

# Your Path to Freedom

*“Why live a life tethered and trapped?  
Claim your freedom and walk your own path.”*

by  
*Michele Emery Henshaw*

©Michele Emery Henshaw  
[www.lifepathdesign.com](http://www.lifepathdesign.com) | [www.michelehenshaw.com](http://www.michelehenshaw.com)

# Contents

## **Introduction**

What Is This Book About and How Should You Use It?

## **Chapter 1**

In The Beginning Was 'The Word': Why Write?

## **Chapter 2**

Start at the Beginning : Types of Freedom

## **Chapter 3**

Feeling the Feels : Get Out of Your Head

## **Chapter 4**

Dream the Impossible Dream

## **Chapter 5**

You're Not Broken, Just Disconnected

## **Chapter 6**

Step by Step, Brick by Brick

## **Chapter 7**

Let's Hit the Road with The 3 C's | Control

## **Chapter 8**

The 3 C's | Clarity

## **Chapter 9**

The 3 C's | Connection

## **Chapter 10**

Now You Know. What next?

# INTRODUCTION

---

## **What will this book give you?**

Before you can claim the freedom you so rightly desire and deserve, you need to get clear about what freedom really looks like for you, so that you can create your own bespoke road map to it. This book will give you that clarity. It will show you how to explore your idea of freedom, adapt it if you need to, change it if it's called for, connect to it and get on the road to it so that you can get excited, just like you would about taking any other beautiful journey. Why? Well, because when you're clear about your definition of freedom and about what makes you feel free, you can stick your pin in that. Not all journeys need a destination, an end point. In fact, some of the most fulfilling and interesting journeys I've taken have been the ones that have been unplanned or that have taken me on unexpected diversions. However, knowing where my pin was meant I could always head back that way if I needed or wanted to. Like the Cheshire Cat said to Alice in Lewis Carroll's 'Alice in Wonderland' when she asked which way she should go...

*Alice: "I just wanted to ask you which way I should go."*

*Cheshire Cat: "Well, that depends on where you want to get to."*

*Alice: "Oh, it really doesn't matter."*

*Cheshire Cat: "Well then, it doesn't matter which way you go."*

Sometimes a wanderlust attitude is fantastic. I'm a huge fan of a little wanderlust. Sometimes you have to allow yourself to get lost in order to find yourself, right? If wanderlust equals freedom for you, you go with it. Getting really clear on what your particular version of freedom looks like, is freedom in itself. Freedom to choose your route, take diversions, to decide who travels with you and to know what to pack. This book will help you work all that out so stick with it.

## **How should you use this book?**

*Your Path to Freedom* is designed to be read in order and is punctuated by exercises and implementations, because putting things in place as soon as you feel inspired or motivated to do so is crucial. When we wait, we rarely get around to implementing. How many books do you have on your bookshelf that you've either read and not followed through on actions from, or even not read at all? How many courses have you bought that you haven't completed or even started, or have even forgotten you bought?

Do each exercise as it shows up. Stop reading and just do it right then and there. Don't worry about not being in the right environment, having the right tools or right lighting. You don't need a zen space, incense and candles. Do not procrastinate! You don't need to put the washing on, take the dog out or finish that programme you were watching first. Bring your attention to this moment, to this book you've chosen to read because it resonated. The likelihood is it resonated because you know something needs to change and change will only come about through taking action. Invest this time in yourself. It will be worth every microsecond, I promise you.

All the resources, exercises and supporting information in this book will have links to a private web page where you can download them completely FREE as a "Thank you." for buying the book. Just in case you miss them, here's the link again [RESOURCES](#)

### **What will you need?**

An open mind and an even more open heart. It's crucial that you're able to be brutally honest with yourself while journeying through this. No one else is listening in or looking over your shoulder. You'll also find it useful to have something to hand to write with, write on and/or record your voice with. Writing things down is neurologically transformational, so make that your preference.

There are sound neurological reasons for writing. Writing engages parts of the brain, senses and motor neurons that typing doesn't and can't. Your brain recognises your own hand at work, almost as if it can recognise your scrawl as connected to its own thought waves and patterns, and therefore puts it all to work quicker, retaining it for longer. It encourages parts of your brain to connect and communicate with each other and can literally alter your neuroplasticity. It's a lot like learning a musical instrument. When neuroscientists map the journey of a musician honing their craft, their neuroplasticity changes as the actions and patterns are repeated and become embedded. That repetition of thought and action is what creates an accomplished musician. Writing also improves your creativity and problem-solving skills as when you're writing, your mind has to visualise the forming of the letters and shapes on the page. Think about the way we teach small children to start writing. To begin with, they're simply making shapes. Then they come to understand the connection to the words they use, and it all starts to link up. This will all make much more sense as you continue to read on and do the exercises, I promise you.

