

EXCERPT FROM

Born to Heal

By Luke Adler

(1500 words)

Popular Society Promotes Suppression

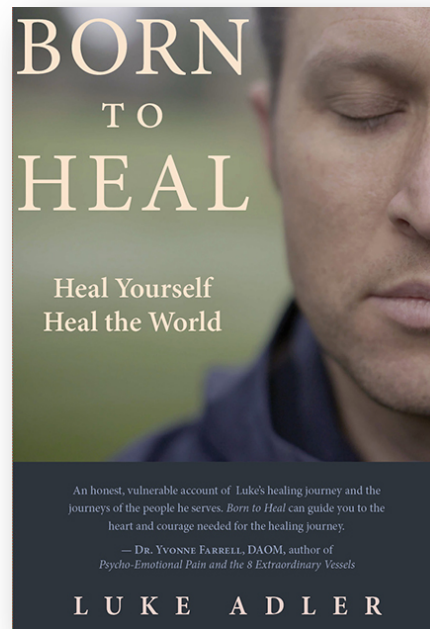
Particularly pernicious examples of societal suppression are learned behaviors reinforced by family, schools, and religious institutions. These impact how we conduct ourselves through different genders, ages, and in a variety of social and professional contexts.

Who has never heard any of these? *Boys have to be tough and strong. Girls have to be sweet and kind. Children should be seen and not heard. You should never challenge authority. It's better not to speak up if it makes other people uncomfortable. Don't rock the boat.*

Agreement with society's truth over Universal Truth is almost always harmful to one's health. It's the one instance where being true to your heart can cause confusion. Society may say one thing and your heart another. Listening to your heart above all other voices is a major part of growing up and becoming a spiritually responsible adult where you and you alone are accountable for your spiritual progress.

When you agree with someone's definition of truth, and that truth does not feel right in your heart, you suppress your Essence. This is an act of self-deception that appears differently for a given constitutional type. Strive to hear what your own heart is telling you, and to listen to it above and beyond the voices of others. Authenticity is good for your physical health, even if being authentic upsets others.

The idea of deception points to the unique way you suppress yourself, and how suppression shows up as pattern of disease in your body. Suppression is a form of self-deception. By deception, I mean the stories you tell yourself (and likely share with others) to build a case that your point of view is right with regard to a particular issue. If the story you create to justify yourself suppresses your truth, it will never lead to Love. If you're looking for a cue that you're doing this, listen when you feel compelled to tell a story over and over to anyone who will listen.



Pay particular attention to any sense of urgency in you and any sense of validation you feel when people agree with you.

You have the freewill to create any story you want. Most of the time you don't get to have love and also be right about your made-up story as though it were Absolute Truth. Almost all the time you'll have to choose between no love plus self-righteousness or Universal Love. The bottom line with any upset in life, whether it is romantic, professional, or in relationships with family and friends, is that if you are committed to love and true intimacy you'll give up needing to be validated for your point of view and choose love instead.

Any story you create is only your perception or perspective on a given event. It will feel completely true. But your story may be one of several or hundreds of interpretations of what is actually true. That's not to say that you're intentionally lying to yourself and/or others. You feel hurt, so you create a story to make sense of the pain. Those kinds of stories usually involve blaming someone (who could even be yourself) or something for why you feel hurt.

To be fully responsible for your life, you must see all sides of the picture. You have to really try to feel what it would be like to live in someone else's shoes. Easier said than done. If you can bring yourself to see something the way even an enemy might see it, you will begin to see how your own point of view is limited. If you keep probing and doing your work, you will likely encounter and identify the deeper fear that prevents you from taking ownership over your circumstance.

To take responsibility always entails some degree of emotional pain and some degree of letting go. You are defensive and reactive because you unconsciously sense sadness, anger, worry, and fear buried beneath the story. In order to survive, you create an energetic shield (the story) to justify not feeling your emotions.

Fear triggers a survival reaction, rather than a response of openness and understanding. The story begins from a pattern rooted in your body. Perhaps anytime you spoke up at the dinner table, your dad told you to be quiet. So you've become quiet around anyone who reminds you of your dad. Maybe your teacher pulled you off a project and didn't tell you why. So you quit and won't try anything new because you're afraid to fail.

An unpleasant anxious physical sensation arises when the fear beneath the story activates. Fear feels uncomfortable. You want it to go away. You're pretty good at taking care of yourself, you think, so you've developed a way to do that. Sadly those self-protective mechanisms are inherently restricting to your Heart and your sense of personal truth.

Here's an example of me working with the fear of facing my truth as an adolescent.

Facing Suppression as an Adolescent

The first time I consciously faced the fear of feeling my emotions, I was 12. I felt like I was going to die

by feeling the mix of emotions in my body. I'd been sitting on the bench of my soccer club for an entire season, while my coach brought in a bunch of superstar players from the surrounding area. It was fun to win all our games, but riding the bench sucked. I remember this one cold and dry night so clearly. We just lost a semi-final game of the Thanksgiving shoot-out tournament in Anaheim. I had decided days before that I was done. When the final whistle blew, I stoically walked up to my coach, looked him in the eye and said, "Len, I quit." I cried on the drive home. With that statement, I gave up my dream of being a professional soccer player like Pele. I was devastated to not see my soccer buddies after school and on the weekends. My story became that I was not good enough to play, that I sucked; that my coach was an asshole for not letting me play. I wanted to run away. I felt embarrassed and ashamed that I sat on the bench. I was angry with my coach and devastated that I gave up my dream.

This is where I learned my first great life lesson. Because I was so distraught about the whole mess, my dad intervened. He instructed me to call my friends and tell them why I had quit and thank them for their friendship. I thought my dad was crazy. It made me so nervous inside to even think of doing such a thing. He wanted me to open my heart and reveal my innermost feelings to my friends, by whom I was so desperate to be liked. I was petrified. I wanted to suppress my feelings, but I knew the moment my dad suggested calling my friends that I had to do it. I couldn't live with all of those feelings buried inside.

The first phone call, I cried like a baby, barely able to blurt a word out between sobs. I called my friend Josh first, because he was very mellow and would be the most sensitive. I choked on my emotion, weeping, as I thanked him for the fun car rides across Southern California. I explained why I'd quit and he said he was thinking of doing the same because he wasn't playing much either. I parted by wishing him the best with the team, and thanked him for the laughs. During the phone call I felt like my heart was being ripped apart, but by the end I felt warm inside. My heart felt full, and I felt strong. The next call was almost as painful, but by the last one I had a little grace in my cadence and I felt composed inside. My dad navigated me through this first experience to share my truth and I felt powerful, full of hope and purpose.

This was the first of many experiences where I took a risk to open and share my soul. I can say now, after two decades of practice, that I'm getting better at it. I'm still making friends and I'm living in my heart. I feel secure inside. I feel steady in my heart. When my heart has something to say, I don't argue that much. I listen and take action. I'm done with needing the Universe to kick my butt to learn the lesson. I'd rather have fun with the brief time we have.