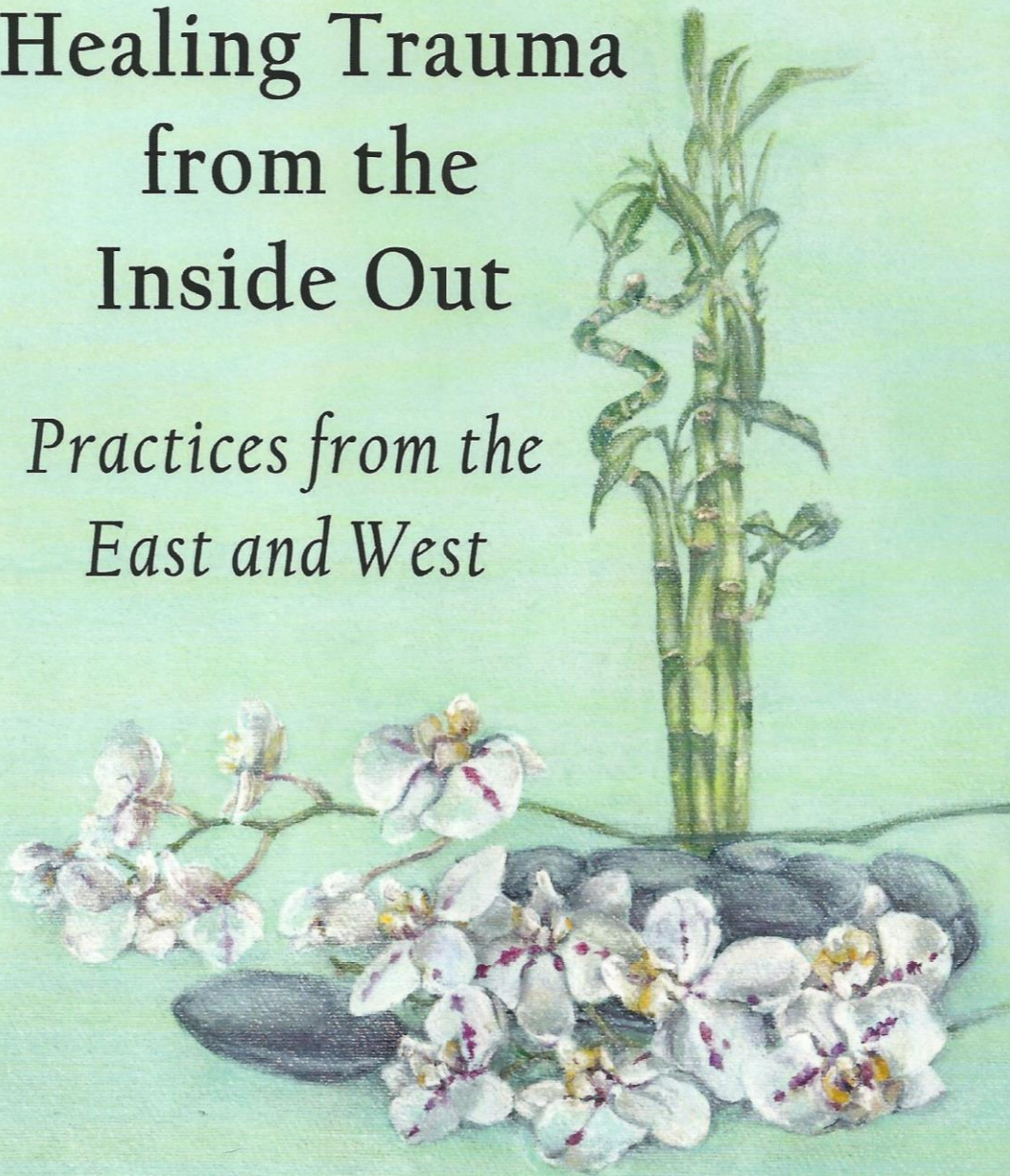


# Healing Trauma from the Inside Out

*Practices from the  
East and West*



**Pamela Tinkham, MSW, LCSW**

with Linda Mortenson

Foreward by Rev. Dr. Nadja Fidelia

## A Course In Miracles

by David Asomaning, PhD

*"We are all entitled to miracles."*

—adapted from Lesson 77 of  
*A Course In Miracles*

To broaden our topic entitled *Miracles*, I invited my mentor, David Asomaning PhD, to write about *A Course In Miracles*. Dave is the founder of SynchroMind, a leadership development firm. SynchroMind's miracle-minded executive coaching, consulting, and mastermind seminar programs use holistic blends of some of the best entrepreneurial, psychoanalytic, and spiritual disciplines available today. These best practices are used to support miracle-minded leaders, entrepreneurs, CEOs, and people from all walks of life, to design and achieve their highest aspirations synchronistically and miraculously. Dave is also the founder of The Billionaire Life, a division of SynchroMind that focuses on leadership development in relation to billionaires.

