

WHEN THERAPY ISN'T ENOUGH:

**5 UNEXPECTED  
WAYS GRIEF  
AND TRAUMA  
AFFECT YOUR  
MIND, BODY  
& SPIRIT**



And How to Heal Naturally

KAREN SIBAL

# The truth is:

Your body is not betraying you.

*It's speaking..* You've done everything right. Months of therapy. Processing emotions. Learning coping skills. Following all the advice.

And yet your body is still breaking.

Insomnia. Mystery pain. Digestive chaos. Chest pain. Panic attacks. Exhaustion that rest doesn't fix. A heaviness doctors and lab tests can't explain.

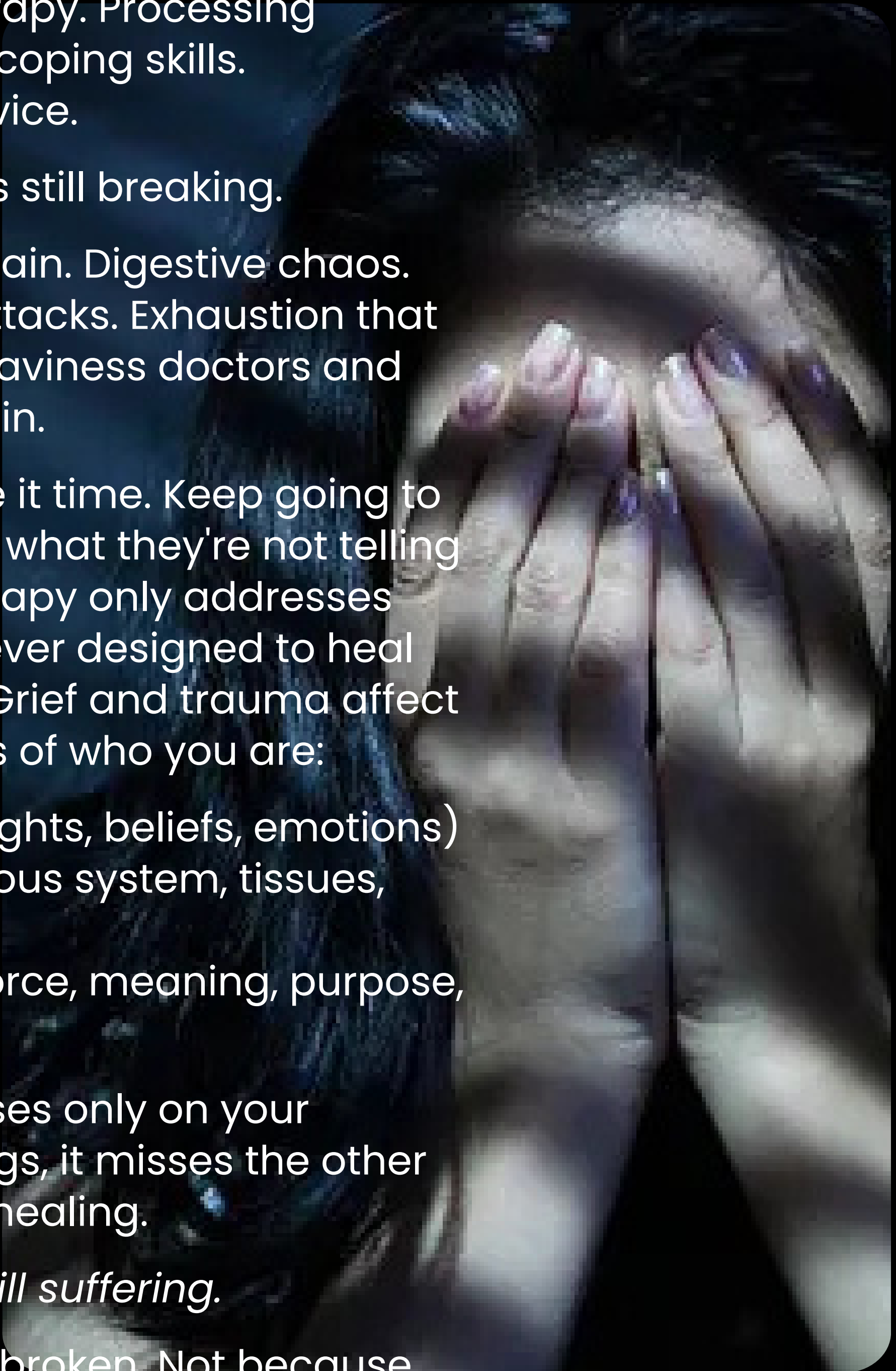
Everyone says: "Give it time. Keep going to therapy." But here's what they're not telling you: Traditional therapy only addresses your mind. It was never designed to heal your body or spirit. Grief and trauma affect all three dimensions of who you are:

