

Your Journey Inward

I am a “healer”

It has been pointed out for centuries that the only person that you can change in life is you. This is a challenging concept for me in that from the time I decided to become a physician my energy was focused on fixing everyone around me. I did not perceive that I needed any work. In retrospect I was focused on others both to divert attention from myself and was also trying to “save others to save myself.” This has been the most humbling part of my journey. Not only was I broken, I was really broken. It was under such severe stress that the façade finally broke down.

Connection

The key to any success that I have experienced in helping others with their problems has been from me being able to be more connected to myself and therefore be able to simply talk to others from a human to human perspective. My patients figure out how to heal themselves on their own. In fact when they reconnect with who they are and where they want to go there is no stopping them. It is similar to opening the door to a caged wild animal. I have learned to just give advice when asked and otherwise stay out of the way.



“My family needs help”

There is a strong natural tendency as patients begin to experience success with these tools to try to engage their family members in the process. Although I do insist that both halves of a couple engage they have to do it completely separately and both have to do it on their own free will. Any energy focused on the other’s progress is counter-productive.

This step has an infinite number of possibilities. I have just a few overall guidelines:

- Become aware of your energy spent on “fixing” those around you.
- Develop an awareness of your own flaws. Learn to completely embrace and accept them as they are. It is the first step in moving forward.
- Read an excerpt daily from [“The Art of Living” by Epictetus \(modern translation by Sharon Lebell\)](#). His focus is almost completely on the journey inward.
- Deliberately research and choose tools that will allow you progress down this road inward.
- If you are pursuing this journey still holding onto the idea it will change those around you—forget it. It is one of the paradoxes of life. Until you truly detach from the outcome it is counterproductive. Conversely once you truly commit to your own growth, life around you will change dramatically.

—Dr. David Hanscom