***"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."***

-Benjamin Franklin

### **What to do when you've finished reading.**

That is entirely up to you lovely freedom seeker. You are totally, 100% capable of making all this happen yourself, of getting the freedom you crave and deserve. If, however, you prefer not to travel alone, you can enquire about joining my group programme or working privately with me one on one. Or you can explore any of the myriad other fantastic programmes, mentors and

coaches out there too. By the time you finish reading this book, you'll be able to *feel* into what, and who, is right for you.

### **What else do you need to know?**

Whatever you decide, please stay connected. Not only to me, but to your model of freedom, your journey to it, to your networks, your communities but most of all, to yourself. Of course, I would love to stay connected with you. I'm always so excited to see where this work takes people and I'm deeply honoured that people choose to share their journeys with me. At the end of this book, you will find details of all the ways we can keep a thread between us, so keep reading.

Above all else, you should enjoy both reading this book and doing the work. When you're finding it hard, keep your eyes and heart firmly focussed on what's on the other side. That door to freedom that you've been seeking for so long.

# CHAPTER 1

## *In the beginning was the word*

---

*“We write to taste life twice, in the moment and in retrospect.”*

- Anais Nin

Hello. I thought we should start with that really as we're about to embark on an incredible journey together. It's so good to connect with you. You may feel that I don't know you because we haven't physically met, but I do. Our energies have connected already, by virtue of the fact that you've been guided to read this book. So hi, I'm Michele. I'm a spiritual mentor and coach, healer, crone, witch and words and language evangelist. I'm also a seasoned survivor; of childhood trauma and abuse, of disastrous careers and relationships of chronic illness and of crippling self-doubt. I've been trapped and tethered for long periods of time, several times over, so I know a thing or two about finding freedom; how to and what it feels like when you do.

From an incredibly young age, six or seven, I began to look at other people, how they lived, how different their experiences and circumstances were, and I wondered how and why. My fascination with people, with their behaviour, with language in all its forms and with the mind began then and will last at least this lifetime. Over a long period of time, I studied, learned and tried so many different ways and means of changing my life experience. I tried thousands of things that didn't work for me, but I found things that did work. I worked hard to understand my life and my story, and I worked even harder to change it. It's that learning and understanding and the actions I took as a result, that have led me to the work I do now and the reason I'm here sharing it all with you in this book.

I will continue to be a lover of words and language, of books and of learning because those are the things that quite literally saved my life. We all have a story, even several stories. There are the stories we're given, the stories we are taught, the stories we create, the stories we tell ourselves, but whatever the story, few of us realise we have the power to edit it, add to or even rewrite our stories.

These days, I live in the Pennine Hills in the north of England, not far from the famous home of witches and healers, Pendle Hill. I'm close to the Yorkshire Dales and the Peak District so I'm surrounded by nature's healing powers, and I respectfully utilise lots of it in my own practice and in the work that I do with others. I'm guided by my witchy and healing heritage; Wicca witches

on my maternal line and Celtic travelling healers on my paternal line. I'm also guided by Gaia/Mother Earth, by the lunar and Celtic calendars, festivals, rituals and energies and by my own deep intuition and learnings and of course, by the pen.

Words have always held power for me. When I couldn't speak, I read. When I couldn't express myself, I wrote. When I learned to speak out and speak up, I was able to transform my own life and became passionate about helping others to change theirs by sharing everything I've experienced and learned. *Your Path to Freedom* is one of the ways I'm able to share my work and experience with as many people as possible and I'm grateful beyond words that you've be called to, and chosen to, read it.

*Freedom* is my number one value, always has been, probably always will be. It's precious to me because I haven't always had it. I worked hard for it. I value it, appreciate it and give everlasting gratitude that I have learned how to make sure my path through life is guided by it and to it. Freedom is my beacon, my guiding light, my compass.

Do you crave freedom? Do you feel tethered, trapped? Do you resonate with any of the following statements?

