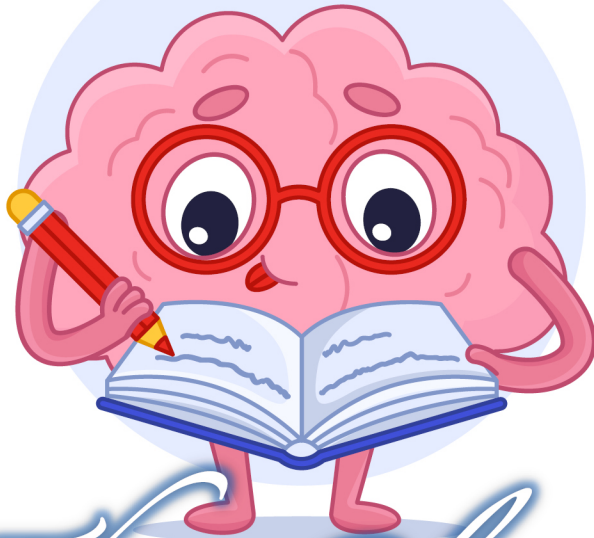


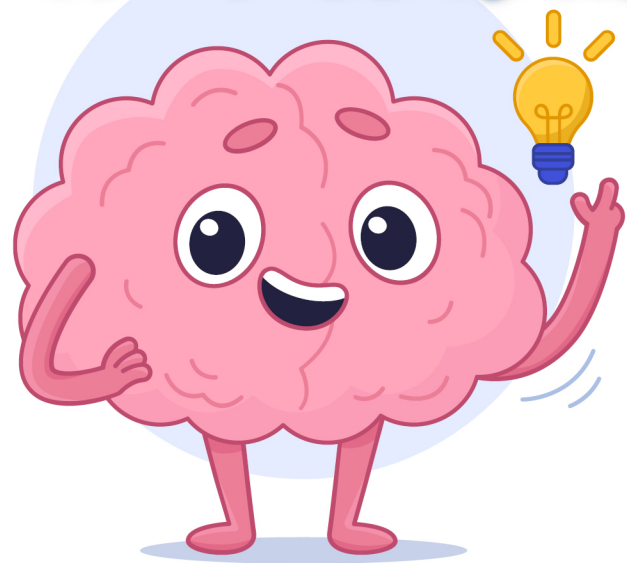
"When I look at this brain, I am reminded that we are neurocircuitry.

**We are neurocircuitry, and every ability we have
is because we have cells that perform that function."**

— Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor, *My Stroke of Insight* (TED Talk)



This Close to Heaven



150 Insights into "Whole Brain Living"

selected and transcribed by Michael-James B. Weaver

(Revised April 10th, 2026)

« **WHAT IS YOUR PERSONALITY?** »

“Each of our hemispheres *think* about different things, they *care* about different things, and — dare I say — they have very different *personalities*.” – Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor

<p>Character 1 (“Helen”) <u>Left Thinking</u> <i>Your A-type personality</i> <i>Your attention to details</i> <i>Your critical, analytical mind</i> <i>Your ego center & perfectionism</i> <i>Your linearity across time</i> <i>Your logical organizer</i> <i>Your ongoing brain chatter</i> <i>Your right-wrong judgements</i> <i>Your sense of urgency</i></p>	<p>Character 4 (“Queen Toad”) <u>Right Thinking</u> <i>Your appreciation & gratitude</i> <i>Your authentic, divine self</i> <i>Your awe that you exist at all</i> <i>Your big-picture visionary</i> <i>Your bliss & euphoria</i> <i>Your connection to all that is</i> <i>Your deep, inner peace</i> <i>Your intuition & wisdom</i> <i>Your love, compassion, & kindness</i></p>
<p>Character 2 (“Abby”) <u>Left Emotion</u> <i>Your anxiety & suffering</i> <i>Your conditional happiness</i> <i>Your craving & addictions</i> <i>Your fear about the future</i> <i>Your guilt & shame</i> <i>Your need for approval</i> <i>Your pain from the past</i> <i>Your traumatic, wounded self</i> <i>Your unhappy, little self</i></p>	<p>Character 3 (“Pig-Pen”) <u>Right Emotion</u> <i>Your adrenaline junkie</i> <i>Your adventurous spirit</i> <i>Your empathy with others</i> <i>Your curious explorer</i> <i>Your fun, playful self</i> <i>Your innovative genius</i> <i>Your outside-the-box creativity</i> <i>Your present-moment experience</i> <i>Your unconditional joy</i></p>

THE GREAT SECRET...

Dedicated to the “we” inside of me:

*“To all the creatures within us! Every one of us has a thousand different kinds of little people inside of us. And some of them want to get out and be wild, and some want to be sad or happy or inventive or even just go dancing. That’s why we all have so many different urges at different times. And, all those different little people inside of us? We must *never* be afraid to take them with us, wherever we go! I mean, who knows when we may need one of them to pop up and rescue us from ourselves. Variety, my little Alex. The great secret is not the variety of life, it’s the variety of us!”* (Lwaxana Troi, *“The Cost of Living,” Star Trek: The Next Generation*)

“How do I set myself up for success? What do I do with the time that I have—and with all these beautiful hours in a day—to set myself up to be able to rescue myself as soon as I feel the signs of my anxiety of my Character 2 being triggered and coming online? And, do I focus my energy into that? Or, do I allow myself to expand beyond that, and actually consciously embody a different part of myself? You know, this is the power of who we are as human beings that nobody ever bothered to teach us, because we didn’t know!” (Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor, *Anxiety Slayer Podcast*)

∞ ABOUT DR. JILL BOLTE TAYLOR ∞

“I pictured a world filled with *beautiful, peaceful, compassionate, loving* people who knew that they could come to this space at any time, and that they could purposely choose to step to the right of their left hemispheres and find this peace. And, then, I realized what a tremendous gift this experience could be! What what a stroke of insight this could be to how we live our lives, and it motivated me to recover.” – Jill Taylor

Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor is a Harvard-trained and published neuroanatomist. In 1996, at the age of 37, she experienced a severe hemorrhage in the left hemisphere of her brain causing her to lose the ability to walk, talk, read, write or recall any of her life. Her memoir, *My Stroke of Insight*—documenting her experience with stroke and eight-year recovery—spent 63 weeks on the *New York Times* nonfiction bestseller list, and is still routinely the #1 book about stroke on Amazon.

Dr. Taylor is a dynamic teacher and public speaker who loves educating all age groups and academic levels about the beauty of our human brain and its ability to recover from trauma. In 2008 she gave the first [TED talk](#) that ever went viral on the Internet, which now has well over 27 million views. Also in 2008, Dr. Taylor was chosen as one of *TIME Magazine's* “100 Most Influential People in the World” and was the premiere guest on Oprah Winfrey’s “[Soul Series](#)” web-cast—a must-see interview!

Her second book, *Whole Brain Living*, was released in May 2021.

∞ ABOUT THIS DIARY ∞

To promote *Whole Brain Living: The Anatomy of Choice and the Four Characters that Drive Our Life*, Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor was guest-interviewed on 100+ podcasts. In preparation for reading this second book, I am re-reading her 2008 memoir *My Stroke of Insight* and also decided to listen to all 100+ interviews and pick out a direct quote from each, resulting in the 1009 insights to be journaled here. Before conceiving this year-long project, I had listened to just a handful of these interviews and would hear a nugget of wisdom that jumped out at me which I wanted to remember, only to easily lose track of its source and the exact wording Dr. Jill had used. So, I thought to log each interview and listen for a quote-of-the-day to record here. Again, this is in anticipation of reading *Whole Brain Living*, and I am listening out for insights that Dr. Jill is sharing in her conversations but which might not have appeared in her book.

“So, I wrote the book and then this year I was out on the boat for six months doing podcasts. I’ve spoken on over a hundred podcasts around the world from my boat. And, between them, I would paddleboard and pray to the stars that I didn’t fall in! Because podcasts now, half of them are more visual, you know, they’re not just audio. But, now I feel like I have thrown all the seeds around the world, like a good farmer should. And, I’m watching what’s growing, and it’s fascinating what’s growing. It’s growing in a way I never anticipated. (Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor, *The You Project Podcast*)

It is my hope to use this project to immerse myself in “whole brain living,” and it has now become part of my daily routine. I have already noticed a change in my attention, because now I am not just listening casually (wherein my attention might wander), but listening out for something specifically to include here (wherein my attention might *wonder!*). On average, each of these interviews is an hour long, from which I have extracted a 90-second clip. I usually listen to every interview twice, before settling on a single takeaway to include in this journal.

“I encourage anybody who experiences the pain of anxiety to really read through this book. There’s all kinds of resources online now. I’ve done all kinds of podcasts. Listen to these podcasts. Get the book. The book, at the end of every chapter of the Four Characters, will walk you through a collection of questions so that you can really get to know. You have to become familiar with that part of your character and once you know those choices, then you have the power to choose which of those you want to embody in any moment.” (Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor, *Anxiety Slayer Podcast*)

If you wish to see and hear the quotes on the following pages in their original context, the page titles are clickable, acting as a hyperlink to the Youtube video of the podcast, timestamped to start when the quote begins. Seeing Dr. Jill’s dynamic body language as she talks, and hearing the intonation of her speech, including word emphasis—adds much-needed ‘color’ that will, of course, be missing from the transcripts provided here. Luckily, I can still hear her voice narrating the words as I read them.

∞ WHO'S WHO? ∞

So, I took eight years to completely recover, and then I wrote my memoir *My Stroke of Insight*. And, I gave a TED talk. And, it was the first TED talk to ever go viral, so boom!—Ted and I went out to the world instantaneously. And, it's been a wild ride. But, over the last few years after that, I had at least 300,000 people contact me and say at the end of my TED talk, I said, "We have the power to choose moment by moment who and how we want to be in the world." And, all these people wrote to me and said, "How do I do that? How do I get out of my left brain and find this deep, peaceful euphoria of my right brain? How do I do that?" And, I just thought, "You know, it's easy for me because I had a hemorrhage, and it whacked me out of the 'this' into the 'that'. But, how do I go back to the 'this' and now help other people figure out how do you go from 'here' to 'there', instead of me going from 'there' to 'here'?" So, it took me a decade to really figure that out, and now I have figured that out, so now I'm sharing that information. And, my whole soul loves helping people figure out who's who inside of themselves, so that they know their own choices. So, that they can purposefully shift how they're being in any moment, and to know that we have more power over what's going on inside of our brain than we've ever been taught.

∞ *OPEN & AVAILABLE* ∞

If I come in “open and available,” then that kind of encourages you. Think about it this way: at any moment in time, people have a power struggle for whose energy is going to win the moment. If I come in and I’m in a really bummed space, and you’re going, “Oh, okay,” you know, and you like try to get me up out of it or whatever... Or, I come in and I come in owning my power—I’m happy, I’m available—then, you have a whole different animal to deal with in dealing with me and how we interact. And, so every interaction with every human being is: I’m coming in a space, you’re coming in a space, and we have to find that moment together. So, do I go to your space, you come to my space, or do we find a new space? But, when you look at your life that way, and you become aware of that, everything changes! Because, all of a sudden, we’re co-creating a moment. No—we want to co-create a life!

∞ *MY PAIN FROM MY PAST* ∞

How many people have said to me, “Jill, I just want to lobotomize that part out of me”? No! No, you don’t! Because it is in the richness of those deep emotions that life is so beautiful. There is nothing more beautiful than being overtaken by the envelopment of grief, and let it take you to the floor, and feel in every cell of your body, and, “Oh my God, I can feel this because I loved, and now I don’t have a place for that love to go!” And, so it just erupts in my whole soul... And, then, that wave passes. I love grief. I think grief is one of the most beautiful, wonderful, horrible things that I’m capable of feeling, but it’s so magnificent! But, the thing about it is that those of us who know how to grieve and allow the wave of grief to take us over—then it’s a long time before the wave of grief comes back. It’s when we stop it and say, “No, I’m not going to feel that. No, that hurts. No, I don’t like it. No, I don’t want to grieve,” that it just keeps banging up against us saying, “You know, I’m a pipe and I have to flow, and as long as you don’t let me...” If you’re not going to feel, it’s just going to keep coming up! And, that’s how we heal ourselves: we allow ourselves to feel that depth, and then it releases us to learn from that experience and say, “Wow, you know, that’s the beauty of being alive!” Is it “all good”? No, I’m not jumping on the happiness bandwagon. I think happiness is important, but I think it’s a part of who we are (It’s circuitry inside of our brain) and that I learn from these other tools just as much as I do from my joy.