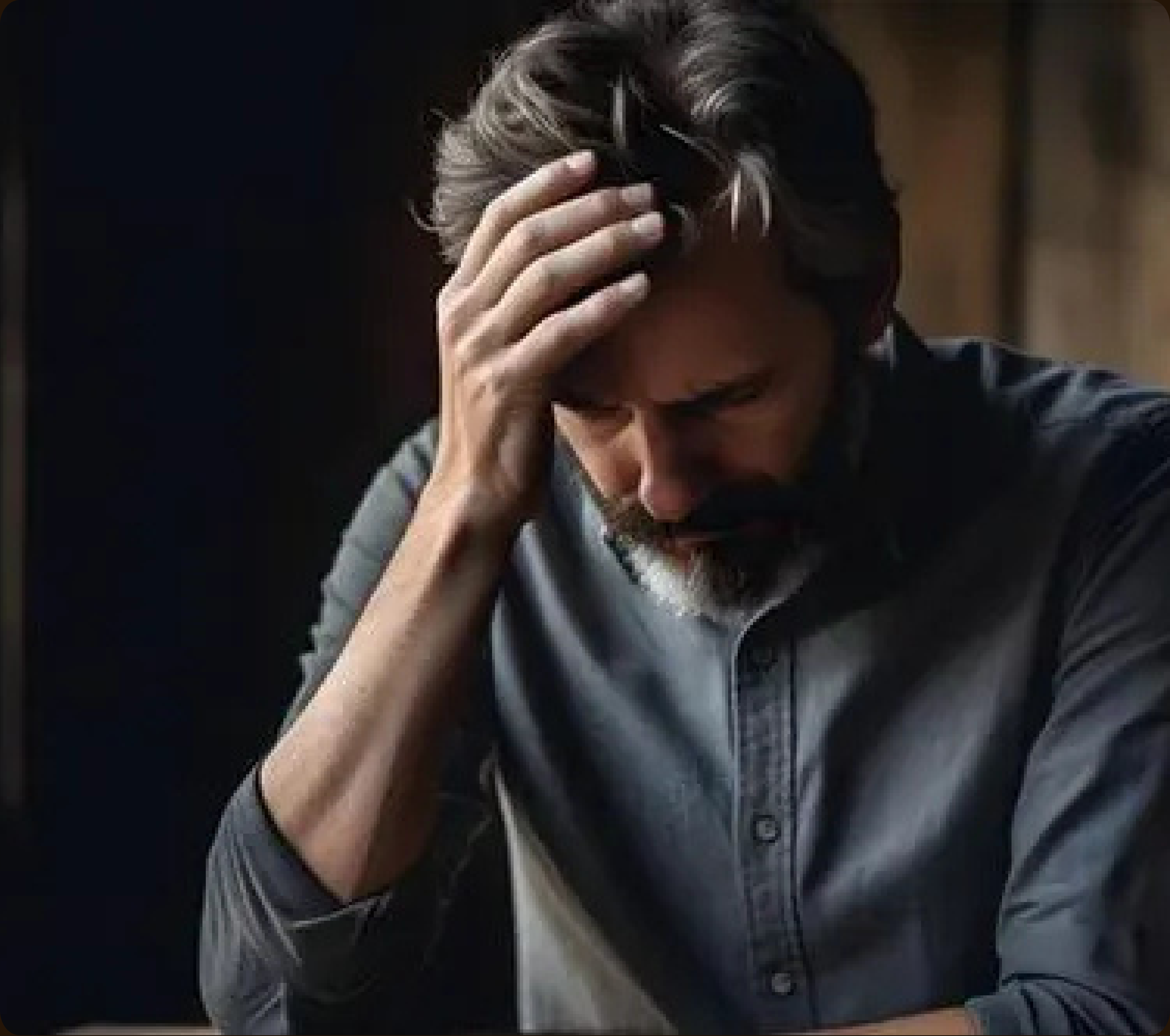
- Your mind (thoughts, beliefs, emotions)
- Your body (nervous system, tissues, organs, cells)
- Your spirit (life force, meaning, purpose, connection).