1. *"I have a deep knowing that I'm meant for something more, something different to the life I'm currently living."*
2. *"I long to break free, to untether myself."*
3. *"I feel called...to something or somewhere."*
4. *"I get bored easily and find it hard to focus on just one thing."*
5. *"I love learning new things."*
6. *"I love variety and like to do lots of different things."*
7. *"I struggle with rules and boundaries."*
8. *"I like creative things (doing or observing); making things, writing, dancing, cooking, music, theatre."*

If you've answered a resounding "Yes" one or more of these questions, it's time to walk your own path, or paths, multiple because it's entirely possible to walk multiple paths and live multiple purposes, and to claim your own unique version of *Freedom*.

This journey won't be a stroll in the park. The terrain will be unsteady under foot at times. There will be obstacles, roadblocks and diversions. The weather may get stormy. You may want to crawl in to dark caves and hide. There will be steep hills to climb but let me tell you, the feeling you will get when you push through, finding ways to navigate to safer ground, when the sun breaks through the clouds, when you get first sight of the incredible, beautiful expanse of space and opportunity that lies ahead of you, you will want to bottle that feeling and re live it over and over again. And you can!

You won't be alone on this adventure. I'm here with you all the way, guiding, encouraging and even dragging and pushing you a little when I feel you need it, always with love and with your best interest at my core. I'll be asking you to think a little, feel a lot and to write with your own hand wherever possible for you.

***“Walking with a friend in the dark is better than walking alone in the light.”***

*- Helen Keller*

So, are you ready? Let's pack and get going, shall we?

Much love,

Michele x



## CHAPTER 2

### *Start at the Beginning*

---

*“The secret of getting ahead is getting started.”* – Mark Twain

Let’s start at the beginning shall we because, well, it feels like a good place to start.

What is freedom? What immediately comes to mind when you read or hear that word? How does it make you feel?

In my 50+ years of developing my own path to freedom and over 15 years (to the point of writing this first version of the book) of working with hundreds of people around this, I’ve found that there are generally three types of *freedom*. The list below is by no means extensive or exhaustive but like I say, at this point, I’m generalising:

#### **THE 3 TYPES OF FREEDOM:**

##### **1. *Physical (or geographical)***

Where we are born, brought up or choose to live can make a huge difference to our idea of freedom. The communities we are a part of can have an influence too. Faith and religious groups can have very different ideas about what freedom means or how it’s represented.

##### **2. *Financial***

Those born into financial privilege or who don’t have to concern themselves much with making money or earning a living will have a very different idea of the meaning of freedom to those who are born into poverty.

##### **3. *Emotional***

Our understanding of freedom can be handed down or taught to us from an early age, before we’re even aware of it. Additionally, our beliefs around freedom can come from our own lived experiences. All of this forms our emotional attachment *to*, detachment *from* or reactions and responses to the idea of *freedom*.

The Oxford Online Dictionary defines freedom as...

***Freedom*** *noun* “The power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants.”

In the western world, we're privileged to be able to think of freedom in this way. In other parts of the world, freedom is thought of and experienced very differently of course. Think about the following, for example:

1. *Freedom of Movement*

There are parts of the world where people are physically restricted from moving around or where it simply isn't possible to; laws/rules, lack of options, transport, money etc.

4. *Freedom of Expression*

Creative expression: social, sexual, religious or political is not accepted or tolerated in many areas of the world, whether spoken, written or artistically expressed. Did you know, for example, that homosexuality is still outlawed in Barbados, Egypt and St Lucia among 50+ other countries around the world or that Chinese artist Zhao Bandi's painting depicting surveillance cameras in the Beijing countryside were removed from an exhibition at the city's world-renowned institution, the UCCA (Ullens Centre for 'Contemporary' Art)?

5. *Freedom of Speech*

In the west we may find it difficult to believe that freedom of speech still doesn't exist in many countries and cultures around the world, but it is still the case. Even now, journalists are being arrested for reporting factual events and civilians are being imprisoned for voting against incumbent governments and regimes.

You could say, therefore, that in many respects, people in the west are already experiencing freedom in ways that many others can't even dream of, by sheer luck of geography i.e., where we are born and/or live. I could leave it there, but that would make for a very short book and probably a less than satisfying experience for you, so I'll keep going. The thing is that, ultimately, freedom means very different things to each of us. Let me give you a couple of examples.

