

You Can Heal Your Life

Louise L. Hay



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Dedication

May this offering help you find the place within where you know your own self-worth, the part of you that is pure love and self-acceptance.

Acknowledgments

I acknowledge with joy and pleasure:

My many students and clients who taught me so much and who first encouraged me to put my ideas down on paper.

My dedicated staff at Hay House, who share my dream of disseminating books, audios, and videos that help to heal the planet spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

My wonderful readers and listeners, who have shown their loving support for my work and who continue to be a source of inspiration for me.

All those whose hearts are opening more and more each day.

My dear friends throughout the world, who surround me with unconditional love, laughter, and just plain fun!

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Foreword

If I were cast away on a desert island and could have only one book with me there, I might well choose Louise L. Hay's *You Can Heal Your Life*.

Not only is it the essence of a great teacher, it is also the powerful and very personal statement of a great lady.

Louise shares some of her journey to where she is in her evolution now in this wonderful new book. I resonated in admiration and in compassion to her story — too briefly sketched here, in my view, but perhaps that's another book.

It's all here, is my point. All you need to know about life, its lessons and how to do the work on yourself is right here. And this includes Louise's reference guide to probable mental patterns behind dis-ease, which is truly remarkable and unique — in my experience. A person on a desert island who found this manuscript in a bottle could learn all he or she needs to know to make this life be the one that gets the job done.

Desert island or not, if *you* have found your way to Louise Hay, perhaps even “accidentally,” you're well on your way. Louise's books, her remarkable healing tapes, and her inspired workshops are wonderful gifts to a troubled world.

It was my own deep investment in working with persons with aids that led me to meeting Louise and utilizing concepts from her healing work.

Each aids person I worked with and for whom I played Louise's tape, *A Positive Approach to AIDS*, got Louise's message on the first

hearing — and many made playing this tape part of their daily healing ritual. One man named Andrew told me, “I go to bed with Louise, and I get up to her every day!”

My respect and love for Louise grew as I observed my beloved aids people make their transitions enriched and at peace and complete — more full of love and forgiveness for themselves and everyone else for having had Louise in their lives — and with a quiet respect for having created that precise learning experience.

I have been gifted in my life with many great teachers, some of them saints, I’m sure, and even avatars, perhaps. Yet Louise is a great teacher one can speak with and be with because of her enormous capacity to listen and to be in unconditional love while sharing doing the dishes. (In the same way another teacher I hold as great makes terrific potato salad.) Louise teaches by example and lives what she teaches.

I am deeply honored to invite you to make this book part of your life. You — and it — are worth it!

DAVE BRAUN

VENTURES IN SELF-FULFILLMENT
DANA POINT, CALIFORNIA

Part I

INTRODUCTION

Suggestions to My Readers

I have written this book to share with you, my readers, that which I know and teach. It incorporates portions of my little blue book, *Heal Your Body*, which has become widely accepted as an authoritative work on the mental patterns that create dis-eases in the body.

I have had hundreds of letters from readers asking me to share more of my information. Many persons who have worked with me as private clients, and those who have taken my workshops here and abroad, have requested I take the time to write this book.

I have set up this book to take you through a session, just as I would if you came to me as a private client and attended one of my workshops.

If you will do the exercises progressively as they appear in the book, by the time you have finished, you will have begun to change your life.

I suggest you read through the book once. Then slowly read it again, only this time do each exercise in depth. Give yourself time to work with each one.

If you can, work through the exercises with a friend or with a member of your family.

Each chapter opens with an affirmation. Each of these is good to use when you are working on that area of your life. Take two or three days to study and work with each chapter. Keep saying and writing the affirmation that opens the chapter.

The chapters close with a treatment. This is a flow of positive ideas designed to change consciousness. Read over this treatment several times a day.

I close this book by sharing with you my own story. I know it will show you that no matter where we have come from or how lowly it was, we can totally change our lives for the better.

Know that when you work with these ideas, my loving support is with you.

Some Points of My Philosophy

We are each responsible for all of our experiences.

Every thought we think is creating our future.

The point of power is always in the present moment.

Everyone suffers from self-hatred and guilt.

The bottom line for everyone is,
“I’m not good enough.”

It’s only a thought, and a thought can be changed.

