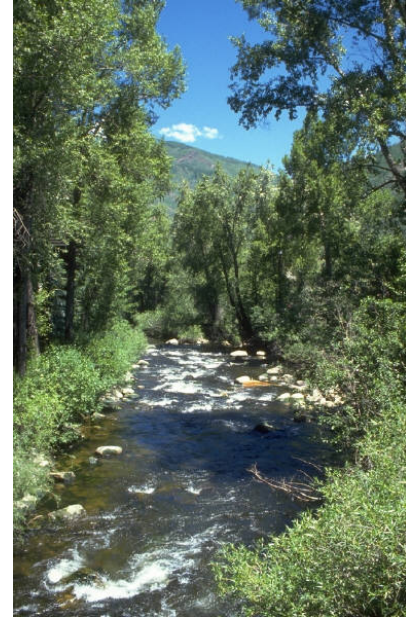


## REMEMBERING WHY WE HEAL

Healing is like wading through troubled waters. I used to swim in some beautiful rivers when I was younger. What I loved most about them was their complexity – their changing expression from mile to mile.

The river seems to me a perfect metaphor for the healing process. It flows through wilderness. It has mighty power in some spots. In others it is more like a stream. It becomes treacherous in certain places.

To get to the serenity of the river's slow-flowing, steady waters, sometimes you have to negotiate rapids, currents and unpredictable depths. The rapids can batter you, the currents can threaten you and the depths can scare you.



Sometimes you just do not want to do it. Time to pack up the swimming bag and go home.

Like the river, some stretches of the healing journey follow a demanding course. They ask a lot of you. Sometimes it seems they ask too much. When the pain you are asked to feel seems too intense to bear; when the challenges seem too frightening and the tasks are overwhelming, remember one thing. Remember why you chose to heal.

You chose to heal because you believe there is a better life for you. Even more importantly, you believe you deserve that life and you believe you can get that life. Otherwise, you would never have begun your journey. Within you, no matter how tiny, there is a kernel of belief. To have taken the first step of your journey, you had to acknowledge the presence of hope and belief within you, even if you did it unconsciously.

It's when healing becomes intensely demanding that we are most likely to get bogged down in the hardship and forget why we chose to heal in the first place. We forget that the journey has a purpose.

These are the easiest times to stop, and the most important times to call to mind the reasons you are on the road. You want a better life. You believe you deserve a better life. You believe you can get a better life.

These are powerful truths. Take a few moments every day to remind yourself of them. Don't let them get sucked away from you by currents of pain. Don't let

them get squashed under the pressure of challenge. Keep them close to the surface of your awareness. Hold on to them. They are your raft. They'll help carry you through the troubled waters. They'll get you to that beautiful place of serenity.

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