



BRUNNEN STIFTUNG  
THIS IS HOW YOU HEAL  
BRUNNEN STIFTUNG

FREE PDF PREVIEW

FIND THE FULL  
BOOK HERE

WHEN YOU'RE READY

THIS  
*is*  
HOW  
*you*  
HEAL

A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS

BRIANNA WIEST

THOUGHT  
CATALOG  
Books

THOUGHTCATALOG.COM  
NEW YORK · LOS ANGELES

# INTRODUCTION

**Healing is not a one-time event.**

It can begin with a one-time event—typically some form of sudden loss that disrupts our projection of what the future might be. However, the true work of healing is allowing that disruption to wake us from a deep state of unconsciousness, to release the personas we adapted into and begin consciously piecing together the full truth of who we were meant to be.

The experiences that catalyze healing are not trying to prompt us to simply recover from a blow to the ego, but for the first time, in many cases, to recognize our ego at all. It is a moment of reconciliation where we are asked to realize that, in the words of Michael Murphy, “a greater life is pressing to be born.”

If we do not answer this call, it will continue to show up in our lives, often in similar patterns and feelings. We will continuously return to wondering: “*How am I still here?*” or “*How did I get here again?*” The answer is that the same wake-up call keeps coming in until our subconscious minds agree to embark on the journey of our own becoming. This is a process of fully restoring us into remembrance of the perfect, whole and complete truth of who we are. It is a life-long quest, because we must tend to the gardens of our minds on a daily basis. Like children, they cannot completely manage themselves. Our lives require a higher functioning, future-considering adult aspect of ourselves to come forth and sit in the driver’s seat.

This is a journey because no healing, whether physical or spiritual, is something that occurs linearly, nor seamlessly. Life contracts before it expands, and pulls back before it leaps forward. This balancing act is not something we should resist, but rather, embrace. The longer we avoid doing so, the longer we will dwell on the event or series of events that arose on our paths for the sake of waking us up, rather than truly beginning the more difficult, but far more rewarding, work.

In many ways, the journey of healing is not so much a chapter in your story, but changing the way you write the entire book. It's a shift in the way you move through the world, one in which you move from being disappointed that life has not met your every expectation to expanding your vision to perceive all of the magic, the wonder, the awe, the heartache, the loss, the gain, the contrast that makes us all perfectly and unpredictably human.

Our healed selves are not our most flawless selves. They are not immune to sadness or grief or fear. They are just not controlled by those experiences any longer. They feel sadness when it is time for sadness, and grief when it is time to grieve, and contentment on a more regular basis. They fear things that are unknown or important or both, but they do not allow that emotion to prevent them from moving forward. Life can be deeply challenging and profoundly unfair, and without the ability to move through the feelings that may accompany our experiences in real time, we often become trapped in the old stories we once wove around them.

When we are able to validate, accept and process our own human experience independent of anyone else, something magical occurs. We begin reconnecting with our true desires, heeding our subtlest instincts, and cease sabotaging our inspired thoughts and feelings. Through this, we tend to usher

in a serendipitous unfolding of events. Over time, we begin to recognize that there is a common thread carrying us through each one of these experiences, which is our soul's silent guidance: ever-present, and always leading us just beyond what we can see in real time.

As we start to recognize this power, we begin to trust it more. As we start to trust it more, we begin to follow it more closely. We have greater stretches of feeling ease and and love. Our lives begin to come back into harmony through our new grounded, centered perspective. We realize that we were never really lost, we were just giving ourselves some space to process before we could move forward completely.

### **Your first purpose is to heal.**

The sheer impact of you becoming the person you know you were meant to be will have a ripple effect on everyone and everything around you. Nothing will ever be the same. If you cannot imagine how else you might leave a legacy, help others, or do something meaningful with your life, the most important place to start is within yourself.

It's also the hardest place to start.

It's far simpler to gaze outward and point our fingers at what we believe everyone else is doing wrong. It is more challenging to look ourselves in the mirror and be honest about the ways that we have not been living up to our true potential, to identify the areas in life where we have some room for growth, and then to consistently push ourselves to show up every day to make those changes manifest.

When we claim ownership over the unique destiny that is meant to be ours, the collective heals with us, because we are

all pieces of the whole. Perfection will be impossible, as it is within the contrast that this world becomes what it is meant to be—a training ground for soul development. This is not about trying to take the world and make it what we think its most perfect iteration might be, but to finally do what we had intended all along: to awaken, to remember, to witness our own seeds of potential take root.