My beautiful and gifted friend and healer Ellen has always valued her freedom. Like me, it's always at the top of her list when she comes to explore her core values. Also, a little like me, she has long been a nomad and a seeker of open space and connection to nature. That's what makes her feel free. The very thought of putting down roots in one place and worse, owning a property with all that entails, was the very opposite of freedom to her. She preferred to be able to move around the country, the world, staying for a while wherever she felt called to for as long as it felt right. When she and her new partner and soulmate

finally found somewhere that she felt truly connected to, somewhere that felt it had been calling her home, her partner suggested that they think about putting down those roots and buying a property. Yikes! Ellen recoiled. The very suggestion brought about shortness of breath and a feeling of being constrained, trapped, tethered. She felt almost claustrophobic.

Ellen and I talked at length about this. I explained my own feelings about my own situation. From an extremely young age (you'll get more of my story later if you keep reading), I was moved around. I spent time in foster care now and then and when I eventually settled to a life with my lovely Dad, we had to move around for his work and so we were never in one place for long. We consciously kept the amount of things we owned to no more than would fit in to four suitcases. Four suitcases were all we had. There were times I would wake up and have no idea where I was. If I woke in the night, I would bump into things on the way to the bathroom because I hadn't had time to learn the route. As a result, I never felt at *home* anywhere. I had no roots, no feeling of security. No sense of stability. I was always half ready to move. I found it hard to make friends or build meaningful connections, always afraid I would have to move on. In the days of no internet, social media or even email (yep, I'm that old), the idea of being able to stay connected to people seemed impossible, so why get close in the first place? It would only cause pain when we had to move on. I never joined activity groups or hobby classes because I could never be sure I would be able to see them through, to stick around.

As I got older, owning my own place to live became almost the most important thing to me. It came to symbolise the stability I had long been in search of. I still didn't need any more than the four suitcases worth of belongings I'd always had, but I *did* need somewhere I could unpack it all and put it away, permanently. Somewhere no one could remove me from at a moment's notice. Ever since then, owning my own home has been the one thing that has made me feel secure. Maybe it was the only thing I felt I had any control over. Owning my own home felt like freedom to me.

At the time of the conversation with Ellen, I had found myself in a situation where I didn't own my own home again and it brought about huge feelings of insecurity for me. I talk a lot about 'future proofing'. Owning a home was, for me, future proofing. It would also give me the freedom to travel freely, my greatest passion, knowing that I would always have somewhere to return to if, and when, I needed to, and would also be a safe way to invest my money.

So, can you see how differently Ellen and I looked at the very same situation, how different our versions of freedom were?

Just in case you're wondering, Ellen and her lovely partner now have their own home in the beautiful Sierra Nevada mountains in Andalucía, Spain and she feels beautifully free. Her home and her place in nature feed her soul, her creativity and have led to her crafting and strengthening her gifts even further. I could not be happier for her.

Me? Well, I'm still working on where I want to call 'home'. These days, home for me is more of a feeling than a place, more about people than buildings. I'll keep you posted.

I've worked with hundreds of people over my fifteen years in business, and helped many more people throughout the course of my life, and I can confidently make the following statements about freedom:

***“Freedom comes from lack of attachment.”***

***“Freedom is an inside job.”***

Now, before you get all bristly and assume that I'm suggesting that we all live like Buddhist monks (though frankly, that wouldn't be such a bad thing), let me qualify what I *don't* mean. I don't mean;

1. *That you shouldn't want material things*
2. *That you shouldn't want change*
3. *That you shouldn't aspire*
4. *That you shouldn't want better relationships*
5. *That you shouldn't want money or more money*

All of those things are useful, and maybe even necessary, when it comes to creating freedom, depending on what your version of freedom looks like. *That* is what we're going to work on together in this book so stick around. It's about to get very, very interesting and *very* transformational.

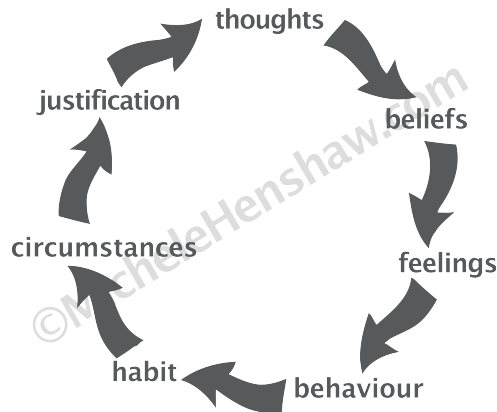
What I *do* mean is that there are, in my experience, three things that are crucial to attaining a sense of freedom. I like to call this 'The 3 C's' because, well there are three things, and they all begin with a C. Let's look at them.

