

Natural Healing, Traditional Medicine, and the Science of Well-Being in Cancer Survivorship.

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Join me for a deeply personal and transformative workshop as I share my cancer journey and the life-changing path that led me beyond conventional treatment options. Faced with difficult choices, I made the decision—against the recommendations of my medical team—to decline chemotherapy and radiation and instead pursue a healing journey grounded in natural medicine, traditional healing practices, and well-being science.

Nearly four years later, my survivorship journey continues to be shaped by the practices, strategies, and healing philosophies that helped me reclaim my health, vitality, and purpose. In this workshop, participants will explore powerful traditional and natural approaches to healing and wellness that may support the body, mind, and spirit in overcoming health challenges, restoring balance, and cultivating greater life-force energy and resilience. Whether you are navigating a current health concern, supporting a loved one, or simply seeking to elevate your well-being to its highest potential, this session offers practical tools and meaningful insight.

Participants will learn:

- The mindset shifts that transformed my healing journey
- Natural and traditional healing practices that supported recovery and wellness
- Strategies for building a personal healing and wellness ecosystem
- Tools for cultivating resilience, vitality, hope, and purpose
- How to create a personalized roadmap toward optimal health and well-being

Most importantly, this workshop is about empowerment—discovering how to take ownership of your healing journey and adapting these principles in ways that are meaningful and sustainable for your own life.

Come explore what is possible when hope, intention, traditional wisdom, and holistic wellness come together in the pursuit of healing and human flourishing.

Healing & Well-Being Roadmap

A Guided Pathway for Achieving Personal Well-Being Outcomes

This roadmap is designed to help participants identify a desired healing or well-being outcome and intentionally navigate the journey using six key success factors:

1. Knowledge – What I need to learn
2. Resources – What tools and assets I need
3. Subject Matter Experts – Who can guide me
4. Support Systems – Who supports me personally
5. Community – Where I belong and connect
6. People & Relationships – Who can help me grow and thrive

STEP 1: Define Your Desired Outcome

My Healing or Well-Being Goal

What specific outcome do I want to achieve?

Why is this important to me?

How will I know I have achieved it?

STEP 2: Assess My Starting Point

Current Reality

Where am I today on a scale of 1–10?

1 = Struggling greatly

10 = Thriving

Current Score: _____

What is working well?

What challenges or obstacles am I facing?

STEP 3: Knowledge Map

What do I need to learn?

Books, courses, skills, concepts, practices, or information that will help me move forward.

Knowledge Needed Where I Can Learn It Priority

Key Insight:

"The better I understand my situation, the more empowered I become."

STEP 4: Resource Map

What resources will support my success?

Examples:

- Time
- Money
- Transportation
- Technology
- Healthy food
- Exercise equipment
- Spiritual practices

- Journals
- Wellness programs

Resource Needed Do I Have It? How Will I Obtain It?

STEP 5: Subject Matter Expert Map

Who knows more than I do?

Identify professionals, mentors, teachers, coaches, practitioners, or specialists who can help.

Expert Area of Expertise How They Can Help

Questions I Need Answered

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Revised Step 6: Support System Inventory

STEP 6: Support System Inventory

Who Is in My Corner?

Healing and well-being are often strengthened through the people closest to us. Your support system may include immediate family, extended family, friends, colleagues, mentors, faith leaders, neighbors, or others who provide encouragement, accountability, practical assistance, or emotional support.

My Personal Support Network

Person Relationship Type of Support They Provide How I Will Engage Them

Support Categories Checklist

Identify the people who currently support you in each area:

- Spouse/Partner
- Parent(s)

- Child(ren)
- Sibling(s)
- Extended Family
- Close Friend(s)
- Work Colleague(s)
- Mentor/Coach
- Faith Leader
- Neighbor(s)
- Wellness Practitioner
- Support Group Members
- Other: _____

Reflection Questions

Who are the first three people I would call during a difficult time?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Who consistently encourages my growth and well-being?

Who helps me stay accountable to my goals?

Are there supportive relationships I should strengthen or reconnect with?

My Support Strength Rating

How strong is my current support system?

