

WE ALL HAVE CHALLENGES to tackle in our lives. Regardless of the nature of the challenge, what matters is how we perceive the condition and whether we are willing to shift our perspective. Rather than clinging onto the condition and become obsessed with it, the key is to rise above it and detach from the outer circumstance.

The challenge I have been facing for the last three years is let go of any preconceived notion of how I should look like and learn to transcend my physical reality. I intend to let go of becoming obsessed with my facial appearance as the more I resist what is staring me right in the face, the more the condition will prolong. Through vipassana meditation and reiki, I am cultivating an awareness to surrender and accept my condition as is without judging self. Through visualization techniques as explained by Adam the Dreamhealer in his books and DVDs, I am learning to build a holographic image of my body and go through daily intensive visualizations until I attain the optimal result. I am also assessing my environment and letting go of people and things that serve no purpose in my life. Nutrition plays a key factor as I am cultivating a deeper awareness of and listening intuitively to what my body requires.

Each time I react to a physical facial discomfort, I become more aware and more mindful of my thoughts. From the time I lay my eyes open to the time I shut my eyes and pass into a deep slumber, I feel pain. It is difficult not to scratch my face when the facial nerves become stimulated and elicit certain neurological responses i.e. prickling, tingling, and burning sensation. It is difficult not to rub my eyes when I feel sand in my eyes or the feeling I get when I wore contact lenses years before I underwent laser surgery. Upon waking up, I look in the mirror and see my face seemingly drooping with one eye looming or protruding and the other sunken.

This is a spiritual test, one in which my ego finds difficult to accept. Many years ago, I lived a different life. Never appreciated my own existence and always took life for granted. As a result, I contracted the herpes virus. I also happen to have downloaded my parent's template and cultivated a false identity. In my earlier years, I rebelled against the authority and self-destructed. I am talking about sex and other forms of addiction that I found comforting at the time. Came from a culture where sex was taboo - a forbidden subject in the household. I had to get married but did not want to. I only wanted to be loved and to love but the concept was a distant reality at the time.

Love is conditional and so I thought. If I do as I am told, remain obedient and submissive, and conform to a certain standard, then I am labeled as a good person. Now as I have read Gregg Braden's book *The Spontaneous Healing of Belief*, I understand that all those character traits I resented to embody were not my own but rather my caretakers'. What I wanted and needed the most from my caretakers were love and acceptance. As a child, I became seemingly frustrated that my viewpoints were not acknowledged, heard, or validated. I ended up ad-

ressing these frustrations by breaking the rules and withdrawing from society. Following Gregg Braden's paradigm, I identified my patterns in the following manner. I attracted people into my life who were angry, unavailable, and judgmental. I wanted them to be loving so that could attract love and companionship. I prevented myself from attracting these traits by withdrawing from the world and breaking the rules.

To know thyself is to go deep within, to that inner space, and remain still. Answers will come at their own time. My job is to cultivate a more authentic and intimate relationship with self and accept myself as I am. After all, I am not my body and I am not my emotions. I am a creative expression of this big cosmic force, call it consciousness or oneness.



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