∞ *THE BEST ME THAT I AM* ∞

I would never go back to the way I was before, never in a million years! I would never, in a million years, give up the insight that I gained into being the best me that I am. And, I truly believe that it is our number one job to love one another. Our number one job is to love one another. And, if that is my frame of mind, that's very different than looking at people and say, "Are you worthy of my love?" And, then I give you a judgment, and I give you this criteria. And, then, I can conditionally love you if you look right, if you speak the right language, if you eat the right foods, if you dance so that I'm not embarrassed, you know—all these criteria and judgment of my left brain. And, it's looking for differences instead of similarities. And, so, the left brain is constantly in search of, "How do I isolate myself away from? How do I separate myself?" Because the left brain is separate from the whole, and I'll take the whole over the separate any moment. But, the ultimate goal is to be both. And, so, when my left hemisphere started coming back online, there was a personality in there that was pretty judgmental and pretty strict and pretty rigid and pretty right/wrong and good and bad, and really good at saying, "No, that doesn't look familiar. That doesn't feel safe to me. I'm going to push away from that." Where my right brain comes in and says, "That looks different from me. I'm curious. What can I learn from that? What can I learn from that person with skin that's a different color? What can I learn from that person who wears clothing in colors I've never seen? What can I learn from that person? How do I live life with curiosity instead of judgment?" I'll take curiosity any day of the week.

∞ *I LIVE FROM MY HEART* ∞

I actually need to pause and listen to myself. I need to listen to my own inner voice. And, I make every decision based on “How does this feel?” And, when I’m making a tough decision, I visualize answering my conflict with each of those options and as though I have made that decision, and then what does that feel like inside of my body? And, my body tells me immediately if that was the right choice or not. [*Do you set any specific time every day, or it is just depending on the situation?*] It depends on the situation because there are times when I’m going to be more in my right brain. Like, I have a hydro bike, and in fact you have a bunch of these down in Austin. I have one of those on my lake here, and so I go out for about an hour and a half every night at sunset. And, that’s a good time for me to just kind of be in nature, and be open, and be with me. And, I set my intention for if there’s any conflict or any conversation I need to have with myself, I’m open to that conversation. I’m not busy anymore. I’m actually in my body, feeling, getting healthy. I’m in nature—it’s beautiful. I’m on the water, which is very grounding for me. And, that’s a good time for me to really ponder things and what are my priorities. But, my heart: I live from my heart. I live from that space of openness, and then I go do my work. I don’t go do my work and then every now and again I bring in the space for my openness. So, I’m backwards from most people, I think. And, I think that it works for me.

∞ WE ARE CONNECTED TO ALL THAT IS ∞

Character 4 is the thinking tissue of our right brain. And, when you consider that when we're born—ever before we're born—when we're conceived, we are one egg and one sperm, DNA weaving together so we become a mighty zygote single cell. Well, that single cell is filled with energy, and it comes from the energy from the womb and from everything else that is around us. So, there's energy in that cell, and that cell is going to multiply itself at a rate of 250,000 cells per second. (Not per minute, per second!) And, so it's going to multiply and divide, multiply and divide, multiply and divide. You're going to have cells differentiate and to be in liver cells, or into heart cells, or into brain cells, or into all the cells. But, they multiply, multiply, multiply, multiply, multiply. And, the energy of that entity is the energy of that Character 4. So, the energy by the time we grow and we are born, we are connected to all that is. And, we are connected to all that is through that consciousness of that Character 4. So, if we are trying to meditate in order to find our peace and our connection to a higher power (or an infinite being, or the force, or God or Allah or whatever you want to call That), we are wired at the level of our Character 4 to be connected to that experience and to that energy consciousness. So, it's a magnificently wise and big picture, open and expansive, completely all-loving, all-encompassing consciousness inside of ourselves.

∞ *I AM EQUALLY RACIST (KIND OF)* ∞

Racism, right now, is going haywire in the world. We are all wired to be able to be racist. Racism is nothing other than my brain—my Character 2—looking out there and saying, “That is different from me. Is it safe, or is it not safe?” And, we’re being fed by a community that “That’s not safe!” Different from me, skewed to the left hemisphere, which is what our society has been. Different from me is dangerous. So, if you have a different color skin, if you have a different religion, if you wear different kinds of clothes, if you look different from me, you behave different from me, you speak a different language from me, you’re danger, you’re a threat to me! And, I with my little Helen is going to come in there and protect me from you. So, my right brain is equally wired for kindness and curiosity. So, I walk into a room of people, I’m probably going to gravitate to someone who has a difference because I’m going to learn something. They’re interesting to me. I’m curious about them. I love learning about different people in different cultures, different values. I love that! So, I am equally as racist (kind of), but we’re in the reverse because I pursue that which is different from me. So, my brain is biologically programmed for “different.” Recognize what is different, recognize what is similar. What do I do with that “different”? Do I gravitate toward it because I’m a whole-brain-living person, and I feel safe and I know that my alarm, I can tame that down. If you have a different clothing on representing a different religious interest, I want to know more about you! Because I want to fuel that circuitry. And, that’s a choice. We can train ourselves.

∞ THE PSYCHOLOGY COMES FROM THE ANATOMY ∞

The fact of the matter is we have two amygdala and we have two hippocampi. And, there was this audible gasp in the room, and I thought, “They know we have one, but they don’t know we have two!” And, what that means is they think they have one emotional system, and that’s why nothing makes sense, because you can’t have one system in conflict with itself. You have to have two separate things in order to be binary, in order to have conflict. And, so then, it was like, “Oh my gosh! If the world understood that!” We were taught the right brain is emotional, the left brain is rational, and that’s not true at all. Both of our hemispheres have an emotional group of cells groups of the limbic system, and then each of the hemispheres has thinking tissue. It just so happens that the left thinking tissue is the rational mind that relates to the external world. So, that means we have four different modules of cells: left thinking, left emotion, right emotion, right thinking. They’re separate from one another, and they create different skill sets. But, on top of different skill sets, what I realized when I was recovering the left emotion and the left thinking groups of my brain after the stroke was that they had personalities. They had characters! And, it was like, “Oh my gosh! We have these four very distinct characters inside of our brain based on the anatomy, and there is not a good psychological paradigm that relates to the anatomy of the brain. And, it’s like, “Well, why not?” I mean, the psychology comes from the anatomy!

∞ *IT IS PURE POWER* ∞

We have the power to choose moment by moment who and how we want to be in the world. But, we can only do that if we know what our choices are, and our choices are these four beautiful characters inside of our head. And, when we get to know each of those Four Characters, then we have the power to set down one character and step into the other character. And, these characters inside of ourselves are constantly communicating with one another. But, if we don't know who's talking to whom and who's valuing what, then we're just kind of running on that rampant trail that's running down the track. If you really want to know who you are—*Whole brain living!* You got the whole brain: It's this magnificent thing inside of your head—and truly getting to know who those characters are, that's your power. It is pure power. We have the power to choose moment by moment who and how we want to be, and part of that is not just *what I want to do in the world*, but that's *how I want to feel moment by moment and how do I find real connection and real meaning in doing so?*

∞ *WATCHING THE PAIN* ∞

That's the emotional reactivity of that little Character 2, and it is designed to save our lives. So, we really owe it a sense of gratitude for its pain. When we have a thought that stimulates an emotional circuit, and then that emotional circuit stimulates a chemical, that will then dump through and run through the blood and run out of the blood. Takes less than 90 seconds. So, our pain—if we watch it, if we become mindful and we feel the trigger and we listen to our thoughts and we're watching our emotional system—our circuitry trigger, and then we feel this run right through of us and we have this whole physiological response. But, if we look at our watches, we can see that takes less than 90 seconds for that to run. And, that is true personal freedom because then I am 'watching' the pain. I am not just 'being' the pain. And the thing about 'being' pain is we feel like we're going to be in that pain forever and it's never-ending, and that's simply not true. Our pain is a physiological response inside of our brain. It is our thought circuitry made up of cells, our emotional circuitry made up of cells. Our physiological response is the byproduct of those cells in the thinking and the feeling. So, just in recognizing that we are a biological creature made up of these billions of beautiful neurons and we can observe them in instead of just engaging in them, gives us a certain level of detachment and knowing that I have these other characters inside my brain that, once that 90 seconds comes and goes, I can pull that energy out of just that little Character 2 and I can bring my mind back to the present moment which is really where my power is.

∞ *OUR SUPERHERO* ∞

Little Character 2, you know, it's not our prettiest self. And, most of us go to therapy because we'd like to have that part of ourselves cut out. But, then I have to go back and say: this group of tissue I consider it our superhero, because these cells were willing to step out of the blissful euphoria of the present moment—the consciousness of the universe—so that I could have a past, I could have a future, I could have temporality in my life; and, I can actually create an individuality that I can relate to the external world. So, we wouldn't be who we are without this character. We have to have it. It's not pleasant when it comes out, but it's screaming, "Pay attention, pay attention, pay attention! I see something as a threat!" And, the rest of us need to address what it's perceiving as a threat.

∞ *OUR INTUITION* ∞

And, then the right-thinking brain tissue: this is where our intuition is stored. And, what is intuition? Intuition at the level of our brain is the ability to—in the absence of all judgment—bring in the present-moment, big-picture experience and relate different pieces together as though it is all connected together. So, this is the part of us that that is wise, and open, and expanded, and has the capacity to connect to the energy all around us. Because the right brain doesn't even have boundaries of where I begin and where I end. The left brain actually has a group of cells in our left parietal brain that creates a holographic image inside of my mind of my body, so I know where I begin and end. I know that I am me and these glasses on my face are not me, because my left brain tells me that. But, in the absence of that left brain, all I am is atoms and molecules in flow, and in motion, and in connection to everything that is in motion and flow around me.

∞ THE ENERGY OF THE SPACE IN BETWEEN ∞

I can practice just shifting myself away from the consciousness that “I’m all about me.” How do I do that? I tame down all the things that are about the “me,” the “mine” in relationship to that rational brain that feels the need to create order in the external world. I set that down. I go in nature. If we can’t get to nature, how can I do that? I can still look out a window. And, if I can look out a window and see what’s between me and whatever is over there (even if it were a building, or a fire hydrant, or it was a parking lot), I can actually look at the energy of the space in between, especially on a hot day. You know, one of my favorite ways when I’m in a city is to watch the steam coming up off of the cement, and I essentially shift the consciousness of me-the-individual from my brain and me into being that energy as it moves off of that parking lot. I also do it if there’s a tree nearby. I can look out, and I can take my vision and make it so that my vision is not focused on the trees. I’m not analyzing the trees with my left brain: “What kind of tree is that? Look at those leaves. Are the leaves flipped over? Is it going to rain?” I’m not making that conversation; instead, I’m looking at the tree. I’m focusing a bit in front of the tree, so that I’m actually picking up the big-picture movement, because the right hemisphere is that big picture. So, I’m looking at the overall movement, without analysis. And, I don’t make myself become the tree. I become the energy that moves the tree.

∞ I HAVE TO HOLD THE SPACE ∞

I gave it [a rehearsal of the TED talk] to one of my best friends, and she's sitting on the couch and she's in it, you know, she's just in it. She's weeping because she knows the story, *blah blah blah*. And then, I get to this third part and I shift completely into my left brain, and I start teaching. And, she's going, "No, no. Stop, stop. No, you can't do this." And, I'm going, "What do you mean?" And, she's going, "You can't do that to us." And, I'm going, "What? I can't do what?" And, she says, "You have taken us into this *deep* place inside of ourselves and we are with you, and you can't just drop us there and teach us. We are not teachable." And I said, "No!" I just started, you know, squealing, "No!" And, she says, "Yes." And, I knew what she was saying was I had to hold that space. I had to hold the space where I had taken my audience. I had to be that vulnerable. And, I started weeping and I said, "Oh my gosh. I have to hold the space." And she said, "Yes, you have to hold the space." And, it was like: *Wow!* That was a huge wow: "How do I do that? How, in this world that is so cruel and filled with criticism, how do I do that? How do I open all of me and hold that space?" But, it was the right thing to do, and so I did. I wrote that last section, and I became a great whale gliding through a sea of silent euphoria. And I took them there, and we were there together. And, that's where we ended: *together*. And, it was so beautiful. I could just feel them lift with me and be that. It was such a beautiful and profound moment with an audience.