Dave is a graduate of Yale University where he majored in biology. He has graduate degrees from Hartford Seminary and the Yale Divinity School, together with a diploma in Anglican Studies from Berkeley Divinity



School at Yale, and a teaching certificate from Southern Connecticut State University. He received clinical training in individual, couples, marriage and family, and group psychotherapy and spirituality at The Blanton-Peale Graduate Institute in New York City, where his clinical work focused on synchronicity and the miraculous. In 2003, he completed a PhD in depth psychology and religion at Union Theological Seminary in New York City with a dissertation entitled, *Signs and Wonders: The Relationship Between Synchronicity and the Miraculous in Depth Psychology and Religion*.

The following is an account in his words:

### **ACIM and My Traumatic Illness**

On Monday, February 17, 2014, I was admitted to the emergency room of the main hospital in Vero Beach, Florida, with huge swollen calves, ankles, and feet. For two weeks before this, I had been having difficulty breathing, sleeping, or keeping food down, and I felt a deep abiding inner panic that nothing seemed to quell.

I had no idea what was going on except that I kept thinking my spiritual and psychological work on myself was surfacing some deeply buried trauma. I figured this trauma was related to several claustrophobic panic attacks I had had as a kid, and that I needed to work on some more. Within 24 hours of being in the hospital, I was diagnosed with congestive heart failure and arrhythmia. I was informed I would need open heart surgery to fix a

faulty heart valve and correct the arrhythmia.

I was aghast at this diagnosis. I tried to explain to the cardiologists that there had to be some spiritual and psychological explanation for what was happening; and that surely we could approach this whole situation in a more holistic way; that open heart surgery was too radical and was not really called for. I was met by the specialists with firm retorts about the dire consequences, including an increasingly malfunctioning heart and possible death that were awaiting me if I delayed in having the surgery.

As a long time student and teacher of *A Course In Miracles* (ACIM), I knew deep down inside, that what the heart specialists were proposing as the solution to my heart problem, would only really be addressing my symptoms. I knew that the deeper solution involved my applying the principles of ACIM to this impending catastrophe so that I could experience a true miracle of healing and a lasting cure.

Since I was getting nowhere with the cardiologists about my spiritual and psychological approach to my serious heart problems, and they had scheduled my surgery for Friday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, I doubled down to wage a private campaign to turn things around. I realized with dismay that although I was accustomed to using ACIM regularly in my executive coaching work for team building and conflict resolution, I had no confident idea how ACIM might apply to such a catastrophic diagnosis as mine.

I had my laptop with me in the hospital, and so I started researching online what ACIM teaches directly about how to turn such dire medical conditions into

miracles. I was convinced that there was a way to experience a miracle in this situation, if only I could find and apply the right principles in the right way before my fast-approaching surgery.

Eventually, in my online research, I came across Judy Edwards Allen's *The Five Stages of Getting Well*, and ordered it through Amazon.com. When it arrived I raced through it, and learned how Allen had applied principles from ACIM to her terminal cancer diagnosis, and had eventually experienced complete remission.

Allen's book helped me zero in on Lesson 136 in ACIM which says "Sickness is a defense against the truth." I was grateful for the guidance her book was providing me on what ACIM taught her about healing from her supposedly terminal illness. However, I was unnerved by the fact that in my almost 20 years of studying and teaching ACIM, I had no real idea about this pivotal lesson. I had no idea how to apply the principles of healing embedded in the lesson so that I could experience a miracle and be healed, and also avoid what I considered to be an unnecessary and, indeed, abhorrent surgery.

In essence, I worked diligently to understand and apply Lesson 136 to my traumatic experience of congestive heart failure, and the impending open heart surgery from which there seemed no escape. I began to understand, dimly at first, then more clearly, that Lesson 136, and Allen's book, were teaching me that I had chosen to be sick in this way on a deep subconscious level. I learned that this sickness was my way of competing with God by proving, through the suffering of my sickness, that I was



more powerful than God. I learned that my agenda in all of this was to prove that if I could suffer and even die through this experience, I would have won the power struggle I was in with God.

During one particularly long night in which I wrestled with these emerging understandings, I asked God again, as I had done several times before, why this was happening to me, and what I could do about it. With all my recent study of Allen's book, and her experience with her terminal diagnosis, and my accelerated learning about principles of healing from ACIM, I had become much more open to an answer from God. The answer I heard was that as a teenager I had vowed that I was willing to be crucified as a show of my willingness to follow Jesus no matter the cost. In my conversation with God, I was told that this vow on my part was completely unnecessary, and that I had a deep misunderstanding of what it really means to follow Jesus. I came to understand that my sickness was actually my very distorted way of competing with God and Jesus rather than following them—i.e., that I was using my sickness and suffering to hide and disguise my power struggle with God and Jesus.

The next thing I remember was God telling me that if I would give up my misplaced need to sacrifice myself through crucifixion I would no longer be crucified through the open heart surgery. Upon hearing this, I immediately disavowed all of my earlier years-long dedication to crucifixion, and pledged to follow God and Jesus in truth as I was being helped to understand this.