When therapy focuses only on your thoughts and feelings, it misses the other 80% of what needs healing.

*This is why you're still suffering.*

Not because you're broken. Not because therapy failed. But because you need holistic healing that addresses your mind, body, AND spirit—all together, in one integrated approach.



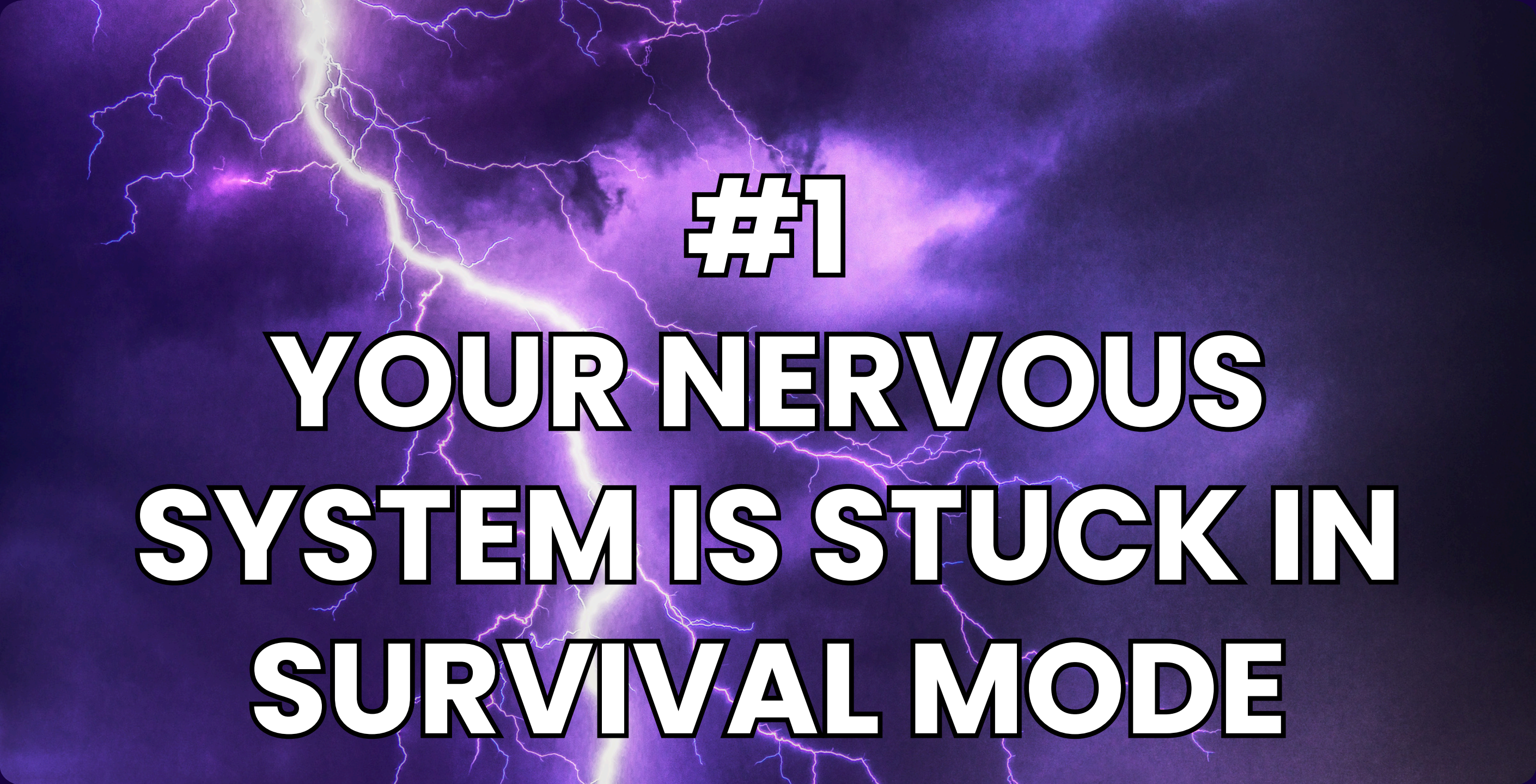


# In this guide...

## **What You'll Discover:**

- 5 unexpected ways grief affects your entire being (that traditional therapy doesn't address)
- Why your nervous system is stuck (and how to release it)
- Simple daily practices to heal all three dimensions
- A complete holistic approach that goes beyond talk therapy

