

Arielle's Healing Story

In 1989, I was shocked to be diagnosed with a small brain tumour, a 1 cm prolactinoma, during a routine visit to my doctor. Although I had been suffering terrible headaches for over 10 years, I was not aware of any other symptoms. Even more puzzling, my doctors could not say whether or not the tumour caused my headaches. At first, it could not be determined by the CT or MRI scans whether the tumour was benign or malignant. Only time would tell, as any change in size would be measured on later scans. Regular blood tests revealed a huge amount of prolactin hormone - over 2200 - was being produced which indicated an ominous level of activity.

This cancer seemed to have come out of nowhere. The shock of discovering that something in my body was malfunctioning led to a loss of trust. My body began to feel like a dangerous place, a war zone, invaded by unfriendly cells that were acting under cover. There was no safe place to run - no escape. I couldn't see or feel or touch my tumour and that made me feel helpless. My doctors all seemed to assume that it was malignant, that it would get worse, and that I would have to undergo surgery and drug therapy. The thought of going through all that seemed like the most horrible nightmare I could imagine. My stress levels soared....and not surprisingly, the activity of the tumour soared too.

The day my specialist first told me the news, I felt too upset to drive home. I walked to Regents Park, and sat down to write my thoughts in a journal. Although the splendid rose garden surpassed itself that July, I barely noticed through my tears. Gradually I began to breathe again, and as I looked up and discovered myself surrounded by roses of every colour, I felt very touched. Roses, had long been my favourite motif. I had read once that the ancient Sufi's regarded the essence of the rose to be the closest you could get to God. Suddenly, I didn't feel alone. Each bed of roses had labels naming the type of rose. To my surprise and delight, I had sat down next to beautiful pink roses called 'Blessings'. I took this metaphor seriously and decided that somehow, my ordeal was a blessing in disguise.

For years I had been working as a specialist in MIND/BODY medicine [NLP, Kinesiology, Naturopathy/Osteopathy], so my diet, exercise and general life style were exemplary. In fact, I had always been very health conscious and loved exercise. There was no physical reason to explain the cause of this tumour. So I delved into the medical libraries to research the most up-to-date information I could find. I discovered that my particular tumour was very common, occurring in at least 1 out of 10 people. Many of those people never knew they had a tumour - it was only discovered after death. These particular tumours have a direct relationship to stress levels. Apparently, under stress the body naturally secretes more prolactin. There were only 2 medical treatments available at the time: a drug named Bromocriptine and/or surgery to remove the tumour. The surgery

had a success rate of 50/50. These tumours liked to grow back. The drug unfortunately had significant side effects and did not cure the tumour or stop it growing, but just shrank it temporarily. And so my journey began, exploring every angle, every treatment, and every possible way to heal I could find. Because of my natural inclination towards mind/body medicine, I decided to research alternative ways to treat it.

I was extremely lucky to develop a great relationship with my endocrinologist, a very understanding specialist. He allowed me to experiment with alternative treatments rather than have surgery or take the medical drugs that were recommended. We made an agreement that if my symptoms or tests indicated greater activity of the tumour, I would immediately take my prescription to the chemist and start taking the drug. Sometimes it took all my persuasive skills of NLP to negotiate with him when my blood test results kept rising. Thankfully, scans showed no increase in the tumour size. After 2 years, I finally managed to bring my stress levels down and the blood test indicated a modest reduction in hormone production.

Because my tumour was so deeply hidden, sometimes it didn't feel real. It was tempting to think it wasn't happening at all. The impact it had on my life was great, but gradually, I came to terms with coping with it. Believing it could be healed was another matter. While healing a cold, or a cut finger seems easy, something as complicated as a tumour felt off the scale impossible. Not knowing what had caused this cancer to appear, how could I know what could help? Even worse, there was no way of knowing whether it would get worse or not.

One of the first 'turn-arounds' in my thinking, was when an NLP friend suggested that I visualize my tumour as being the same as a cut finger. Just as I could trust that my body could heal a small cut, I could trust that my body could rectify these aberrant cells. After all, since my body had created this tumour, it knew exactly how to un-create it.

