

Wake Me Up When It's Over!

Dawn Brown

A few months ago a new client called me to make an appointment. She had just been through a very painful separation. We talked about what she was experiencing and the healing process. It was clear that time was needed as the ending of the relationship had done what endings normally do – stir up painful memories of other endings. So she was not only grieving the loss of this relationship but other losses in her life as well. She wanted to rush through the process, skip the hurts; do something to make the pain go away. In desperation she asked me if I did hypnotherapy. I then asked her if she had been hoping that I would “put her to sleep” and then wake her up later with the pain all gone. She laughed and replied, “Yes, something like that.” Would that life were that easy!

Whenever we're healing, whether it's a broken heart, a battered ego, or a broken bone, we have to allow the healing to take place. I remember breaking my toe years ago. The physical pain was bad enough but I really went through a hard time as I had to give up my dance lessons and the various forms of exercises that I had enjoyed. After 4 months I asked my doctor if I could resume my lessons as I felt fine. He assured me that doing so would compromise the healing and that I needed to wait a bit longer. It is challenging to allow the healing process to be. We want quick and easy answers and reassurances that life will be as it was.

Think about swimming and the undertow. You are advised to stay calm, float with it and then allow the surface current to bring you back to shore. Fighting against it tires you out and results in certain death. You may feel you're doing something about it but that's not what is needed at this time. That is the same way busyness can create the illusion of movement and hide the fact that we're stuck or sinking. I heard a joke years ago about a woman whose car had broken down and the person in the car behind her kept beeping his horn. She got out of her car and instructed him to start her car while she sat in his car and beeped the horn! We've all seen people who punch the elevator button several times (creating the illusion of control and doing something). The elevator closes in its own time.

Now doing nothing about a situation doesn't mean that you sit, watch and do nothing! Life is a paradox. So while you're doing “nothing” about the situation, you may be doing an infinite number of other things in your life: practicing self-care, seeing friends, taking classes, seeing a therapist, reading books, helping someone else, learning a new skill, allowing living things – plants or animals – in your life, exercising... and before you know it, time has gone by and when you check, the intensity of the pain has lessened. You find your perception has shifted, you're in better physical shape, you've created harmony in your environment, you've opened your heart to others, you're laughing more, and you've done nothing and everything to healing yourself!

Dawn Brown is a psychotherapist, international speaker, and author (*That Perception Thing!* and *Expert Women Who Speak...Speak Out!*). Her new book: ***Been There, Done That... Now What?*** is available in bookstores and at www.perceptionshift.com.