In the same way that no two people are exactly alike, every purpose we are called to is unique as well, and this is precisely what this book intends to do: awaken each of us to the small and large ways in which we truly can affect those around us, in the corner of the earth we were given, in the specific ways we know how, for the period of time that is ours.

You are far from alone in hearing the call to wake up from the life you had planned in order to commit wholeheartedly to the life that has been waiting. If enough of us are able to do so, I believe we will have the potential to see massive shifts in our shared physical reality. There is not one person who does not need healing, because there is not one person who does not need to be awakened from their unconsciousness and into all life might offer.

This book is a collection of pieces I wrote over the course of many years of my own journey, beginning as a young girl who suffered from significant mental and emotional health disorders, to the woman sitting on the coast of California on a chilly summer evening—healthy, established, connected and thriving—and writing these words to you now.

If you picked up this book, you're already on that same path to healing and discovering your true purpose. I hope my words may help ease your heart through the journey your brave soul has already begun.

See you on the other side.

**Brianna Wiest**

January 2022

THIS YEAR,  
LET GO *of*  
THE PEOPLE  
*who* AREN'T READY  
*to* LOVE YOU

It is the hardest thing you will ever have to do, and it will also be the most important: stop giving your love to those who aren't ready to love you.

Stop having hard conversations with people who don't want to change. Stop showing up for people who are indifferent about your presence. Stop prioritizing people who make you an option. Stop loving people who aren't ready to love you.

I know that your instinct is to do whatever you can to earn the good graces of everyone you can, but that is also the impulse that will rob you of your time, your energy and your sanity.

When you start showing up to your life wholly and completely, with joy and interest and commitment, not everyone is going to be ready to meet you there.

It doesn't mean you need to change who you are. It means you need to stop loving people who aren't ready to love you.

If you're left out, subtly insulted, mindlessly forgotten about, or easily disregarded by the people you spend the most time with, you're doing yourself an incredible disservice by continuing to offer your energy and life to them.



You are not for everyone, and everyone is not for you. That's what makes it so special when you do find the few people with whom you have a genuine friendship, love or relationship: you'll know how precious it is because you've experienced what it isn't.

But the longer you spend trying to force someone to love you when they aren't capable, the longer you're robbing yourself of that very connection. It is waiting for you. There are billions of people on this planet, and so many of them are going to meet you at your level, vibe where you are, connect with where you're going.

...But the longer you stay small, tucked into the familiarity of the people who use you as a cushion, a back burner option, a therapist and a ploy for their emotional labor, the longer you keep yourself out of the community you crave.

Maybe if you stop showing up, you'll be less liked.

Maybe you'll be forgotten about altogether.

Maybe if you stop trying, the relationship will cease.

Maybe if you stop texting, your phone will stay dark for days and weeks.

Maybe if you stop loving someone, the love between you will dissolve.

That doesn't mean you ruined a relationship. It means that the only thing sustaining a relationship was the energy you and you alone were putting into it.

**That's not love. That's attachment.**

The most precious, important thing that you have in your life is your energy. It is not your time that is limited, it is your

energy. What you give it to each day is what you will create more and more of in your life. What you give your time to is what will define your existence.

When you realize this, you'll begin to understand why you're so anxious when you spend your time with people who are wrong for you, and in jobs or places or cities that are wrong, too.

You'll begin to realize that the foremost important thing you can do for your life and yourself and everyone you know is to protect your energy more fiercely than anything else.

Make your life a safe haven in which only people that have the capacity to care and listen and connect are allowed.

You are not responsible for saving people.

You are not responsible for convincing them they want to be saved.

It is not your job to show up for people and give away your life to them, little by little, moment by moment, because you pity them, because you feel bad, because you "should," because you're obligated, because, at the root of it all, you're afraid to not be liked back.

**It is your job to realize that you are the master of your fate, and that you are accepting the love you think you're worthy of.**

Decide you're deserving of real friendship, true commitment and complete love with people who are healthy and thriving.

Then wait in the darkness, just for a little bit...

...And watch how quickly everything begins to change.

## 7 PSYCHOLOGICAL BIASES *that are* MAKING *you* RESIST *your* OWN GROWTH

Growth is hard.

Sometimes, it's downright terrifying.

It requires us to take an honest look at ourselves, to abandon what we've known, and to suspend ourselves in uncertainty without knowing when we'll ever find the next step.

What this means is that we will remain what we have always been unless we consciously choose to become something else. Sure, everyone evolves and adapts over time, but if you aren't intentional about it, you'll end up the product of who and what is around you as opposed to an authentic expression of who *you* really are.

Growth is a required assignment.

The only question is *when* we do it, and how long it takes for us to realize that we often have to defy some of our instincts in order to create a better reality for ourselves.

