

# Mindful Life Keys:

## *6 empowering tools to get you through the gunk*

### 1. Stay in your own “business”!

Byron Katie, author of “Loving What Is,” talks about three types of business:

1. Yours
2. Theirs
3. “Gods” (Forces of nature, etc.)

When I am in *any* business other than my own, I am suffering. This could drain my time, energy, momentum and spirit. It is a place of disempowerment, a place of loss, a place of *why-nots?*, and of *what-ifs?*. I have noticed that being out of my own business stops my movement in life in all directions: forward, backward or sideways and instead, I am stuck. It can turn into depression, anxiety, apathy, addiction, pain, illness, and so so much more.

### Questions to ask yourself:

- A) Whose business am I in? Remember-you only have 3 choices: Yours, Theirs, God’s/The Universes/or Natural Forces
- B) If you are not in your own business...why? Go to “thework.org” and download the “Judge Your Neighbor” worksheet. Fill it out and explore what is alive in you around this issue. (Notice it’s all getting back to you! And that's where power lies.) If exploring this on your own sucks: book an [Applied Mindfulness Session](#), speak to a counselor or your best-est, (I can’t believe that is not a word), most compassionate friend.

## 2. Clean pain or Dirty pain

**Clean pain is raw, in-the-moment, authentic: physiological, emotional, and spiritual feelings and release.** It is pain not surrounded by stories, blame, or any of the other outside of the Now strategies.

For example: you find out someone has died. After the initial shock, you cry grief-stricken tears. The emotion fills your whole body and you surrender to the pain/release. Amazingly, after you've felt the pain, it disappears and you move on with your day, feeling the release and appreciating the time and space you gave yourself to grieve. More waves of emotion may come and you don't judge them, you receive them and allow the process to happen again and again.

**Dirty pain is judgmental, heavy, suffocating, full of thoughts/stories around the issue, and is usually unbearable.**

Using the same example of death, this pain starts as clean pain in the form of grief, and you stop it or you bathe in it, drowning and withdrawing...telling yourself that you never want to feel better. Or, you don't have time to feel sad, instead, you avoid, suppress or "stuff down." If the pain becomes heavy you might reach for food or alcohol to numb or moderate this pain as it seems like it will never end or change. Typically, feelings and thoughts are extreme and immobilizing.

### Questions to ask yourself:

A) Is it ok to feel sadness, anger, fear, joy, etc.?

B) Why or why not?

C) Are certain circumstances better than others to feel my feelings? I.e. Is it okay to cry when someone dies, but not when I get hurt?

D) How can I hold space for myself or with others to feel the pain safely until it passes? Now is a time to reach out and use self-soothing strategies to connect and grieve.

I received an image during a session with a client of pain being like a beautiful glass flower -- that **treating the flower with gentleness and compassion allows it to stay whole and beautiful, much like allowing pain to be clean.** Dirty pain is taking that same beautiful flower and coating it in stainless steel. There is a huge loss in the beauty of the flower. Its transparent, fragile beauty and charm is lost.

### 3. **Extreme Self Care**

The airlines are famous for making this tool clear...**if you can't breathe, you can't help anyone else breathe.** So, put on your oxygen mask first.

Here's where people get confused: they assume that everyone's oxygen mask looks the same. In my 23-plus years helping people find wellness (a.k.a. oxygen), it rarely looks the same. *One person's sanctuary is another person's suffering.* So your mission is to choose to accept you... to find the life-producing habits that add energy and vitality to **your** life.

I love the Canadian and Mental Health Foundation's **triangle of self care.** It creates simplicity and balance in life.

#### a) **Healthy lifestyle**

- a. Food
- b. Sleep
- c. Movement
- d. Spirituality
- e. Sensuality
- f. Sustainable work/income

## b) Healthy boundaries/business

- a. With self
- b. Family
- c. Friends
- d. Work
- e. Community
- f. Etc.

## c) Healthy grief

- a. How do you take care of yourself as you experience the many losses life offers us? (Birth, death, leaving home, separation, accidents, divorce, job loss, etc.)