1. **Control** – or rather letting go of the need to control; situations, people, outcomes, processes. In particular, letting go of the ‘How’. Remember that freedom comes from lack of attachment.
2. **Clarity** about what freedom looks and feels like for *you*. There’s no use comparing your version of freedom to someone else’s version and it’s no good following someone else’s freedom model.
3. **Connection** – Getting fully connected with, and aligned to, *your* version of freedom so that you can adjust your beliefs, actions and behaviours to fall in line with it. This is what will get you there and what will bring you back whenever you drift off course, go off piste or decide to take a diversion.

Don’t underestimate or be quick to dismiss the beliefs piece by the way. I know we hear a lot about this from all the personal development gurus out there, but the reason they all talk about it is that it’s been proven time and time again in numerous neuroscientific and psychological studies, that our feelings (energies), thought patterns, behaviours and physiology are all inextricably linked. Did you know, for instance, that the heart has a brain all of its own? Yep, it has its very own system of 40,000+ neurons that can sense, feel, learn and remember and it’s now widely accepted that the heart and head brains communicate constantly. The heart brain is in charge of emotions and sends complex coded messages to the head brain about how we are feeling, so that the head brain can communicate with our bodies and organs about how they should react i.e., behave. The heart sends more messages to the brain than the brain to the heart. How frikkin’ amazing is that? Can you imagine what they’ll be saying to each other when you start to feel that sense of *freedom*? You have quite the power team on your side working hard for you to get you your freedom, lovely seeker.

Here’s an interesting article about this from Huff Post if you’re interested in knowing more about the heart and head brain [HUFF POST ARTICLE](#)

Look at the little illustration below that explains how the beliefs, actions, behaviour thing works.



Here's how it plays out. It pretty much all starts up in the head brain. First comes the *thought*. When we think that thought for long enough (or, by the way when we're told something for long enough), we start to *believe* it. When we come to believe something strongly, it provokes *feelings*. Now, until this point, all the things at the early stage of the cycle are internal but here's where it starts to get interesting. As those feelings grow in strength and intensity, they then manifest as *behaviours*. Now it all starts to become visible and more real because it's now happening externally. The behaviour, unchallenged and unchecked, becomes a habit. That habitual behaviour then creates a set of circumstances that we then use as *justification* for having the thoughts we had in the first place. In neuroscience and psychology this is referred to as *Cognitive Dissonance*. It seems unbelievable and maybe even inconceivable doesn't? Why on earth would we do this? My guess is you can relate though.

Now, can I be presumptuous enough to assume that when you look at the diagram and feel into that explanation of the cycle of behaviour, you're thinking about something relatively negative? Maybe a habit; smoking, biting your nails, getting into toxic relationships, eating junk food. Maybe an emotional behaviour; worry, anger, self-doubt, being betrayed. It's OK. Everyone reading this will be doing the exact same thing. However, consider this. If this cycle can incredibly effectively embed negative thoughts, behaviours and outcomes, it can also work with replacement positive thoughts, actions and outcomes...can't it? You really can change things for yourself in the most inconceivably powerful ways. You really can break free.

Let me explain how it works in a more visual way, my favourite kind of way, with a story.

Say, for instance, you're afraid of dogs (you can choose anything you have a strong belief about at this point, I'm using dogs just for illustrative purposes). You start with the *thought* about the dog, that dogs are nasty things that bite. You may not even know where that thought started.

Maybe your parents, guardians or a friend were frightened of dogs. Maybe you had a less than pleasant encounter with Tyson from down the road who lurched at the gate as you passed by on your way to school every day, but the thought is there and therefore, so is the fear and the behaviour. Now, because you've repeatedly had that thought about dogs, you've come to *believe* it wholeheartedly and there's a *feeling* that envelops you whenever you encounter a dog. Maybe you come out in a cold sweat or feel the heat rise from your chest to your head as your heart pounds, and so you *behave* in the same way each time you encounter a dog, maybe you hide behind someone or jump out of the way. That pattern of thoughts, beliefs and behaviour have become a *habit*. Intellectually, you may know that not all dogs are scary but that *habit*, or habitual behaviour, creates a set of *circumstances* each time. Maybe the dog reacts to your nervous behaviour because it senses your fear and feels it needs to defend itself. You then use that experience as justification for *thinking* the way you did in the first place. And there you are, back at the beginning of the cycle of behaviour again and round and around you go, trapped and tethered by it, repeating the same experience over and over again, justifying your beliefs over and over again, even though they don't serve you well.

