one of those china cups against the rocks, I hollered something rather nasty which you don't need to hear. One actually bounced off the rock unbroken, so I got to throw that one twice. In a little while they were all demolished. That's how I got that fear of breaking a china cup out of my system. It was the unforgiving that I was trying to bust up.

It's hard to learn how to be forgiving when all you learned was the opposite. Sometimes you need to be gentle to make changes. If you are too rough when you put the rolled out dough into the pie plate, it just falls apart. But if you are going to bust something unforgiving you need to use some serious muscle. There's a place and a time for righteous anger. And it feels good.

I carried all that busted concrete into my driveway, planning to haul it off to the dump. Dumping fees are calculated by weight, so it was not going to be cheap. The pile of rubble was as big as a car. Then my neighbour dropped by with his friend Dan. Dan owns a farm, and many many years ago somebody built an underground wooden shed in the back of property. It rotted and collapsed. Dan discovered this cavern by almost falling into it himself, and he was worried that if others fell into it, they would not be found alive. He asked me if he could have all that busted up concrete to fill in the cavern. Of course I said yes.

I got a load of topsoil and we turned that space into a lovely garden just outside the back door. When you try to make the world more beautiful, other people just help you. It's amazing how things can work out like magic. Have fun!

The Right Time. baw-baw dooP Book 7

Page 12

Text: and Rofklimmer upglusplup Bynerkrix.

Action: Rofklimmer, still on his back, and on fire, burps up Bynerkrix. Out comes Bynerkrix, grinning, all tangled up and twisted. Wunkum catches Bynerkrix on the spoon end of her big wood spoon.

Emotion: Great fun!

Eat Dessert First

Tutorial 13

Gentle Reader, did you ever go to a good restaurant and eat dessert first? No? Well, you just got yourself some more homework. It's cruel of me, I know, to give you such a tough assignment, but I believe this will help you find your funnybone, and I'll bet that when you do this, you are going to make others laugh too. That's why I did it. I had no idea at the time, that doing this was the last real laugh I would share with my kid sister.

Sometimes in life, you need to do things backwards. What good is a car with no reverse gear?

Esther invited herself to visit me for 2 weeks, and I didn't want to say no to her. I know how to say no very clearly and I even know how to say no ferociously if I must, so there is no confusion. I did not want to say no to Esther because she was lovable, even though she was impossible. I am lovable and impossible too.

So my ladyfriend Christine and me make reservations, and take Esther to Sam's restaurant. The owner is also the chef. As we walk to our table, I see a gorgeous, fresh, whole cheesecake on display that Sam made. The server brings us menus.

I say, "Hi Jesse, please bring us each a piece of that right now."

Esther bursts out laughing.

"What!" she says. "You're kidding, right?"

Christine and I were frequent customers already, so Jesse knows I'm a little on the wild side. He just says "okay" and goes away.

Esther says, "Are you serious?"

We can see Jesse cutting our cheesecake.

"Oh, I'm serious," I say.

"I can't believe it!" she says.

Christine just laughs and enjoys the game. Esther takes one bite of cheesecake.

"Oh!" she says in a loud voice, "I'm in love!"

She was in love with every bite. Her joy overflowed and filled the whole restaurant. Then we had our entrees, and came home happy. For 2 weeks, I

filled her up with kindness. When we were kids, our parents ate the prime rib roast and gave us the strings to chew on. When Esther was here, we ate prime rib roast fresh out of the oven. Being kind to others is so good for my heart. It's a shame really, that abusers don't know that. Abusers cheat themselves out of so much that is wonderful about life.

Even though I knew Esther was dying right in front of me, my heart was not prepared for her final breath. My sorrow felt like it had no bottom for quite a while. She was my brave kid sister. I stood beside her when the abusers attacked us. I stood up and defied the abusers with all my might. I was a just kid myself. I have no regrets. I cherish her laughter.

Sometimes you remember that you are really really really loved. And sometimes you forget. Sometimes you drive forwards and you get stuck. And the only way to get free is put the car in reverse. I hope your dessert is fantastic! Have fun!

The Right Time. baw-baw dooP Book 7

Page 13

Text: Every time Bynerkrix is eaten, he's more gwitterful.

Action: Bynerkrix sits in Rofklimmer's hair. Wunkum holds the firehose on both Rofklimmer and Bynerkrix, washing all the goop off them both. Bynerkrix looks like he did when we first saw him on page 1, but he's bigger, more mature, and he's all untangled.

Emotion: Satisfaction, very pleased.

Memory Yields to Imagination

Tutorial 14

Gentle Reader, our child abuse stories are a very important part of our history. They live in our memories and in our bones. I can easily imagine that you were having a bad day, then you got one of my tutorials, and you made the conscious choice to change your focus from your child abuse story to BOOK 7. I imagine your healing laughter, and you know by now that I'm doing all I can to encourage it.

The memories of our child abuse stories are not locked forever into our being. We are constantly changing and our stories change with us. I learned that memory is not static. Memory is flexible.

When I was a kid, I got yanked out of my bed when I was sound asleep and beaten up. I got hit when I was asleep in bed, so I learned to be afraid of the dark. No fun. As an adult, I have slowly learned that I am safe in the dark. It took me a long time.

Now, when I'm in total darkness and I can't sleep, it is easy for me to imagine myself walking through the forest alone, or baking a pie with my grandson Miles, or creating a new piece of art. I have often gone to bed thinking about an engineering problem with one of my sculptures, and the solution woke me up! I have also been kissed in the dark, and I have been loved in the dark and that was fun. I also learned that Santa Claus comes in the dark. I like Santa Claus! I am no longer afraid of my dreams either. I keep a notepad and pencil by my bed, to jot down my dreams. I have been doing this for over 20 years, so it's interesting to see dream patterns emerge and change over time. I pay attention to my dreams so I get to know my lovable self better.

So many things that the abusers did terrified me. So I did other things. Chopping wood. Education. Frisbee. Baseball. Therapy. Sailing. Writing. Sculpture. Gardening. Teaching. My memories of child abuse yield to my imagination. Imagination is stronger. Memories are about the past. Imagination is about the future.

I can look back at my child abuse stores now from a whole new healing place. Those stories hold no fear for me now.

Abusers act like they are the most important people in the world. But I have more respect for a cricket than I do for somebody who beats up kids. I have learned how to be responsible for my own freedom. I grew up. Nobody dictates to me how to live my life anymore. I do not seek anyone's approval for how I live my life. I trust my heart, and I trust where and how my heart guides me. I have a few friends. My grown children and grandchildren love to be with me. So my

life is a success. Nothing can diminish that. I love my life. I do not fear death because I am happy and busy living my life.

Here we are at the last page of BOOK 7. I have really enjoyed writing these tutorials for you, and I hope that you are inspired. The more you participate, the more you will set yourself free, and the happier you will be. That's the plan. I am tempted to say good plan Batman but I won't. You can if you like. Have fun!

The Right Time. baw-baw dooP Book 7

Page 14

Text: Wunkum and Rofklimmer oobeedoo him ya in their bones.

Action: Wunkum splashes her hair over Bynerkrix while he sits in Rofklimmer's hair, so Bynerkrix is getting a huge hug. Everyone smiles.

Emotion: Love.

Vocal Freedom

Tutorial 15

Gentle Reader, your drawings are images, important for more than your eye. You create them with care, so you respect them. They hold meaning. Every thing that you create, however humble, reinforces your creatorself, bringing you joy. Creatorself. Isn't that a nifty word combination? That's the self that you want to nurture and nourish. Remember those lovely words? I will be sprinkling a few more such word combinations in these tutorials, just for fun.

Do you like joy? I do. I've learned that real joy isn't big and loud. That's called being rowdy. I am rather good at being rowdy, so I am highly qualified to speak on this matter. Real joy is quiet, and it is a source of creative energy. A delicious word can bring joy. Lots of words in **baw-baw dooP** BOOK 7 are funnylooking and funnysounding. Maybe you noticed. Creating new words with new meanings and new sounds is fun! To me, words are pictures. Words look funny. I'm strange that way.

Abusers tried to silence me. They tried to prevent me from speaking the truth. Now, my listeningself and my speakingself are working together in harmony, so I can write fun books and these tutorials for you.

Let's take a few moments to look at your illustrations for **baw-baw dooP** Book 7. For fun, let's think of Rofklimmer, as The Swallower, the one who did the swallowing. And let's think of Bynerkrix as The Swallowee, the one who got swallowed.

Something happens to Bynerkrix after he gets swallowed by Rofklimmer. He changes. He goes through some transformation while being unseen and unheard. He's still Bynerkrix, but he's different. He is more gwitterful, more himself. Isn't that nifty?

The ways that Rofklimmer changes while remaining the same, are directly due to his swallowing Bynerkrix. The changes in Bynerkrix are also due to him getting swallowed. Bynerkrix is the agent of change for Rofklimmer, at the same time that Rofklimmer is the agent of change for Bynerkrix. So you might say Bynerkrix and Rofklimmer are not exactly secret agents. But I said it first.

The changes that each of them go through are central to the story of who they are and who they are becoming. Both Bynerkrix and Rofklimmer help create each other, for they both are re-created through this series of changes.

Next time you draw this story, Bynerkrix will be even more gwitterful, more himself, than he is now. He thanks you. And you will be different too. Maybe you will be more gwitterful, maybe not. I do hope that you will be more your trueself.

Our words are images for more than our ears. Our words empower us. They help carry something up from the depths within us. One of the things that abuse taught me, with utter clarity, is how so many things cannot be communicated with simple words. I mean things like anguish. Despair. Hopelessness. Bitterness. Defeat. Humiliation. Pain. Devastation. I had to learn to articulate these powerful things so others could understand. It was not easy. So I know the value of creating new words or word combinations in order to convey meanings not found in any dictionary. Meanings that my heart and your heart know are true. A trueself is a healingself.

Now that we are not in the grasp of the abusers, we can exercise our vocal freedom without fear of punishment. I know from experience that fear of punishment can linger about in our bones long after the abuse. So part of our healing is understanding and acting on the truth that we are allowed to speak aloud.

I invented about 400 new words for this series of 16 **baw-baw dooP** books and I spoke them out loud in a professional recording studio, to get each one just right. I mean with just the right flavour. Yummy. Recording them was fun!

What 7 fun new wordpictures and meanings can you invent? Say them out loud! Feel free to translate your wordpictures in any language you like. Have fun!

Word	Meaning
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____

The Spirit of The Story

Tutorial 16

Gentle Reader, there is another dimension to every story. It is invisible, and yet it is always present. It's a bit like when you walk into your friend's home, and you smell fresh homemade apple pie, but you can't see it. If you like apple pie, that smell is warm, and inviting. That smell lifts your spirits, and makes you smile. It's a wee gift, all by itself. Right away, you look forward to tasting that pie. And the message you get from your friend is this: you are special to me. You already know that baking a pie from scratch takes time and thoughtfulness, so you appreciate your friend's act of kindness. That is how a pie story should be told. That is how a pie story should be heard. For fun, let's call this invisible part of the story the Spirit of the story.

Abusers are greedy. They hoard the good stuff. I have learned that the good stuff tastes so much better when it is shared.

When my grandson Miles digs into a piece of my apple pie, he looks like the happiest kid on the planet. Correction. He *is* the happiest kid on the planet. Just watching him eat it brings me joy. That kid chomps into barbecue beef ribs like a real caveman, grinning once in a while. Happy kid, happy parents. Did you notice we just talked about dessert first?

Child abuse stories are really hard to stomach. So we need to learn how to feed ourselves healing stories. Over time, the good stuff dilutes the hard stuff. All the wonderful meals I've had since I left home truly outweigh the mean ones. I haven't forgotten the hard times. I have learned to put them into a wholesome perspective. The abuser dominates and controls like some kind of monster. A child abuse monster devoured me, when I was a kid. So I had a big devouring story. I wanted to learn how my devouring story fit with other devouring stories. I had heard the story of Jonah being devoured by the Whale.

Here is an excerpt from my Doctoral thesis: "The basic story of extreme intrafamilial violence is one of survival, the story of living while one is dying, being annihilated by a physically stronger but morally inferior (parental) force. Dying is the act of becoming disembodied, the act of being swallowed into what I have come to know as the dark caverns of the great fish. The biblical whale provides the key metaphor in my inquiry into self, trauma, and survival...The student who has been swallowed on the way to death but cast out into life needs the help of a compassionate listening teacher to help him/her make a map of the insides of the great fish. Only then can the great fish be seen as a vehicle, an underwater boat, a slimy submarine. The journey inside the great fish becomes integrated into the story of the whole journey. It becomes a key component in the Jonah-student-teacher's education, rather than a mis-educative detour. The map of the insides of the great fish shows: (1) the way in, which is death-in-life; (2) the "belly" or the place and the lesson, which is life-in-death; and (3) the way out,

which is new life. Thus, the belly of the great fish comes to be seen and appreciated as a critical place of growth where the Jonah-student-teacher's new self was being created, a paradoxical type of womb, a new matrix of meaning. The abuser dominates and controls like some kind of monster. A child abuse monster devoured me, when I was a kid. So I had a big devouring story. I wanted to learn how my devouring story fit with other devouring stories. I had heard the story of Jonah being devoured by the Whale. Survivors of chronic intrafamilial violence have been swallowed many times, again and again. Their stories need to be told and heard. But how can they be told?"