∞ A GREAT PLACE TO VISIT ∞

If I'm really a strong Character 1, all that means is that I exercise those circuits routinely. And, the more you run a circuit, the stronger it gets. The stronger it gets, the more active it begins to run on automatic, and it becomes habitual patterning. Some of us get caught in our trauma. So my trauma: if I spend a lot of time thinking about my past, remembering my past, going into every detail of my trauma—thinking that if I go into every detail, then I'm going to find some solution—yes, but if I do, I'm going to do that in reflection of. So, this is a great place to visit, but it's not a great lifestyle. It's important to go and visit and explore and learn from, but it is not a good lifestyle because this part of ourselves is caught up in the past or the fear of the future. We have other parts of our brain that are stronger, healthier pieces. Now, thank goodness that these cells were willing to do that, because that *alarm-alarm-alert-alert* of that left amygdala is what keeps us alive. Because, you know, let's say I was accosted and I did have trauma and it was by let's say a dog, a big German Shepherd. And so now, whenever I see a big German Shepherd, I go into *alarm-alarm-alert-alert*: "I've had a problem with a dog like that. That's not safe. I need to push it away." So, it is designed to save our life. But, again, it is designed to save our life. It is not designed to be a lifestyle.

∞ *THE POWER TO SELF-SOOTHE* ∞

Life is a moment-by-moment experience and we do have the power to choose, moment by moment, who and how we want to be in the world. And, that power is designed based on these Four Characters. So, once you learn who your Four Characters are and you master the Brain Huddle, then you have that power to live a completely conscious life. And, the beauty of knowing who your Four Characters are, is that that little Character 4 of your own—that is connected to love, that is as big as the universe, that is always there for you—has the power to self-soothe your own unhappy little Character 2. And, from the moment we think a thought, to the time where we stimulate an emotional circuit, and then we run a physiological response that flushes through our body and floods out of us—takes less than 90 seconds. So, we have the power to use our Brain Huddle during that moment—during that 90 seconds—to observe what is going on inside of my brain at any moment and, in a Brain Huddle, who do I want to advance? Which of the Four Characters in the huddle do they nominate in order to go navigate the next way of being? So, that's it for me. We have the power to choose who and how we want to be in the world, and we don't have to live with three quarters of our brain unconscious.

∞ *COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS* ∞

Character 4 is for, many people, the hardest part of ourselves to identify with. This is the part of us that likes to experience and repeat affirmations. This is the part that enjoys meditation. This part of us is very mindful that we have the ability to choose deep inner peace. It is very peaceful inside. It expresses itself as gratitude: "I love Kyle." Every time I'm with Kyle, I make sure Kyle knows. I look him in the eyes, I touch him on his shoulders, I hold him close to me, and I say, "Kyle, I love you! I am so grateful that you are in my life." It is important to your Character 4 that the people you love, know you love them. Where are you when this part of you comes out? Do you walk in nature to feel this part of you? Do you love to swim and every time you're in the water, you are so filled with gratitude that "Oh my gosh, I'm in the water! I get to feel what it feels like to swim and be in my body in the water." Where are you when this happens to you? When you wake up first thing in the morning, this is a great time to say, "Oh my gosh—" Whatever that higher being is that you believe in—call it God, call it Allah, call it the Infinite Being, call it whatever you want to call it, but it is that cosmic consciousness that you woke up today: "Oh my gosh, I woke up today!" And you woke up today because there's a tiny little group of cells right in here in this pons, that its job is to wake you up. And, it did its job, and so I wake up in the morning. And, the first thing I do is I say, "Oh my gosh, little cells that woke me up, thank you for doing your job! You woke me up! So, I get another moment of being a conscious human being."

∞ *BRAIN HUDDLE!* ∞

I use an acronym called B.R.A.I.N. And, I call it the “Brain Huddle.” And, I see these Four Characters inside of my brain as my brain’s team, and then I call a Huddle. And so, I will call a Brain Huddle periodically throughout my day, literally 20 or 30 times a day. So, in a moment I will say, “Brain Huddle!” and I pause myself, and I bring my mind immediately to my breath, because my breath is always a grounding in the present moment, and I feel that. And, then, B is “breath,” focus on the breath. R is “recognize” which character was I exhibiting, which group of cells was I exercising, when I called the huddle? R is “recognize” which character. A is “appreciate” the fact that I may have been in my rational left brain when I called the huddle, but I have Four Characters. And, then, I is “inquire” which of the Four Characters might I want to be in the next moment? And, then, N is “navigate” which character do I want, moment by moment by moment—as my life unfolds in moments. And, the beauty of simply calling a Brain Huddle is all four of my characters come back online, and it’s like, “Oh, I’m a conscious being.” I can observe what’s going on inside of my head. And, then, I have the power to choose, moment by moment, who and how I want to be in the world, in order to create my best life.

∞ *HOW WONDROUS WE ARE* ∞

So, we have each of these parts and if you want to hook in to that Character 4, always seek your gratitude because when we move into a sense of gratitude that “Oh my gosh, I’m alive at all,” the difference between me having any thoughts or any emotions or any physiological responses is not being here and being deceased: “I have life!” And, simply hooking into the idea that I can celebrate and be grateful for those beautiful cells that give me sight or give me sound and the ability to communicate, or hands and digits that allow me to manipulate the space around us, and legs! I don’t have to stand in the presence of you. If you’re bringing me an energy or something that I’m not comfortable in, I have legs. I can choose to walk away, and walk away. We get to pick and choose. So, try focusing on this awe and this amazement that we exist at all and “Oh my gosh, we’re alive!” I mean, these are cells. How absurd that 50 trillion beautiful molecular geniuses got packed together and created you! I mean, we are this incredible, awe-inspiring miracle of life. And, when you allow yourself to wake up in the morning and just lay there with your eyes closed and think, “Wow, I’m awake. I’m awake. I’m not even sleeping anymore. I’m awake, and I’m alive, and oh my gosh, wow! I have life!” And, I know I go on and on about that, but to me it’s clearly this amazing phenomenon, and people kind of overlook how wondrous we.

∞ I DON'T QUESTION MYSELF ANYMORE ∞

And, one of the beauties of having a huddle is it's like, "Okay, right now, I've got two hours before I've got to be on a podcast, so I've got time." Pig-Pen (who I call my little Character 3 who's always making a mess), I got time for her to go for a nice paddleboard. We can kind of like just go and play. We can jump in the lake. We can have some fun. Plenty of time to get cleaned up and come in so that Helen can do what Helen needs to do. But, when I do that—when I hold the huddle—I feel no guilt. I feel no remorse. I don't question myself anymore, because the huddle has made the decision. So, Helen knows, "Hey, I'm going to play for an hour, Helen, and then you're going to be back on. You're going to get your time. We're going to do what we need to do. Are you okay with that schedule?" And, she's calculating the timing and "Is it all going to work out?" And, it's like, "Yeah, that makes sense to me, and we'll even have time to fit in some lunch." So, it's a democracy inside of the head, and it's a matter of everybody gets a vote, everybody gets a voice. And, everybody agrees, so that when I am being a Pig-Pen, Helen's not being critical. And, when Helen's working, Pig-Pen isn't saying, "Come on, I want to go play. Come on, I want to go play. Come on, there's only two hours left of sunshine. Come on, come on, come on!" So that I feel peace. Nothing worse than feeling anxiety all the time because the different parts of you are in conflict.

∞ *ISN'T THIS INTERESTING?* ∞

What you did—through the eyes of a neuroscientist—is you observed the circuitry in action, instead of simply engaging with that circuitry. So, you didn't go to the store and get a new cigarette, or go to a buddy and say, "Can you spare one?" You actually observe the craving happen. And, we as human beings, when we hook into that kind of tissue, a part of our brain—that little Character 2 emotional tissue—that is saying, "This is going to last forever. There's no end to the craving. There's no end to the desire." And it's like, no, this is circuitry, and cells will eventually shift. You can actually observe it, instead of engaging in it. If you engage in it, it's like perpetuating the loop of craving. But, as soon as you start observing it, you're taking the energy and the power in the brain out of those cells of the craving and of the addiction, and observing it through other parts of your brain. So, you did that instinctively. It might have taken you a long time, but you finally found your way to really observing and thinking about that as "Isn't this interesting? This is a group of cells inside of my brain offering me this experience of craving." And, the same is true for anxiety, or anger, or grief, or happiness. You know, a good belly laugh doesn't last more than 90 seconds. And, when you're observing craving instead of simply perpetuating it automatically, it too should last approximately 90 seconds. And, you can do anything for 90 seconds!

∞ A WILLINGNESS TO TRY ∞

[*So, I'm hearing that you say hope equals intention.*] No, because intention is a direction, hope is an impulse. And, you have to have the impulse to move before you know where you're going, do you know what I mean? To me, hope can end up being an intention, but hope to me is the impetus toward something new. And, then, it may be a positive intention, or it may be "I'm feeling sadness," but it's the impetus to run a circuit. And that circuit 'intention' is a group of cells. Intention is not everywhere in the brain. Intention is a group of cells in the right hemisphere. So, a lot of people don't have any real intention, and that's because they're not running that right-brain circuitry. They're just, like, flopping around like fish in the sea, right? They don't know they're heading somewhere, or purposefully heading somewhere. There's a lot of searches running in random, right? And, that's the left brain: it's just going somewhere. Just going somewhere! And I've been thinking so much about it: At the level of the brain, what is hope? In order to have hope, I can't just "be." There's something 'beyond.' And, so, intention is me choosing which of the 'beyond' path[s] I will take in order to pursue, but the hope is the impetus of action. And, so, if you got a neuron that is kind of not communicating with other neurons—it's not in the link—like when I had my stroke and, did I have any hope? Well, any hope of what? First of all, you have to ask yourself, "Hope for what?" But hope became a willingness to try, whatever trying is. I'm either willing to try for anything, or I'm not. So try for change, a change from what I currently am. So hope, to me, is the impetus toward making that leap toward the try. And, once I have the try, then I can try with an intention toward a specific goal.

∞ *THE PRESENCE OF BEING THERE* ∞

I get asked that a lot: “Who’s the observer?” I think Character 4 is the consciousness that is just always observing everything. It’s just the presence of being there, and it’s the presence of being there without a judgment. Character 4 doesn’t come in and say, “This is right,” or “This is wrong,” or “This is good,” or “This is bad.” It’s just like: It is what it is! And it’s the blue sky that is always the blue sky, regardless of the clouds or whatever the weather blows in as a Character 1, 2, or 3. Because Characters 1, 2, and 3 are action. When I experienced that stroke, I was all but dead. I passed out moments before I landed in Mass General Hospital’s emergency room. As soon as I got in there, they started poking and prodding.... I felt my spirit surrender—that’s the only language I can use—and I said goodbye to my life, literally. I had hung on for four hours during this hemorrhage, and I dissipated. So, for me, that consciousness is big as the big as universe. It’s a big energy ball. It still surrounded me. My cells were still alive, but I had no consciousness of a functional brain going on. But, once they stabilized my body and I woke up later that afternoon, there was a tiny little glee (glee!) inside of me: “I survived!” I didn’t hear the words, but I felt the spirit: “I survived!” And, that would be, for me, the impetus—the energetic possibility of Character 3, the action of experiential. So, I shifted from that overall consciousness of “total one with all that is,” into that impetus of possibility again. And so, to me, the action are Characters 3, 2 and 1, and that observing all-awareness, all-knowing ... consciousness of the observer, for me, I truly believe it’s Character 4.

