

# The Possibility in the Pain

One of the many tricks post-traumatic stress plays on us is that it makes us think it is evil or wrong. Post-traumatic stress symptoms are neither of those things. Terrifying, confusing, debilitating, excruciating – yes. But evil? No, the symptoms are not evil. Wrong? No, they are actually trying to help you. I hope this handout helps you glean some joyful possibilities from the dregs of pain. Have a journal nearby for this:

1. Recall the last time your traumatic symptoms (emotions, nightmares, urge to create chaos, addictions, etc.) kicked up and gave you trouble. Write a bit about that in a journal or express it through visual arts or movement.

2. Perform a relaxation, on your own, guided, or by listening to soft music.

3. While you are relaxed, call to mind the NEED that was expressing itself through Step 1. In other words, when your traumatic symptoms got kinky, what did you need? It's okay if you don't know and want to brainstorm a few ideas here.

4. Complete the following sentence: When I need \_\_\_\_\_ [one of the ideas from Step 3.], a healthy way I meet that need is \_\_\_\_\_.

5. Complete the following sentences: When I need \_\_\_\_\_ [one of the ideas from Step 3.], a healthy way I have thought of meeting the need is \_\_\_\_\_. I haven't tried that yet because \_\_\_\_\_.

6. Complete the following sentence: When I think of choosing options to meet my needs, I can also imagine myself becoming more \_\_\_\_\_. That's right! Anything is possible for you if you listen to your needs and trust yourself! Thank you, trauma.