We create every so-called illness in our body.

Resentment, criticism, and guilt
are the most damaging patterns.

Releasing resentment will dissolve even cancer.

We must release the past and forgive everyone.

We must be willing to begin to learn to love ourselves.

Self-approval and self-acceptance in the now
are the keys to positive changes.

When we really love ourselves, everything in our life works.



*In the infinity of life where I am, all is perfect,
whole, and complete, and yet life is ever changing.*

*There is no beginning and no end,
only a constant cycling and recycling
of substance and experiences.*

*Life is never stuck or static or stale,
for each moment is ever new and fresh.*

*I am one with the very Power that created me, and this Power
has given me the power to create my own circumstances.*

*I rejoice in the knowledge that I have the power
of my own mind to use in any way I choose.*

*Every moment of life is a new beginning point
as we move from the old. This moment is a new point
of beginning for me right here and right now.*

All is well in my world.



Chapter One

WHAT I BELIEVE

“The gateways to wisdom and knowledge
are always open.”

Life Is Really Very Simple. What We Give Out, We Get Back

What we think about ourselves becomes the truth for us. I believe that everyone, myself included, is responsible for everything in our lives, the best and the worst. Every thought we think is creating our future. Each one of us creates our experiences by our thoughts and our feelings. The thoughts we think and the words we speak create our experiences.

We create the situations, and then we give our power away by blaming the other person for our frustration. No person, no place, and no thing has any power over us, for “we” are the only thinkers in our mind. When we create peace and harmony and balance in our minds, we will find it in our lives.

Which of these statements sounds like you?

“People are out to get me.”

“Everyone is always helpful.”

Each one of these beliefs will create quite different experiences. What we believe about ourselves and about life becomes true for us.

The Universe Totally Supports Us in Every Thought We Choose to Think and Believe

Put another way, our subconscious mind accepts whatever we choose to believe. They both mean that what I believe about myself and about life becomes true for me. What you choose to think about yourself and about life becomes true for you. And we have unlimited choices about what we can think.

When we know this, then it makes sense to choose “Everyone is always helpful,” rather than “People are out to get me.”

The Universal Power Never Judges or Criticizes Us

It only accepts us at our own value. Then it reflects our beliefs in our lives. If I want to believe that life is lonely and that nobody loves me, then that is what I will find in my world.

However, if I am willing to release that belief and to affirm for myself that “Love is everywhere, and I am loving and lovable,” and to hold on to that new affirmation and to repeat it often, then it will become true for me. Now, loving people will come into my life, the people already in my life will become more loving to me, and I will find myself easily expressing love to others.

Most of Us Have Foolish Ideas about Who We Are and Many, Many Rigid Rules about How Life Ought to Be Lived

This is not to condemn us, for each of us is doing the very best we can at this very moment. If we knew better, if we had more understanding and awareness, then we would do it differently. Please don't put yourself down for being where you are. The very fact that you have found this book and have discovered me means that you are ready to make a new, positive change in your life. Acknowledge yourself for this. “Men don't cry!” “Women can't handle money!” What limiting ideas to live with.

When We Are Very Little, We Learn How to Feel about Ourselves and about Life by the Reactions of the Adults Around Us

It is the way we learn what to think about ourselves and about our world. Now, if you lived with people who were very unhappy, frightened, guilty, or angry, then you learned a lot of negative things about yourself and about your world.

“I never do anything right.” “It’s my fault.” “If I get angry, I’m a bad person.”

Beliefs like this create a frustrating life.

When We Grow Up, We Have a Tendency to Re-create the Emotional Environment of Our Early Home Life

This is not good or bad, right or wrong; it is just what we know inside as “home.” We also tend to recreate in our personal relationships the relationships we had with our mothers or with our fathers, or what they had between them. Think how often you have had a lover or a boss who was “just like” your mother or father.

We also treat ourselves the way our parents treated us. We scold and punish ourselves in the same way. You can almost hear the words when you listen. We also love and encourage ourselves in the same way, if we were loved and encouraged as children.

“You never do anything right.” “It’s all your fault.” How often have you said this to yourself?

“You are wonderful.” “I love you.” How often do you tell yourself this?