∞ *BECOME THE BREEZE THAT IS MOVING THE LEAVES* ∞

I think the flow is definitely right brain, but I think it depends on what your intention is—what you’re doing. If you’re doing something actively, I think it’s Character 3, because it’s the creative, and innovative, and put-it-together, and time flies by, and I’m not managing dealing with the judgment of that left brain and right/wrong, good/bad. I’m just doing it and being it. I think, though, that the experience of feeling at one with all that is, is a beautiful experience that people strive for. So, meditation, prayer, really feeling like the quiet. What happens is: it’s not like this right brain lights up, it’s like the left brain quiets down. And, you know, when we do rosary, we’re doing a repetitive. When we’re doing as a mantra, we’re repeating. And, if my left-brain language center is busy talking a mantra, then all those others—“Oh, I didn’t do this this morning. Oh, I gotta remember to do that later”—all those details, they go to the background. And then, what happens is something emerges. I kind of emerge my consciousness away from that level of vibration of *buzz*, and *busy-busy-busy*, or *worry-worry-worry*, and I shift into the present. And, as I’m in the present, then when I really allow myself to become the breeze that is moving the leaves. And the other day, I was on the back of my boat, and I looked up at the trees. And, there were these three little clumps of leaves, and they were all just kind of wiggling. And, I looked at them, and they were like little characters up there. And, it was like shifting away from me, into being the energy that is wiggling those leaves. And, it literally made me giggle because it was so cute! It was like the universe saying, “Tickle, tickle!” And, I became that glee!

∞ *I CAN SLOW MY BREATH DOWN* ∞

You're allowed to ask yourself, "Why am I freaking out? What am I saying to myself, what emotions am I thinking about? Am I terrified that I'm gonna fail this, even though I've studied? Well, that doesn't make any sense," right? So, from a logical, analytical thinking part of your brain, it can come on and say, "We prepared. It's okay. The anxiety that I'm feeling...is anxiety!" It's a group of cells inside of my brain that I'm running. And, it has the power to change the frequency of my breath, the length and depth of my breath. I can freak myself out, and I can also use my cognitive mind to come into the present moment and say, "I can slow my breath down. I can close my eyes, and I can watch my breath as though it's a train on a track, and I can slow it down. And, as I slow it down, I can feel I'm breathing more deeply. And, I can open my eyes, and I can bring them to the present moment. And, I can know in the present moment this is a different time than my freakout, because my freakout's about the past and the future. And, I can actually make some cognitive efforts in order to purposely shift the physiology of my experience of the emotions. Because I have thoughts, I have emotions, and I have physiology. And, I can manipulate at any level. I can interject a different way of perceiving or experiencing myself in any of those ways.

∞ *WE ARE NEVER ALONE* ∞

Mental illness is true and real. And, chronic depression, there are several different biological reasons for true depression. But, this is really about how do I take my brain as a person who isn't going to be at that chronic or acute, severe depression or mental illness? How do I work with the cells inside of my brain in order to strengthen certain circuits that I know that I can, in order to distract myself away from that pain? Or, how do I focus on that pain with a part of myself—my Character 4—that is loving and supportive? We are never alone! We have the perception in our Character 2 that we are alone and isolated and lonely, because there's a group of cells in there that defines me as separate from the whole. But, I'm not separate from the whole. I only have that perception. But, I then have that right-brain ability to hook into the consciousness of my Characters 3 and 4, where I can use those characters to self-soothe myself. And, then, there are tools that we can teach ourselves to self-soothe. And, it's the same kind of thing: When my mother died—she was my self-soother—I didn't have that. I had my own little Character 2 and I'd go to my mama, and my mama would come in with her love and she would soothe me. And, then, once my mother passed away, it was like: Well, I still had my Character 2, but now I didn't have my mama's Character 4 to come in. And, it was like: Well, what did she do? What did she say to me? How did she hold me? What was the support that she brought to me? And, I learned I could train myself then to give that to myself and create this healthy relationship between my own Character 4 and my Character 2.

∞ THE BIGGEST WOW OF ALL ∞

Give me a stained glass piece with a small crack in the glass—that’s where the *soul* comes in. You know, give me a sculpture where, okay, the hair is a little too big—that’s where the *soul* comes in. You know, give me something that makes it unique and different. Allow it to be what it is, without the negative judgment of that left brain. So, we’re chasing something that’s impossible to win, which is the value of the left brain. The right brain is happy and peaceful and euphoric, *simply because we’re alive*, Craig! Simply because I’m alive. I mean, really stop to think about it. Forget I’m a human. Forget I’m a woman. Forget all the details of my story. If I’m just sitting right here and I’m sitting in this mass that I call “me,” and I realize *I can wiggle that toe way down there. And, I have these two things that I can move, so that I have mobility around. And, I got these fingers, these digits, that allow me to manipulate the space around me. And, oh my god, I got eyes that can bring in the colors and the lights. And, I can hear the sounds. And, I can chew food. And, I can taste all these tastes. And, oh my gosh, I’m alive!* Now, wow! To me, that’s just the biggest wow of all, right? We should all wake up and just go into that *Oh my god, I’m alive! And, the cells in my spine and my spinal cord and my midbrain in my brain stem that woke me up today, they actually woke me up today!* I mean, come on, let’s get real what’s important. That is a gift that I can thank the trillions and trillions of cells that work together to allow me to simply be the living being that I am. And say, “Thank you,” and then bring that gratitude into the world, and I will live a different life.

∞ *A BLANKET OF LOVE* ∞

And, then, Character 4. We know these people. These people are the anchors of our hearts! We know who to call when we're sad. If we want to commiserate—misery loves miserable company—go to the 2's. If we need somebody to help fix a problem, we call the Character 1 and they say, "What do you need?" and I say, "I need A, B, or C," and they say, "We got it. You got it." Or, you know, it's like: "I could use some ice cream. Can we, like, go play, you know? Can we go for a walk in the woods together and just be together and spend some time, and be calm?" and, that's going to be the 3. And, then, the Character 4 is just going to come in and wrap us up in a big ol' blanket of love, and it's like: "Thank you! I just needed to *breathe*."

∞ *I PICK?* ∞

I'm actually working with a gal who works in a school system. and just the other day, there were two eight-year-olds who were fighting with one another. And, so the teachers came in and she happened to be present, and so they broke the kids up. And, then, my friend went over and she said, "Do you want to know about your brain, and how your brain works, and what just happened to you?" And, the kid's going, "Well, well yeah, yeah I do." This was not the instigator, okay. This was the one who was trying to rationalize "I don't want to fight, I don't want to fight, I don't want to fight," and then gave in and punched him out, right? So, the other kid's Character 2 is attack-attack-attack, and I don't wanna fight: "Go away," you know? No big deal. Push away, push away. And, then, *bam!* I move into my 2. And, so my friend described this experience in these characters, and the kid said, "So, what you're saying is: I pick?" Yeah, you pick! You pick which character you want to be. And, you could have stayed in that Character 1 and just said, "No, I'm not dealing with your Character 2" and known in your mind that they're just gonna keep going, keep going, keep going (because that's what the 2 does). And, you could walk away, or you could manage that in a different way. Kids love it because it's like: "Oh! Well, that makes sense!"

∞ *THERE'S PEACE THERE* ∞

So, this hemisphere—our left brain—spans time. It's our methodical, logical, analytical thinking. But, there's also a small group of cells back here that defines the boundaries of where I begin and where I end. So, I know that this is me but these glasses are not me, because I have a group of cells in my left brain that says I'm an individual, and I have a past, and I have a future, and I can relate to the external world. The right hemisphere doesn't have that. So, in the consciousness of the right hemisphere, when you have people come together and become quiet for the first few moments and to focus on something in the present moment and to focus on breath, brings them outside of the definition of themselves, and there's peace there! Because there's no way to reason to not have peace. The universe exists in a state of peacefulness, but our left brain in its thinking and its emotions—as they relate to our pain from the past and our fear of the unknown in the future—brings us discomfort and that's where our suffering comes in.

∞ *BE ABLE TO WALK SILENTLY* ∞

I think if we are too caught up in language—which I do believe our society is at this point, because we are skewed to the values of the language—well, I don't want to be skewed to the values of the left brain. I don't want to be skewed to talking about everything. If I'm walking on a beach hand-in-hand with someone I love, I want to be in the present with them. Language pulls it out of the present into the analysis of the present. I don't want to be analyzing the present! I want to be connected to all that is, including this person I adore. I want to be able to walk silently in that space and share the present. I don't need words for that, and for me words pull away from that. So, I'm really aware of who I spend time with. I mean, I live on a boat six months out of the year, and I have very rigid rules. When you come into my boat, you're coming into the cove, and you're coming into the silence of the cove. And, we're dropping the phones, and we're dropping the technology, and we're pushing out all that stuff that's out in that left-brain world. You can return to it anytime that you want. But, this is a sacred space. It's like if you're going to go into an ashram, we're not just chatty-chatty-chatty, whatever-whatever-whatever. We're seeking space between those words because we're just regurgitating over and over that cellular circuitry of that left brain analysis-analysis-analysis. Is it a bad thing? No! Out of balance, yes! I want all of it, but I want it all in balance.

∞ *WHY WE REALLY NEED THE HUDDLE* ∞

Let's say Character 1 is busy upstairs, and she set a timer on her clock to, say, okay, every hour on the hour. So, the ping goes off, and Helen is Character 1 left thinking goes: "Okay, huddle time. Hello, how's everybody?" And, so, Character 2 pings in and says, "Well, I'm good right now, you know. I'm okay right now. You're busy, I'm good." Character 3 goes: "Well, I'd rather not be here, but I'm good too." And, Character 4 is going, "I just love us all," right? Character 1 can train herself, on a routine basis, to call a huddle so that she knows what that feels like. You have to learn: What does it feel like to call the huddle? Character 2 is why we really need the huddle. When our Character 2 pain comes on—if we're feeling like scheming and conniving, or we're really starting to feel angry and we just wanna grumble—this character needs to call a huddle. But, she doesn't want to call a huddle because it's addictive, right? This is our addictive circuitry. Inside of that brain circuitry is where our addictions are. So, it's addictive and it's delicious. "And, I want more of it, and I'm going to be mad at you, and I'm going to be mad at you forever, and I don't want to make up with you yet, because I'm not done being mad at you," right? And, then, the telephone rings and *boom*: "Hello-oo! :) La-la-la-la-la-laaa. La-laaa!" And then she hangs up the phone, and she's going, "Well, then, what do I do?" In that moment, that's the huddle: What do I do? Which do I choose? Do I say, "Oh, I was saved by the bell. Thank goodness I'm not feeling all that pain." Or, is this one still ready to chew on you some more, right? So, little Character 2: We really learn the huddle to rescue our own Character 2.

∞ *WE CAN ALWAYS TAP INTO* ∞

The thinking of the present moment is the part of the consciousness that is completely in the right here, right now. And, “right here, right now” is a perfect moment without the judgment of what is right or wrong, or good or bad about it. It just is what it is. And, there’s this incredible sense of gratitude that exists in that Character 4 right-thinking tissue that I exist at all. Oh my gosh, Robin, I have a voice, and I can communicate with you. I have eyes, and I can see you. I have legs and arms that allow me to move the mass of this organic collection of cells into the world. “Oh my gosh, I’m alive!” And, just that experience of “I’m alive,” it’s a phenomenon I’m grateful for. I have no idea about all these other things that that pile on top and make the noise of my existence but right here, right now is a perfect moment that we can always tap into. And, then in the Character 3, it’s more of that “Okay, what do I do in the present moment?” And, then, Character 2 comes in and “What do I feel about all the past? Give me a reason to push it away, and say no.” And, then, Character 1 isn’t even in the present right here. It’s in some external world. I mean, so, these are the noisy parts of our brain. And, so, when people said, “Oh, well, she’s brain damaged. She’s left lost her left hemisphere. She’s not conscious.” And, I am probably more conscious than I have ever been, in the purity of what consciousness truly is.

∞ WHAT A SACRIFICE ∞

So, Character 2—in all of its ways that it manifests as output of behavior—it’s all designed to save ourselves and to protect ourselves from any threat that we have ever experienced in the past. And, so, what that really says is that any of the pain that we experience in the present moment that has something to do with our past, it brings it back up so that we can reflect upon it, we can think about it, we can relate to it, we can find peace with it, we can move through it, we can heal it, and come back into the present moment, then, as healthier people. So, it’s a critical portion of our brain so that we can reflect and grow. At the same time, when it’s exercising its alarm, it’s generally not the most pleasant part of our being. [*So, you know who Character 2 reminds me of? I’m sure you’ve seen BACK TO THE FUTURE, right?*] Yeah. [*It reminds me of Christopher Lloyd’s character Doc. So, I’m gonna call Character 2 “Doc.”*] I love it. [*Going back into the past, like really protective. Like slightly paranoid, but in a good way: He wants to keep everyone safe.*] Exactly, that’s exactly right. And, he’s brilliant, and he’s bringing in billions of bits of data. And, you know, one of the beautiful things about this little Character 2 inside of us is: It has been willing to step out of the bliss of the present moment. What a sacrifice! I mean, it has sacrificed its own peaceful heart in order for us to be able to have *alarm-alarm-alert-alert* from my past experience. So, because of that group of cells, we become a bridge across time. Our consciousness isn’t just right here, right now. We do have a past, and we can project our minds into a future.