I have good news for you. It is absolutely possible to change all this and feel free. The secret to breaking free, is to change these patterns by changing the thoughts and beliefs and therefore the behaviours. Changing thoughts, behaviours and beliefs can literally alter our neuroplasticity by creating brand new neural pathways, altering our (synaptic) wiring. Yep, that's right, we can alter the shape of our brain with new thoughts and behaviours because, miraculously, it was created to do this. Our brain is like plasticine, open to our creative moulding and fashioning. Incidentally, it can sometimes be incredibly powerful to change behaviour first. Think about smoking or eating junk food. Often, we stop, alter or create new behaviours in order to alter the way we think. Like I say, it's powerful to do it that way around but it's often just too much for some so for now, let's stick with the idea of changing thoughts and beliefs to change behaviour. To do this when it comes to freedom, it's important that we examine what freedom means to us and identify any patterns of behaviour we may have inherited, been taught or that we've created. Patterns that need to be edited, changed and/or replaced. It's entirely possible that we're sabotaging the very freedom we crave. Portia Nelson's poem illustrates this beautifully...

*"I walk down the street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I fall in.  
I am lost... I am helpless.  
It isn't my fault.  
It takes forever to find a way out.*

*I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I pretend I don't see it.  
I fall in again.  
I can't believe I am in the same place.*

*But, it isn't my fault.  
It still takes me a long time to get out.*

*I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I see it is there.  
I still fall in. It's a habit.  
My eyes are open.  
I know where I am.  
It is my fault. I get out immediately.*

*I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I walk around it.*

*I walk down a different street.*

“You’re nuts Michele. Why would I do that?” I hear you ask. Well, you would never deliberately, consciously do it of course, but we do *all* do it. Think about the following examples...

- *The placebo / nocebo effect* - We’ve all heard stories of people healing because of their *belief* in the healing power of something. We’ve all heard stories of people heading in to a negative or disastrous situation because of a belief that it would happen. Even worse, though, those negative thought patterns can stop us even attempting things because of the beliefs we have about how it will pan out.
- *Mirages* - The mind sees what it chooses to see, what it longs to see and *believe*.
- The *Fake News* phenomenon. We are so easily sold ideas, ideals and so called ‘facts’.

There are many more examples. I’ll leave you to explore your own.

Each of us receive, process, hold on to and let go of information in VERY different ways. Let me give you another example because, well, you’ll realise by now that I love to tell a story and you seem to like hearing them. So, if you’re sitting comfortably, let me introduce you to Aron and his wife Julia.

Aron loves his wife. They have been married for almost 20 years. Aron’s wife Julia is a free spirit. She loves travel, adventure and learning new things. Julia is from a military family and moved around the world with her father’s work. She loved the way she lived as a child and her parents always made sure she felt loved and secure and there was always lots of fun. Julia’s version of freedom is moving



around, trying new places to live, meeting new people, discovering new places. Aron on the other hand, is from a very stable family with strong roots in one place. Three or four generations of his family have always lived in the same ten square mile area. His ancestors tended the land and served the community. Aron doesn't like change. He loves the idea of having history and a connection with the people that live around him and with the land beneath his feet. Aron wants to stay in one familiar place around familiar people. That is freedom to Aron.

When I met Aron and Julia, they were considering ending their marriage. They just couldn't see a way forward. They had been so busy building a life together in the first ten years or so of their married life, that they hadn't had time to think about anything else. They had two children and had renovated a large old house. In Julia's mind, she imagined that when the children were old enough and the house was finished, they would move on, have new adventures. Aron, meanwhile, was happy to be putting down permanent roots and imagined his children following in his well rooted footsteps. It's only when they had time to share their dreams and desires, their individual ideas of freedom, that they realised how different their versions were. Surely, it just couldn't work...could it? Can these two very different versions of freedom ever co-exist? Well yes, they can.

Every relationship is about compromise and when it comes to freedom, each deserves to have their own version. It's our right. If you compromise to the extent that you feel tethered, trapped or unhappy, that's not a relationship. That's a one-sided, co-dependent situation.