Countless myths exist about monsters who devour. A myth is like a story that lives in our bones and we might not even know it's there. When was the last time you thanked the marrow in your bones for doing a good job? As long as it is doing the job it is supposed to do, you don't really care about it, do you? See what I mean?

As a kid, I was totally overpowered, and terribly injured. Here I am still. I refused to let my child abuse story swallow me and my kids up too. So I got to work with that story. When I was a kid, I was brave. I love that part of myself. The brave thing is to keep living and keep healing. Child abuse monsters turn out to be human after all and they die a dumb death. Good riddance.

We are not going to talk about forgiveness for maybe 300 years, so you don't have to worry about that. I have learned some useful things that are maybe second cousins to that subject, but I shall keep them all to my lovable self unless you ask.

Child abuse stories, by their very nature, hold within them a Spirit that is heavy, maybe even down sinking, like a big rock, and very hard to handle. How they weigh us down. However, you already know from experience that the Spirit of **baw-baw doop** BOOK 7 is way lighter than that of a child abuse story. Maybe the Spirit of a healing story floats. It is uplifting.

So here's another one of those kind of healing stories for you. I designed it to nurture and nourish your healingself laughingself kidself.

I have written 6 books in this **heart-brain** series. *Paco the Pelican* is BOOK 2, and it is 23 pages long. For each page, again, I provide:

1. Text. The plot or story line in English
2. Action. What is happening.
3. Emotion. Enough said. I said that last time. I might say it next time too.

For this and the next 22 tutorials, again you get one page per tutorial, to give you time to read, think about, and draw this funny story, one scene at a time. Lucky you. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 1

Text: On Tuesday, my brain goes for a walk on the beach.
And my brain finds this castle.

Action: Sunny summer day, nobody else on the sandy beach, waves roll in. We see the castle as Brain approaches it from about 4 or 5 feet away. The sand castle proper stands about 18 inches tall, about 2 feet square, with various castle-like structures including a portcullis, drawbridge and moat, battlements. The tower part of the castle is cylindrical, with a pointy roof. This tower stands almost a foot taller than the rest of the castle. The walls of this castle are maybe 6 inches thick, it looks strong.

Emotion: Curious.

Seduction, Love

Tutorial 17

Gentle Reader, sometimes a little trip totally changes your life. I wanted to buy a new Spanish-English dictionary, so I rode my bicycle to a bookstore. All the reference books were downstairs. So down I go. I don't see anybody. There's a table with lots of new books on it, but none of them are priced. There's a door. I open the door, and there's a lady on the phone in there. I gesture that I am waiting out here. She comes out in a minute. I ask "are these books for sale?" She says "yes." I pick up the Spanish-English dictionary. She tells me the price but I don't remember the price. I remember her heavenly eyelashes. She fluttered them at me. I baked her a pie. That was over 18 years ago. I still have that dictionary right here in my upstairs office. The lady is downstairs making pancakes.

Our child abuse stories seem to block out any hope that we will ever be treated with kindness, respect, and love. How do we learn that we are lovable after being horribly mistreated? Well, that takes time. I brought a lot of heartache to myself along the way because I had to learn the difference between lust and love.

Lust is good, don't get me wrong. I'm still a lusty critter. As I matured, I learned that seduction is quite easy. You just let your hormones lead the way, and who cares about the consequences. Seduction is a game, and when you play games, somebody is going to lose. Seduction keeps the focus on sexual satisfaction, so you are always kind of selling your sexy self. That's fun for a while. Then it's no fun anymore. It leaves you always craving more, and feeling empty. Like an addict, you can't get enough. You can't trust it because you are selling all the time, and you are being sold too. When you are selling yourself, well, there's a word for that, and you probably know that word. I didn't like being treated like that. I had to stop treating others like that.

You can't build your house in quicksand. Seduction is just like quicksand. I needed to learn that love is like a house, and you need a sturdy foundation on solid ground so you can build. Trust is absolutely essential. That means I had to stop the selling game and get to work building something trustworthy so I could set a decent example for my kids.

Abuse teaches you to disconnect parts of yourself in order to survive. Reconnecting them is painful, especially when sexual abuse is involved. When as kids we are forced against our will to participate in the event, we feel like we are cut in half. We are overpowered and must obey to survive, and we tell our bodies to say yes, to cooperate, but inside we are screaming NO NO NO at the same time.

And as we mature, we learn that we carry these opposing messages into every adult relationship. No fun. So we get to therapy and learn to respect ourselves. We learn that love is real. Imagine that. Imagine being truly wanted before you were conceived. Imagine being welcomed into the world by truly loving parents. Imagine being loved so you knew you were loved and nothing could shake that knowing. Imagine the foundation of your loving house so solid and trustworthy.

If you can imagine it. If you can see it. You can build it. That's what I do. Here to inspire you, is another page. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 2

Text: This castle is very sturdy.
It has a tall tower.

Action: We see the tower as Brain stands beside it.

Emotion: Exploring.

Absolutely Positively Maybe

Tutorial 18

Gentle Reader, it is so easy for me to be absolutely positive that I am doing the right thing and I keep doing it over and over and it doesn't work, and then I suddenly learn that I have been doing the wrong thing over and over. It's crazy. But at least I figure out why it didn't work.

For example. When my sister Esther was alive, she came for a visit. I'm sure you are relieved to know that she came for visit when she was alive. I miss her, and I dream about her, and soon it will be her birthday. The first time that I won't be able to call her on the phone and wish her "happy birthday."

My daughter Sara taught me how to make a drink called a Fuzzy Navel. So when Esther is visiting, it's her birthday, and I serve this amazing chocolate cake made by my friend named Mim. Mim makes this cake especially for Esther. I get the stuff we need to make the Fuzzy Navels, and I set it all on the dining room table by the chocolate cake. Esther never had this kind of drink before, so I tell her how to do it. I'm busy washing up the dinner dishes, getting birthday candles and side plates and cloth napkins and forks, etc. Of course we've got the music rather loud, and a sane person would say I am being rowdy.

Now, just so you know, when Esther and me were kids, not once, that's right, not once did we have a birthday party in our family home. The very first birthday party that I ever attended for one of my siblings, was when my brother turned 26. His wife was shocked. My wife was shocked. I didn't really know how to behave so I was rowdy. My brother's wife was generous with the cake so I ate lots and lots of cake.

In our family home, when we were kids, the abusers kind of sucked all the energy out of everybody else for themselves. Never one birthday cake. But lots of paddywhacks. You know, good hard smacks on the butt, one for each year of your age. They start off slow, then go faster and faster and maybe you are only 9 but you get maybe 37 whacks. Oh sure, you pretend it's fun but your butt really stings and it's no fun. When I was 16, I learned that my parents forgot what day I was born. We always celebrated my birthday 2 days late. Celebrated. Maybe that's the wrong word. Too bad swearing doesn't help.

So Esther is making my ladyfriend Christine and herself and me each a Fuzzy Navel. We all have a taste. We all agree that we can't really taste the Peach Schnapps. So she adds some more. We all taste. Need more. We all taste. Need more. She keeps adding more, and we are going to need bigger glasses if this keeps up. How come the Peach Schnapps doesn't taste peachy? Esther puts on her reading glasses. She holds up the bottle.

"What?!"

She laughs so hard Christine and me can only join in. She gives me the bottle. Vodka.

I hate vodka. Vodka sneaks up on you, pretending to be Autumn, then crash you're in 3 feet of snow. Too late. Bailey's Irish Cream is like that too. It doesn't taste like a real drink. It's so smooth. Suddenly oh my this is not really dessert. Too late. Tequila isn't sneaky. You know from your first sip that it's nasty. You know not to trust it. You know not to sip it. You just toss it back, and bite that lime and lick that salt. And with each shot, the Tequila tastes better, but soon you don't care. Too late.

I was so busy I was distracted, and I gave my sister vodka instead of Peach Schnapps. Sara brought the vodka for a party and left it here.

Now, whenever I am convinced I am absolutely positively right, and things still don't work, I ask myself if I'm actually pouring vodka or Peach Schnapps.

Child abuse taught us so much about cruelty and suffering, and that learning was intense and terrifying. It's fun learning a different way, don't you agree? Happy birthday! Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 3

Text: The tall tower is a jail.
It has one tiny window.

Action: Close up view. The window has vertical round steel bars in it.
We do not see inside the jail.

Emotion: Too bad the window is so small, a little sad.

Lovingkindness

Tutorial 19

Gentle Reader, our child abuse stories hold within them little hard nuggets of the truth of how we had to become hard and cold in some ways in order to survive the onslaught. Somehow we got tough.

We're like that. And at the same time we do one small act of lovingkindness, and our hearts melt. Lovingkindness. What a lovely word.

For example. My daughter Sara was going to London, England for a year. She was packing her luggage. Her mum and me met Sara in her room. I took Sara's hairbrush in my hand and I sat on the floor with my legs crossed. Her mum sat beside me. Sara sat just in front of me, her back toward me. I had no words. I could not say goodbye. Gently, and slowly, I brushed Sara's hair. Tears rolled down my cheeks. I brushed her hair. My heart melted. Sara slowly leaned back until her shoulders rested against my chest. I set down the hairbrush. I put my arms around Sara and kissed her head. I left the room so they could say and do their woman things daughter things mum things.

Away went Sara. Not long after, I met 2 of my older sisters in a shopping mall for lunch. I told them about brushing Sara's hair, like I just told you. Both my sisters cried right in front of me. Their hearts melted. They never had one ounce of lovingkindness shown them in our family home. I can only imagine the huge ache inside them that may never quite heal. Of course they were truly happy for Sara, and for me, that I became a loving father.

So that is a healing story for my sisters because now they can imagine being loved as daughters should be loved.

Abusers can make you bleed. They can break your bones. They can make you half crazy. But they cannot rob you of your imagination. If you can imagine lovingkindness. If you can see it. Or smell it. Or taste it. Then you can touch it. It can touch you. It can melt your heart. Yes. You can create it. That's what I do.

So here's your chance to bring a little more healing to your imagination. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 4

Text: The jail has a big door.
It is made of strong iron bars.

Action: We see the door as if we are standing in front of it.

Emotion: A bit fierce, very solid and unbreakable.

Personal Boundaries

Tutorial 20

Gentle Reader, some gifts that others give you are truly amazing and unforgettable. Not because they are big and spectacular. Because they are openhearted.

Out of respect for my daughters, as soon as they started puberty, I always turned a little bit sideways whenever we hugged.

Abusers have no respect for personal boundaries. They just invade you whenever they feel like it. It's like you are their slave. They own you. So they can treat you like trash if they want. And if you protest you are going to pay for it with your skin and blood. I found the very sight of the abusers hands revolting. Inside, I was more or less constantly saying don't you touch me.

Of course I was always craving loving touch so that got me into trouble with girls at an early age. Good thing I finally found the right woman.

So you understand why I decided not to force any hug or even touch on my kids. No matter how old they got. My oldest daughter Robin has 2 wee boys. My neat little trick, to avoid the hugging department at the front door when they came to visit, was to be busy washing dishes or cooking in the kitchen, or working in the garden or upstairs writing my books. My neat little trick didn't work so well because Robin just came to find me to say hello and give me a hug.

Well not long ago, the very moment I turn a little bit sideways, Robin stops. She looks me right in the eye. She takes firm hold of both my shoulders. She turns me back around so my body is facing her squarely. "Hug me," she says. Two little words. She hugs me squarely. I know she's a woman. She knows I'm a man. And it's okay. She is telling me that she knows she is respected. She knows she is 100 percent safe. She is telling me that I can relax now. I hear her. I hug Robin.

About an hour later, Robin's younger sister Sara arrives. I turn a little bit sideways to hug Sara. She stops. She looks me right in the eye. She takes firm hold of both my shoulders. You know the rest. I hug Sara.

It's a conspiracy, I tell you. Robin and Sara are not twins, but sometimes they sure act like they are. They are friendly and I really like them. Actually, I think they are marvellous creatures. I'm quite sure they know that.

That's my healinghugstory. You never know when someone is going to give you something precious like that. You need to let it into your heart. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 5

Text: The big door is locked.
The key is lost forever.

Action: We see the massive ancient rusty padlock on the door.

Emotion: Inescapable, so sad.

Up, Down, Level

Tutorial 21

Gentle Reader, it seems perfectly fair that when you are suffering, you want the opposite. You want notsuffering.

Our child abuse stories contain suffering, so of course we want to compensate. When we have nohappy, we want happy. When we have bignohappy, we want bighappy. When we have hugenohappy, we want hugehappy.

That seems fair. I had to learn that my determination to compensate for my own bigsuffering was not healthy for me, because in effect, I created a rollercoaster ride for myself. I had to learn that the healing thing is to actually get off the rollercoaster, instead of wanting up when I was down, and then being up but dreading down. It's okay to be happy. It's okay to be sad. Happy and sad are manageable and part of a normal life. Hugehappy and hugesad are extreme and unmanageable and make you crazy.

I had to redefine what was up and what was down. Trying to make myself happy or up usually resulted in a kind of quick-fix that left me feeling terrible. If you've ever got horribly drunk, then you know what I mean. One minute you are up having fun, the next minute you are down vomiting which is no fun. Buying a new car is fun, but still making payments on it 5 years later is no fun.

I began to question my own definitions of happy and nohappy. The more I explored what I deeply believed in, for myself, the more I realized what I actually loved and wanted. These things were not forced upon me. They came from inside me. So I could trust them. They became like anchors for me. Anchors don't hold you down. They keep you steady.