*You deserve healing that addresses all of you—not just your mind.*



# #1

# YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM IS STUCK IN SURVIVAL MODE

Your body won't let you relax. Here's why it's stuck.

## **What this looks like:**

- Constant vigilance (always scanning for danger)
- Insomnia or nightmares (body won't be vulnerable enough to sleep)
- Digestive shutdown (nausea, IBS, loss of appetite)
- Heart racing, shallow breathing, tension that won't release

## **The hard truth:**


Talking cannot convince your nervous system it's safe.

When you experience loss or betrayal, your nervous system goes into threat mode. Even after the crisis ends—after the funeral, after the conflict—your body doesn't know the danger has passed. It stays stuck in fight-flight-freeze.

Traditional therapy works with your conscious mind through conversation and cognitive techniques. But your nervous system operates below conscious awareness—in your physical body. No amount of talking or reframing thoughts will reset a dysregulated nervous system.

**You have to speak to your body in the language it understands: sensation, breath, movement, and grounding.**

This is where holistic healing comes in—using ancient wisdom (Ayurveda, yoga) combined with modern science (nervous system regulation, somatic practices) to address what talk therapy cannot reach.



# The Practice: Grounding Through Your Feet

## Daily practice (3–5 minutes):

1. Stand barefoot on grass, soil, snow (yes), or floor
2. Feel your full weight in your feet
3. Imagine roots growing deep into the earth
4. Breathe: Inhale 4 counts, exhale 6 counts
5. Say aloud: "I am here. I am safe. I am grounded."

## Why this works:

This directly activates your parasympathetic nervous system (rest-and-digest mode).

It sends the signal your brain desperately needs: *The danger has passed. You can relax now.*

# #2

## YOUR LIFE FORCE IS DEPLETED

Life feels colorless. This is why you feel depleted.

### **What this looks like:**

- Everything feels meaningless, flat, empty
- Going through motions but feeling dead inside
- Nothing brings joy anymore
- Profoundly disconnected from yourself and life

### **The hard truth:**

This isn't just depression. It's spiritual devastation. When someone you love dies—or your family betrays you in your darkest hour—it doesn't just break your heart. It breaks your sense of meaning, purpose, and connection to life itself. Traditional therapy may call this depression and offer antidepressants or cognitive behavioral techniques to challenge negative thoughts.

But what you're experiencing goes deeper than brain chemistry or thought patterns. This is the depletion of *Ojas*—your vital essence, your life force, the inner radiance that makes you feel alive.

In Ayurveda (ancient Indian medicine), *Ojas* is like the deepest reservoir of vitality. Grief drains it completely—like pulling a plant from soil. You can't access nourishment anymore. To restore your life force, you must nourish yourself at all three levels: mind, body, and spirit.

This requires an integrated approach that traditional therapy doesn't provide—one that combines psychological understanding with physical nourishment and spiritual reconnection.



# The Practice: Rebuild Your Vital Essence

## Daily Ojas-Building Foods:

### EAT MORE:

- Sweet (dates, sweet potatoes, ripe fruits)
- Heavy/grounding (whole grains, root vegetables, nuts)
- Nourishing fats (ghee, coconut oil, avocado, tahini)
- Cooked/warm (soups, stews, porridge)

### Simple meals:

- Warm oatmeal with dates, ghee, cinnamon
- Sweet potato soup with coconut milk
- Rice with cooked vegetables and tahini
- Warm milk with honey before bed

### AVOID WHEN GRIEVING:

- Processed/packaged foods (deplete life force)
- Raw, cold foods, ice water (hard to digest when depleted)
- Excessive caffeine and alcohol (overstimulate exhausted system)
- Screen time before bed (drains nervous system and blocks restoration)

### Why this works:

When your spirit is depleted, your body needs substance. These foods literally rebuild your vital essence from the inside out. This is nutritional medicine—not just "eating healthy," but using food as healing.