∞ FREEDOM TO BE WHO I AM ∞

I think as women reach different decades, there's this shift that happens inside of us. When we're 40, our children are starting to leave the nest. By 50, they've pretty much left the nest. And, now, I'm looking at: *I just spent half a century being of service to my family, but what am I doing here? What is my contribution? How do I find true meaning in my life? And, how do I be of service to the bigger picture?* And, I think by the time we reach 60, we're pretty much on our own as far as "I really don't care what you people think about me anymore"! I have my purpose, and I need to bring my purpose and do my thing, regardless of all the other judgment. And, when I look at these beautiful women who are in their 70s and 80s—who are truly living their lives on purpose—they radiate youth. They radiate their beauty. Their hearts are wide open. They're loving the world. And, they have found their perfection in being of service, not just to me and mine—my family, my spouse, my minimal—but to the bigger picture: *How do I make my contribution and use my life to serve the bigger picture?* So, I think that there's definitely a journey that women in general—at least the western woman that I'm familiar with—that we have embarked upon. And, I love this stage in my life. I'm 60-something now, and I love being 60-something because there's this incredible freedom to be who I am, to be what I believe is true, and to make my statement. And, at the same time, balance that with self-nurturing and love and joy. And, the healthier I am, the healthier I project into the world, and hopefully the more positive the impact of my life is on those around me, near and far.

∞ *THE BEAUTY OF THIS MASTERPIECE* ∞

I went to college, and I fell in love with the subject of anatomy. And, I was in cat lab studying anatomy and doing all that, and a medical student came to me and said, “Would you like to see the human remains?” And, I thought, “Oh my God, that sounds so beautiful.” And, it was instant fall-in-love, and that it for me. Just from there on, everything was about the beauty of this masterpiece and that it’s actually organized and structured inside, and I can learn it. And, I can understand it, and I can think about it. I can learn the anatomy. I can learn the physiology of how it works. I can understand the biochemistry and break everything down into the bits and pieces. And, it was like, “Oh my gosh!” And, immunology: what happens when it gets ill. And, I mean just the whole thing, to me. This is this masterpiece of 50 trillion beautiful cells, and I have one! This is mine! Oh my gosh, I’m alive! I’m alive, you know. It’s like, yeah, I know we all go back to the *FRANKENSTEIN* movie, but it’s true, you know. Remembering with a sense of excitement and awe and gratitude that I’m alive at all. I mean, Dave, how can we pass that by?! It’s like this incredible phenomenon. So, yeah, you know, I’m a little odd because of my perceptions, but aren’t we all? (You know, I just have mine on parade.) And, when I lost all that left-brain judgment, it was like: This is peace. And, we’re wired for peace. And, if everybody knew that we were wired for peace and that they could find this—if they knew how to get there—oh my gosh, what a different humanity we could be. And, it was worth it. It was, you know, the effort, the try—it didn’t matter. It unfolded the way it was supposed to unfold.

∞ *NO FEAR OF LIFE OR DEATH* ∞

When I really know who I am—when I exist as the consciousness of my Character 4, and I know, “Oh my gosh, I’m alive. Wow, what a wonder I exist at all. And, then one day, I won’t exist at all. But I will have lived.” And so, for me, that consciousness then dissolves out of the cellular structure. But, that’s the consciousness that created me! And, so I continue to exist in the formation of some part of my Character 4. So, Character 4 has no fear of life or death. It just exists like: “Oh my God, right now, I do exist as these 50 trillion beautiful molecular geniuses.” And lay on top of that consciousness, that consciousness of action of the Character 3—with curiosity and movement into the world. And, then, add to that a left hemisphere that defines me an individual—gives me a past, gives me a future. And, then, on top of that, an experience with the external as a social norm. And, now, I have all four consciousnesses of the four different parts of my brain. And, when I truly know I’m as big as the universe. And, I am, ultimately, alive and it’s a blessing to be alive. And, then, *boom!* Just like that, I won’t be alive anymore. I’m good with that, because I know that part of myself is real.

∞ SIMPLY LOVE THEM ∞

When someone shows up as their Character 2—their little unhappy self—that’s an opportunity for any of us to say I can get right back in your face and be a tit-for-tat little Character 2 right at you, or I can show up and say this is an opportunity for me to love another human being. I don’t have to bite them back. I can simply love them in spite of themselves. And, I think right now especially in our society when we have so much anxiety and so much fear—I mean, oh my God, it’s a virus. You can’t see it. It’s a pandemic, which means it’s everywhere. You don’t know how your body’s going to respond or react to it. You don’t know who’s got it and who doesn’t got it. There’s just fear. There’s just this level of fear. And, it’s like it’s an opportunity really for us to show up as our best selves. So, you know, it’s kind of like the big test of humanity right now: How are we being with one another? [*And that love truly dissipates that fear. I’ve been in situations where I thought, “Oh, this is not a good situation,” but when I’ve come at it with love, it totally changes.*] Yeah, and if it doesn’t change it for the other person (because they’re not ready for it to change them), it certainly changes the experience you just had and how you feel about yourself as you present yourself as a human being in the presence of another.

∞ REMIND ME ∞

We're so much more, so much more than just those cells that say, "I have addiction. I'm not happy." And, so, we're really supposed to be talking about self-soothing (is what I heard from you earlier), so let's go into that. How do I then self-soothe that part of me that is saying, "Well, it's not good enough. I'm not happy enough. I don't want this. I wanted that. I'm not—*waa-waa-waa-waa-waah!*" And, that's where Character 4 comes in. It's that part of me that was in the womb of my grandmother, when my mother was five weeks old! It is that part of me that is perfectly content, perfectly beautiful, perfectly amazing phenomenon of life that just multiplies itself and multiplies itself, so I have 50 trillion gorgeous cells that work together, differentiate me as all this construct. I have eyes that can see. I have hands that can move. I have a heart that beats. I have *all of this*, and I'm gonna give my power to my pain? When I can just say, "Character 4, can you come over here and remind me why I'm beautiful? And, how I'm good? And, how lucky we are to be alive? And, that I'm not alone? And, that—even though I feel like I'm alone, or really I feel isolated, or I feel sad, or I feel this—that, really, every cell in my body is having a party because I exist at all?"

∞ A SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE ∞

I don't use the word *spirituality* because that is a word that a population uses to describe that experience. For me, it was just energy. And, so I can use the scientific language of "it was just energy," but they don't like even the word *energy* because they don't get energy, right? You know, very very few scientists actually—unless you're talking about mitochondria—energy and consciousness remain taboo subjects, which it's getting a little bit more fluid now, if you will. Because, you know, it's time we did talk about these things. But, for me, it was just energy. But, you know, every ability we have, we have because we have brain cells that perform that function. So, if we human beings are capable of having whatever you call it "a spiritual experience," then it's because we have brain cells that are designed to have that spiritual experience. So, regardless of what you call it, or regardless of how your left brain says, "No, we don't understand that. That's woo-woo," it's like well, call it whatever you want, but you need to look at it because it's a part of what we are as biological creatures. And, you can't simply say, "Well, it doesn't exist," simply because it makes you nervous that we can't measure it, or talk about it, through using tools like the scientific method. Which, by definition, is a method. Which, by definition, is how the left brain functions. And, the left brain functions linearly, and there's absolutely nothing linear about the way the right brain looks at a three-dimensional life-force energy of cells and says, "You know, that's a linear structure that we can then define with method." You simply can't do it.

∞ I CAN SELF-SOOTHE ∞

If I'm in my Character 2 pain, there are certain Character 1's I'm not gonna call, right? I don't need it fixed, right? And, what I need is somebody who can hold me in my space, so I can relax. So I'm gonna call somebody who is a good Character 4. And, who predictably is a good Character 4 me? Well, when my mother was alive, it was my mother and then once my mother passed away it was like, "Well, who do I call now?" And, it was like, okay, don't worry about calling someone else. What was it that my mother did to hold me? And, let my own Character 4 come in and play that role, and be with me. And, I could be that because my own Character 4 is expansive, and open, and loving, and kind. And, I am never alone, because my own Character 4 is always right there, and I can self-soothe. (Oh my God, tell me that's not in my power, right?) So, when I move into my trauma, when I move into that circuitry, am I in danger? Do I need Character 1 to come on and fix something, or make a phone call, or do something, or do whatever? Do I need my Character 4 to come in and help me settle? Because the Character 2 gets dysregulated. Everybody else is just kind of in a flow about life, but as soon as Character 2 gets dysregulated, it needs to be brought back into regulation. And, so I can use my Character 1 to fix anything to make sure I'm not in danger, and then I can come in with my own Character 4: And, I can soothe, and I can rock, and I can breathe, and I can love, and I can come to the present moment.

∞ *WHERE IS THE PAIN?* ∞

The ultimate goal is whole brain living: How do we then really allow these characters, moment by moment, to have a conversation and say, “How do we create balance in our lives? How do we allow each of these four parts of ourselves to grab the microphone and become their own exquisite expression of who and what we are as living beings?” And, allow each piece of ourself to speak and to be heard, in our own unique way. And, when we allow ourselves to come together and all four characters communicate with one another, then we get to live a balanced life. And, when we have that level of balance, that’s when we have not just mental health and brain health (mental health based on the brain health), but then we also have the insight into where is the pain? This is not at all about stepping to the side of our pain, but it’s allowing pain to be a communicator. Okay, if I’m experiencing an emotional pain or a spiritual pain or even a physical pain, allowing that pain to bring my awareness that there is something that needs the attention of all parts of me, in order to be able to come in, hear that, nurture that, heal that, and then expand as a whole human being.

∞ *NOT JUST BEING THE PAIN* ∞

That's the emotional reactivity of that little Character 2. And, it is designed to save our lives, so we really owe it a sense of gratitude for its pain. But, recognize that this pain—. When we have a thought, that stimulates an emotional circuit. And, then that emotional circuit stimulates a chemical that will then dump through and run through the blood and run out of the blood—takes less than 90 seconds. So, our pain—if we watch it, if we become mindful and we feel the trigger and we listen to our thoughts, and we're watching our emotional system (our circuitry trigger) and then we feel this [*emotion*] run right through us, and we have this whole physiological response. But, if we look at our watches, we can see that takes less than 90 seconds for that to run. And, that is true personal freedom, because then I am watching the pain, I am not just being the pain. And, the thing about "being pain" is we feel like we're going to be in that pain forever, and it's neverending. And, that's simply not true. Our pain is a physiological response inside of our brain. It is our thought circuitry, made up of cells. Our emotional circuitry, made up of cells. Our physiological response is the byproduct of those cells in the thinking and the feeling. So, just in recognizing that we are a biological creature made up of these billions of beautiful neurons—and we can observe them, instead of just engaging in them—gives us a certain level of detachment. And, knowing that I have these other characters inside my brain, that once that 90 seconds comes and goes, I can pull that energy out of just that little Character 2, I can bring my mind back to the present moment, which is really where my power is.

∞ WORKING MYSELF BILATERALLY ∞

I am a bilateral entity, and so everything that I do I need to focus on the bilaterality of that. And, so when it came to like a movement skill—like in order to move—once I could ambulate, once I had enough strength in my right leg (because my right side went paralyzed, because it was a left brain trauma), once I could get up and ambulate, then it was a matter of, “Okay, how do I use the right hemisphere and the left hemisphere, to create a gentle rhythmic pattern between them?” And, if I could establish a walking pattern that was not just step with the left leg, drag, heave-ho the right leg around—it’s like, “Okay, how do I try to synchronize these different body parts?” Because we have fibers going between the right hemisphere and the left hemisphere, at the level of the brain. So, if I have trauma in my left hemisphere, not only do I have the trauma of what those cells do (which may be to move that right leg rhythmically), but I am connected to the exact same group of cells on the opposite hemisphere. So, if I can do one thing *and the other* and create a rhythmic connection between the two, then I’m not just using the power of the left-to-the-right *problematic* part of the system. But I’m using the power of the *healthy* part of the system and working myself bilaterally and, boy, did that make a difference in my recovery. And the other thing is that, at every level of the spinal cord, literally half the fibers that come in as motor or go out as sensory are crossing at that level of the spinal cord, so why not do everything as bilateral? And, it’s bilateral all the way up, so how can we use the system of what we know to be true anatomically, to work what’s working, to fuel power and security, and strengthen that which is has been weakened (or dismissed as functional)?