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 — 8 — 9 — 10

Action Step

One person I will contact this week to strengthen my support network:

Key Insight

Healing and well-being thrive in connection. Family, friends, and trusted allies often become the foundation upon which resilience, hope, and lasting change are built.

STEP 7: Community Connection Map

What communities can help me grow?

Examples:

- Faith communities
- Recovery groups
- Wellness groups
- Professional organizations
- University groups
- Volunteer organizations
- Support circles

Community How It Helps First Action Step

Community Reflection

How can belonging accelerate my healing journey?

STEP 8: People and Relationship Network

Who can open doors, provide encouragement, or share wisdom?

Think beyond immediate family and friends.

Examples:

- Colleagues
- Nature, the land, Your garden
- Community leaders
- Coaches
- Neighbors
- Community center fellows

Person Connection Opportunity They Offer

STEP 9: My Action Plan

Next 30 Days

Action Completion Date Success Indicator

Next 90 Days

Milestone Target Date

STEP 10: My Well-Being Dashboard

Rate each area from 1–10.

Area	Score
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Physical Well-Being	
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Emotional Well-Being	
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Mental Well-Being	
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Spiritual Well-Being	
----------------------	--

Area Score

Social Well-Being

Financial Well-Being

Purpose & Meaning

Areas Requiring Attention

STEP 11: The Ecosystem Reflection

Healing and flourishing rarely happen alone. Success is often the result of an ecosystem working together.

Reflect:

What knowledge will empower me?

What resources will sustain me?

Which experts will guide me?

Who will support me when challenges arise?

What community will help me belong?

Which relationships will help me thrive?

Personal Commitment Statement

I commit to taking responsibility for my healing and well-being journey by actively seeking knowledge, utilizing resources, learning from experts, engaging support systems, participating in community, and nurturing relationships that help me achieve my desired outcome.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Workshop Principle

"Healing and well-being are not achieved through willpower alone. They emerge through intentional action supported by knowledge, resources, experts, support systems, community, and meaningful relationships working together as a thriving ecosystem and a roadmap to navigate it."

Embrace the Suck, Transformability and Other Basic Training for Surviving and Thriving

“It’s not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to Adaptability”

C. Darwin

Embrace the Suck – What & Why

“Embrace the suck” is a military-inspired phrase that means accepting and pushing through difficult or unpleasant situations, viewing them as opportunities for growth and resilience. It is about getting comfortable with discomfort and focusing on what you *can* control.

Origin

The phrase gained popularity in the military—particularly in training programs such as the Navy SEALs—where instructors encourage recruits to “embrace the suck” as a way to mentally prepare for harsh conditions and intense challenges.

Meaning

At its core, this phrase represents a mindset shift. It acknowledges that life will not always be easy and that unpleasant situations are inevitable.

Application

“Embrace the suck” can be applied to many areas of life, including work, relationships, personal growth, and the pursuit of meaningful goals.

Key Principles

- **Acceptance:** Acknowledge that something is difficult or unpleasant while focusing on what you can control.
- **Resilience:** Push through challenges and view them as opportunities for learning and growth.
- **Mindset:** Develop the capacity to tolerate discomfort and see adversity as a path to strength.

Examples

- In the military, it means enduring grueling training and harsh environments.
- In business, it involves pushing through setbacks or demanding projects.

- In personal life, it means facing challenges head-on, embracing the growth process, and transforming adversity into an advantage.
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Readiness in the Face of Uncertainty

The “Embrace the Suck” Metaphor

“This sucks” describes the experience of something unpleasant—an unexpected challenge, unforeseen circumstance, or disruptive event that brings psychological and physical distress.

In this chapter, you will explore how to understand the nature of the suck and learn how to transform and transcend it. You will do this by reappraising it (seeing it anew), placing it within a framework of adaptation, recognizing its potential for growth, and identifying possible solutions. Ultimately, this is about learning how to accept difficult situations and work with them—making the uncomfortable more manageable.

Our challenge is to integrate resilience and adaptability, wisdom and creativity, and cognitive interventions as essential tools, skills, and strategies for embracing the suck.

At its core, this work is about naming and claiming not only our fears, risks, and vulnerabilities, but also our hopes, strengths, and innate capacity to adapt and grow from adversity. It is about accepting uncertainty as part of our environment and part of the rules of the game.