So, what did Aron and Julia do? Well, having initially started working with Aron who came to me frightened that he would lose his family and asking me to work with him to 'change' his idea of freedom (the way he described it was "I need to get brave about doing things so that Julia is happy."), I ended up working with them as a couple to explore the way forward. What we discovered was remarkable. Julia did value having roots and stability, just as she had with her travelling military family, but that had always been provided *for* her and she didn't want, or know how to, create it. Her answer was to keep moving. Aron wanted nothing more than to be the creator of that stability. He was happiest at home in his familiar environment, being Dad taxi for the children and supporting family and friends. He loved to see how happy Julia was when she went off on adventures but just couldn't understand why she loved it so much. He didn't understand but crucially, he didn't resent it. Julia discovered that she didn't need

Aron to travel with her. She loved meeting new people and felt much more free when she travelled alone, not having to consider anyone else.

Bingo. A happy compromise. Once Aron and Julia were able to be honest with each other, and with themselves, about what freedom meant to them and were able to clearly define their roles, their relationship went to new heights, their connection deepened, and they were both happier than they had been for years. They had just got so stuck in the pattern of wanting, not having, being resentful, being unhappy, arguing, that they perceived that they'd reached the point of no return, the end of their journey together.

Remember, *"If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always gotten."* - Jesse Potter at the Seventh 'Woman to Woman' conference in the US in 1981. [As an aside and because like I say, I'm passionate about words and language, many people think this was a quote by Henry Ford. Not so. I love that a woman is to be credited for it, I don't love that the credit has somehow been shifted to Henry.] Anyhoo, let's get on with the subject in hand.

What we're essentially looking for is the door to freedom but often the harder we look for it, the harder it is to find.

*"There's what's real and what isn't and in between lies the door  
to perception."*

We see things the way we want them to be. We take what we know, think about what we don't and we fill the space in between with what we want to be, hope to be or even fear will be. It may sound crazy, but the mind is powerful beyond belief.

If you're anywhere near as old as me, which I realise is unlikely but let's go with it, you may remember a story about Elsie Wright, her cousin Frances Griffiths and one of the greatest fake phenomena, or hoaxes, of all time, the Cottingley Fairies. I was among the millions of people, including leading experts and even Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who believed what Elsie and Frances presented to us; photographic 'proof' of fairies existing at the bottom of Elsie's garden. The photos were cleverly constructed in the early 1900's and it wasn't until 1983, that the creative hoax of these two fabulous young women was finally uncovered. Despite the fakery, even today the photos are capable of fetching a pretty price when sold or auctioned due to the connection to the story. So, it wasn't all bad was it?

If you don't believe in fairies, the reveal will seem like good news, justification. If you do believe, you may feel that the *Cottingley Fairies* story is detrimental, damaging. It all depends on what you *believe*.

I haven't been given permission to feature the *Cottingley Fairies* photographs in this book but when you get a minute, do a search. Once you've read the various accounts of the event, I'd love to hear your thoughts.

## [RESOURCES](#)

## CHAPTER 3

### *Feel the Feels*

---

*“The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart.”* – Helen Keller

Now, all of that is interesting, valuable and undoubtedly transformative. I’m constantly fascinated by the power of thought, language and the mind. Now though, it’s time to talk about what freedom *feels* like because it’s when we truly understand that, that we can transform things powerfully. Remember the conversation that takes place between the heart and head brains? It’s when we get them on the same page that things really start to ramp up. Getting clear on your version of freedom shows them the page they need to be on.

Have you ever been told to make decisions from your head, not your heart? I know I was. Well, I’m here to tell you that if you’re a ‘from the heart’ person, you’ve been doing it right all along. Now, I’m not underestimating the value of a logical, considered, intellectual decision making where appropriate, but it’s intuition that guides us to do what’s really right and aligned for *us* and our intuition does not live in the head. Intuition lives in the heart and solar plexus. It’s what is sometimes referred to as a ‘gut feeling’. Convention has taught us to ignore those feelings in favour of consulting the head brain when it comes to decision making. Big mistake. HUGE! I tried that for years, decades and made bad decision after bad decision. I’d been taught not to trust myself. Like most of us, I’d been ‘untaught’ living intuitively in favour of living by someone else’s modus operandi; the education system, religion, government, ad infinitum. You see, it’s easier for the world, particularly for those who want to run the show, to have us all follow a particular way, *their* way mostly. It doesn’t suite their agenda for us to think individually and it would definitely not do for us to behave intuitively.