∞ *THIS MAGICAL COMBINATION* ∞

It's energy. I mean, you're describing the energy field. I mean, you have to consider that if I'm a molecule and I become a genetic molecule and I'm spinning a certain way, then ultimately if I manifest as an organic structure—if I take atoms and molecules and put them together and I come up with something, I might create a lemon. But, if I take those same molecules but I twist them energetically—the background—the other way and they create something organic, then they would create a lime. So, we're looking at atoms and molecules that are in motion, but the motion is the energy. And, so you know, when it comes to consciousness, we're trying to figure out and understand how much of the consciousness is actually in the energy field, and how much of the consciousness is at the atomic level of the molecules? But, you know, we as human beings, we're the manifestation of life, and so what is life? Life is nothing without the energy field, and life is nothing without the matter that makes us up. So, we are this magical combination of the two. So, when you can detect someone's energy field, oh yeah, there's a book to be written on each one of us as we greet one another, right? But, we do have some say over our own energy field based on which groups of neurons we are putting the energy into. And, that's why I just love this human brain so much because, essentially, it's not just cells in communication with one another, but it's the energy fields and dynamics that get set up, as those circuits emit themselves as each one of us as individuals. And, wow, aren't we this magnificent collection of 50 trillion molecular geniuses? I mean, we're not a single microbe, right? We're magnificent!

∞ OUR NOURISHMENT ∞

We have a space within us where we can find incredible, deep, inner peace. Character Three is about *go-go, do-do*. Character Two is about processing information about the emotions from our past, so we can heal. And, Character One is busy interacting (me with the external world) in order to create order, so that my life is not chaos. But, Character Four is where I find my deep inner peace. This is where my connection to something higher, or something within myself that is holy. This is my authentic self, or my divine self, or my true self—whatever language people are comfortable with. When we pray, we say a prayer and we quiet the left hemisphere language, so that the left hemisphere can become quiet. So, my heart and spirit can open, and I can join and merge with something that feels greater than I. Call that a god, call that whatever you're comfortable calling that energetic. I call it "the big energy ball of the universe." I am this magnificent ball of energy, and I unite with the big ball, and it's euphoric. There's this unconditional love. There's this feeling of being connected to something that is greater than I. It brings my meaning and my purpose: Why am I alive? I'm not just alive to create order, and I'm not alive just to feel my pain from the past, and I'm just not here to just *play-play-play* away. I'm here to be *all of it....* And, it is our nourishment. This is the part of our brain that is like the battery; this is the charged battery. Characters Three, Two and One: They take energy out of the battery. But, energy is recharged and restored through the nourishment of being connected to something that is greater than I, where I can actually dissolve and relax into it, becoming completely open and expansive.

∞ WHERE MAGIC IS ∞

We have to have this balance between the *push* and the *pause*, no matter what we're doing. And, we know that, if you're involved in sports. I'm a swimmer and when you swim, you *stroke* and you *glide*, and you *stroke* and you *glide*. I mean, otherwise, you *stroke-stroke-stroke-stroke-stroke-stroke-stroke*, you burn out the system right? It just gets overrun. But, if you *stroke* and you *glide*, and you *stroke* and you *glide*, then you kind of like, with every pause, there's this reset for the muscles, so that they can begin again. Life is this balance between the push and the pause.... I'm a rower, too. I got a beautiful shell here on the boat, and it's magnificent. You know, it's such a full-body *<heave>*, and then you just *glide*. And then *<heave>*. I mean, it's magical! This, you know, we as a biological creature, which is magical. And, if we just *push-push-push*, we kind of miss out on the magic. And, we burn too much energy in the *push-push-push* without that pause, we miss the glide, you know? And, it's in the glide that we allow ourselves to shift out of the push part of our brain, into the pause part of our brain that is experientially right here right now, and that's where magic is.... And, look at our society: I mean, we are skewed to the values of the left brain, which is the *push-push-push-push-push-push-push*, no pause. "Pause is a waste of time," right? "It's a waste of time. It's a waste of energy. You're wasting your life." It's like, *no!* It's the balance. So, in order to be healthy, if you just keep pushing the push button, that's the cortisol—that's the stress circuitry inside of our brain. You have to allow that to dissipate itself, or you're going to create illness in your body. And, look at our society: We have illness everywhere. We're thriving in a society of disease. Umm, there's a reason why!

∞ *CLARITY OF MIND* ∞

By “recovered completely,” I’m going to say I got all my circuits back—and I got back physically, I got back intellectually, I got back emotionally. I had to rebuild that circuitry. So, it’s different than it was before, but it’s back to functioning as normal today as it would ever. But, my whole existence was about getting better. My whole existence. That’s why I had to smile when you when you first talked about psychedelics. At this point, I have worked so hard to get my brain cells and my cell circuitry back to functioning like normal that I don’t do anything that compromises their health and well-being. And, I’m just very cautious about that. I don’t want to feel intoxicated, because I know what it’s like to not be able to process information normally. And, I value my clarity of mind at a level that, you know, probably few people do. Because it’s theirs—and it’s theirs to abuse, and use, and try, and explore, and hack, and all that. And it’s like, no, I’m not that girl. I already hacked mine! I have fought too hard, too long to get it back to working well that I value it. And, I value the life and the time that I have here at a level that I think most people don’t. And, that’s because of the focus on the magnificence of what I am as a living being and a real awareness of how precious little time we have in these bodies.

∞ THE WHOLE SYSTEM CALMS DOWN ∞

When you're thinking about what's getting in the way of your sleep, it's your left brain. And, it *is* your left brain! Because the left brain is our stress circuitry, right? Our thoughts—we think about things in the past that stimulate the Character 2 anxiety. Or, we're running through a list, and we've just got a million details that we're following, and we can't get that part of our brain to be quiet. Or, emotionally, I'm feeling fear about the future of the unknown, or I'm feeling anxiety, or resentment, or guilt, or shame from anything that has happened in my past. So, that left brain is very intense and it's very, very busy. And, the right hemisphere isn't like that at all. So, the Character 3 is the right emotion and it's right here, right now. And, it's not really so much emotion as it is experiential: How does it feel for me to be just in this present moment? What is the temperature on my skin? How do my clothing feel on my body? Am I comfortable in my seat? So, the experience of the present moment is Character 3. And, then, Character 4 is that shared consciousness that exists without any boundaries of where I begin and where I end. And, it's just connected to a sense of gratitude. And, when we shift into our sense of gratitude, the whole system calms down, because the right hemisphere is not ramping up our stress circuit. And, our stress circuit accelerates our thinking *details, details, more details about those details*, in intense emotions and memories and hooks into it. And, it's fast and it's dramatic, and it's heavy-duty emotions. And, the right hemisphere is just kind of the experiential of the present calmness of the present moment, and just the big-picture sense of gratitude.

∞ FOCUS ON WHAT I CAN DO ∞

So, here you are, you're managing a major illness, and Character 1 comes online and says, "Okay, well, what's the protocol? How do I study? Let me do the research. Let me learn about all the details. Let me figure out what do I need to do in order to set myself up for success? What medications do I need? What things do I need to avoid? How do I set myself up for good sleep, good food, etc.?" So, that's Character 1. That's the job of Character 1, is to fix it. Character 2 comes in and says, "Oh my gosh! I have a serious illness, and I'm sick, and I don't feel well. And, I'm not well, and I could not be well for a very long time. And I'm not happy, and I'm overwhelmed, and I'm sad about it all." And all this drama and trauma. We all know this is how we can be when we're facing a major illness. And, then, Character 3 comes online and says, "Um, okay, well, I'd really like to get some movement in my body because I like it. I feel better when I move. And, okay, well, I can move my toes, so I'm gonna move my toes. And I'm gonna do what I *can* do. I'm gonna focus on what I *can* do. I'm not gonna focus on what I *cannot* do (which is what little Character 2's doing). So, little Character 3 is saying, "Okay, what can I do? How do I start with what I have and increase my health? What can I do? What tiny little changes can I make in order to feel better in my body? Because my body is this *amazing* thing. And, then, my Character 4 is going, "Wow, you know, there are some big lessons to be learned here. Because I gotta slow down. And, as I slow down, my values shift, and my priorities shift, and I look at the world differently, and I look at myself in relationship to the world differently." And, there can be growth there on a real cosmic level for me.

∞ *HELP ME HEAL* ∞

For people who actually do successfully find healing, which part of their brain are they using? And, which parts of their brain are they making sure are not getting in the way of us healing ourselves? Because little Character 2, you know, for me, she's the little doubter. And she's like, "Oh my gosh, you know, I've got a problem!" So, the fear becomes so big that I can't wrap my arms around the mere concept that I could heal from this. And, then, I go further and further. And, you know, when a Character 2 is looking for a negative in the world to support its own negativity, it's gonna find it everywhere. But, so is our holy Character 4, the part of ourselves that feels like gratitude inside of our cells, and is open to all the possibilities of healing as a reality. And, what do I need to do in order to set myself up as a Character 4 to be open to the possibility of letting that positive healing energy come and help me heal? How do I work with that? And, then, how can my Character 1 come online and really say, "You know, I need to pay attention and find that balance." And if I'm *work-work-work-work-work*, and I'm hooked into my stress circuitry of my left brain with my Character 1 and Character 2, that's only going to fuel an illness inside of me. So, it's all these four characters in their interplay and the relationship in who and how do I want to be under different circumstances?

∞ *A WHOLE DIFFERENT ENERGETIC* ∞

The brain is circuitry, so if I were a sleep expert and a neuroanatomist, I would probably say, “Pay very close attention to which circuits you’re already running. What behaviors are you engaging in?” When I think about the brain and mental health, a big part of mental health is our ability to sleep, because we have to have that in order to flush out that circuitry, so that we can we can function the next day without foggy brain or having that low threshold for anxiety. You know, for me, our brain is like a tree, and the leaves are our thoughts, and our emotions, and our behavior in the external world. And, at the root of that tree are the brain cells that are resulting in those thoughts and those emotions and those behaviors. Well, we can certainly change behavior up here *<points to the leaves>*, and we can take a medication up here *<the leaves>*, but if you really want to change behavior, go to the level of the roots of a tree, right? Go to the level of those brain cells to figure out: What are my choices? Yes, I have a choice. Yes, I can take a pill. My left brain, it wants that pill because it’s going to give me a behavioral shift. And so, you might be able to quiet that left brain a bit, but what you really want to do is master getting into the right-brain present moment and hooking in. It’s a whole different energetic: you’re expansive and open and big as the universe. And, you’re not just focused on that left-brain circuitry, which is our stress/distress circuitry.

∞ *START LAUGHING* ∞

You already told me the thought. You've already habituated your system so that the thought is "I'm an introvert. I'm more comfortable with my books, and now I gotta go get on stage in front of all these people." Now, you might not hear your Character 1 part of your brain use that language and say, "I'm an introvert, and now I got to go talk to these people," but it's already ingrained in your body. So, it's part of the patterning. And, so you might just be bypassing the thought process of Character 1 and being in the automaticity of Character 2 fear response. Now, this is what you need to do. What I'm going to encourage you to do is I'm going to encourage you to feel that, and start laughing and saying, "Oh my gosh, that's my Character 2 and he's freaking out! And I get that, and that's okay," and let it. And, feel yourself palpate. And then realize, you know, why do we always bring ourselves back to breath? Because breath is in the present moment. And, so if you allow yourself to bring your mind to the present moment, think about your breathing like it's a train running down a track: You can change the frequency. You can change the amplitude. You can mess with it with your mind, And, then *boom!* you're on stage, and you go out there. And, you take a big deep breath, and you look at them. And, they take a big deep breath. And you're theirs, and they're yours.