This approach creates readiness—a sense of engagement and empowerment that can move you from fear about an uncertain future to feeling prepared to restructure your life in ways that are more sustainable, resilient, and successful.

The stress and anxiety you may be experiencing are temporary states. They reveal vulnerabilities, but they also present opportunities to reshape our lives and mindsets so that we are better prepared for what lies ahead. They also give us a chance to clarify what truly matters and to build a community that supports and inspires us.

“Embrace the Suck: Name It, Claim It, Transform It”, Application, Transformation, & Adaptability Strategies

Introduction

What are your hopes and fears?

The Suck: Name It, Claim It, & Transform It

“If you write down a problem clearly and specifically, you have solved half of it.”

— Kidlin’s Law

Embrace the Suck Application / Intervention Worksheet

Step 1 – Name It

Be aware of what is going wrong.

Identify and clearly define the suck.

Step 2 – Claim It

Understand the *why* of it.

“I have met the suck. It is my suck, and I claim it.”

Determine the root cause: What is driving this challenge?

Step 3 – Transform It: Strategies

Identify actionable strategies, interventions, and effort needed to transform the situation.

First, calm yourself—take a few slow belly breaths.

Second, recognize that things could be worse, and you are still capable of responding effectively.

Third, remember that your brain has evolved over centuries and possesses remarkable adaptability. You have the capacity to move through the suck and transform it.

Step 4 – Apply Transformative Interventions for Positive Change

Transformational Intervention #1: Positive Reappraisal

The ability to see things *anew*—to create a different perspective that invites hope, optimism, and confidence.

How can you transform this situation through a mindset shift, perspective change, or specific action using positive reappraisal?

Transformational Intervention #2: Behavioral Activation

Can the suck be shared—or even made meaningful or motivating? Shift from a negativity bias to positive emotion by engaging with others. Share the suck with your peers; chances are they may be in the same boat and can offer insight, support, or creative solutions.

Can adversity become an opportunity to learn about yourself, find your people, build new friendships, and even have moments of joy? Behavioral activation means identifying and doing activities that prepare you for what may happen while also creating positive emotions and connection.

What specific action can you take using behavioral activation?

Transformational Intervention #3: Exposure

Face the suck. Gradually do the things that make you uneasy until they no longer feel threatening.

What specific action can you take using gradual exposure?

Transformational Intervention #4: Acceptance into Action

Embrace the suck and convert acceptance into outcomes and strategies for change.

Creating Outcomes: Acceptance into Action

Identify and define outcomes and daily tasks.

Ask yourself:

- Do I have the right mindset, without denial?
- Am I ready?

- Do I have my ETS (Embrace the Suck) team in place?
- Do I have a supportive community and growing confidence in my resilience and adaptability skills?

By building a like-minded community grounded in shared knowledge, experience, and action, we learn that together we can not only survive—but thrive.

Summary – Use all the you have studied and applied in this chapter to create your Embrace the Suck challenge to solve problems, challenges and resolve roadblocks.

1. List Your Embrace the Suck Strategies, Outcomes and actions.

2. What specifically are you planning to do?

3. Break Down Outcomes into Daily achievable Tasks

HERO Wellbeing Introduction Application

Everyone say hi to your neighbor, introduce yourself and shake their hand for at least 6 seconds. Take turns asking each other the following questions based on HERO

H – Hope, How are you hopeful, What are you hopeful about?

E – Engagement, What activities bring you joy and make you feel fulfilled and bring meaning to your life?

R- Relationality, Talk about your best relationships with people place, pets nature

O – Outcomes, what specifically do you desire to achieve?