My late mentor and friend, Stephen Russell aka The Barefoot Doctor once told me a story. At the peak of his notoriety, when he was writing for UK national newspapers, prolifically publishing books and had even been asked to put his name to a range of wellbeing products in a leading UK retail outlet, he was invited on to well known UK television panel show. He meditated on it,

tuning in to his intuition and it told him “No. Don’t do it”. He went on the show anyway. In his own words, he told me that “Ego took a hold of me.” As he was accompanied to his seat and before filming even began, he realised why he was there. It was over two decades ago and there was a huge degree of scepticism around his kind of work: Taoism, spirituality, healing, manifestation. He was there to be the show stooge, to be ridiculed for cheap laughs that fuelled the egos of the other celebrity and political panel guests and host. His gut churned and he wanted to rip off his lapel mic and get out of there but his ego self, his head, told him to stay put. Logically, according to convention, getting up and leaving would be unacceptable, rude, unprofessional. So, he stayed. It was tortuous and it took him some time to recover from the experience. A valuable lesson was learned though. That was the last time he would be tempted *not* to trust his intuition. The last time he would allow ego to take over. The last time he would allow himself to ‘go north’ as he put it, to his head brain to make an important decision.

Sadly, Stephen is no longer here on the earthly plain in his human vessel, but he and his lessons live on as strongly, necessarily and transformationally as ever. Find out more about his work that is being carried on by his sons at <https://barefootdoctorworld.com>

Now, let’s start by talking about what *lack* of freedom feels like. That might sound counter-intuitive, but you know the old saying “You don’t know what you had until it’s gone.”? Well, when we understand what makes us feel trapped, tethered, it leads to clarity about where that door to freedom is. Remember Ellen and Aaron’s stories? Remember how different their versions of freedom were from their significant others? There were marked differences in the way they thought about freedom but more powerful than that, was how they felt about it.

When you feel a lack of freedom, when you feel tethered, stifled or trapped, you’re likely to experience one or more of the following:

- **Fear**
- **Guilt**
- **Detachment (not belonging)**
- **Insecurity (emotional, financial, practical)**
- **Judgement**
- **Imposter Syndrome**
- **Loneliness**
- **Prolonged procrastination**

All of these are completely normal human emotions and it is natural and, I’d even argue, *necessary* for us all to experience them at some point. You know the old adage, “How can we appreciate light without darkness, day without night, love without hate...” etc etc, add infinitum. This is true of course. Without a point of reference, it would be impossible to recognise change or

transformation. However, problems start to present themselves when we consistently, or even persistently, feel these feelings. When we allow them to hang around too long, they can become toxic and hard to shift.

It helps to be sure about what you consider to be the antidotes to these feelings and there's no time like the present so, take a few minutes here to complete the following exercise. Reproduce this simple table on a sheet of paper, spreadsheet or whatever works for you. It's only important that you get some clarity around what you feel about these feelings. When you identify their opposites, it will give you something to focus on when you need to get away from them.

### Do This...

1. Take a couple of deep breaths to ground yourself and prepare to *feel*.
2. Consider the list of emotions/feelings. Feel free to change any don't ring true for you and replace them with your own. Also add any that you're aware of that aren't already listed here.
3. Take a moment to really go there and feel the feelings for a moment, but no longer than two or three minutes. Try to recall specific situations when you have felt the feelings. Visualise them if you can, whether as visual words, energies or objects.

Label each one with the corresponding emotion.

<i>Emotion</i>	<i>Antidote Emotion</i>	<i>How Can I Make a Swap?</i>
Fear		
Guilt		
Detachment		
Insecurity		
Judgement		
Imposter Syndrome		
Loneliness		
Procrastination		

4. Now, list what you consider to be the antidotes to each of the listed emotions/feelings, in other words, their opposites, emotions that will dilute or neutralise the negative energy and feelings of the feelings you have listed. Really feel them and again, try to recall times when

you have felt these feelings. If you can't recall, try to imagine a time in the future when you will feel them strongly.

5. Close your eyes lightly and visualise attaching a golden or silk thread to each emotion, one by one, and follow the thread to a lighter, brighter open space where there are several beautiful trees, side by side, in a line. Remember, silk and gold are strong and can withhold heavy weights and the strongest storms. Wrap your thread around each tree and as you do, attach a label with your chosen antidote emotion. See the tree absorb your thread as you put the energy of your antidote feeling into it. Really go there and feel it. Know that the tree is solidly rooted and that it will hold your emotion/feeling and keep it safe so that you can return to it whenever you need to.

Repeat this visualisation for each feeling and each thread.

On the resources page (link at the end of the book) you will find a video guided visualisation to support this exercise as well as links to some of the Barefoot Doctor's teachings too.

[RESOURCES](#)