However, I Would Not Blame Our Parents for This

We are all victims of victims, and they could not possibly have taught us anything they did not know. If your mother did not know how to love herself, or your father did not know how to love himself, then it would be impossible for them to teach you to love yourself.

They were doing the best they could with what they had been taught as children. If you want to understand your parents more, get them to talk about their own childhood; and if you listen with compassion, you will learn where their fears and rigid patterns come from. Those people who “did all that stuff to you” were just as frightened and scared as you are.

I Believe That We Choose Our Parents

Each one of us decides to incarnate upon this planet at a particular point in time and space. We have chosen to come here to learn a particular lesson that will advance us upon our spiritual, evolutionary pathway. We choose our sex, our color, our country, and then we look around for the particular set of parents who will mirror the pattern we are bringing in to work on in this lifetime. Then, when we grow up, we usually point our fingers accusingly at our parents and whimper, “You did it to me.” But really, we chose them because they were perfect for what we wanted to work on overcoming.

We learn our belief systems as very little children, and then we move through life creating experiences to match our beliefs. Look back in your own life and notice how often you have gone through the same experience. Well, I believe you created those experiences over and over because they mirrored something you believed about yourself. It doesn't really matter how long we have had a problem, or how big it is, or how life-threatening it is.

The Point of Power Is Always in the Present Moment

All the events you have experienced in your lifetime up to this moment have been created by your thoughts and beliefs you have held in the past. They were created by the thoughts and words you used yesterday, last week, last month, last year, 10, 20, 30, 40, or more years ago, depending on how old you are.

However, that is your past. It is over and done with. What is important in this moment is what you are choosing to think and

believe and say right now. For these thoughts and words will create your future. Your point of power is in the present moment and is forming the experience of tomorrow, next week, next month, next year, and so on.

You might notice what thought you are thinking at this moment. Is it negative or positive? Do you want this thought to be creating your future? Just notice and be aware.

The Only Thing We Are Ever Dealing With Is a Thought, and a Thought Can Be Changed

No matter what the problem is, our experiences are just outer effects of inner thoughts. Even self-hatred is only hating a thought you have about yourself. You have a thought that says, "I'm a bad person." This thought produces a feeling, and you buy into the feeling. However, if you don't have the thought, you won't have the feeling. And thoughts can be changed. Change the thought, and the feeling must go.

This is only to show us where we get many of our beliefs. But let's not use this information as an excuse to stay stuck in our pain. The past has no power over us. It doesn't matter how long we have had a negative pattern. The point of power is in the present moment. What a wonderful thing to realize! We can begin to be free in this moment!

Believe It or Not, We Do Choose Our Thoughts

We may habitually think the same thought over and over so that it does not seem we are choosing the thought. But we did make the original choice. We can refuse to think certain thoughts. Look how often you have refused to think a positive thought about yourself. Well, you can also refuse to think a negative thought about yourself.

It seems to me that everyone on this planet whom I know or have worked with is suffering from self-hatred and guilt to one degree or another. The more self-hatred and guilt we have, the less our lives

work. The less self-hatred and guilt we have, the better our lives work, on all levels.

The Innermost Belief for Everyone I Have Worked with Is Always, “I’m Not Good Enough!”

We often add to that, “And I don’t do enough,” or “I don’t deserve.” Does this sound like you? Often saying or implying or feeling that you “are not good enough”? But for whom? And according to whose standards?

If this belief is very strong in you, then how can you possibly have created a loving, joyous, prosperous, healthy life? Somehow your main subconscious belief would always be contradicting it. Somehow you would never quite get it together, for something would always be going wrong somewhere.

I Find That Resentment, Criticism, Guilt, and Fear Cause More Problems Than Anything Else

These four things cause the major problems in our bodies and in our lives. These feelings come from blaming others and not taking responsibility for our own experiences. You see, if we are all responsible for everything in our lives, then there is no one to blame. Whatever is happening “out there” is only a mirror of our own inner thinking. I am not condoning other people’s poor behavior, but it is OUR beliefs that attract people who will treat us that way.

If you find yourself saying, “Everyone always does such and such to me, criticizes me, is never there for me, uses me like a doormat, abuses me,” then this is YOUR PATTERN. There is some thought in you that attracts people who exhibit this behavior. When you no longer think that way, they will go elsewhere and do that to somebody else. You will no longer attract them.