Share Circles

Everyone says something about themselves

I am here because _____

What specifically is 1 or more take aways from this workshop

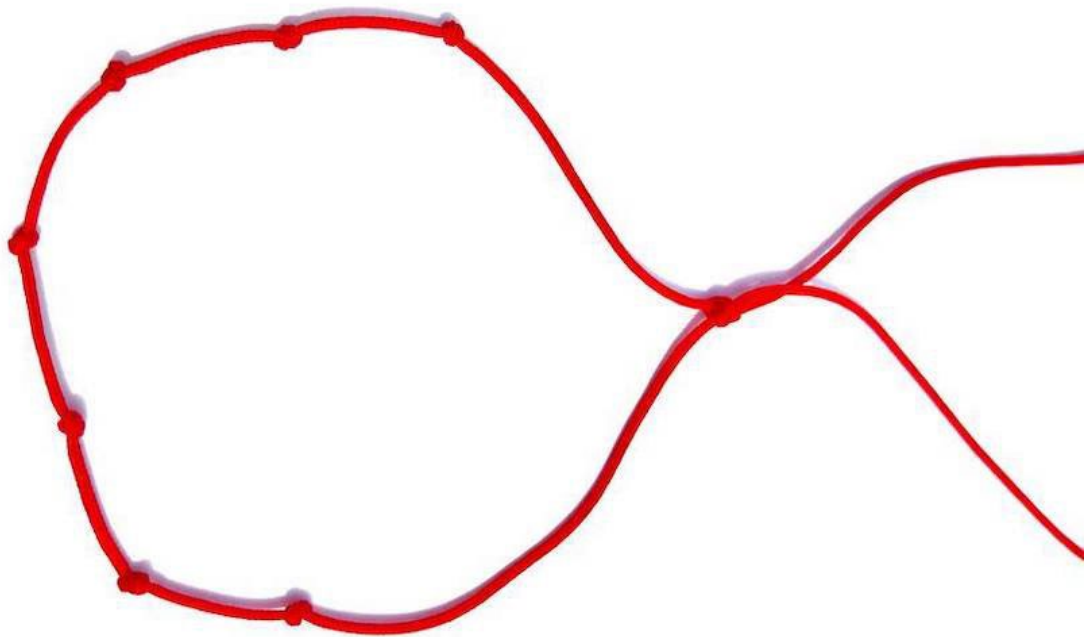
Something that I learned that I am going to do today

Curandero Ritual for Healing

For more than 500 years, village healers in Latin America, known as curanderos, have been dedicated to alleviating physical or spiritual illnesses. One of their methods is to suggest tying seven knots in a red ribbon, one for each worry or stress, the seventh knot creating a complete circle.

Tying the knot releases that specific concern, enabling the person to leave it behind. The red color signifies strength, health, vigor, energy, passion, courage, the element of fire, career [goals](#), fast action, vibrancy, driving force, survival.

simply leave their worries behind and start anew.



here's how to do this simple yet very healing curanderos ritual at home.

Materials:

- Red ribbon, string or cord – 9-12 inches long
- A quiet place to concentrate
- A moment to slow down and release stress

How to:

- Tie the first knot at one end while you focus on your first concern. Take a moment.
- Tie the second through the sixth knots – each one focusing on a different worry.
- Tie the seventh knot to create a circle of ribbon.

- When tying each knot, concentrate on one specific concern, visualize the best outcome and let go of the concern.

1. Curanderismo-style worry knot rituals

In some contemporary healing practices inspired by Latin American **curanderismo** traditions, a **red ribbon with tied knots** is used to symbolically transfer worry, stress, or emotional burdens into the cord. Variations often use **7 knots**, each representing a concern to be consciously released. Red is commonly associated with vitality, protection, life-force, and spiritual strength.

The idea is psychological and symbolic:

- **Naming the burden** externalizes it
- **Tying the knot** gives it form
- **Sealing it away** creates closure
- **Burying it** symbolizes returning it to earth for transformation

3. Jar / bottle containment rituals

The act of placing the ribbon in a sealed jar and burying it aligns with broader **jar spell / bottle spell traditions**, where a container symbolically isolates, contains, neutralizes, or transforms what is placed inside.

Why practices like this can feel effective

Even without supernatural claims, rituals like this can work as a powerful form of **intentional psychological release**.

They activate several evidence-based mechanisms:

- focused reflection
- emotional naming
- tactile embodiment
- symbolic closure
- deliberate transition from rumination to release

So in summary:

- red protection symbolism
- curanderismo-inspired release practices
- folk containment / burial rituals

- the intentional act of externalizing and releasing emotional burdens.

Together they can symbolize:

“I acknowledge these burdens, bind them, transform them, and release them fully.”