*There is no order of difficulty in miracles.
One is not harder or bigger than another.
They are all the same.
All expressions of love are maximal.*

A Course in Miracles

I knew that every thought you think and every feeling you feel releases different chemicals and messages into your body. Positive, happy thoughts release chemicals that boost the immune system and generate health. Negative thoughts and feelings release stress hormones that switch off the immune system and inhibit the functioning of major organs and glands. Chronic negative thoughts gradually create wear and tear on the weak points in your body. So you actually create the health of your body from moment to moment. Your habitual thoughts and feelings create either good health or ill health. Sometimes it's easy to delude

yourself that a problem has nothing to do with you, or that you've dealt with it, when in fact, all you have done is cover it over. But when a problem isn't dealt with, the feelings get suppressed into the body. Often these hidden thoughts, feelings and beliefs are responsible for creating illness. However, a good reframe is to think that everything that happens is an opportunity for resolution and healing!

As I healed my tumour, a stubborn mistake I kept making was thinking that the tumour was the problem. A physical illness - whether it is cancer or a cold, can be measured in the body - but does the problem originate in the body? It is much more likely that prior to the problem, your stressful thoughts led to the habitual release of chemical hormones in your brain and body. Focusing only on the symptoms of disease, may not address the underlying cause or find the full solution. In order to heal, what is needed is a change of perception. What is needed is to relieve the original stress. When the mind is healed and at peace, then the problem on the physical plane is no longer necessary. It can just heal naturally.

Miracles are thoughts.

A Course in Miracles

According to Quantum Physics, everything in the universe is made of energy. The vast vacuum of space is not empty. The space between stars and the space between the atoms in your body is alive with energy and probability. You can affect the flow of this energy and probability through conscious thought. You can create a different reality by focusing your mind on forgiveness, love and peace. The Holy Spirit does not pre-determine your life or cause things to happen to you without your input. The Holy Spirit gives you free will and joins with you to co-create your life journey. If you haven't been consciously focusing your thinking, your unconscious thoughts have been directing this flow. Therefore, if you have co-created an illness or a reality you don't want consciously, it must indicate that some deeper hidden part had some other purpose in making that happen.

If you could monitor your thoughts more carefully and become more aware of your unconscious thinking, the reason and purpose of your illness may become clear. Your unconscious mind is not your enemy. There is no internal saboteur trying to kill you. Your unconscious mind merely holds all the unresolved traumas, mistaken ideas and beliefs, as well as old family skeletons that need to be healed. The only way it could bring your attention to these hidden problems is to create symptoms to attract your attention. If your illness is life threatening, then the message it conveys has a 'life or death' level of importance. Once you have an opportunity to resolve and heal the inner problem, the energy in your body will shift and allow physical healing to occur.

On a superficial level, being diagnosed with a brain tumour felt like the most unfair thing that could have ever happened to me. Consciously, I had taken good care of myself, and all I had ever wanted was a loving relationship and healthy children - a happy family. But my body had created a tumour that caused infertility. All my plans were interrupted. To me, this seemed much more than a mere coincidence!

Looking deeper, I slowly discovered layers upon layers of psychological factors that required gentle resolution: issues to do with old heartbreaks, fear of sacrifice, fear of commitment, and fear of being a mother. Working with friends and therapists for several years, helped to unravel the complicated thought structures lurking in my unconscious - problems from the past that I had never known how to deal with. What a surprise to discover that the deepest layers of my unconscious mind were so full of fear that in fact, the last thing in the world it really wanted was a 'relationship and children!' The sad truth was that my body had created a tumour perfectly designed to follow the unconscious purpose. The good side of this was that I now began to understand and trust my body again. Plus, knowing what needed to be healed, I now felt empowered to face my fears and deal with the issues that required resolution.

*Miracles are natural.
When they do not occur,
something has gone wrong.*

A Course in Miracles

For many years, I used to think that if I did everything 'right', then my tumour would disappear. But what I didn't realize was that my intense desire to make it go away, was actually investing in making my tumour real. This kind of confusion and attachment to getting some kind of result is very common. You may focus on what you want, whether it is getting rid of symptoms or having perfect health, achieving some goal or solving some problem, and think if you do everything right, your desired result must happen. But this is a trap! If it doesn't happen the way you want it, you may feel you have failed. This kind of attachment to getting a result has too much force, too much demand, too much control. It IS important to think positively and set a desirable outcome, but then you must let go. The real investment needs to be your peace of mind. The real solution comes with finding that place of stillness, full of the miracle of forgiveness, love and joining.