## Questions to ask yourself:

Where is my self care amazing?

- a. healthy lifestyle:
  
- b. healthy boundaries/business:
  
- c. healthy grief

Where is it lacking? How could I add actions here to help?

- a. healthy lifestyle:
  
- b. healthy boundaries/business:
  
- c. healthy grief:

## 4. Staying in the moment as a strategy during times of stress

Most of my friends and clients see me as a very patient person. I usually like to clear this misconception up with them right away. My exterior is calm and inside I am working the tools that allow me to calm the storm and stay in the moment. I often share a story of having very young children and literally sitting down on the ground and surrendering to my desire for peace. Amazingly, most times my young child would curl up on my lap and we would have an opportunity to reconnect to each other and restore balance, leading to better options for behavior and movement forward.

Another strategy is to just breathe. I have to say it has taken me years (like, 20) to feel as though I am starting to use this strategy consistently. Weird as it sounds, taking one super-deep breath can be one of the hardest things to do. I must in times of stress and challenge breathe: 3 seconds in and 3 seconds out, rhythmic and slow. And voila, I won't lose my ability to think!! This is my miracle secret.

The other strategy I use is self-talk. How we talk to ourselves inside our head is of key importance. Are we kind and realistic, or mean and hard on ourselves?

### Questions to ask yourself:

What strategies could I try today during times of stress?

What could I do to remind myself daily, maybe even hourly, to try to use a strategy to maintain my inner peace?

How could I change my inner voice to be kinder and more gentle with myself?

## 5. Letting go...or learning the difference between your Ego's wants and your Spirit's flow in life.

Life is a big discerning process:

*Knowing when to hold on and pursurvier and when to release and surrender.*

I have to admit, I think I could earn a world record for holding on too long in romantic relationships while my ability to let go of habits that aren't working is much more efficient.

### Questions to ask yourself:

Start with one topic that you need to discern whether to pursurvier or let go and ask the following:

- a. What am I holding onto that I need to let go of at work? Home? Love? Friendships? Self talk? Past regrets? Future worries?
- b. Am I learning to recognize my thinking patterns: negative thinking, empowered, strategic thinking, circular thinking, etc.? And letting go of the ones that don't help me anymore?
- c. Am I learning to recognize my habits? Are certain behaviors adding or subtracting things from mylife?

## 6. The body's wisdom as a key to pursuing healing and wellness as we move through life

- a. **Biofeedback** Is recognizing our body's signals: How are you breathing? What muscle areas are tight? Is any part of your body numb? Each of these signs are signals to us that something is not working the way it wants to.
- b. **Inner Child Exploration:** Do you ever feel younger than your chronological age? It may be your inner child or children speaking to you or through you! Doing the above work can help you re-parent and grow/support and love unconditionally your inner child. Deeper inner child work can be done with an Applied Mindfulness coach or a trained therapist.
- c. **Deep Body Wisdom and Body talk:** Our body's illness and upsets can offer valuable insight into where things are working in our life and where they are not. Pursuing this can expand our understanding of ourselves and move us into a new land. Some strategies to start with would be: yoga, chakra work, meditation, acupuncture or pressure, osteopathy, massage, therapy and or coaching.

### Questions to ask yourself:

What is my biofeedback aka signs and symptoms I notice when my body is trying to communicate with me?

What am I noticing in my body?

When do I see my inner child playing? Acting up?

Am I parenting myself? If not, what could I do to help my inner child right now?

Do you ever connect with or talk to the tight areas of your body?  
What are they saying to you? What do they need or want? What would offer them relief?

Information is available when we want it.  
All that is needed is to connect;  
to sit in silence or rage and to be with ourselves.

If you are interested in learning more about any  
of these strategies, I am here to help:

[www.caseyberard.com](http://www.caseyberard.com)

Applied Mindfulness coach and Chakra therapist  
Please check website for the next session of  
Applied Mindfulness 101 Mastermind

Please note: these strategies are not a replacement for medical and  
psychological help.

Please continue to consult with medical professionals.