∞ SLOW'S WHERE IT IS ∞

Everything has to happen in slow motion for me to be able to attend to or learn anything. Anything that a biological system can do quickly, it can do quickly because that path is already rooted in and active. Well, if I'm having a problem and I want to learn something new, I have to back off of 'the fast' and I have to do it just minute, micro movement in order to figure out how do I get from A to Z? I have to go slowly and learn. [*Learning a new skill, the way to learn it is to go slow. Once you know that skill, then you can go fast. In our society, I think it's so hard to slow down.*] Slow's where it is. If I'm going to try to figure out how I have to organize all these different muscles in my body to be able to walk across the room, I can do it quickly because I have trained my body and those circuits inside of my brain are well developed. But, if there's been a break in the connection or I've been blocked off because there's been a trauma, and now the brain says, "Okay, we're going to move that like a block" (because any intricate movement creates pain and we want to protect ourselves from more trauma), then I have to try a lot of different micro movements in order to find my way. And, if you're going to do a micro movement, you have to do it exquisitely slowly. Exquisitely slowly, because it is in the slow where you're saying to a cell, "I want you to do something new"! And, learning at the brain level is nothing more than a group of cells creating new connections among themselves to create a new pattern response. That's all it is. so, if you're going to learn, you have to slow down and go to the slowness of the cells. And, that way, then, you're giving direction to the cells of what you want.

∞ OUR HERO'S JOURNEY ∞

What's happening with *Whole Brain Living* is people are realizing they have so much power over their own fears. And, they're understanding their children's fears, and they're understanding their spouse's, and they're looking at their boss's. And, they're all going, "I can love you with my Character 4 because I can love you. And, with the Character 4, I connect with you. And, as soon as I connect with your fear, then I have served my purpose on the hero's journey." It is our hero's journey to love one another, to be that power, to be that goodness in the world. So, every person who comes into the presence of me in pain is an opportunity for me to serve my purpose as a human being. So, look at the rates of suicide on this planet. What's missing is the meaning and the purpose of my life. Well, we don't exist in a society—in our left-brain society—that says, "You're miserable. Let me *love* you." It's, "You're miserable. Let me *fix* you"! (Well, I'm not fixable. I don't need to be fixed. I need to be connected with and loved.) And, then I serve my purpose. And, then I feel like, "Oh, my life had meaning today. I loved someone who was so dysregulated from their own peaceful heart—I stood in for them, and I helped them self-regulate." And, if we can help regulate one another, we got a whole new world!

∞ *THAT'S HEALING* ∞

In the meantime, we're running the 90-second loop so that the anxiety can allow itself to actually dissipate across time, because I'm no longer fueling Character 2's thoughts and emotions. I'm pulling the energy away from that group of cells. And, as I do that, then I start to calm. I start to relax. I'm grateful that Character 1 is there. It's like Big Mommy—Character 1, you know—she's gonna fix things. And, then I got my big Character 4 that's gonna come in and love me no matter what. And, I am safe and I am okay. And, then eventually little Character 3 is going to come in and say, "You want to go do something fun? Let's go outside. Let's go for a walk. Let's go look at the bugs. Let's go play in the mud puddle. Let's go get ice cream." Whatever it is, right? And, so the power of *Whole Brain Living* is that we're not just focused on that ball of energy of pain, but allowing the other parts to come in. And, then, once Character 2 has calmed itself, then that's when we care about social-emotional learning. Because, then, it's like, "Okay, what happened? How do I look at that? How do I differentiate what happened? What did I hear? What was said? How did I take that? How might I learn from that?" So that the next time that kind of thing happens, it doesn't have the same power to do the same trigger. And that's healing. And, that's why we absolutely have to have that Character 2, but it never needs to drive the bus.

∞ *HOW DO I SHOW UP?* ∞

My right hemisphere—again, the emotion of the present moment (right here, right now), and the thinking (open, expansive, connected to something greater than I)—call that my divine self, my authentic self, my big Truth, call it whatever you like. I guess it all boils down to: every ability we have, every ability we have, whether it's wiggling my finger, or it's my experience to say a prayer. Hear that prayer in my left hemisphere, quiet the language centers in my left hemisphere, and open me up to the consciousness in my right hemisphere of being connected to something of which I am a part of a whole. And, a part of that whole is I am a very small piece of humanity. But, together collectively, we know—at the core of our being, in our right hemisphere—that we are brothers and sisters here on this planet, trying to make the world a better place. And, so when it comes to my life and how I have used the time that I have had in this form, I did not die that day. And, the lessons that I learned have been vast and profound. And, I never know if I'm going to have another five minutes, or another five years, or another 50 years. But, that's not what's important. What's important is how do I show up as a human being in the world? How do I show up with my kindness, my openness, my compassion, my possibilities, and a magnificent left hemisphere (that allows women in science to excel)?

∞ *IT'S MIND-BOGGLING* ∞

Imagine what it's like to just have a present moment. You don't have a past, which means you don't have any relationships with people, and you don't have a relationship with a job, and you don't have any of the stress circuitry that goes with people and relationships and work. And, all you have is the right here, right now. And, you don't have the definition of self as an individual. Instead, you feel as though you're as big as the universe. And, so the feeling of that part of our brain is where our deep inner peace rests. It's the part of us that is simply filled with gratitude that we exist at all. I am alive! What a wonder and awe that I have life: I have eyes that see. I have hands that can manipulate space. I have voice that allows me to speak language. It's mind-boggling that I exist at all.... I mean, if anybody in your audience doesn't have an amazing awe and sense of gratitude that they exist at all, they're forgetting to look at the miracle of what life is. And, that is what the Character 4 is of our right thinking tissue. So, tapping into that blissful euphoria, that awe, that amazement, that sense of incredible intense gratitude that I exist at all, regardless of the weird stuff going on in my daily life. Outside of that—shifting into this magnificence of what we are—wow, that's the consciousness we want to tap into when we meditate, or when we go into prayer.

∞ *THERE'S NOTHING TO FEAR* ∞

Character 4 is the thinking character of the right brain. So, the thinking character of the right brain: Right here, right now. No boundaries of where I begin and end. So, this is the character that *is* the thinking consciousness of the universe. There is no separation between me and that which is beyond. This is the consciousness in every cell of my body, when I was multiplying at a rate of 250,000 new cells per second in the womb. That is the consciousness in every cell of my body. And, it is the portal through which I get to communicate with something beyond the definition of myself. It is loving. It is pure loving. It is supportive. It is open. And, it is so filled with gratitude that it exists at all. It has no fear, because there's nothing to fear! It is love. It is the opposite of the fear of that left hemisphere. There is no *alarm-alarm-alert-alert*. It is pure grace, and pure gratitude, and just absolutely in awe that we exist at all and that we can communicate at all. And, that we have technology at all. And, that we have digits, and hands, and voices, and eyes, and ears, and "Oh my gosh, I'm alive!" That is your blissful euphoria. [Okay, I have to ask a question. You said this is the thinking of the present, and then you said this is love. Is love thinking, at all?] It's an energetic consciousness. Is there a consciousness of love? I think love has a consciousness. [Totally, but it's not a thought, is it?] Well, no, but that's the only way that I can actually describe that added-on tissue. [Hmm.] And, I think that it is thought.... For me, that is thinking tissue, and I use that to describe "It is not emotional tissue." I don't think love is an emotion, unless it is perhaps expressed between two people, but that may be a conditional love.

∞ *IT'S DELICIOUS!* ∞

You know, the beauty of knowing your four characters is that you get to know your own enormous, loving self that is filled with just an immense sense of gratitude that it exists at all. And, oh my gosh, we're capable of being miserable! Let me hold me in my own misery, right? Misery loves miserable company, and I can project that outwardly in all kinds of hostilities, and hurtful ways, or needy ways. Or, I can say to my own brain, "Oh my gosh, where is that part of me that is connected to all that is? Let me hold myself." My Character 1—which is all about the external world and fixing things (Character 1 is this fixer)—Character 1 can come in and say, "Okay, we're safe in the moment. Everything's fine right now, so we're okay," right? "We're okay, little Character 2. We're okay." And, Character 4 can come in and say, "Oh my gosh, isn't it magnificent that we're capable of being so miserable and so unhappy?" You know, this is the beauty of being alive. "I'm not six feet under. I'm alive! I'm capable of this misery." And, I always tell people I don't mind if you're miserable, as long as you remember to enjoy it! It is delicious: our sadness, our mad, all of it. It's delicious! But, we don't want to just let it, you know, give it the microphone and let it run around forever. Pull yourself out of just that pain, by using these other three really healthy parts of who we are.

∞ THEN WE ARE CONTAGIOUS ∞

What is the Christ mind? The Christ mind is bringing your attention to the present moment. And, it's calming the rest of what's going on inside of ourselves, so that we can find this peace. So, the peace is found in our Character 4. And, when we feel that peace, how can we find that by choice? By remembering what does it feel like? How do we embody this experience? And, what are the steps we can take in order to get there? Character 4 feels open and expansive. It's aware of the present moment, so it sees the big picture. And, it doesn't define the boundaries of where I end and where I begin, so I'm an energy being as big as the universe, because I'm blending my energy with all the energy of you and all the energy around us. It's connected to the all that is, so we gain the consciousness that we are one human family. It's generous of spirit, and it's supporting, and it's nurturing, and it's compassion. And, why wouldn't it be? Because if you are me and I am you, then of course I want you to succeed! Because when I lift you up, it lifts me up. When I bring myself into this space and I resonate at this vibration and you resonate with this vibration, then we are contagious, because everyone has this part of who we are. It's intuitive, because it's not looking and worrying about all those left-brain details and getting things done on time. It's open to the big picture. It's authentic and accepting. It has integrity, because it simply is what it is, and it accepts what it is, and it's good with that. And, it's just filled with this immense sense of gratitude that I exist at all!

∞ *I HAVE THE ABILITY TO CHOOSE* ∞

I'm interested in differentiation, not in synchronization. Well, think about us as biological creatures: We are cells, and we are the *life* of each of those cells. So, a cell is not just organic atoms and molecules. It is an energetic consciousness—if you will—as it is related to that individual cell. So, I'm nothing other than 50 trillion cells uh. And, a single cell is an organism that is capable of life in and of itself, so I'm just a very complex cellular life. And, so I am both matter (mass), and I am energy. And, the synchronization systems synchronize the different circuits inside of our brain, and in doing so it neutralizes predominance of any one or any thing inside of there. It brings it all into some kind of a communicable balance. For me, I want to differentiate, I want to know what my choices are. I don't want to simply be all in fluid connection. I do want that, but I believe that I gain that by choice. And, I gain the ability to manipulate that as an individual when I know what my differentiation choices are. That's my power, not that I'm all blended.... So, for me, I just want to follow the anatomy. The anatomy is simple. It's clean (these modules). But, ultimately, I have an intellectual consciousness, and I want to be able to use that and the emotional (experiential) experience of knowing who I am as a human being. And, that I have the ability to choose when I line them all up and I say, "Okay, I know each of these personalities. I know what they feel like inside of my body. I know how they speak. I know how they act. I know how they look. I know what they like to do. I know what they don't like to do. And, I can—in an instant—embody any of those parts of who I am."

∞ *A LEVEL OF CONSCIOUSNESS* ∞

I do believe that the universe has a natural tendency toward creating order out of disorder and making sense out of nonsense. And, it has managed to create life. And, even if you're looking at a microbe, there is a fine membrane between what's inside of the microbe, and then the universe outside of it. And, yet that membrane is semi-permeable; some things can move in and out. There are receptors on it, and that microbe is attracted towards some things (let's say, photons, light, atoms), or rejected (pushed away) by (let's say, hydrogen atoms). So, as soon as you have life, there is a this and a that. There is a within and there is an outside of. So, is there a consciousness? Well, personally, I think that if there is a drive toward making sense out of nonsense or order out of disorder, I'm going to give that a level of consciousness. Now, does it have language? No, I have to have a left thinking brain in order to have that language. Does it have a "me," an individual? No, I think you have to have the cells of the left hemisphere to have a "me," the individual. Does it have an experiential? Well, it does, but does it think about it? Does it have a past, does it have a future, or does it process experience in the present moment? And, I think that the complexity and the beauty of being human is that we have connection to that consciousness. And, that is what I call our Character 4, which is the thinking tissue of our right hemisphere. We're wired for peaceful bliss. We meditate to get there. We pray to get there. We do whatever we do to find that blissful, peaceful euphoria. But, we're wired to have that experience.