Krishnamurti once said that if you want to make something holy, put the object on your mantelpiece, and worship it everyday. Bring it flowers, light a candle, put incense around it, chant some mantras and it will soon become holy for you, not because there is any inherent holiness in it, but merely because you have given it that holiness by believing it to be holy.

The techniques of NLP helped tremendously to calm down my stress levels. Through various different processes and exercises, I was able to heal many of

my early life experiences, feelings and decisions that had contributed to creating my tumour. Gradually after a few years, the hormone production of my tumour decreased to a stable, although still too high level. My specialist was surprised though, and began encouraging me to keep doing whatever it was I was doing.

Eight years later though, it felt very disappointing that my tumour had still not vanished. By that time, I had read about many people who had healed serious problems in weeks or months. Why, with all the effort I had put forth, were my results not better? While the tumour had stabilized without any medical treatment, and my doctors pronounced it 'benign', it was still there. Tired of having to cope with this nightmare and feeling resigned, I just wanted it to be gone!

Whenever you become attached to some outcome or result, you make that more important than God. Sometimes you have a mantelpiece in your mind on an unconscious level without realizing it. You don't even know that you have this attachment. When I finally let go of needing my tumour to disappear, when I finally accepted its presence and gave it permission to be with me to the end of my days, when I recognised it as my friend, guide and teacher, when I felt gratitude for the motivation it had given me to change my life and my thinking, when I had forgiven all the people I had grudges with, my tumour no longer had a purpose and it melted away!

I will never forget the day I walked into my doctor's office with my annual blood test results. The lab report showed that the hormone levels were well within the normal range. Probably because I had fully accepted the presence of the tumour, I thought the result must be a mistake, even though my headaches had diminished as well. So when my doctor took one look at the results and said, 'Wow! That's amazing!' I was surprised. When I questioned him, he insisted that it could only mean that my tumour had regressed to normal. He said, 'I don't know how you have done this, but it is a real credit to you. I've been seeing you every year, and watched you change. You are not the same person I met ten years ago.' It was a poignant moment, because although I had never taken any of the medication he prescribed, his monitoring had been vital throughout my journey. As I appreciated his support, I realized what an important part he had played. In fact, so many people had helped me on my journey, I began to think of them all as my team.

It amused me to consider why my tumour had taken 10 years to heal. Obviously, I would not have applied myself to learning what I needed to learn. I wouldn't have healed or resolved my hidden issues unless it had continued to motivate me! Or maybe the real purpose of the tumour was to inspire and train me to help others find these truths. Perhaps my most important step was forgiving my body and forgiving my life for taking me on a journey I hadn't planned or expected.

Many health problems reveal a lack of forgiveness. There is someone or something you are holding a grudge against (sometimes your own personal guilt, or sometimes blaming God). Often these grudges began long long ago, before you had the ability to understand or view things from a better perspective. They can even be passed down the ancestral tree. Not long after I was diagnosed, my mother surprised me with the information that my grandmother had died of a sudden brain tumour at 34 years old. Although my grandmother's physical tumour was quite different to mine, the thoughts that created it may have been similar.

This way of dealing with the underlying causes of illness is not meant to be a substitute for proper medical treatment. Nor should anyone ignore the need for thorough training if you are intending to work with other people as clients. My intention is to only to share some ideas as a framework to help you put think differently and connect with your own inner wisdom. Thanks to my tumour, my life took a very different path, and I am happy with the person I have become. I feel more akin to my purpose than ever before and more able to share my talents and give my gifts. I believe that each person has special gifts they bring into this world, talents to share, potential for change and personal evolution. Each life has a purpose, maybe several purposes.

To heal often requires that you move away from problem solving long enough to be able to monitor your thoughts. You need to let go of your needs long enough to be still, and listen. You need to turn within and ask for help from a place of acceptance. You need to forgive and rekindle your relationship with a higher power. Miracles of healing are never created alone.

© Arielle Essex