Happy is like growing like a tree. Happy is what keeps you steady. Happy is knowing you are growing your own deep roots. So no matter how hot or cold or windy or rainy you just keep growing steady steady steady. Trust. No huge ups or downs.

Level is what actually works. Level-headed. Level means matching the curvature of Earth. It does not mean flat. Level. What a lovely levely word. Keep that in mind when you want to fix something. Like a deck. Or your life.

Now, when I want up and down, I go for a hike in the forest. It's good for my heart. I always take my pencil. Here's another page that I wrote. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 6

Text: In the jail is—oh no, here comes Paco the Pelican.
He waddles up the beach right to my brain.

Action: We see Paco up pretty close. He's an older pelican, with a raspy voice.
He looks friendly, but not too friendly. Brain recognizes him.

Emotion: Oh no, what do you want?

Enough to Share

Tutorial 22

Gentle Reader, you might say that our child abuse stories tell about how we got too much bad stuff and not enough good stuff. We want more good stuff. More and more and more. It feels like we can't get enough good stuff.

If you said that, I would totally agree with you. I don't know if you totally agree with me or not, but I totally agree with me. Sometimes I am so agreeable that it is easy being me. Other times, well, you might say I am disagreeable, and it is not easy being me, and I would totally agree with you on that point too.

You might ask, "How much good stuff is enough?"

We already know that any child abuse stuff is too much. So we are not dealing with enoughness regarding that. Because you never hear anybody say, "I had enough child abuse." No.

We are dealing with muchness. So we need to compare too much child abuse stuff that we didn't want with how much good stuff we do want. We don't want just enough. We want much. We had too much child abuse, so we want too much good stuff, just to make things even.

That sounds reasonable.

I collected things. For me. All of them useful, of course. To me. All of them valuable. To me. I filled my trailer with stuff. I filled my yard. I filled my shop. I filled my old truck. It happened slowly. Notice how I said that. It happened. That's not the same as saying I did it. So let me correct that. I did it. It did not happen. Not much actually just happens in my life. I actually do lots of stuff. So when I take myself out of the equation, and sound irresponsible, I hear that right away and get back on the right track. I had to learn that.

Nothing just happens. Child abuse doesn't just happen. So the abusers don't get to say, "it happened," like they weren't even there and had nothing to do with it.

We don't get to say that either. Not for the bad stuff. Not for the good stuff. It happened. Right. The plane landed in the river. Really? No. Somebody named Captain Sully landed that plane in the river. Holymoly. Buy that guy a pizza and kiss his feet and say thank you for saving your life.

I hated that the abusers hoarded the good stuff, and the moment that I recognized that I was turning into a hoarder, I fixed that, and I mean right now.

I know some people who will never have too much money or too much stuff. They just keep buying more and more and more. They have to build more places to store the stuff. They are perfect consumers. They have a poverty of spirit and it is quite sad. They will die one day. The new owners will rent a big truck and haul all their precious stuff otherwise called junk off to the nearest recycling depot.

Years ago, a lady showed me a whole room full of beautiful sweaters in her house. She had them stacked on wide shelves. Folded. 3 high on each shelf. Every colour imaginable. When she showed me that room, she talked about her impending divorce. Sweaters don't warm you up. There is no such thing as a warm sweater. Unless you put it inside a warm oven. A sweater only keeps your body heat from escaping too far from your skin, so you stay toasty warm. This lady could not be warm enough in her marriage, so she tried to buy some warmth. She had no clue how cold she was. It was not my place to tell her that. I hope for her sake that the day came when she decided she had enough sweaters.

Enough means you are content. Too much means you are not content yet. Too much is just too much. I have enough, and I know it. I have enough to share. So I share this book with you. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 7

Text: Paco has eyes like dark blue marbles.
"Who lives in the castle?" he asks.

Action: Paco is very close to the castle.

Emotion: Friendly.

Perfick

Tutorial 23

Gentle Reader, I used to try so hard not to be like the abuser. The problem was that the abuser did so many things that I did too: walk around on 2 feet, breathe, drink water, eat, belch, tell jokes, watch TV. Human things.

I tried not to eat marmalade after I left home, but every few years, I bought a jar of Robertson's thick cut orange marmalade and it tasted good. Every bite also reminded me of the abuser. He liked really good marmalade and hogged it all when I was a kid so of course I wanted buckets of it. He was involved. I liked it + he liked it = Dilemma.

So I tried the opposite. We never once had spaghetti in our family home. So when I left home, I ate miles of spaghetti. He was still involved. I liked it + he didn't like it = Dilemma.

So I tried something else. Lots of violence with sawing wood, but not with chopping wood, so I taught myself to chop wood. For many many years, I could not saw a 2x4 or a piece of firewood without feeling afraid inside if I didn't do it perfectly. When you are told constantly that you can't do anything right, doing things perfectly is hard.

Who told abusers that they are perfect? Whoever said so really should correct that right away.

So perfect is a word that I don't like much. It is an imperfect word in my books. More. It is totally imperfect. And perfectly useless. So I invented a better word. And I prefer my own word instead. Here it is: Perfick. Now there's a word. And I think perfick is a totally perfick word. A very useful word.

Finally, when I started sawing branches and small trees for pieces of sculpture, I began sawing perfickly. My excitement replaced my fear. When I fully engage with what I am creating, that brings me happiness. There's just no room inside for fear. Like right now. I am fully engaged in writing this tutorial for you. More than that. I am fully engaged with the Spirit of this story. This is a healing story for me. A perfick story. I can write about stuff which was really no fun but the way I tell this story is actually fun. See? It really works.

Some dilemmas have a way of working themselves out. I learned that I'm allergic to citrus and tomatoes, and I don't get along with wheat either, so no more marmalade or spaghetti for me. That works for me perfickly. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 8

Text: Paco leans way over, to look in the tiny window.
And FLLAARRPP! he crashes down on my brain.

Action: Brain is squished under Paco, so we can hardly see Brain.

Emotion: Shock.

Pass It On

Tutorial 24

Gentle Reader, you already know that I like Santa Claus. I told my grandson Miles last week that I am still too young to be Santa, because not all my hair or whiskers are white yet. Miles says I am not too young.

It's important for people who have been abused to believe in Santa. Believing in Santa helps you recognize him. He is a very generous guy, and he leaves presents around all the time, not just once a year. These presents really make up for all the ones you never got.

For example. I go to the forest in October looking for some very particular wee sticks. I walk around slowly, really paying attention to what's on the forest floor, amid the maple leaves. And suddenly I see them. A matching set of deer antlers. In perfect condition. Holymoly. Thank you Santa.

Antlers are hard to find in the bush because porcupines usually find them first and eat them up. Porcupines chew on your tractor tires too. I have no doubt that antlers taste good because Rudolph has antlers and he's a very good reindeer, but I wonder what makes tractor tires taste good.

Mice will eat bars of soap if you don't hide them. That's what we need. Mice with clean innards. Here, eat this Irish Spring soap for me. Irish Spring? Irish Hurricane you mean. You take it out of the box and it smells greener than a golf course. I mean supergreen. I took one bar into the shower with me and that was too much. It felt to me a lot like Kryptonite. I am not going to waste it, though. I am going to give it to my Irish friends who have Irish mice in their house. Let them party.

I bring Rudolph's antlers home and scrub them. And I put them in a special place. My friend Daniel comes to visit. He's so excited. He's got this new deer book and he's got big brown eyes and he's in love with Dasher and Dancer and Prancer and Vixen and Comet and Cupid and Donner and Blitzen and I just can't take it anymore. I run upstairs and grab Rudolph's antlers and run down stairs.

"Close your eyes and hold out your hands!"

He does. I put Rudolph's antlers in his hands. He doesn't kiss me, but I'm pretty sure he thinks about it for a minute.

Santa gives you a fantastic present. It's yours. You take really good care of it. Then your heart says pass it on. And you do. Then you learn that you are not too young to be Santa. That, right there, is the best present in the world. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 9

Text: Oh! Paco is so heavy!
I fear my brain will break in pieces!

Action: Paco tries to stabilize himself with his wings, sand is flying.

Emotion: Distress.

Internal Guidance System

Tutorial 25

Gentle Reader, my childhood home life was so miserable, that I never felt that I actually had a home. Since I was a teenager, I felt like a scruffy tumbleweed rolling along a dusty gravel road in some ghost town. I didn't know where I belonged on the planet.

When your childhood home makes you sick, you get homesick. This longing inside is like a constant hunger that seems impossible to satisfy. I have learned that longing is part of the human condition, rather than a problem of mine. People with no child abuse stories long for home too.

We all yearn for things that we just can't buy. We spend so much money on things we don't need to try to satisfy these yearnings. We hope the things we buy will make us feel better. Or at least keep us busy. My friend Rick told me that his lifestyle was going to kill him. Now he's dead. He wanted his lifestyle more than his life.

I don't live in fear of death but I don't shingle the roof in a thunderstorm either. I worked really hard to stay alive as a kid and I'm not throwing away my life. I really love living in this huge garden we call Earth.

I have learned to be quiet in this garden. I have learned to listen. Did you ever stand still long enough to hear a deer walk slowly on dry moss? Ssquishhh squishhh. Did you ever stand still long enough to hear the air flowing through the wings of a hawk overhead? Whhishh whhishh.

I have also learned to listen to little internal signals. They are about as loud as your most secretly whispered prayer. You almost don't hear them. You hear them as they glide softly by.

Maybe you stand still watching a bumblebee collect yellow pollen from the cone flower and you hear it. Maybe you stand still in the shallow part of the lake and a fish swims close to your feet and you hear it. Maybe you stand still by a tree and a fox ambles by and you hear it.

I used to think that whatever internal guidance system I had got squashed flatter than a bug on a bumper by the abuse. I am happy to report that I was wrong. I trust these signals because they are my very own. I write them down. I share them only with my most trusted, soulful friends. They help me recognize patterns or themes. The more I pay attention, the more clear the signals become. I let these signals kind of help steer me a bit. I know who I am now. I know where I belong now. I want to go home. I'm working on it.

May you hear the wee healing voice of freedom calling you too. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 10

Text: Paco slides off my brain.
My brain is all bruised up.

Action: Paco sits on the beach beside Brain. He tries to compose himself.
Brain is bruised and looks a wreck.

Emotion: A bit sad because of the injuries.

Listen to That Bird

Tutorial 26

Gentle Reader, my friend Alberto is Italian. He can't help it. Alberto comes to visit me for a week at my cabin by the lake. When he walks down to the water's edge with me, a blue Kingfisher appears and hovers over the water maybe 20 feet directly in front of us. This never happened to me.

I tell Alberto, "That's your Kingfisher. He's trying to tell you something."

Every time Alberto walks down to the water's edge, that Kingfisher shows up for him. While that bird is there, Alberto walks down to the boat launch, and sure enough, that bird follows him. And when he stops, that bird hovers in front of him. Alberto just sparkles.

If you want to see Alberto grin from east to west, nonstop, just watch him chatting with his Kingfisher. If you don't believe in true love, just watch them together for a few minutes.

Something very Kingfisher resonates with Alberto. If you get the feeling that I just set you up, you are correct.

I've never seen a live Eagle up real close. Correction. The one I saw up real close and real alive was in a dream. Here's my dream. I am lying on my tummy, hiding in long grass in a shallow ditch. A huge Eagle lands directly beside me on my left. I am terrified, yet I roll onto my right side to face Eagle. His claws are as big as a man's hand. In one claw he holds a rough chunk of gold about the size of a large grapefruit. He raises this claw and smashes this chunk of gold through my chest wall directly into my heart. Holymoly. Never going to forget that.

I don't need to pretend to know exactly what Eagle was trying to teach me. I don't need to pretend very much at all anymore. When I was young, of course I knew everything. Only when I realized that I didn't know anything, could I start to learn something. Now that I actually know something, I prefer to pretend that I am a robot, or a pirate or Superman when my grandson Miles is here, and that satisfies us both.

Even Superman gets knocked flat. A few years ago, I became very ill. I lost just over 40 pounds in 33 days. I could not eat. I had already been churned through the medical machine, and other stuff like Naturopathy and Acupuncture and Massage, so I didn't bother to do that again.

I know I am dying. I don't tell a soul. I don't cry. I am thankful for my life. I know better than to get all dramatic. I stay quiet. Then I suddenly know what will help me. I feel it. It persists inside me for a few days. So I call my friend Merritt after supertime. He is a man of the Earth. I tell him what I need. Merritt lives

about 20 miles away. He says his wife and son are out, come right now. So I giddyup over there.

The first day I had heard Merritt pray in his Native Ojibway tongue, it sounded like music to me. That was the first time I understood clearly that you can only trust the prayer if you can trust the person praying it. No wonder all the church prayers I've ever heard don't resonate with me. My parents prayed those prayers. I'd rather hear a chickadee. I trust a chickadee.

Of course I take Merritt some tobacco. Respect. He says thank you. He invites me to sit on a short stool in his living room. He gets his big cluster of Eaglefeathers that he made like a fan, and says a wee prayer for me. With the Eaglefeathers, he sweeps the air in a downward motion just a few inches above my spine just like I asked. Devastating sorrow breaks loose from my heart. I sob and sob and sob from my broken heart. He sweeps the air above my spine more and more slowly. He offers me the cluster of Eaglefeathers to hold for a while. I say thank you.