That night, I went to sleep exhausted with this

intense battle to undo my pledges to suffer, and when I woke up a few hours later in the early morning, I collected my urine as usual in the plastic container I had become quite used to for this purpose. To my horror and deep disappointment, my urine that morning was blood red. Inside, I cried out to God, "How could this be? I've put so much effort into studying ACIM over the last couple of weeks while here in the hospital, in order to experience a miracle, and be healed, and this is the pitiful result of all my work? I now have a new problem with my kidney in addition to my heart problems?" What a nightmare!

I was frustrated, angry, and scared, and was still fuming when the first nurse of the morning came in to check on me. I told her about the blood in my urine, and she passed the news on to the three heart specialists who had been working with me. As each of these specialists came into my room that morning on their rounds, they voiced concern over the blood in my urine, and then admitted that because of this development, it would not be feasible to proceed with the surgery as planned. It then dawned on me that the blood in my urine was a significant miracle in this entire nightmare; that this was God's physical empirical way of getting the medical experts to stand down from their plans for my surgery, where I had failed to convince them with my psycho-spiritual formulations. My mood changed with this realization that my bleeding kidney was God's best way under the circumstances to block the surgery, and that the work I had done in rescinding my vows to suffer crucifixion had been honored almost immediately, although in a way

that took me a few hours to understand. WOW!!

I had been scheduled for surgery on Friday, February 28, but now with my right kidney bleeding, the surgery was indeed suspended. This cancellation happened just a couple of days before February 28. What a reprieve!

Due to the fact that the various complications from the congestive heart failure and the arrhythmia (such as way too high heart rate, fluctuating heart rate, vulnerability to blood clots and thus stroke, and also a chance of sudden death from cardiac arrest), had been brought under control by medications, I was sent home on Friday, March 7. The understanding was that the kidney problem would be fixed on an out-patient basis so I could then return for the surgery in several weeks.

I was under doctor's orders to take things very slowly while at home, and to avoid, for example, going up and down any stairs, or doing anything strenuous or stressful, this, given that sometimes, when I had been at my worst, I couldn't even sit upright in a chair in the hospital for more than 5 minutes without beginning to get dizzy on the way to losing consciousness entirely.

The next phase was a busy time seeing various specialists on an out-patient basis to continue working on getting ready for the surgery, while I also continued strengthening my new found understandings of ACIM and miraculous healing.

In a completely surprising turn of events, I was told on Tuesday, April 4 that due to my improving symptoms, the surgery was probably no longer needed. I was told that this assessment had to be confirmed with an



echocardiogram which was done on Wednesday, April 5, and which then confirmed for the three specialists I was seeing that the surgery was no longer called for. This is because my heart rhythm and rate had both gone back to normal, and the damaged valve had also gone back to a mostly normal condition. Also, I no longer had any bleeding from my kidney, and the underlying problem there had become somewhat secondary for the time being.

Also, after about a total of eight weeks off from my regular work schedule, I started to ease back into my executive coaching work.

As you can imagine, I was truly amazed and delighted by this miraculous turn of events, and I am full of joy and gratitude to know that there is definitely a trustworthy way out of the hell of such traumatic torments.

### **ACIM, Trauma, The Ego, The Body, and Miracles**

ACIM teaches that presiding over our stuck-ness in trauma and nightmares is the ego. This is not Freud's ego, or Jung's ego, nor the ego that most people refer to as the harbinger of everyday conceit, narcissism, arrogance, and self-centeredness. ACIM's ego is a brutal, destructive, sinister, malicious, deceptive, and ultimately illusory part of every human mind, and is also the source of each and every collective trauma humanity suffers from: genocide, the threat of nuclear annihilation, war, poverty, racism, social injustice, mass shootings, terrorism, all mental and

physical disease, and every other conceivable malaise of any kind. The way out of such nightmarish, yet ultimately, illusory individual and collective trauma of any kind, is through the miraculous healing of the individual and collective negativity contained in the individual and the collective psyche by the Inner Divine Source available to all.

Miracles are the results of shifts in perception through the power of this Divine Source within us, shifts in perception which can solve any problem for us no matter how impossible the problem seems to solve. The physical space-time, energy-matter continuum our bodies are a part of, is an ego-based illusion, which the Divine Source is completely free from. When we tune into the Divine Source, even for a moment, a Holy Instant, we are also free from the limits of the body and the physical world. Understanding and applying all this effectively so that life becomes a consistent series of Holy Instants, takes work and devotion over time, what ACIM refers to as mind training.

In ACIM, psychotherapists at their best, are in touch with the Divine Source within, which leads to moments of freedom from all the limits of the ego (Holy Instants). In this way therapists impart this freedom from all limits to their patients and clients, although it is the actual experience of the therapist's freedom from ego limits and trauma that liberates the client rather than the words the therapist speaks. Also, in this way, anyone who is in touch with this state of freedom from ego limits and trauma (even for just a moment), becomes a therapist (whether or not they are actually a psychotherapist), who helps to



set others free, in the same way that Allen's experience of freedom from ego and body limits as captured in her book about her miraculous healing helped heal me and to set me free miraculously.

## Reference

Asomaning, David. "A Course in Miracles." In [\*Healing Trauma from the Inside Out: Practices from the East and West\*](#). Pamela Tinkham, LLC, 2016. Pamela Tinkham.