Here are a few of those unconscious fears that prevent us from becoming all that we possibly can be, and how they might specifically be affecting you.

## 01 | You have become comfortable being uncomfortable.

In the same way that too much of a decadent dessert can overwhelm the taste buds and become unappealing, we reject intense emotional highs when we aren't used to them.

Gay Hendricks, author of *The Big Leap*, calls this hitting this your “upper limit.”

His theory is that people have a predisposed tolerance for happiness, and when our emotions exceed that limit, we begin to unconsciously self-sabotage in order to bring ourselves back to a more comfortable baseline.

*Any change, no matter how positive, will be uncomfortable until it is also familiar.*

Any time you're looking to make a significant positive change in your life, a mindset shift must accompany it. If you don't believe you deserve to feel good, you'll limit your capacity for experiencing good things. If you're not used to life being easy, you'll make it hard to anchor yourself back down to what you're familiar with.

Overcoming this is not a matter of overwhelming your system with positivity.

It's actually a process of grounding yourself, expressing gratitude, and shifting your belief system to reflect the idea that you are allowed to feel good, you are allowed to create goodness in your life, and you deserve the beautiful things that are blossoming—you don't need to keep uprooting them.

## 02 | You don't know all your options yet.

The human mind cannot accurately predict what it hasn't yet known.

When you imagine a potential outcome for your life, what you're really envisioning is a solution to a past experience, a feeling you've had before and would like to maintain. What you cannot account for are the things that you wouldn't think to ask for, because you don't know that you want them.

*Real growth requires genuine exploration, a period of trial and error. It requires you to first admit that you might not know what you want.*

This uncertainty is an unnerving experience, so most people avoid it completely. They numb out their fear of the unknown with mind-consuming activities, failing to realize that without allowing oneself to accept the unknown, the answers will always remain at bay. Instead of trying to construct an experience of happiness, we can find it in the moment if we're gearing our mindset to appreciating what we already have instead of planning how to acquire what we don't.

Through this, we inch closer to what it is that actually makes us feel best, not what appears best or "should" be right from the outside looking in.

### **03 | You believe that negative potential outcomes are more likely than the positive ones.**

When you imagine all of the possible outcomes for your life, the negative options probably seem more real than the positive ones. This is because of negativity bias, which is where we are inclined to believe that bad things are more real than good things, because we're more afraid of them.

Because one appears as a threat and the other doesn't, our attention naturally gravitates toward what we feel we need to be more aware of. However, it has the opposite effect of self-defense. When we believe too much in our negativity biases, we end up resisting change, taking fewer chances, and overall adjusting to a less optimistic outlook on life.

Negativity bias limits us not because we aren't able to be realistic, but because we don't understand that positive outcomes are often *more likely* than worst case scenarios, they just aren't as emotionally triggering.

#### **04 | You're staying loyal to what you've put a lot of time into, even if it's not what's really right for you long-term.**

You're most inclined to stick to what you've invested in the most, even if it's unviable long-term, and even if a better opportunity is presenting itself.

This is because of sinking cost fallacy.

What this bias prevents us from seeing is that *the ship is sinking anyway*, and every additional ounce of effort, time or resource that we put into it is yet another bit that we lose. We can't salvage it just because we've spent so much time believing in it. Sometimes, even the things we've given everything to are just not what's best for us long-term.

It's hard to let go, but it's harder not to.

#### **05 | You are giving precedence to what you believed first.**

The brain tends to prioritize and overvalue whatever it is that we did, knew, saw or learned first.

This makes it hard for us to change course.

Your very first approach and assessment of your career prospects are anchoring what you believe is possible today. Your very first introduction to certain geographical areas or types of people is likely the same way.

Whatever you were exposed to first or believed in first is going to take precedence in your mind. It's important that you're aware of this, because when a better option presents itself, you have to be able to see it for what it is.

## **06 | You're making a long-term assessment based on a short-term experience.**

When you declare that you'll never find love because you just went through a breakup, or consider yourself fundamentally awful looking because you're not loving your outfit today, or you're sinking in the feeling that you'll never find your way in life because you feel lost right now, what you're doing is extrapolating.

Extrapolation is the projection of a single experience into a long-term assumption about life.

*“This moment is not your life, this is a moment in your life.”—Ryan Holiday*

What you're not realizing is that just because you're temporarily having a negative experience does not mean that it will define the rest of your life in the way that you fear it will.

What you're really saying is that you can't see a way out of your current circumstances because in some way, *you don't completely control them.*

Instead of trying to form a definitive statement about how life is or isn't or will or won't be based on your temporary circumstances, try to see them for what they really are: an experience you're having currently, that will eventually fade out, as all others do.