On my way home I buy a roast chicken. I stop by the lake and eat the whole thing. That's better. I gain weight easily and soon I'm bouncing around and making a ruckus like the guy everybody knows.

Merritt saved my life. Sometimes the medicine you need is very simple and full of soul. Listen to your heart. Listen to that bird. Take a gift. Say thank you. Then go have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 11

Text: Paco takes a really big scoop,
I mean a big mouthful of the beach, and my brain.

Action: We see Paco with his neck bent down. We see Brain between the upper and lower part of Paco's beak as he scoops up Brain with a mouthful of beachsand.

Emotion: Afraid.

What Makes Sense, What Works

Tutorial 27

Gentle Reader, it is really difficult for us to make sense of our child abuse stories. They are hard to work with and harder to figure out. We have so many questions that can never be answered. The biggest question, of course, is why. When I finally learned that no answer would ever be good enough, I started asking other questions. Questions that move my focus away from trying to make sense of the abuse, to questions that help me figure out what works.

When you approach a problem with this attitude, then the problem becomes a puzzle. And puzzles are just plain interesting. Fun even.

For example. When my eldest son was about to get married, I helped him get the place ready. He wanted to string lights around a big lawn so we could all party outdoors until the sun came up. Good idea.

I say let's plug each set of lights into the extension cord first, to make sure that each string works, before setting them all up. The first string of lights doesn't work. Okay. Set them aside. The second string doesn't work. Okay. The third and fourth strings don't work either. Something is wrong here. I suspect the problem is not the lights.

I say take a lamp that he knows is working at one plug inside the house, and plug it into the same plug as the extension cord. Make sure the lamp works in that plug. Then unplug the extension cord and plug the lamp into exactly the same place that the extension cord was just plugged into. He comes back in a few minutes. Yes the lamp works in both places. We plug in 4 strings of lights and none work. He is getting frustrated.

Okay. That means the problem is the extension cord. But first, let's try another plug. I say now go and plug that lamp into another plug, top and bottom, to make sure that plug works. Then plug the extension cord into that plug. When he comes back, every string of lights that we plug into the extension cord works.

"But that doesn't make sense!" he says.

"You are about to get married," I say. "Don't do what makes sense. Do what works."

It was a great party.

If you only do what makes sense, that means you are not open to the possibility that something that doesn't make sense might work. Well, artists for centuries have been creating lovely stuff while living in great poverty, which doesn't really

make sense now does it? Have you listened to Mozart? Do you want to tell Mozart that his art doesn't work? I didn't think so. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 12

Text: "No! No! No!" yells my brain.
But my brain is sure that nobody hears.

Action: Brain hollers for help. Paco stands with Brain and a big pile of sand in his beak. Beak is almost totally closed. Sand dribbles from his beak.

Emotion; Sad, helpless.

A Little Thing Right Full

Tutorial 28

Gentle Reader, surprise! Abuse is like poison. The antidote for our child abuse stories is love. I used to think that because I endured huge abuse, I needed huge love.

Then I learned that a little bit of real love is actually a whole lot. The trick is to take really good care of it.

Did you ever notice
the bottomlessness
of a thimble
full of love?

This poem is from one of 8 wee **Lusty Books** of poetry that I have written. So if you find more poetry in future tutorials, well, now you know where they come from.

Surely you remember those two lovely words, nourish and nurture. That's what you do. You nourish love. You nurture love. Keep your focus on the love that you nourish and nurture, not on the love you missed. That's how you keep your thimble right full. That's how to make your thimbleful of love become bottomless. Your little thimble right full of love is way more alive, way more powerful, way more fun than a big barrel that is empty. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 13

Text: Paco waddles into the ocean.
He points his nose down.

Action: Paco stands in about a foot of water, small waves hit his belly. His beak is closed tight. He leans forward into deeper water and points his beak down toward the waves.

Emotion: Oh no! Going to get devoured.

Stack it Nice

Tutorial 29

Gentle Reader, surprise again! I like real maple syrup on my pancakes and bacon. My grandson Miles does too. We polish off a hearty breakfast before heading into the forest together.

Maple sap does not like to be rushed. It has been flowing for thousands of years, like the tide.

maple
sapple
dribble
little
by little
until
ittle
overfill
your pail
if youll
hold still

If you are in a big hurry for maple sap or something else really sweet, and feeling all rambunctious, go chop some wood. A face cord of wood, that's a good start. That's a stack 16 inches wide by 4 feet high by 8 feet long. A bush cord is 3 times that amount. Stack it nice. Lots of people think success is sweet, and they are impatient for success. Mostly, success is sweat.

Success does not just happen. When things just happen, that makes it easy for us to believe that we are victims. Some people even claim that they are victims of success! Our child abuse stories do not render us helpless victims. Sure, you feel that way sometimes, but not for long. That feeling vanishes the moment you pick up your axe and get to work. Earn your blisters. A stack of wood is a beautiful thing.

Of course, you don't have to chop wood. But you do need to get to work doing something that is good for you and your heart. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 14

Text: "No! No! No!" yells my brain.
Paco opens his big mouth just a little.

Action: Paco's beak is open maybe an inch or two. We see some of Brain.

Sand streams out of Paco's beak into the water.

Emotion: Afraid of death.

Secret Pie Recipe

Tutorial 30

Gentle Reader, are you expecting a poem? Surprise! Here is a very special pie recipe that I sent to my eldest son and his two friends when they were visiting their friends in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

I like pie. It took me a long time to learn how to make perfect pastry. Good thing I'm a patient guy. Patient? Correction. Motivated.

I also learned that you can't motivate somebody else. I have been to hear motivators who didn't motivate me. These motivator guys sound like preachers and they try to get you all fired up. Well, I don't let anybody light my fire but me. The motivator guy up there on stage making almost everybody laugh is not that funny. I am not laughing. I am not clapping. He said that same speech maybe 1000 times, and he's just a slick salesman. I don't trust slick.

Learning to heal is not slick. It is honest and soulful. My friend Laura is a therapist with a good soul and holymoly can she cook. We talk lots. She loves these tutorials. We have this deal: she helps me sort out death stuff and life stuff and work stuff and play stuff and father stuff and Grampa stuff and in exchange I give her some of my sculpture.

When you really want to learn how to do something, nobody can hold you back. Nothing can hold you back. Not even child abuse stories. If you think that is malarkey, then just watch a little kid strive and strive and strive to learn to walk. How come when we get older we forget how good it feels to accomplish something like that? Pain slows me down a bit, but I refuse to let it stop me. My grandson Miles loves to run just to see how fast he can go. That kid is motivated. Full of life. He loves making pie with Grampa.

pi resipe...hulo jentredr im sendinya mi sekret pi resipe first getyrself a gud ovin gaswunz kukbetr kuz th temprachurz nawt goin wild first getyrself a koldber an thro a sede inth sedemashen mabe th dorz an dans arowndth hows first kutdntpik redjuse rubarb n pikdontkut abigbolfula jusered strawbreez wawshemgud first maka bigsin sayin welkumfrenz anpudit inyer windoso noberdez krashinta yer kichinwindoz first prehet th ovin first bildyrself a bighows bi th oshin uz ok fer thflorz pinz tusawft pinzgud ferth walz tho yudont want sumdumas drungkparte gi putiinhis handthru yerwal driwal semzta invit that lidltest anfalzevretim kors yuwant bigwindoz withnobarzinem let th pi kul about 45 minits bfor servin yorztrule

This pie recipe, as you see, is a wordpuzzle. It is almost English. It is easier to understand if you read it out loud. I will help you with the first 2 lines. Pie recipe....Hullo Gentle Reader, I'm sending you my secret pie recipe first get yourself a good oven gas ones cook better 'cause the temperature's not...

I like to say hullo instead of hello. But I still say jello not jullo. Don't ask me why. Okay, ask me. But I'm still not tulling you.

This recipe is from a book of wordpuzzle letters I wrote entitled *yorztrule* just for fun. I also wrote the English solution to these wordpuzzles in a book entitled *yours truly* in case people get stuck. Isn't that nifty? Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 15

Text: My brain sees the ocean.
It's so beautiful, so full of light, so full of bubbles!

Action: Brain has tipped, fallen forward in Paco's beak, so Brain sees the ocean.

Emotion: Wow! Amazed, not afraid.

Kiss Kiss

Tutorial 31

Gentle Reader, I have learned to trust love. Trust takes time.

Our child abuse stories can be full of panic, especially when we fear for our very survival. I finally learned that I don't have to dread dying 10 minutes from now or next week or next year or in 40 years. One day for sure I will die. That means no matter how long I live, I've got my whole life. My whole life! I want to really live it!

How does this apply to you? Good question. Like this. You don't have to dread dying 10 minutes from now or next week or next year or in 40 years. One day for sure you will die. That means no matter how long you live, you've got your whole life. Your whole life! Do you want to really live it?

Life is a gift and you don't really want it? Just because it's a gift, that doesn't mean it was given to you to waste. Look around. Babies only a few days old just stop breathing and die every day. Two year olds fall in the swimming pool and die every day. Three year olds die from cancer every day. There are about a zillion ways to die and here you are, old enough to read this and you aren't actually thankful for your life? I just don't understand that. Ask any dead kid and you'll soon find out that he or she would trade places with you faster than you could say your name. Even if your name is only one syllable. Life is a struggle and that's why it's called life. You can sleep a long time when you're dead. You are going to die anyway, so you might as well live your life like you mean it. I'm not talking about partying. Anybody can party their life away, that doesn't take any brains or any guts, and it doesn't make the world a better place. This culture wants to sell you lots of stuff so you can party every day. Ask any dead kid what's important and he or she will tell you that being loved and loving is what's important.

You already know that. I'm just reminding you.

We cannot know where our lives will lead us, or where love will lead us. That is what makes life and love adventurous instead of boring.

windshield	wipers
sweep the	snowflakes
left and	right like
you kiss	kiss my
eyelids	like you
pile up	mem'ries
on the	inside
edges	of my
eyes I'm	driving
blind you	see I
love to	love you

Boring is bad. Do you hear how the poem reads with the rhythm of windshield wipers? Have you ever had someone tenderly kiss your eyelids? Mmm mmm. Mmm mmm. Have fun.

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 16

Text: The ocean comes in,
and the sand goes out.

Action: water swishes through Paco's beak, all over Brain, taking the sand away.

Emotion: Pleasant.

Inside Loneliness

Tutorial 32

Gentle Reader, learning how to be lonely wasn't easy for me.

Most people avoid being lonely, even people with no child abuse stories. Now the people who own the pubs know this, and they make lots of money for this very reason.

lonely's the word
when you feel your
self fly

fast

like a littleblack
bugintothebigyellow
beakofthebird

Acute loneliness feels like it devours you. Swallows you up. Now who actually wants to feel that? Not very many people. So we go to pubs where we meet lots of other people who don't know how to be lonely. Any reasonable person would rightly say that I had some serious abandonment issues to work on, and I would agree.

So I got to work. I learned that when you really really really need something, that neediness is exactly the thing that pushes it away. So are these feelings of acute loneliness actually real, or am I being too needy and dramatic? One way to find out. Sit down and stay sitting right here and be lonely and see what happens next. Oh, here comes a question: What am I lonely for? The answer: Me.

Hello me. It's kind of nice to just sit here and be me. It doesn't actually hurt. How about that? I am going to sit right here and listen to the frogs in the bog. A frog is a frog is a frog. A baby frog in a bog is a pollywog. I want to be me. rribbit rribbit. rribbit rribbit.

I found something very valuable in my loneliness. Myself. I sat down with my pencil and paper and learned how to write about it in a fun way. You can read it and say ya that's how it feels. But that's no reason to make the owner of the pub rich. Look at those nifty words doing their fun jobs! Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 17

Text: My brain is all clean and shiny.
I'm sure my brain will taste good now.

Action: The inside of Paco's beak, and Brain are sparkly clean. No sand at all.

Emotion: Resigned to fate.

Giggling in Bed

Tutorial 33

Gentle Reader, my friend Hub adores gorillas. So I wrote a wee book entitled *gorilla goodness* with 20 gorilla limericks, just for fun. The subtitle: limericks to read on the toilet so you don't get lonely. Lonely became something for me to play with. Maybe you noticed.

I don't know how many people get lonely on the toilet but I do know that lots of people take their phones into the washroom with them. Not me. I just hate the idea that I'm having a phone conversation with somebody who's on the toilet. And everybody here knows not to talk to me when I'm in the washroom. Because I won't answer. It's called privacy.

Lots of people who were abused need to learn the difference between privacy and secrecy. Abusers deal in secrets, so they don't get caught. They don't respect your privacy. I've learned that keeping lots of secrets is a big heavy burden that I don't want anymore.

When I was a kid, we had an outhouse behind the barn, and nobody bugged me there. So when I moved into the bush as an adult, I set up my outhouse. The best way to keep toilet paper dry in this location is to cut the bottom off a plastic bleach bottle, and suspend 2 rolls of bumf (that's a real word!) inside it, hanging from a hook or nail. And if you don't want your bum to freeze in there, just get a flat piece of Styrofoam, about one inch thick, and about 18 inches square, and cut the hole in it, and put it where you park. And if you still insist on being lonely on the toilet, at least your bum will be happy. Just let the Dutch door swing open. Did you ever wonder what kind of toilet does Santa Claus have at the North Pole? Does Santa Claus read on the toilet? It's 35 below zero out here and if you read *Moby Dick* in this weather, nobody will find you until Spring.

