

Weeding the Garden of the Mind

When people ask me how I am having such a vibrant midlife experience, I often tell them it is because I have weeded my garden. I don't mean flowers of course. I mean a kind of emotional clearing--getting rid of the thorns in my heart.

In my younger years I used to throw very nice pity parties for myself in which I would shed copious tears and repeat a litany of pity producing thoughts. "Oh, my mother never loved me." "Oh, I haven't seen my father since I was 15." When I came into midlife, I realized that I was living in the past--filtering the present through old stale pain from years before. But, I had a craving for love, for my consciousness to expand, for my life to have deeper meaning. With support and guidance, I recognized that I was no longer being served by all this reciting of wrongs done to me, and I was able to forgive my parents. The clearing out of those old stories, those old weeds, is what made room for my best self to blossom and grow.

Was it easy to let go of these wrongs that had been done to me? No, of course not. Each one of us longs for love--to feel peaceful and unafraid. But at the same time we cherish our emotional wounds. They grow in the secret gardens of our souls, and we can't bear to part with them. We know that these weeds and thorns overgrow and choke other parts of our lives--maybe we are afraid that if we pull them up and throw them out, there won't be anything of us left.

Just the opposite is true, of course. Under those weeds is our truer selves waiting to be tended and nourished. Pulling the weeds out releases enormous amounts of trapped energy--energy to create lives we love--and opens our spiritual and emotional connection to a higher, loving power. If you are a woman in midlife, you already know that more energy and more connection is just what you need.

Benefits of Emotional Clearing:

- Makes you feel powerful--no energy drains.
- Reduces boredom--you can fully experience and enjoy the changes you are going through.
- Creates balance--fewer mood swings, feeling grounded, easier to identify your own deepest desires
- Eases menopausal symptoms--studies show that depression, unresolved emotions, and emotional disconnection worsen the physical discomforts of menopause

I hope you are feeling inspired to weed your garden! Below I've included instructions for a short meditation that will begin your journey of emotional clearing. Other activities that will loosen that old soil and help you let go of the past include singing, dancing, getting massage, spending more time in nature, and connecting with a spiritual teacher.

Weeding your garden can and should be an emotional experience. As you revisit each old hurt, you may re-experience the emotions associated with it, or you may simply need to grieve letting it go. If you are strongly experiencing your emotions, reach out to those who love and support you. If you are having a hard time experiencing emotions, I

recommend Bach flower remedies, Star of Bethlehem or Wild Rose, to help melt your heart and facilitate your emotional experience. If you feel very afraid at the idea of facing all your thorns, try Miulus or Aspen, to reduce fearfulness. And again, reach out for support from those who love you.

Letting Go Exercise

As you read this, take a deep breath and, as you exhale, allow all the tension to leave your body. Let your scalp and forehead and your face relax. Let your tongue and your throat and your shoulders relax. Let your back and your abdomen and pelvis relax. Let your breathing be at peace as you relax your legs and feet.

In this relaxed, comfortable position, say to yourself, "I am willing to let go. I release and let go of all tension. I let go of all fear and anger. I release all guilt. I let go of all my sadness. I let go of any perceived limitations. I let go of everything old and stale, and I am at peace. I am at peace with myself. I am at peace with my life, with my age, with who I am. I am safe. I am loved."

In love and light,

--Lucia Luna

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