**07 | You're using self-reflection as an escape mechanism, rather than a way to actually change your life.**

When we begin something new in our lives, it's almost always because we have a revelation about it, or ourselves.

We realize that we need to course-correct, we have an "aha!" moment about the people we want to be, we let go of what's holding us back, we find courage, and we embark upon our new path.

This is often where people find themselves in a slump.

While many people think the process of releasing the past and embracing the future is scary, it's also very freeing. So freeing, in fact, that the high of having epiphanies and life-changing realizations can sometimes eclipse the actual implementation of them.

The honest truth is that no matter what you choose to do or be in life, to do it well and long-term, everything will become boring and monotonous at some point or another. That's sometimes the reality of life. While you'll undoubtedly feel more peace and fulfillment pursuing what's really right for you, you're going to have down days, you're going to have periods of burnout, you're going to have moments of second guessing yourself, and you're absolutely going to realize that it's often far more exciting and thrilling to decide to totally



uproot and start again than it is to simply stick with the path day-in and day-out.



## ABOUT *the* AUTHOR

BRIANNA WIEST is the bestselling author of *101 Essays That Will Change The Way You Think* and *The Mountain Is You*. Her work on mindfulness, spirituality and self-improvement has appeared in publications such as *Forbes*, *The Huffington Post*, *USA Today* and *Thought Catalog*, where she is currently a partner. Brianna is also the author of two poetry collections, *Salt Water: Poems On Healing & Wholeness*, and *Ceremony: Poetry & Prose*. Her life's work is to help people activate their potential by rewriting their inner narratives with more alignment, truth and purpose.

[briannawiest.com](http://briannawiest.com)

[twitter.com/briannawiest](https://twitter.com/briannawiest)

[instagram.com/briannawiest](https://www.instagram.com/briannawiest)



Thought Catalog Books is a publishing imprint of Thought Catalog, a digital magazine for thoughtful storytelling, and is owned and operated by The Thought & Expression Company, an independent media group based in Brooklyn, NY. Founded in 2010, we are committed to helping people become better communicators and listeners to engender a more exciting, attentive, and imaginative world. As a publisher and media platform, we help creatives all over the world realize their artistic vision and share it in print and digital forms with audiences across the globe.

[ThoughtCatalog.com](https://ThoughtCatalog.com) | **Thoughtful Storytelling**

[ShopCatalog.com](https://ShopCatalog.com) | **Shop Books + Curated Products**

MORE FROM

BRIANNA WIEST

CEREMONY

SALT WATER

THE MOUNTAIN IS YOU

I AM THE HERO OF MY OWN LIFE

101 ESSAYS THAT WILL CHANGE  
THE WAY YOU THINK



BROOKLYN, NY

# When You're Ready, This Is How You Heal

by Brianna Wiest

Buy The Book

[shopc.at/how-you-heal](https://shopc.at/how-you-heal)

THOUGHT  
CATALOG  
Books

—shop  
catalog

[instagram.com/thoughtcatalog](https://www.instagram.com/thoughtcatalog)  
[tiktok.com/@thoughtcatalog](https://www.tiktok.com/@thoughtcatalog)

[instagram.com/shopcatalog](https://www.instagram.com/shopcatalog)  
[tiktok.com/@shopcatalog](https://www.tiktok.com/@shopcatalog)

WHEN YOU'RE READY

THIS  
*is*  
HOW  
*you*  
HEAL

A COLLECTION FROM THE BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF  
*101 Essays That Will Change The Way You Think*

BRIANNA WIEST

Here  
Is Where  
I Heal

I AM  
MY OWN  
LOVE

WHEN YOU'RE READY

THIS  
is  
HOW  
you  
HEAL

A COLLECTION FROM THE BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF  
101 Essays That Will Change The Way You Think

BRIANNA WIEST

WHEN YOU'RE READY

THIS  
*is*  
HOW  
*you*  
HEAL

A COLLECTION FROM THE BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF  
*101 Essays That Will Change The Way You Think*

BRIANNA WIEST





WHEN YOU'RE READY

THIS  
*is*  
HOW  
*you*  
HEAL

A COLLECTION FROM THE BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF  
*101 Essays That Will Change The Way You Think*

BRIANNA WIEST



WHEN YOU'RE READY

# THIS is HOW you HEAL

AN ANTI-INFLAMMATORY APPROACH TO THE BEST TIPS FROM THE #1 BESTSELLER 'THE WAY YOU HEAL'  
BRIANNA WEST