I shipped Hub a copy of *gorilla goodness* like a good Santa Claus. Most of them are, shall we say, more colourful than these two:

I knew a gorilla named Max
He played a 10-cent tune on his sax
His music was good
So I thought I should
Collect only 9 cents in tax.

I had a gorilla named Sam
Who refused to eat bacon or ham
The thing he loved most
With coffee and toast
Was to dip his banana in jam.

When I was working on these limericks, I hardly got any sleep. I'd go bed and start giggling, so I had to get up and write down the next one. Back to bed. Giggle giggle. Get up again. Wacky fun. Way more fun than child abuse stories. It's your turn. Write two limericks. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 18

Text: Paco waddles back to the castle.
He opens his big mouth and my brain gets out.

Action: Paco's big chin rests on the sand, his beak is open really really wide, and Brain hops out energetically. Paco and Brain look glad.

Emotion: Thankful, happy.

Blue Blob

Tutorial 34

Gentle Reader, I love rocks. I brought lots of rocks from the forest to my garden. Some weigh about 500 pounds. That's serious work for my shoulders. You don't get muscles watching TV, and I love my muscles, so I don't watch much TV. I don't have a tractor just yet, so I pretend that I'm a tractor and get to work.

Lots of people look at that rock and say that rock sure looks heavy. They don't even try. I look at that rock and say I am going to move that rock. I usually plan how to move that rock. Carefully. I have been moving rocks for many years, and I know how to do it right. But when I make a mistake, it's no fun. Hurting myself reminds me real fast that I am actually not a tractor. I never blame the rock for being heavy. That's the job of the rock. To sit there and look heavy and be heavy.

Sometimes I just want to give a wee rock as a present. So I go see Hing. It takes me just over an hour to get to his place. I want something special. I'm looking for just the right thing.

"Look at this," he says.

He puts a brownish curved tooth about the size of my baby finger into my hand.

"Incisor," he says. "From a lion."

A lion's tooth? What am I going to do with a lion's tooth? I buy a wee rock and the lion's tooth and put them in my pocket. I go see my friend Leigh about my food allergies. She talks about food like it's medicine. Don't mix this and that. Only mix this and this. Cook it like this. Eat it like this. So good for you. Healing for you. You need to have a relationship with your food.

I need to have a relationship with a hefty sandwich. I am moving rocks this afternoon. She has this blue piece of glass on her desk.

"What is that?" I ask.

She went to Venice. To this place where guys blow glass. Lots of it blobs on the floor. She brought some blobs home.

It feels neat. Thick. I like it. I hold it up by the window. I can see through it.

"You can have it," she says.

"Thank you!"

She is like Santa Claus. Only cuter. She starts talking about Africa. She loves Africa. I put the lion's tooth in her hand. It perfectly fits the curve of her hand by the base of her thumb. Her hand is like a cradle for it. Her eyes get all wet and she smiles.

"Leigh, go rent this movie *Secondhand Lions* (2003) starring Robert Duvall and Michael Caine. You're going to love it."

After my shower I sit on the couch playing with this piece of blue glass. I have this spot on my back that has been bugging me for about 20 years. It's not sore, not itchy. It's just a spot below the skin that bugs me. I have never been injured there that I know about. I don't know what it is. It is exactly the furthest point on the lower edge of my left shoulder blade that I can reach with my right hand. I really like this piece of blue glass. I turn out the lights. When I hold this piece of blue glass a few inches in front of my chest, in the dark, it's like I can feel it there. I mean like my chest can feel the blue glass there. Yes. That's what I mean.

What? I decide to spend the night with this piece of blue glass. True love is like that. One minute hello and the next minute in the sack. I put it in my shirt pocket, on my left side, directly in front of the sore spot on my back.

In the morning, that spot on my back is really sore. It feels like it's on fire. My ladyfriend applies bandages to an eruption there and she changes them a few times each day for 4 days. That blue piece of glass somehow pushes some yucky poison guck out of my back. Holy moly. I keep it in that pocket until my back is all better.

My doctoral research into child abuse trauma helped me understand how trauma is toxic. When we suffer trauma, we store some of it somehow in our bodies. Our bodies know our child abuse stories. Our bodies remember. It's important to get rid of that yucky poison guck. Our bodies know what we need to heal. We need to keep listening. That way, we learn new ways to listen. How about that? You can say oh yuck and hold onto your guck or you can listen up and let it go.

Go rent that movie. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 19

Text: The castle is all busted.
The tower is all busted.

Action: The tower is not busted because of water, so the lines of destruction are fresh and sharp.

Emotion: Curious.

In Love, Not Normal

Tutorial 35

Gentle Reader, I love rocks. Maybe you heard.

Here's the thing: you gotta love *something*. I mean something that you can't just buy or consume. Something natural. Something that grabs you and makes you wonder how anything could be so beautiful. Something that astonishes your senses so much that you have to sit in quiet reverence. Something that lights the candle of your heart, when you didn't even know the candle was there. Something. Maybe the word is sacred. Maybe the word is holy.

Abuse can shut us off from this beautiful world. That is a tragedy. Nevertheless, it is up to us to learn how to open the eyes and ears of our hearts. It is up to us to learn how to belong here, and to boldly claim our birthright. I have been shattered by abuse and left for dead, and I put my shattered self together again and I want to live! I no longer wait for anybody on this planet to give me permission to exercise my right to participate in the joyful world of roses and bumblebees and rocks and trees.

I'm in this store, looking at slices of rocks. They are from Brazil. They are about as thick as your index finger, and about half as big as the palm of your hand. I pick up this one lovely slice of rock and right away I get this strong feeling that this rock is for Dennis. And he should go fishing. Should I stand there and argue with this little rock?

So I buy this rock and bring it home. My ladyfriend Christine is going to see Dennis at a get-together with other friends in a couple of days.

"Give this rock to Dennis," I say to her, "and tell him to go fishing."

Christine goes to the meeting. About an hour later, she remembers the rock in her purse. Everybody waits while she gives the rock to Dennis.

"This is for you, from Matthew," she says. "He says go fishing."

Dennis reluctantly accepts the rock. Everybody is puzzled. The meeting continues. About 20 minutes later, Dennis takes off one shoe. Something inside his shoe is bugging him. Everybody waits. No. It's not inside his shoe. It's inside his sock. He takes off his sock. He finds a big fishing hook in the heel of his sock. What? Everybody laughs.

This is strange, I agree. I love rocks. Everybody knows that when you are in love you act strange. So that makes me normal.

Our child abuse stories make us feel like we are not normal. So I hope you find something to fall in love with, so you can act strange and everybody will know that you are in love, and that will make you normal. Good luck with that. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 20

Text: The jail is all busted.
The jail door is all busted.

Action: Severe destruction, what looked so strong is now in tatters. Even the big old rusty padlock is mangled and in pieces.

Emotion: More curious.

Your Heart is Calling

Tutorial 36

Gentle Reader, I used to get upset about people telling me I was too intense. Those who have known me for over 20 years would tell you that I'm generally not as intense as I used to be, and they're happy about that. They would also tell you that I can still hit my intense switch and when I do I'm not much fun.

There's a paradoxical side to this. These same people absolutely love it when they have some job they want my help with, and I hit that switch and get the job done lickety-split. When I want to get something done, I act like I mean it.

I used to apologize for being intense. Used to. I have learned that lots of people are kind of half asleep as they go through life. I am very awake. I learned to be very watchful in order to survive. What is at the absolute core of our child abuse stories? The abuse? No. The story of our survival.

To most people in the Western World, survival is not really an issue. Sure, lots of people give themselves points for surviving the Super Bowl. They survived because they had beer and pizza. Mercy. When I hear yet another such silly story, I smile and think you lucky dog you don't know how lucky you are.

For those of us who had to learn how to actually survive, survival is a skill. And the sooner we realize that we are not willing to relinquish this survival skill, the sooner we stop apologizing for being who we are. What is the absolute core of our survival stories? How hard it was? No. We really wanted to live.

Let us never apologize for wanting to live. Since when do crickets apologize for chirping? Since when do wolves apologize for howling? Since when do cardinals apologize for singing? They all shout, with their very bones, "I'm alive!"

There is a time to chirp and howl and sing. There is a time to hush. A time to hear others chirp and howl and sing. Every cricket and every wolf and every cardinal knows that.

I have learned how to harness my intensity to make the world a better place than it was when I got here. That's my job. That's your job too.

Hush now. Your heart is calling.

Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 21

Text: And guess who sits beside the jail door?
My heart.

Action: Heart sits boldly.

Emotion: Proud, confident, free.

The Essence of Fatherhood

Tutorial 37

Gentle Reader, our child abuse stories have taught us that it is wiser to pay more attention to what people do, rather than what they say. We have learned that the only people who truly know a man are those who live behind closed doors with him over the years.

Another good word for abuser might be tyrant. Speaking from personal experience, tyrants who like their power don't particularly like to have their positions challenged.

In our family home, the tyrant didn't like learning anything, so instead of trying to teach him, I had to teach myself to stand up. It looks like I taught myself to stand up *against him* because I declared war. But if you read my autobiography closely, you'll see that I really wanted to learn how to actually stand up *for myself*. I really wanted to keep breathing. Me being me had the result of teaching him that I was not going to just be bullied my whole life, and he took that as a direct threat and holymoly I paid for it with more broken bones and sometimes I stopped breathing which was no fun. Not many considered this wise on my part.

We can learn to be wise even if we have unwise parents. We must. Here is one of 4 workshops that I created, about fatherhood.

STAND UP TO YOUR INNER DARTH VADER

We all carry our fathers in our bones.
How do we become the fathers we wish we had?

We learn how.
We must learn how to be wise sons
before we can learn how to be wise fathers.

Fathering demands the best of us.
Our children entrust their souls to us.
We must choose to act bravely.

We show our kids, by our example,
how we expect them to raise their own children,
so the next generation depends on us.

It is our responsibility to earn our own trust.
Every moment, our actions demonstrate
what kind of father we choose to be.

Even if we come from violent homes,
we can learn how to create new definitions
of hope, father, home, love, and happiness.

Let us respect our struggle.
Let us practice being good fathers.
Let us earn our proud father muscles.

Our father stories become healing stories
when we cleanse our hearts with truth.
Let us nurture a legacy righteous and true
in the bones of our sons and daughters.

We who have suffered abuse know that freedom is not cheap. We earn our freedom, one breath at a time. The freedom we want lies within us, and it is up to us to take charge of our own lives, and educate ourselves about freedom. That is our primary responsibility. That is how we claim ownership of our lives.

It is not our responsibility to teach the tyrant or to get the tyrant to stop being a tyrant. No. It is our responsibility to teach ourselves how to be free, and education is key. As we educate ourselves, our actions and choices effectively educate the tyrant. But this takes time, and it bears risks. Tyrants don't like to give up any power. So any direct "I'm going to teach you" tactics can backfire and get people hurt, even if you have a really good attitude and noble intentions and all that.

Nelson Mandela emerged from a prison cell to lead his country. He was in a dark prison, however, a very long time.

Here is another workshop that I created, about fatherhood.

THE FATHER I SEEK

We all meet our fathers in the dark caves
of our being. We meet the fathers we had.
We meet the fathers we seek.

In darkness we are all conceived.
In darkness we are first treasured.
In darkness we learn how to live and grow in darkness.

Fathers show us their big worlds.
So many lights.
Who nurtures us in the darkness?

How do we find the father we need,
the one who will show us
how to nurture our own darkness?

We go searching for him.
How do we recognize him in the darkness?
Ah, by the sound of his voice.

That's the voice that inspires trust.
That's the voice that my heart knows.
That's the voice that speaks truth.

That's the voice that holds me.
That's the voice that comforts me.
That's the voice that heals me.

That human voice.
The one that speaks my name.
The one that brings me back home to myself.

Nobody said growing up was easy. I grew up anyway. The father we seek, like the freedom we seek, is within us. Those of us who suffered abuse need a good teacher to help us find him. I know that because I found him. Here I am. I know in my heart that I gave my kids an unshakable foundation of love that will see them through no matter what their lives bring them. Now I am Grampa. My kids bring me their kids. I nurture them. I nourish them. I keep the promise.

Sometimes I sit in the dark and I just sit there and I just sit there and I just sit there being myself in the dark like being at the bottom of a hole. I am no longer afraid of the dark. It comforts me. I like my own company, and the solitude of my own prayers, and the purifying of my heart. I am a worthy vessel for love. That is the soul of the matter. That is the essence of fatherhood. Nothing, not even death will change that.

It's your turn to bust out. Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 22

Text: "Thanks for busting me out of jail!" says my heart.
My brain looks around but Paco is gone gone.

Action: A long line of Paco's footprints down the beach close to the edge of the water, and Paco looks very small in the distance with his back to us.

Emotion: Glad.

Trust Your Heart

Tutorial 38

Gentle Reader, here we are at the last page of this wild book. I feel lots of things that I want to share with you because I am sure you feel them too.

Writing these tutorials for you is fun and I am going to miss it. These tutorials are kind of conversational and I have enjoyed discussing so many issues in our child abuse stories with you. Thank you for listening and inspiring me to be the best teacher I can be for you.

I have written you 38 letters. I hope that you will write me at least one. Just say hello and let me know how you are doing. If you would like me to write another tutorial on something very specific, you can include that request, and I will do my best.