∞ *WE MUST LOOK AT THE PAIN* ∞

First of all, you're already a miracle, regardless of which circuitry you're running. And, our pain from the past is held in a group of cells that is specifically designed for us to learn from. Pain is energy. and, whether I whack my shin and I experience a physical pain, or whether I have a trauma from the past and I have an emotional pain—pain is there in this group of cells to say, "We must look at the pain." We must look at the pain and heal the pain. Because the pain stimulates us (moves us) along this path of learning. And, I can learn not to walk that close to that wall again (because I'm going to whack my shin again, and I'm going to have more pain). Or, let's say, emotionally, I've had a trauma in the past and now I have learned because of the experience that those kinds of scenarios that are similar to whatever that trauma was brings me pain. Well, I can get caught in the pain—I can run that circuitry over and over as my habitual emotional experience of the world—or, I can actually bring in other parts of my brain in order to look at that experience and help that part of my brain self-soothe. Because the pain is real, and the goal is not to ignore the pain, or just step away from the pain, but to look at the pain through other parts of our consciousness. Self-love ourselves: "Okay, what was my part of it? What was not my part of it? This is a trauma that happened to me in the past. It's in the past." This pain is designed to protect me in the future from something that looks or feels like what that was, but it's designed to be healed and loved, so that I can come back into the present moment and have a new experience, having learned from that circuitry, rather than being held paralyzed in that circuitry.

∞ THE RICHNESS OF MY EMOTIONS ∞

[*So, an unhealthy Character 2, then, would be someone who has been traumatized a lot earlier in life and is carrying that trauma around—hasn't purged or resolved it—and is acting out in various ways: anger, violence, all kinds of things like that. What, by contrast, would a healthy Character 2 be like?*] I think this is such an important point, Rick, because most of the time for most of us, our little Character 2 is not being triggered. You know, when was the last time you were really angry? When was the last time you were really fearful? [*Doesn't happen that often.*] Yeah, you don't do it. So most of the time, your little Character 2 is just fine. And, so, getting to know your little Character 2. Character 2 is the richness and the deliciousness of our life. We don't want to quiet it. We don't want to hush it. We don't want to squash it. Everybody says, "Oh, I just want to cut that part out of my head." And, it's like, no, no, no, because that's the part where we grow. We have to look at what pains us and what we're up against, and analyze and look at it, and nurture ourselves through that process in order to have personal growth. So, when I am emotionally triggered, I'm not presenting the most healthy part of me. Absolutely. Most of the time, I'm not emotionally triggered. And, so, my little Character 2 is the richness of my emotions. I love it. It's Mother's Day. Happy Mother's Day to all the mothers. I *love* my mother! She's been gone since 2015, but my love for her is still so vast and open, and it is that ability to then be able to have that level of depth, whatever the emotion is.

∞ CONSTELLATION OF PHYSIOLOGICAL RESPONSE ∞

I didn't know what these deep emotions were. And, so as fear and emotional pain and anger came back online, I would have to describe to my mother what it felt like inside of my body: My chest felt tight, my jaw clamped, the furrow in my brow, you know, just I was sweating, my fists. And G.G., my mother, said, "You know, Jill, that's anger." And, it was like, "Eww, yuck," you know, feels horrible. Why would anybody ever purposely feel this, right? So, I got it, but each of these emotions is its own constellation of physiological response. And, when I was experiencing fear and learning fear, my heart was palpating. I was sweating. I felt light in the head I felt I felt *go-go-go, rush-rush-rush*. I felt like I was, you know, on a jet going a million miles an hour, on a bullet through space, and just this feeling. And, it was like, "Jill, that's fear." And, it's like, "Fear? Eww, yuck," you know. But, I had to relearn what these were. Because these are cells and circuits, and these groups of circuits would get stimulated, and then I would have these physiological responses depending on which neurotransmitter was dumped into my bloodstream, depending on which neurotransmitter. So, I think it's important, really, for people to realize we're this magnificent collection of cells, and every ability we have is because we have these brain cells that are performing that function. Right down to our anger, or right down to our fear, or right down to our anxiety, or right down to our joy. And, paying attention to ourselves and each of our abilities and these different skill sets of these different four characters allows us to observe ourselves, and then be to differentiate more and more who and how we want to be.

∞ *THAT IS ME, I AM THAT* ∞

In the absence of all the details of the left hemisphere, I become open and expansive and literally as big as the universe, in the present moment. And, it's that feeling that we get when we look, you know, over a mountaintop. And, we just look at the open vastness, and our whole soul opens up to, "Oh my God, this is so beautiful!" Well, that's what we are we are. Oh my God, we are so beautiful, in that consciousness of that right hemisphere without the obstruction of the skill sets of the left.... We know what it feels like when you're standing at the ocean's edge and looking over the water. And, it's like, "oh my God, oh my God" and you're watching the sun as it's dipping down, and you're saying, "Oh my gosh, that is me, I am that." It's just like I'm not separate from that power and that beauty and that love. And, you know, the magnificence of being a human is that we can tap into that in any moment. I can close my eyes and go to the beach. I can feel that feeling inside of myself. I can bring myself instantaneously into that feeling in my body, in that sense of consciousness with no language, and no concern of the past or the future, or me in fitting into anything. It's like I am that love. And, that's what it feels like, is this incredibly deep sense of love.

∞ LEAD WITH LOVE ∞

The subject of the debate was fascinating. It was *Leadership by Fear, or Leadership by Love?* And, I thought, “Well, we know what side I’m gonna weigh in on,” right? But, it’s really gotten me to stop and think, you know, why? Why is it better? And it’s better because it’s a true connection. And, when we lead with love, there is a real connection. And, I don’t need to know all the people who read my stuff, or watch my TED Talk who are touched. Because I trust that, when they do that, they will touch their love. And, as they touch their love, love is just love. Love is a community thing, right? It’s everywhere. And, so just by them then feeling that sense of “touched and loved,” they raise that level of love in the world. And, to me, that is where we’ll find more peace, and we’ll find more joy, and we will truly be connected. And, then yes, we can have leadership by fear, but it’s not a real connection. In fact, it’s the threat of the absence of connection. So like, “I will love you until you do that, and then you’re gone,” right? “I don’t like you anymore. I disconnect from you. I’m gonna ghost you. I’m gonna say mean things about you,” or whatever. So, if we use the brain of humanity as the model of connection, we’re all ‘neurons’, and we’re all reaching out, and we’re connecting. In love, we truly connect... And, I’m this enormous ‘neuron’, and I hold my network in love. And, I think that the more of us who do that, we’re just raising the vibration of what we are as humanity, and what we really want humanity to be.

∞ TAKING TURNS ∞

So, the two hemispheres dominate. One group of cells is dominating the other, so they're tethered together in circuits. We have the ability to train ourselves to get both skill sets. Some people are very good at reading body language. Some people are terrible at it; you know, they don't even think about that. Some people cannot even identify emotional content of voices, and some people are hypersensitive to that and tune in very well. So, the brain is this magnificent collection of these cells with all these skill sets. And, allowing ourselves to develop all of those and not just have that left-hemisphere, Character 1 alpha personality be the part of us that is always dominant, always the boss, always "my way or the highway," always "I've got to be right," always thinking hierarchically. Yes, that is important, and those are critical skill sets that we have. But, we need to balance that *push-push-push-push* with the pause of contemplation, reflection, big-picture perspective. So, really, the beauty of having these two hemispheres and these four characters is getting to know them, embracing the skills of and gifts of each of them. And, then, you know, really paying attention to the ongoing conversation inside of our own head between these different parts of ourselves. Because the more compatible they are, then they're taking turns as we live our life. And, then, we don't feel guilt, and we don't feel shame, and we don't feel critical, and we don't feel conflicted. We feel, like, okay. We feel balanced.

∞ WHAT'S MY CHOICE? ∞

Everybody says, "Oh, we have choices." Well, what's my choice? Well, how do I do that? If I practice my Character 3, and I embody this playful, open, creative, adventurous, collective-whole part of who I am, then that circuitry gets stronger. And, then, it's easier for me to become that level of my consciousness. If I spend a lot of time in the awe and the wonder and the gratitude that I'm alive at all, and "Oh, my gosh, what is, is. And, it's all good anyway." And, then *boom*, "I'm dead." That was like, "Wow, that was a ride!" That's a part of who we are. We can embody that part, practice that part, and spend more time being that part. And, with the difference, essentially, between the tools that our society has been using of mindfulness, etc., yes, that Character 4 has been the ultimate goal. How do I find my own deep inner peace? How do I find that? What does that even mean? Who feels that? What does that feel like? Well, Character 4 is that goal. That is this personality that we are all wired with. And, the more we practice it, the easier it becomes to access any of these. And, that really happens by having a conversation between these different parts of ourselves, because they're already having conversations. But, once we identify who's saying what in any minute, then it's "Oh, I can actually differentiate between these different parts of me that are in conflict," and figure out, "Well, oh, those are my options!" And, then, it's easier to embody.

∞ *IN THE GUTTER* ∞

Let's say I'm in a car accident, and I'm in a gutter. And, I *know* that I'm going to die: I am bleeding. I feel the moisture of my blood. I recognize that my world out there (Character 1) is gone. There's no more, right? It doesn't matter. I don't have to fit into a social norm. I'm not in a social norm anymore, I'm on my deathbed. So, Character 1's going to shut down, right? All that stuff related to the external is gone, except for what I have right here. Little Character 2 is going to be all my pain from my past. Now, am I going to run through a lot of my pain from my past? Well, if I'm really in the present moment, my pain from the past of Character 2 isn't there anymore. I'm here, I'm in the present moment. We die in the present moment. We don't die in the past. (Well, some of us die in the future! I mean, wasn't it Mark Twain who said, "I've died a thousand deaths and none of them happened," or something like that? You know, I love that, because that's the capacity of that left hemisphere.) But, when we actually die, we die in the present moment. And, Character 3 which has an impetus to go—there's no impetus, right? If I'm in the gutter, and I'm coming to the end, Character 3 is gone. And, that leaves me in the state of Character 4. And, in that state of Character 4, is the feeling of love. Don't ask me why, but the feeling of the universe—when none of the other stuff is in the way of it, distracting us away from it—is this incredible feeling of love. And, in that love there is a warmth, and a gratitude, and appreciation, and an awe, and a wonder of "Oh my God, I was alive!" And, I think I'm going to be feeling the "Oh my God, I was alive" instead of an "Oh my God, I'm dying," right?

∞ *IT FEELS LIKE LOVE* ∞

Character 4 is going to be the right thinking tissue. Well, why do we have right thinking tissue? Imagine what that personality would be like. If it's "right here, right now" and it's not experiential or emotional, then it just is thinking. And, in thinking, there's a level of clarity. And, in clarity, you have to look at that big-picture understanding, of really feeling connected to all that is, and feeling a deep sense of gratitude. So, it is our Character 4 that is open. It feels open. When you stand on a beach and look out over the ocean at the sunset, and your heart just opens—that's your Character 4 opening your heart. Or, you're on a mountaintop, and you feel this expansive openness: It's so beautiful. So, it's open, and it's expansive. It's connected to all. And it's that divine spark inside of us, that piece of us that is just so grateful that I exist as life at all. What a miracle of life I am, simply because I'm alive. And, I'm alive as a part of one human family, because we're all connected. And, it's just this miracle of humanity. So, I'm open and generous of spirit, and in that I feel this incredible sense of deep inner peace. I am comfortable inside of time. I'm supportive and nurturing of others, because they're just an extension of me. This part of me is non-judgmental, because it's just compassionate and it feels like love. It feels like love. And, when I look at my dog, or I snuggle my dog at night, and I'm just saying good night to this beautiful creature, and I just feel that sense of love, I know this is my Character 4 meeting, generally, her Character 4. It is so beautiful in these relationships that we create. It loves unconditionally. It's like, I don't care who you are, or what you do, or what's going on. I love you no matter what.

∞ *THE LOVE THAT LIFTS US* ∞

We need this Character 4 because, when we can't find our Character 4, then essentially we can't find the meaning of "Why am I here?" And, life is hard. Life hurts. People spend a lot of time in a lot of deep, deep pain. And, Character 4 is the love that lifts us, so that we can bear that pain long enough to be able to learn from it, so we can move through and grow in response to that pain. And, you know, the trauma from our past: it's trauma by definition of "something wasn't right or good, and it hurt us." So, what can I learn (having had that trauma in my life) so that I can become a more healed and healthy human being (having had the experience of that trauma and what it could teach me)? So, trauma is not designed for us to create a lifestyle. It's designed to teach us lessons. [*I see. So, it's like a challenge.*] It is! I mean, it's an opportunity for growth.