

## We could use some personal self-healing

by MARK PAVILONS

Let's face it, humans are frail creatures who suffer countless emotional and physical wounds in our lifetime.

While these scars may not be our fault, our healing rests with us.

Byron Katie once noted that a clear mind "heals everything that needs to be healed." And the late, great Leonard Cohen said everything has a crack "that's how the light gets in."

We seldom find peace or happiness in the places we lost these precious commodities. Often, we don't even know how or when the events took place. But something, somewhere along the line, things changed inside of us.

And this change either sparked renewed focus and creativity, or was left festering at the back of our minds, the pits of our stomachs.

There's no question we all have "cracks," and some part of us that needs mending. Identifying it is the first step. Digging deeper is another. And then deciding on a path, opening new doors, leads us somewhere new, and hopefully exciting.

The human condition has been the focus of study for hundreds, if not thousands of years. From the "Father of Western Philosophy" Socrates to Sigmund Freud, who founded psychoanalysis, the human psyche has been studied, evaluated and quantified.

Many have followed and propelled these intangible practices into bona fide science.

There's no doubt that when learned men delved into the human mind and host of emotions, that skeptics pointed fingers and raised eyebrows. Exploring the unique package that a person is has led to countless modern practices and forms of healing or self-improvement.

Joe Dispenza notes that "the moment you start feeling whole and grateful is when your brain starts to begin healing."

It's almost contradictory that the smarter and more advanced we become as a society, the sicker we are as individuals. Stress and anxiety are at all-time highs, leading a host of emotional and physical ailments. The term "stress will kill you" is absolutely correct.

Modern medicine treats anxiety, depression, social awkwardness with pharmaceuticals. We have become dull to our pain and the real reasons we harbour such destructive demons.

As a veteran journalist, I've encountered literally thousands of unique souls over the years. I've learned from very knowledgeable academics and listened to those on the fringe. I've soaked up the energy and enthusiasm of those considering not mainstream. As a Boomer, I've lived through several decades, where things like natural medicine, homeopathy, self-help lectures, crystals and the power of positive thoughts have become part of our beautiful mosaic.

More and more of our fellow men and women are looking at alternatives to complement their lives and wellness journey.

I've experienced the serene pain of yoga; the calm of meditation; the blissful feeling of Reiki and the impact of acupuncture. I've read countless articles on proper diet and the benefits of herbal supplements. I've been lost in thought during rigorous exercise bouts and sweated out impurities during backyard chores.

I turn to writing down my thoughts as a cathartic practice, one that often lets the steam out of the pressure cooker that is my mind.

I've been one with Mother Nature, and find solace in a dog falling asleep in my lap.

I've always been open to the 'unconventional' and I love the paranormal. I believe everyone needs more spirituality in their lives, a sense of oneness with the universe if you will. If that comes from religion, fine. If it arises out of self-exploration, great. If you need a nudge, or a kick to become less skeptical, nice.

Like expanding one's pallet, I believe in trying everything, at least once.

Some philosophers note that when one's confusion dissipates, so does suffering.

We all see through a certain lens - our personal aperture. This is formed by our experiences, upbringing, exposure, education and awareness. Each person sees things a bit differently. But we can find common ground in a lot of things. We are all basically brothers and sisters, after all.

But this lens dictates how we see life, and the world we live in.

Isaac Asimov said our assumptions are our windows on the world. 'Scrub them off every once in a while, or the light won't come in,' he said.

I have always been jealous of those who find joy, inner awareness so easily. I wish there was a secret potion that could give us all clarity of thought and purpose.

Aristotle reminds us that the 'true purpose of tragedy is to purify the passion.'

One of the real travesties of human existence is that we are in a constant fight for our lives, physically or emotionally.

I am in the biggest struggle I will ever have and I hope that modern medicine, a better lifestyle and positive attitude will give me what I need to heal.

If that means listening to the unique sound of a rain stick, so be it.

Kierkegaard prescribed silence as the remedy for all the ills of the modern world.

Rest, recover, renew, repeat.

In our digital world, maybe the best advice is to 'unfollow' yourself and just let go. Instead of 'noise,' maybe we should fill the void with the sounds of silence.

Heal first, then choose your next chapter.