It really is an honour to do this healing work. I have shared my heart with you. You know that I am a guy with real blood and bones and whiskers and toes and lots of other yummy parts.

Here we are. It feels like it's time to give you a hug, like at the airport, and send you on your way. Here we are. You survived. All the time, while we were being devoured by child abuse, we were safe, and we just didn't know it. Just like Brain who gets devoured by Paco the pelican in Tutorial 26. Just like Bynerkrix who gets devoured by Rofklimmer in Tutorial 10. Just like Jonah who gets devoured by the great fish in Tutorial 16. You can read these devouring stories as horror stories. Or you can read them as survival stories.

We survived intact, and we know it. Then we forget. Then we remember. Then we forget. We just keep doing the healing thing that helps us remember. And sometimes, when we embrace healing moments with our whole hearts, we are wonderfully, magically happy. In these moments, our hearts are so full of joy, there is no room in them for our child abuse stories. We must remember these moments, and build on them. We stack them up in our hearts. That is how we turn our horrific-child abuse-devouring-survival-stories into healing stories! Countless healing moments await you. Stack them up in your heart, one at a time. Each one is precious.

You already know that I am not too young to be Santa Claus, so at this very moment, I bestow a gift upon you to keep you safe. Accept this gift. Here it is.

Blessings upon the heart of your home.
Blessings upon the home of your heart.

Now trust your heart, and proceed with the adventure that is your life! Have fun!

Paco the Pelican. Heart-Brain BOOK 2

Page 23

Text: That's how my heart and my brain became friends. We're still friends.
We want to build this castle...

Action: Brain and Heart in the sand, side by side, very close, to each other.
They have started to build a brand new sand castle. One thick wall is already
up, with battlements on it. We do not see the old wrecked sand castle.

Emotion: Hope, renewal, joy, friendship, excitement.

Baseball Bud

Tutorial 39

Gentle Reader, thank you for your letters! I am so glad that my tutorials help you laugh again! You asked me to write more tutorials that deal with the real nitty-gritty of healing from child abuse. The hard stuff. So here we are.

This next series of 12 tutorials are different than what you're used to. Now I want to show you some sculptures that I created on my healing path. These humble little people sculptures show truths about how we learn to heal from child abuse. I talk about baseball in these first 2 tutorials because the first 2 of my 12 little people sculptures are playing ball. Maybe you don't like baseball. That's okay. I am sure, however, that you will appreciate the truths that these sculptures will show you. It was a huge amount of work learning how to create these 12 little people.

At the big recycling depot, I often filled my truck with hundreds of discarded plastic bottles that once contained carbonated beverages (pop) at the supermarket. At home, I washed them all in soap and water. Then I peeled off the labels. Then I washed them all again with a solvent to remove the glue that held the labels on. Then I washed them all again in soap and water. As you know, these thin plastic pop-bottles have no rigidity when they are empty. The carbon dioxide in the fizzy pop drink keeps the pop-bottle the proper shape! That's intelligent packaging! Some of my little people need hands and feet to be able to play ball. In order to make the pop-bottles very rigid, I set my propane torch on my kitchen table, and I rotated the plastic bottle in my hands a few inches above the blue flame. I wrecked lots of pop-bottles learning how to do this right. I created feet from these rigid plastic pop-bottles. And airplane wings too! You will laugh when you see my little airplane! I created lots of nifty toys from these pop-bottles and I will show them to you in tutorial 50.

When I was in school, I was always the last one to be picked by any team for any activity such as baseball, soccer, floor hockey, volleyball etc. I was the last one left and whichever team got me would groan. When I was a kid, right after school I went to work, so I never had the luxury of learning how to play sports. Luxury. That's the right word. I got hit so much at home. At school, when we played sports, I hated it when some guy ploughed into me and knocked me down or kicked me or elbowed me in the face. I hated being hit and I didn't want to be hit anymore. When I saw a ball coming my way, I ducked so it wouldn't hit me. As you might imagine, this did not exactly make me popular.

It took me years as an adult to realize that the ball was not my enemy trying to hit me and hurt me. It was just a ball. I started to step up to meet the ball, but it wasn't easy. I had to defy my teachers. Teachers don't like that. They make you run around the gymnasium 100 times to teach you not to be mouthy. In grade 10, being ridiculed yet again, I take my turn at bat during a baseball game

for physical education class. As usual, the outfielders walk in close to the bases. I have never once hit the ball with the bat in my whole life. I am 16 years old. I step up to the plate, and for the first time, I stand on the other side of it. The teacher yells at me to swing right. I yell right back. "No!" For the first time, when I hold the bat over my left shoulder, it feels better. It feels right. For the first time in my life, I'm ready. Here comes the pitch. I hit the ball. Nothing fancy. Just a smack on the kisser and away it goes, bouncing in the grass past everybody. Nobody is out there to stop it. My first home run! This is fun!

Sometimes, you just have to do the opposite of what you've been doing all along in order to break through. I bought my very first baseball glove when I was over 30 years old. I still have it. I learned to keep my eye on the ball. It is a good sound to hear the ball land smack in the glove. That's the sound of success. And smack the ball up and away with a bat. Another sound of success. I just kept practising. When you hit the ball or catch the ball, that makes you so happy that there's no room left for fear.

So baseball is a healing story for me. It can be a healing story for you too. Let me show you how.

Baseball is a game of selves and names. Baseball is a game where a whole bunch of ball selves mix wonderfully. The catcher throws the ball to the pitcher. That's the name of the ball in play: "The Ball."

The pitcher winds up. The moment it leaves the pitcher's hand, "The Ball" gets a new name:

Rising fastball.

Curveball.

Split-finger fastball.

Screwball.

Knuckleball.

Sinker.

Fastball.

We recognize each distinct baseball self by how the baseball dances through the air toward home plate at 90 miles per hour.

When Fastball dances outside the strike zone, it's name instantly changes.

Ball 1.

Ball 2.

Ball 3.

Ball 4.

The pitcher may intentionally throw a Ball instead of a strike that challenges the batter. When the bat in the arms of the batter connects with Fastball, however, Fastball's name instantly changes again.

Fairball.

Foulball.
Flyball.
Groundball.
Home run.

That's the game. It is a game of perpetual transformation. Like a baseball in play, each of us contain different selves and voices. Some of them we know, and can name. To demonstrate, I have created my 12 Popbottle People. They all have names and personalities. They help bring the valuable lessons that I learned about healing out into the open. They represent some of our selves-in-transition. They help us see our different selves clearly.

Baseball Bud represents each of us, as healthy as we can be. Baseball Bud is in motion, running to catch the baseball. Balanced. Focused. His whole body is complete.



Baseball Bud

He is celebrating his life-in-motion, and his body, by playing catch. He is full of life. More than that. Baseball Bud is free, and he knows it. He is free to breathe big breaths and run and jump and shout with joy. Life is wonderful!

We play catch with our whole bodies. Not just with our hands. We learn geography and other stuff from books with our whole bodies too, not just our eyes and our brains. Everything in our bodies is connected to everything else. Our leg bones are connected to our inner ear bones. Abuse teaches us about suffering. We learn suffering with our whole bodies. That is no fun. We also learn joy and healing with our whole bodies. That is lots of fun!

Maybe you don't like to play baseball. That's okay. Whatever you like to play that is healing for you, go play! Have fun!

Hector

Tutorial 40

Gentle Reader, Hector is Baseball Bud's friend. He too plays with his whole body. In the field, he has just thrown the ball, and Baseball Bud makes a running catch with his left hand.



Baseball Bud & Hector

Through their play, Baseball Bud and Hector constantly create their friendship. They would never throw the ball if the other's back is turned. They throw the ball back and forth to each other, never at each other. This is how they build and maintain trust.

Abuse can absolutely shatter trust, and it's our job as survivors to learn how to build trust. Playing catch really helped me to do that. Because we learn trust with our whole bodies. It feels good! When you learn to trust the person you are playing catch with, this helps you to create a trusting self within you. And that person trusts you, so you are creating a trusted self within you too. It feels good!

Abuse is very unfriendly. Playing catch is very friendly. Abuse isolates you. It makes you feel like you haven't a friend in the whole world. Playing catch holds you in your friend's kindness. And you hold your friend in your kindness. So now you are creating a kind self within you. It feels good! It feels exactly like happiness inside your body! Happiness is good! Abuse teaches you to be afraid that you will never be happy again. When you play catch with someone who cares about you, happiness is right at your fingertips. And then, suddenly, happiness is in the palm of your hand. Every time you grab it, it feels good! You need to grab it. That's how to create a happy self within you.

Abusers try to make you feel like you are just worthless. When I make a good catch, I am so surprised sometimes that I just look at the ball in my glove and

wonder how did I do that. I know the answer. I am amazing! So you see how you get from worthless to amazing? You get there by reaching out and grabbing that ball of happiness. That's how to create an amazing self within you.

Playing ball is how Hector and Baseball Bud nurture each other. Remember that lovely word?

Now, go play with your friend. Have fun!

Bud

Tutorial 41

Gentle Reader, how did Baseball Bud see himself before he learned the joy of playing ball? And what was his name then? This is Bud.



Bud

Bud represents the person who has been abused. He has no safe place in the world and no safe place inside for a sense of a whole self. He feels hollow and empty. He feels that everybody can see clearly that he is afraid all the time.

Bud's eyes and ears are bigger than normal to show that Bud's senses are always on the alert. Internally, however, Bud's eyes, ears, and mouth are plugged. Gagged. Bud is told repeatedly to "shut up," to "be seen and not heard," and to "speak when you're spoken to, and not before." Bud is punished for questioning, for talking.

When it comes to survival, sometimes it is wise, and sometimes it is unwise to refrain from speaking. In many ways, you allow yourself to be silenced when you refuse to speak up for yourself.

When you allow your personhood, your individuality, to be squashed by others, without protest, you forfeit your identity. Your own voice is lost. Allowing others to treat you badly prevents you from participating in life as a whole person. You are a person with a name! Speak your name! You cannot be free without your name! Your name is not the name of the abuser! Your name is your very own! Your life is your very own!

Although Bud sees and hears the horror of violence all around him, he is punished brutally for seeing and hearing. Because the abusers want to maintain total control. Should Bud pretend that he has no eyes and no ears in order to

survive? The abusers are allowed to have bodies. The abusers are allowed to eat really yummy food. The abusers are allowed to get headaches. The abusers are allowed to spend an hour on the toilet with their books. Bud is not allowed to have a body. He is not allowed a minute on the toilet. The abusers eat the bacon and give Bud the rind off the bacon. The abusers eat roast beef and give Bud the string that held the roast together. The abusers are allowed to make Bud bleed profusely. But Bud is not allowed to bleed on the floor after he has been attacked. His attacker stuffs a huge used handkerchief into Bud's mouth at the beginning of the attack so Bud is not allowed to cry out in agony. This gag chokes Bud. Bud is not even allowed to breathe. Bud is not allowed to be a human being. He is not allowed to be.

Bud does not see his Victimself as having a complete body. He is not like other people in the world. He is isolated. He has no choices, no control over anything in his life. The connection between Bud's head and his torso represents the paradox of how Bud understands abuse inside his body. Bud is plugged.



Bud struggles to learn

The lessons that others try to teach Bud are represented by the coloured liquid. Bud cannot even bodily absorb the geography lesson in school. He cannot bodily understand the meaning of the word "relax." He cannot learn the irrelevant lessons in the school classroom or anywhere else. He is already overwhelmed with trauma and his moment-to-moment survival. School lessons only add to his burden. Bud is unplugged.



Bud still struggles to learn

Bud cannot learn the irrelevant lessons that so many others want to teach him, and punish him for not learning. They run through him like diarrhoea.

As a child, Bud cannot learn how to hope for a future. He lives with the constant threat of his own imminent destruction. He cannot learn how to gain faith in his own existence-in-the-future. He cannot learn how to generate hope from within himself. But he wants to live so he learns how to focus all his energy on enduring his war situation. In his very particular situation, he cannot do otherwise.

It is very hard for Bud to learn how to imagine the possibility that he might still be alive in a few minutes. He has learned through experience how to face unimaginable fear and bodily pain and imminent death alone.

Bud's inner strength, born out of his determination to simply keep living against all odds, needs to be recognized as a significant individual achievement. Bud thinks that life is war. He knows that in war, the Bad Guy, who is just as big as the Good Guy, is going to kill the Good Guy dead real fast, the first chance he gets, unless the Good Guy kills the Bad Guy dead first. Fair fight. In a violent home, however, Bud knows that he is just a kid, but the Bad Guy is big. Not a fair fight. Not a fight at all. No contest. Bud knows that the Bad Guy is going to kill him dead whenever he feels like it, but mostly he just keeps on killing Bud not quite totally dead over and over again. Bud is severely stuck. The Bad Guy won't let him live. The Bad Guy won't let him die. Bud cannot escape.

Nobody helps Bud. The abusers say they love Bud. Everybody in church agrees that God loves Bud. Lots of otherwise intelligent people talk about love. Bud is not so sure what love is exactly, but it looks like and sounds like and feels like love is absolute hell.

Bud's intense struggle for survival forms the basis for his warrior personality. The more Bud tries to change who he is, the less he is able to accept who he is. He cannot change; his resistance to change is equal to his need to change. Changing a habit is hard work and takes time. Changing his warrior personality is harder work and takes more time. Only through acceptance of who he is can he change.

Bud has a few questions about love and life. Who will listen to Bud's questions? Who will help him ask them?

