

First Steps in Moving On from Trauma: Finding Joy in the Journey

I remember the day my world first shattered. Sitting in that doctor's office, hearing "You have Lupus," trying to process how my life would change forever. Then, years later, another blow - a deep betrayal and family upheaval that tested everything I thought I knew about trust and relationships.

I get it. Not just as a coach, but as someone who's lived it. After experiencing severe illness, betrayal, and loss, I discovered something powerful about healing - it starts with three fundamental shifts.

Acceptance: The First Brave Step ✨

This is the day I learned what acceptance really means. I was homeschooling my sons, teaching a history lesson about the Revolutionary War when my younger son spilled an entire gallon of milk. In that moment, something profound happened - instead of exploding with frustration like I would have before, we all simply cleaned it up together, continuing our lesson without missing a beat.

That's when I realized: **acceptance isn't what most people think it is**

Acceptance is **NOT**:

- Giving bad behavior a free pass (like I used to do with toxic relationships)
- Surrendering your power (like I did for years with my illness)
- Pretending everything is fine (we all know that doesn't work)

Acceptance **IS**:

- Seeing your reality with clear eyes (yes, even the messy parts)
- Choosing where to spend your precious energy (because with chronic illness, energy is gold)
- Taking back your power to change what you can (like I did with my family relationships)

Like that spilled milk story I often share, sometimes our biggest breakthroughs come when we stop fighting reality and start transforming it instead.

Practical Steps for Your Journey:

1. **Self-Reflection:** Sit with your feelings without judgment. They're messengers, not enemies.
2. **Honest Communication:** Start small, but start somewhere. Your voice matters.
3. **Empathy Practice:** Understanding others doesn't mean excusing their actions.
4. **Releasing Control:** Focus on what you can change today.
5. **Gratitude Moments:** Find tiny joys - they add up to hope.

Control: The Safety Illusion

You know that feeling when your adult children move across the country? That's when I learned my biggest lesson about control. Here's a truth that changed everything for me: **Control isn't protection - it's prison.** I used to think I needed to control everything to keep my family close, but it was actually *pushing* them away.

Let's Break Free Together:

Your Spheres of Influence:

1. Direct Control (Your thoughts, actions, choices)
2. Indirect Influence (How you show up in relationships)
3. No Control (Other people's choices, the past)

Real Tools for Real Change:

- **Journal** your patterns (I'll show you how)
- Use the Serenity **Prayer** as your compass
- **Focus** on your response, not the outcome
- Build a **support system** that gets it
- Practice present-moment **awareness**

Perspective Meditation: The Key to Breaking Free

Going back to my spilled milk story: Years ago, when my sons were young and I was homeschooling them, a simple accident changed my entire perspective on what matters. My younger son was getting himself a glass of milk while I was teaching his older brother about the Revolutionary War. The gallon slipped from his hands, pouring out all over the countertop and floor.

But here's what was remarkable - without missing a beat in the history lesson, we all just worked together to clean it up. No yelling. No blame. No drama. After it was cleaned up and my son had successfully gotten his glass of milk, I started to cry. My boys asked what was wrong, and I told them I was crying because I was happy.

You see, I realized in that moment how much I had changed. In the past, I would have erupted in anger over the mess, the interruption, the waste. But standing there, I saw with complete clarity - it was just milk. Just an accident. My son wasn't careless or defiant; he was just a kid wanting a drink. That's when I truly understood how perspective changes **everything**.

Let me guide you through a **powerful perspective-shifting exercise** that'll help find peace even in the most challenging of relationships:

Step 1: Think about someone you're in conflict with right now. You know that person - the one who makes your stomach tighten just thinking about them.

Step 2: Who are they to you? Really consider this relationship. Is it a family member who should have been safe but wasn't? A friend who betrayed trust? A partner who doesn't understand?

Step 3: Now, imagine you're in that heated discussion with them - you know the one. Feel the tension, the frustration. Now... freeze that moment!

Step 4: Here's where it gets interesting - step outside yourself. Like you're watching a movie of your own life. Move to the side and really look at both of you.

Step 5: What do you see now? Not what you feel - what do you actually see? Two people hurting? Two people afraid? Take a moment here. Really reflect.

Step 6: Now for the challenging part - try stepping into their shoes. How do they feel? (They probably won't fit right - that's okay.) Ask yourself:

- Do they feel heard in this moment?
- Are they feeling respected?
- What fears might be driving them?
- Are they splitting their ambivalence without realizing it?

Step 7: Step back into your own shoes. How do they feel now? Different? Ask yourself those same questions:

- Do YOU feel heard?
- Do YOU feel respected?
- What are YOUR fears in this moment?
- Are YOU splitting ambivalence without realizing it?

Step 8: From this new vantage point, how important is this argument really? On the scale of your life, where does it truly sit?

Step 9: Here's the growth moment - can you accept their perspective without agreeing? Can you disapprove without rejecting them entirely?

Step 10: Take out your journal (yes, right now), and explore:

- How do you feel about this person now?
- What shifted when you tried to see their side?

- Has your acceptance grown?
- How will this change your next interaction?

Remember that spilled milk moment? Years later, I cried - not because I was upset, but because I realized how far I'd come. Sometimes our greatest moments of healing come when we can step back and see the whole picture - not just our corner of it.

Your Next Step Toward Joy

If you're reading this, part of you knows it's time for change. Maybe you're like I was, trying to handle everything alone, thinking you should be "strong enough" to figure it out. The strategies here are powerful, but implementing them alone can feel overwhelming. I know because I've been there - trying to balance chronic illness, family relationships, and personal growth all at once.

That's why I'd like to invite you to a **FREE** 30-minute Breakthrough Session where we'll:

- Get crystal clear on what's keeping you stuck (like I was)
- Identify your unique path to joy (even with chronic illness or family challenges)
- Create a practical action plan forward (because real change needs real steps)
- Explore if art therapy and coaching could be your missing piece

No pressure. No judgment. Just honest conversation about your next steps.

Like I tell my kids - sometimes the bravest thing we can do is take that first step. Let's take it together.

Schedule Your Free Breakthrough Session [HERE](#)

 humorinchaos@gmail.com  www.humorinchaos.com

Remember: Joy isn't just possible after trauma - with the right guide, it's inevitable. 