Following are some results of patterns that manifest on the physical level: Resentment that is long held can eat away at the body and

become the dis-ease we call cancer. Criticism as a permanent habit can often lead to arthritis in the body. Guilt always looks for punishment, and punishment creates pain. (When a client comes to me with a lot of pain, I know they are holding a lot of guilt.) Fear, and the tension it produces, can create things like baldness, ulcers, and even sore feet.

I have found that forgiving and releasing resentment will dissolve even cancer. While this may sound simplistic, I have seen and experienced it working.

We Can Change Our Attitude Toward the Past

The past is over and done. We cannot change that now. Yet we can change our thoughts about the past. How foolish for us to PUNISH OURSELVES in the present moment because someone hurt us in the long ago past.

I often say to people who have deep resentment patterns, “Please begin to dissolve the resentment now, when it is relatively easy. Don’t wait until you are under the threat of a surgeon’s knife or on your death bed, when you may have to deal with panic, too.”

When we are in a state of panic, it is very difficult to focus our minds on the healing work. We have to take time out to dissolve the fears first.

If we choose to believe we are helpless victims and that it’s all hopeless, then the Universe will support us in that belief, and we will just go down the drain. It is vital that we release these foolish, out-moded, negative ideas and beliefs that do not support us and nourish us. Even our concept of God needs to be one that is *for* us, not against us.

To Release the Past, We Must Be Willing to Forgive

We need to choose to release the past and forgive everyone, ourselves included. We may not know how to forgive, and we may not

want to forgive, but the very fact that we say we are willing to forgive begins the healing process. It is imperative for our own healing that “we” release the past and forgive everyone.

“I forgive you for not being the way I wanted you to be. I forgive you and I set you free.”

This affirmation sets *us* free.

All Dis-ease Comes from a State of Unforgiveness

Whenever we are ill, we need to search our hearts to see who it is we need to forgive.

The *Course in Miracles* says that “all dis-ease comes from a state of unforgiveness,” and that “whenever we are ill, we need to look around to see who it is that we need to forgive.”

I would add to that concept that the very person you find it hardest to forgive is the one YOU NEED TO LET GO OF THE MOST. Forgiveness means giving up, letting go. It has nothing to do with condoning behavior. It’s just letting the whole thing go. We do not have to know HOW to forgive. All we need to do is to be WILLING to forgive. The Universe will take care of the *hows*.

We understand our own pain so well. How hard it is for most of us to understand that THEY, whoever they are we need most to forgive, were also in pain. We need to understand that they were doing the best they could with the understanding, awareness, and knowledge they had at that time.

When people come to me with a problem, I don’t care what it is — poor health, lack of money, unfulfilling relationships, or stifled creativity — there is only one thing I ever work on, and that is LOVING THE SELF.

I find that when we really love and accept and APPROVE OF OURSELVES EXACTLY AS WE ARE, then everything in life works. It’s as if little miracles are everywhere. Our health improves, we attract more money, our relationships become much more fulfilling, and we begin to express ourselves in creatively fulfilling ways. All this seems to happen without our even trying.

Loving and approving of yourself, creating a space of safety, trusting and deserving and accepting, will create organization in your mind, create more loving relationships in your life, attract a new job and a new and better place to live, and even enable your body weight to normalize. People who love themselves and their bodies neither abuse themselves nor others.

Self-approval and self-acceptance in the now are the main keys to positive changes in every area of our lives.

Loving the self, to me, begins with never ever criticizing ourselves for anything. Criticism locks us into the very pattern we are trying to change. Understanding and being gentle with ourselves helps us to move out of it. Remember, you have been criticizing yourself for years, and it hasn't worked. Try approving of yourself and see what happens.

*In the infinity of life where I am,
all is perfect, whole, and complete.*

*I believe in a power far greater than I am
that flows through me every moment of every day.*

*I open myself to the wisdom within,
knowing that there is only One Intelligence in this Universe.*

*Out of this One Intelligence comes all the answers,
all the solutions, all the healings, all the new creations.*

*I trust this Power and Intelligence,
knowing that whatever I need to know is revealed to me,
and that whatever I need comes to me
in the right time, space, and sequence.*

All is well in my world.