I need a break right now. I am going to play. You too. Get going! Have fun!

Bud-at-home

Tutorial 42

Gentle Reader, how does Bud understand his whole body while he is being viciously attacked by the abuser?



Bud-at-home disconnected

This is Bud-at-home. He does not feel connected to any part of his body, including his limbs or his senses. His body is being mangled, broken and torn open by his attacker. His bones are being broken and he is bleeding profusely. His body is a sieve; neither the thin net that was his skin nor his bones hold him together. His body is more than transparent now, you can put your fingers into the gashes in one side of his body, go through, and out the other side. The pain being inflicted upon him is so severe that Bud-at-home is at the very edge of death. Bud-at-home must learn how to bear unbearable suffering. He must learn, at this very moment, how to die, because nobody will rescue him. This is not the time for hope. He must find the courage, in the middle of this horror, to stop screaming in agony. He must focus his mind. This is not the time to pray. This is the time to learn how to die.



Bud-at-home connected

Time goes by. Even though Bud-at-home is in one piece, he still feels totally shattered. Bud-at-home sits in that geography class and tries to learn geography because the abuser will throw Bud-at-home against the wall and break his arm again if Bud-at-home talks in class or if he gets less than 100% on the next geography test.

Bud-at-home hears people at school talk about the fight-or-flight response, and he knows from experience that there is another option, one created in his family home. At school, others see Bud-at-home as a walking, talking, bright and cheerful boy. But he knows the truth. He has no feet; no flight. He has no hands; no fight. He cannot run from the abuser. He cannot fight back to stop the abuser.

Bud-at-home doesn't really care about geography because it won't help keep him alive for five more minutes. So geography isn't very practical, now is it? One way he fights back is to talk in class. He likes being with friendly people and his classmates seem like friendly people. Bud is not allowed to have friends because friends might learn the truth and they might try to help Bud and this might create problems for the abusers.

Bud knows the abuser will probably kill him, but Bud-at-home flunks the next geography test. On purpose. And when he takes his report card home to his attacker, Bud-at-home is totally terrified of the pain that is coming. The huge pain, that's the hard part. Death is not so hard now that he has learned how to die. His attacker doesn't know that. His attacker is still afraid of death. That's why he prays for God's forgiveness.

Bud-at-home knows that school buses carry children to school. The bus is the vehicle. Violence is a vehicle too. It carries the hatred of the attacker. Bud-at-home knows that this hatred is being beaten into every cell of his body. If Bud-at-home survives, how will he ever learn to cleanse himself of it?

Bud-at-home needs a really good teacher to help him learn that there is more to life than war. Maybe he could learn how to be a loved human being someday. Maybe he could learn how to play ball someday.

Go play. Go! Go now! Go run and jump and holler and breathe and sweat and play because you are alive to do so! Dying is no fun! Play like you mean it! Have fun!

Buddy
Tutorial 43

Gentle Reader, meet Buddy.



Buddy

Buddy represents the armoured person who suffered child abuse. He is impenetrable. He is covered, from the crown of his head, in shields.

He can only filter experience through his eyes. His ears and his mouth are plugged. No one can hear him. He can hear no one.



Buddy with sword and shield

Buddy is always on guard, ready to do battle. In his left hand, he holds another shield. In his right hand, he holds a sword. In his family home, he lived under constant threat and now he thinks and behaves as if the whole world is a threat to his survival. He drives aggressively. He talks too loud so you know he means it the first time. When he stands and talks to you, he always stands just a little

sideways, so he is a smaller target for you. He watches you very closely, with his chin close to his shoulder. He never takes his eyes off you. The stance of a fighter. The moment you get within 3 feet of him, his hands come out of his pockets. The moment you move any closer, he plays with his beard while he talks so he's got one fist ready to fly in your face if you insult him or make a sudden move. He never sits on a couch, so nobody can sit beside him. He sits alone on a chair or he stands away from the crowd. Always with his back to the wall. He will not be ambushed again.

A good therapist could understand Buddy, and help him get along in the world. Buddy learns to question what he believes and what he feels. Buddy learns new ways to determine what actually constitutes a threat and what does not. He learns to take new risks so he can learn how to trust.

Buddy has deep inner experience to draw upon. He has faced huge fears already, and he calls upon his bravery so he can learn how to heal his life. He knows war. Now he must learn peace. Each time Buddy tries to get along in the world without his weaponry, he feels very vulnerable. Naked. He is brave though, and he knows he must learn this because it is the right thing to do. He wants to grow, so he must practice, practice, practice. Therapy really helps relieve the pressure inside Buddy, and he keeps gaining confidence. The time comes when he sets his sword and shield aside. He grabs a pencil and a pad of paper, and he begins to write a book about how he struggles to heal his life. His therapist believes this book will inspire others who struggle like Buddy.

When I was a kid, I would often get inspired by reading about people in the encyclopaedia in the school library. Look at this little black and white picture of Mozart. He's just a boy, sitting at the piano. His feet don't even reach the floor. His shirt with big fluffy cuffs. His long curly hair. He is already a composer!

Go listen to some Mozart. Listen with your heart. Get inspired! Have fun!

Brenda
Tutorial 44

Gentle Reader, meet Brenda.



Brenda

Brenda is Buddy's adult mate. She suffered child abuse too. Brenda's experience of suffering dominates her sense of self. Like Bud, she does not see her Victimself as having a complete body. She was not allowed to grow. Brenda, in many ways, is plugged up like Bud.

In order to feel safe, she maintains control of how close others come into her physical and psychic space. This uses a lot of energy, and keeps her anxious. She tries to keep others at a safe, non-threatening distance with her sharp edges. Lots of people who don't know her background think of her as prickly. Like a porcupine. Don't mess with her.

Paradoxically, like Bud, in some ways Brenda is also wide open.



Brenda, close up

Brenda's left ear is super sensitive and open. She can tell you what bird is chirping just by the song it sings. She doesn't have to see the bird. But she cannot tell you what the mechanic just said about what is wrong with her car. It's all gibberish to her. Brenda can filter some things she sees with her right eye. She can spot a bird in a tree when you can hardly see the tree. But she cannot see the rolling pin in the drawer. She calls Buddy on the phone and says, "did you see my rolling pin?" Buddy is ten miles away. He says, "yes I did, it's in the drawer, just to the left of the kitchen sink, on the right side." Brenda finds it right there, right where she has kept it for over 10 years.

Buddy has learned not to scold Brenda for not seeing stuff. "Don't you talk to me like that!" she yells. When she stands up for herself, Buddy knows she can be fierce.

She has a difficult time filtering what goes into, and what comes out of her mouth. She was just a little girl when she was first raped by the abuser. Now, if anyone dares to insult her, she spews venom. She is so hungry and so thirsty that she eats and drinks too much. Nothing satisfies her. She is actually starving for love, and her sharp edges protect her deep wounds that have not healed.

I do not have a female's body, so I cannot speak about the horror of rape from a female child's perspective. When I was a boy, I did all I could do to protect my sisters, and in reality I could not protect them at all. I could stand beside them after they were raped and beaten. I could defy the attacker. I could tell the truth. I could become a good teacher and make this planet a safer place for their children and grandchildren.

Sometimes Brenda's past overwhelms her. It is hard to see in the photograph, but even her hair is brittle and has sharp edges. Even Brenda's hair says "don't touch me!"

When my younger sister was dying, I went to stand beside her. I felt like an earthquake went through me when she died. She read my movie scripts, and many books that I wrote. They brought her lots of laughter. I have her hand-written letters right here.

Brenda believes that Buddy is the only person on this planet who understands her.



Brenda & Buddy

Lots of people will tell you that opposites attract. Not me. I think that's only true for magnets. We attract people that are like us somehow. As we become more mature, some people that we found attractive years ago become less attractive. That's why divorce got invented.

If you look with compassionate eyes, you will see that Brenda is also very much like Buddy. They mirror each other. Did you ever notice how much you like your mirror until it mirrors something you don't want to see? If you do your healing work, as time goes by you will see an older, wiser, and happier version of your healingself in the mirror. Part of your healing work is to go have fun. So go! Have fun!

1+1=0

Tutorial 45

Gentle Reader, meet Boundary-Bud and Boundary-Brenda.



Boundary-Bud



Boundary-Brenda

1+1=2. This is true if you are talking about oranges.

1+1=0. This is true in intimate relationships when two people use each other to satisfy their urgent and desperate needs. The sex might be wild and delicious but it doesn't heal the pain that abuse brings. These two people actually work against each other because they make each other more crazy. Abuse can make you crazy enough. Healing means less crazy. They both crave intensity, and this can lead to dangerous activities and lots of drama. They both expect the other one to make them feel safe and loved. But love and sex are not the same. They both live under constant threat that the other will leave. Threat. That's the

word. That makes trust impossible. The spirit between them is abusive. Abusive. That's the word. And it will destroy them both.

Boundary-Bud and Boundary-Brenda represent what the abused person looks like without appropriate personal boundaries. Their eyes are like long tentacles that reach out where they don't belong. Their immature bodies are not whole so they both are quite wobbly and fall over easily. They do not know how to think or behave around others.

Neither of them have learned to trust their bodies, including their senses. They don't know how. Neither of them knows how much physical space they actually occupy, or how much they "should" occupy. These problems are represented by their overflowing, overlapping senses. Their struggles in life are so similar that they attract each other. Their suffering, not their joy, brings them together.



Boundary-Bud close up



Boundary-Brenda close up

You already know that if you have a lovely garden without a fence around it, all kinds of people will walk right in and help themselves to what you have grown. Fences and locked doors only keep out honest people. Abusers are thieves. Thieves never ask permission. Healthy boundaries are like friendly little fences so you know and everybody else knows that this is your garden. If somebody wants a rose from your garden, they need to knock on your front door and ask you for it politely. And you can say no. Healthy boundaries help you to choose when to say yes and when to say no. And mean it. The first time. You learn to say no in a friendly tone of voice, so others hear you. And if they don't hear you, then you say no more forcefully so they do hear you. You have that right. In their violent family homes, nobody respected any personal boundaries, so neither Boundary-Bud nor Boundary-Brenda know anything about them. Whatever the abusers wanted, they just took, and now, as adults, Boundary-Bud and Boundary-Brenda must deliberately choose if they are going to become thieves too.

Lots of people will tell you violence is a cycle. Really? What kind of cycle? A unicycle? A bicycle? A tricycle? A motorcycle? The people who tell you that violence is a cycle haven't done their homework. This so-called cycle of violence is a model, that's all. It's only one way of looking at the problem. If you come from a violent home, like me, then you might just become terrified, like me, that you will become a violent person. I chose otherwise. We are not robots. We are not programmed to repeat violence. People who know my parents were abusers ask me, "did they come from abusive homes?" Abuse is not cause and effect. Just because I got beaten is no excuse for me to beat my kids. The truth is that my parents chose to become the people they became, one breath at time, just like me, and just like everybody else on this planet.

Boundary-Bud and Boundary-Brenda both feel like beggars, begging for some kindness, some affection. And they are angry about that. They do not enjoy feeling like beggars. They know that if they take what they want by force, like a thief, they will no longer beg, but this means that they become like their abusers. Is this an acceptable option?

Can they learn another way? A good therapist will tell them that they both need to learn that they actually have rights. Just because nobody respected their rights, that doesn't mean they didn't have these rights from the moment they were born. Human rights. The right to be treated with dignity and respect. The right to personal safety. The right to say yes. The right to say no.

Once Boundary-Bud and Boundary-Brenda accept and respect that each of them has these individual rights, they can accept and respect that their partner has these rights too. Learning and healing starts within, then reaches out. You can't teach someone to play baseball if you don't know how to play baseball yourself.

Go watch a game being played outdoors. Baseball or soccer or lawn bowling or rugby or whatever you like. Pay attention to the boundaries of the game. Notice how often players become off side or out of bounds by crossing a line, and how they respond to the referee and each other when they get caught. Watch the drama as if you are the referee. Do not choose sides. Be fair. Have fun!

1+1=3

Tutorial 46

Gentle Reader, I'm sure you recall meeting Boundary-Bud and Boundary-Brenda.



Boundary-Bud



Boundary-Brenda

1+1=2. This is true if you are talking about apples.

1+1=3. This is true when you are talking about how babies get here. One adult female and one adult male join energies to create a third being. This is also true in intimate relationships. When two people who are taking responsibility for their own healing get together, that creates a space for more healing at a deeper level. Instead of working against each other, they work together, like a team. Two people get more done together than they can do separately because the spirit between them is a source of creative energy.

Lots of people want relationships to be easy and fun all the time. Well, to them I say good luck. My garden is good and it's work. My writing is good and it's work. My sculpture is good and it's work. My apple pie is good and it's work. My relationship with my lady Christine is good and it's work.

When we met, Christine and I were both seeing therapists individually. Both of us had to learn important things so we could be our true selves, instead of what we thought the other one wanted us to be. Learning to be yourself is not all that easy when you have not been allowed to be yourself since you were born.

Couples argue and need to sort things out. That's just part of life. It can get crazy though if one invades the other. Things can go from friendly to hostile in seconds. Sometimes the person being invaded has a huge reaction and the other one is actually innocent. Sometimes the invasion is deliberate, to force the issue. It gets hard to know the difference.



Boundary-Bud and Boundary-Brenda invading each other

See how Boundary-Bud's green eye is invading Boundary-Brenda's eye? One of her eyes is invading one of his eyes too. See their long floppy ears in their individual photographs above, and notice how they are all entangled when they are together. It's work learning how to see yourself and how to hear yourself and how to speak and how to touch and how to smell and how to feel like a human being. It takes time to learn to trust your senses and your feelings, and how to process all that.

Christine and I also went to therapy together so we could get help recognizing how we were invading each other, and how to correct that. We also learned how to fight fair. We did our homework. For years. The more we practised, the more stable we became within ourselves. We both gained confidence and competence getting along in the world. Our relationship got healthier too.

A few days after I meet Christine, I buy her a new baseball glove. She first uses it in the parking lot behind the bookstore where she works. It is her very first baseball glove. We play catch under the full moon at midnight by my log house in the bush, naked as teapots, laughing and healing our lives.

If you need to call a therapist, do that. Obey your heart. Then, go laugh and play with your best friend. Have fun!

Envious Ernie

Tutorial 47

Gentle Reader, allow me to introduce Envious Ernie.

Envious Ernie represents the abused person who doesn't bother to get help. Such people think they see everything clearly when they see nothing clearly.



Envious Ernie

Envious Ernie's body is not fully developed, representing his immaturity. He does not want his life. He wants somebody else's life, one that looks better. He refuses to learn. He complains instead of taking responsibility for changing his life.

Envious Ernie twists everything he sees and hears to suit his life-is-no-fun perspective.



Envious Ernie, close up

Everything he says is designed to manipulate others. He does not want to be free, and he does not want others to be free. He is a totally boring expert victim of himself.

These people can really annoy you if you let them. For example. JR just loves to play his sad tunes on his sad cello. He tells me his sad stories and reads me his sad poems. His wife cooks up a chicken. How sad. No roast potatoes to go with it. I bake an apple pie. How sad. No ice-cream to go with it. We eat in the backyard. How sad. Three mosquitoes. Birds chirp. How sad. Fall is coming and they will all fly away. Flowers bloom. How sad. They will all die soon. His wife and I just laugh.

Don't let an Envious Ernie in your life drain your energy. You need your energy for healing! Go play without him. You will be happier and healthier. Have fun!

Janet

Tutorial 48

Gentle Reader, meet Janet.

Janet represents the compassionate teacher. Externally, she looks normal; she has a body, with arms and legs.



Janet with body-knowledge

Looking inside her, you see that Janet has body-knowledge, represented by the various coloured liquid throughout her entire body.

Janet has internal filters for her eyes, ears, mouth, her mind, and in her limbs and organs, through which she filters her life experience.

Bud searches a long time until he finds Janet one day.

"I'm looking for help," says Bud. "I don't know how to learn how to learn. I don't feel safe enough anywhere to learn anything."

Abuse makes you feel unsafe inside your body. Your emotions and your thinking feel like they are out of control. Asking for help is an act of bravery. In my intense suffering, I learned that asking for help was futile. Nobody helped me to stay alive. I was a brave boy, and being a brave adult meant asking for help so I could try to learn how to be a human being.

Janet invites Bud to tell her his story. Janet understands why Bud speaks so fast, and why his voice quivers with fear. She listens to Bud. While telling his

story, Bud can see and feel that Janet is not rushing him. She respects his struggle. Janet is not threatened by the intensity of Bud's child abuse story.

"Filters allow you to slow your experience down," says Janet. "They allow you to choose what you want to learn, how much you want to learn, and when."

Knowledge is represented by various coloured liquids that move slowly through Janet, mixing as they go. Everything that she learns mixes with everything else that she has learned, and changes within her. She learns with her whole body.



Janet learning new things

Janet is very different than Bud. She is a teacher, yes, with a Teacherself. She also has a Motherself, a Daughterself--many selves. Bud hears her many voices mingling in her Teacherself, and he hears how she embodies and lives them.

As Bud and Janet exchange their stories, Bud learns that it is safe to talk about how hard it was to learn geography in the classroom as a boy when his arm was broken and his nose was broken and some of his ribs were broken by the abuser because the teacher wrote on the report card that he talked in class.

"I want to learn how to learn!" says Bud.

"You already know how to learn. You learned a lot about abuse," says Janet. "Nobody should have to learn that."

Bud can see that Janet the teacher actually cares. You know how you can have a really hard day, but you pretend that you are okay, then somebody says something kind to you, and you start to cry?

“It doesn’t feel like learning!” says Bud.

Tears roll down Bud’s face.

“I feel like I never got a chance to grow! I still feel like a little kid and I don’t know anything! I like to go exploring in the forest and I like to go exploring in books too. Do you have a good book I could read?”

“Sure,” she says.

She selects a book from the bookshelf. She hands it to Bud.

“I wrote this book. You can borrow it for one week. Please take good care of it.”

“Thank you.” says Bud.

He knows that Janet is trusting him. Next week Bud brings back Janet’s book and they talk about it. Bud has started on a new path. He is very curious where this path will lead. He is exploring. He has hope. Inside his body, Bud feels like he just grew a little bit. It feels good!

Grab a book to read, maybe a funny kid’s book. Somebody with a name and a body wrote that book, hoping someone just like you would enjoy it. Have fun!

Bud-Wiser

Tutorial 49

Gentle Reader, allow me to introduce Bud-wiser.

Bud-wiser represents the abused person who is learning how to learn, with his whole body, the lessons that Janet, the compassionate teacher, is teaching.



Bud-wiser with body-knowledge

Bud-wiser is growing a body. His eyes and ears, his senses, are not so pronounced; he is less vigilant. Instead of white filters, like Janet, Bud-wiser creates his own filters, slowly, in his favourite colours. His filters represent his ability to make choices, and allow him to slow his experience down so it's manageable. They allow him to choose what he wants to learn, how much he wants to learn, and when. Now he is learning how to learn more effectively. He's having fun.

Bud-wiser recognizes that he has body knowledge, represented by the liquid in his limbs and torso. Body knowledge is what we learn and know with our being. It is not memorizing your notes for a test, then forgetting everything you memorized a few days later. You can't learn to ride a bicycle by reading about it. You need to hop on the bicycle and figure it out with your whole body. When you learn stuff like that, you don't forget very easily.

In the centre of Bud-wiser's body, his chest is full of black liquid, representing fear.



Bud-wiser with fear in chest

He still feels afraid. He does not know how to feel confident inside his body. Fear is what stops you from learning. If you are afraid that you will fall off the bicycle and break your neck, you will not likely hop on the bike. If, however, you know that your friend who already rides a bike will greet you with a very friendly kiss just because you rode your bike across town, well, you will probably learn to ride a bike in a few minutes.

"I still feel like I don't know anything useful" Bud-wiser says to Janet. "It feels like fear."

"You do know something very useful," says Janet. "You know a lot about survival and suffering. It's time for you to learn more and more about this big beautiful world."

As Bud-wiser learns more about what fascinates him, his fear is slowly diluted, and passes from his body.



Bud-wiser learning new things

Bud-wiser knows fear is no fun. Fear isn't bad, it's only no fun. Bud-wiser is healing. Joyful learning dislodges the fear he learned. So the more Bud-wiser partakes of joyful learning, the less fear he holds inside. Bud-wiser can feel the difference in his body. He feels happier. That feels good!



Bud-wiser's happiness shows

Bud-wiser's true inner self slowly reveals itself to him. Hiding inside the fear, inside the blackness, are little gold nuggets. They emerge from the blackness. They sparkle! They don't bring joy. They are joy. Bud-wiser understands now that real happiness is learning and living his true heart. Bud-wiser can hold onto this truth. He can trust it. He can build on it.



Bud-wiser having fun learning

He will never forget the painful lessons about abuse. Healing doesn't mean that his memories are erased.



Bud-wiser's happy heart

No. Healing means that you take hold of the lesson, no matter how painful, and you build on it. You build your life, little by little. Like how a rosebush grows in your garden. A little safe place to put down roots, a little stinky fertilizer, a little rain, a little sunshine, a little wind, a little lightning, a little pruning, a little bouquet for the person who kisses you, a little frost, a little snow, a little rain, a little sunshine...

Go be with some beautiful plants. Waltz around in a garden. Don't just stand there and look at things. Behold them. Engage your heart. Appreciate something lovely just because it is so lovely. Go. Have fun!

Naomi
Tutorial 50

Gentle Reader, remember Janet, the teacher? Well, she got pregnant. That was fun!

Meet Naomi.



Naomi in Janet's womb

Naomi represents Janet's soon-to-be-born baby, and Naomi's dwellingplace represents Janet's womb.

Naomi has no filters for the world yet. She is totally vulnerable. Janet filters everything for Naomi. Women who want healthy babies take good care of themselves. Naomi's body knowledge, by that I mean what she learns while growing inside Janet's womb, is represented by a blue marker that floats freely inside Naomi's body. When Naomi is born, she will already recognize Janet's voice. Naomi wants to be born. Worktime.



Naomi being born

Every one of us comes from a sack of water. Imagine being conceived in love. Imagine being nurtured and nourished in the womb. Imagine being welcomed into the world by parents worthy of being parents. Parents who are worthy of you.



Naomi standing

Naomi comes into this world through Janet. Janet knows that Naomi agrees to entrust her very soul to Janet for safekeeping. Entrust. Now there's a word. Janet agrees to nurture and nourish Naomi in this beautiful garden we call Earth. That is the essence of motherhood.

Janet eagerly awaits the day when she will teach Naomi how to play ball. Maybe they will meet Baseball Bud on the field. Look at Baseball Bud chase that ball! He is a whole person. He holds all these other people, all these other selves, within himself. He knows them by name. He recognizes them. Hector. Bud. Bud-at-home. Buddy. Brenda. Boundary-Bud. Boundary-Brenda. Envious Ernie. Janet. Naomi. These are only some of his different selves that he has integrated in order to be the healthiest he can be. Each of us is a family of one. Each of us carries a family of selves within us like these 12 little people.

May the stories that these selves bring to you be healing stories.

And now I show you some nifty toys.
This is my People-Mover Motorhome.



Peoplemover Front



Peoplemover.Back

My Peoplemover is the home of my 12 little People who tell the truth about learning to heal. This Peoplemover is fun to drive down the hallways at Universities. Others offer to drive it for me!

I am conducting the workshop.

“Hey, that’s a garbage can!” yells some guy near the back.

“Really?” I ask. “This doesn’t look like a garbage can to me!” Did you ever see such a lovely, happy, fun garbage can?”

Laughter.

“No no sir, you are mistaken,” I say. This is a Peoplemover. It may have been manufactured as a garbage can. But then I transformed it as you can plainly see. This workshop is about transformation. I rescued all my little people that

you are about to meet from the garbage. Abusers treat children like garbage. Children are not garbage.”



Small sailboat



Big sailboat

The whole boat, even the sail, is a window! Yes, they float! A little breeze and away they go!



Boat of Under-standing

This is my first and only coloured boat. Things are unclear; it is scratched and weathered. The anchor is down.



Submarine

The submarine in this boat is used for exploring the depths, a window for seeing things clearly where light usually does not penetrate. Two people, Rick the student, and Garvin, the therapist-teacher stand under the sea, working together. The big green hands are an extension of Rick's hands. They are open. Rick uses them for bringing some things up to surface to get a good look at them, and for letting other things go, down into the mud where they belong. The arms reach lower than the body of submarine and are operated by voice command when Rick and Garvin inside agree what to work on together.



Monster truck



Snowmobile



Motorcycle



Tractor

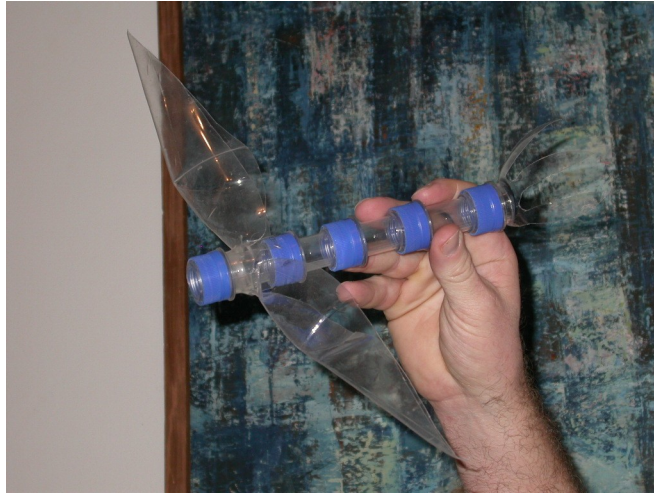
Yes, the wheels turn, and you can steer it too!



Goldfinch Birdy



Cardinal Birdy



Blue Jay Birdy



Helicopter

Yes, both rotors spin!



Airplane

This is a turbo-prop short-take-off-and-landing (STOL) airplane. The wings pivot. The propellers turn too!

Now that you are inspired by my nifty toys, go make yourself a toy to play with. Something humble and full of meaning to you. Something that celebrates you and your life. Go! Have fun!

About the Author



Dr. Matthew W. G. Stewart

Dr. Matthew Stewart earned his Doctor of Philosophy degree in Trauma and Recovery at the Ontario Institute for Studies In Education, University of Toronto, Canada, in 1998. He is a researcher, educator, author, sculptor, gardener, father and grandfather. As a solo workshop leader, he has provided training about learning-healing to universities, Children's Aid societies, young offender and First Nation agencies, hospitals, etcetera. He writes movie scripts, educational articles, self-help books, poetry, and books for kids of all ages.