### Morning ritual (5 minutes):

1. Scrape your tongue (signals: healing begins now)
2. Place hand on heart, take 3 deep breaths
3. Say: "Today, I give myself what I need to heal."



# #3

# YOUR BODY IS HOLDING WHAT YOU COULDN'T PROCESS

**That pain isn't "in your head." It's in your tissues.**

What this looks like:

- Chronic pain (neck, shoulders, back, chest, jaw) with no medical cause
- Digestive issues
- Mystery illnesses doctors can't explain
- Autoimmune flares; frequent coughs, colds, infections
- Body feels heavy, tight, foreign

## **The hard truth:**

Your body is not malfunctioning. *It's speaking.* Trauma researcher Bessel van der Kolk discovered: "The body keeps the score."

Grief and trauma are stored in your muscles, fascia, organs, and cells. Your body literally holds the pain, shock, and betrayal. Until you address it at the physical body level, it stays stuck.

Traditional therapy addresses what you think and feel through conversation. But it cannot release what's trapped in your physical tissues.

Your body is saying: "I'm holding what you couldn't process. I'm carrying what you couldn't express. Please help me release it."

This is where somatic (body-based) practices become essential—using touch, movement, breath, and body awareness to release what talking cannot reach.

A person is shown from the side, performing a self-oil massage (Abhyanga) on their shoulder. They are holding a small bottle of oil in their right hand and applying it to their left shoulder with their left hand. The background is a warm, orange-toned wall.

# The Practice: Abhyanga (Self-Oil Massage)

**2-3x per week (10-15 minutes)::**

1. Warm sesame or coconut oil
2. Before shower, massage entire body with slow, loving strokes
3. Pay special attention to joints, feet, hands abdomen, scalp
4. Let oil soak 10-15 minutes
5. Shower with warm water

## **Why this works:**

Oil massage releases physical tension, calms your nervous system, and helps your body let go of stored trauma.

In Ayurveda, oil represents love—you're giving your body the care it's been craving.

The warmth and touch signal: *"You are safe. You are loved. You can release now."*

# #4

## YOUR MIND IS IN A PRISON OF RUMINATION

You can't think your way out of this. Here's why.

### **What this looks like:**

- Obsessive thoughts you can't control
- "What if" and "Why didn't I" loops that won't stop
- Brain fog, memory issues, inability to focus
- Your mind feels like it's betraying you


### **The hard truth:**

When your nervous system is dysregulated, your thinking brain goes offline. Your prefrontal cortex (rational thinking) shuts down. Your amygdala (fear center) takes over. No amount of cognitive restructuring works when your brain is in survival mode.

Traditional therapy teaches you to identify and challenge negative thought patterns. These are valuable skills—but they require access to your rational brain.

When your nervous system is flooded with stress hormones, you literally cannot access the part of your brain that does rational thinking. You must calm your nervous system and body first. Then your mind can come back online.

This is why a holistic approach addresses the body and nervous system directly—not just through talking, but through breath, movement, and somatic regulation—so your mind can actually benefit from psychological work.



# The Practice: Nadi Shodhana (Alternate Nostril Breathing)

**5-10 minutes daily (especially before bed):**

1. Sit comfortably, spine straight
2. Use right thumb to close right nostril
3. Inhale slowly through left nostril (count of 4)
4. Close left nostril with ring finger, open right
5. Exhale through right nostril (count of 4)
6. Inhale right, exhale left
7. Continue 5-10 rounds

## **Why this works:**

This ancient yogic practice balances both brain hemispheres, calms your nervous system, and stops mental spirals. It's like hitting "reset" on your overactive mind.

*When your breath is balanced, your mind follows.*

# #5

# YOU'RE DISCONNECTED FROM LIFE ITSELF

The loneliest feeling in the world: being here but not here.

## **What this looks like:**

- Intense loneliness that connection doesn't fix
- Feeling like no one understands
- Isolated—even from people who care about you
- You're fundamentally different now, separated from "normal" life

## **The hard truth:**

This is existential disconnection—and it requires more than traditional therapeutic approaches.

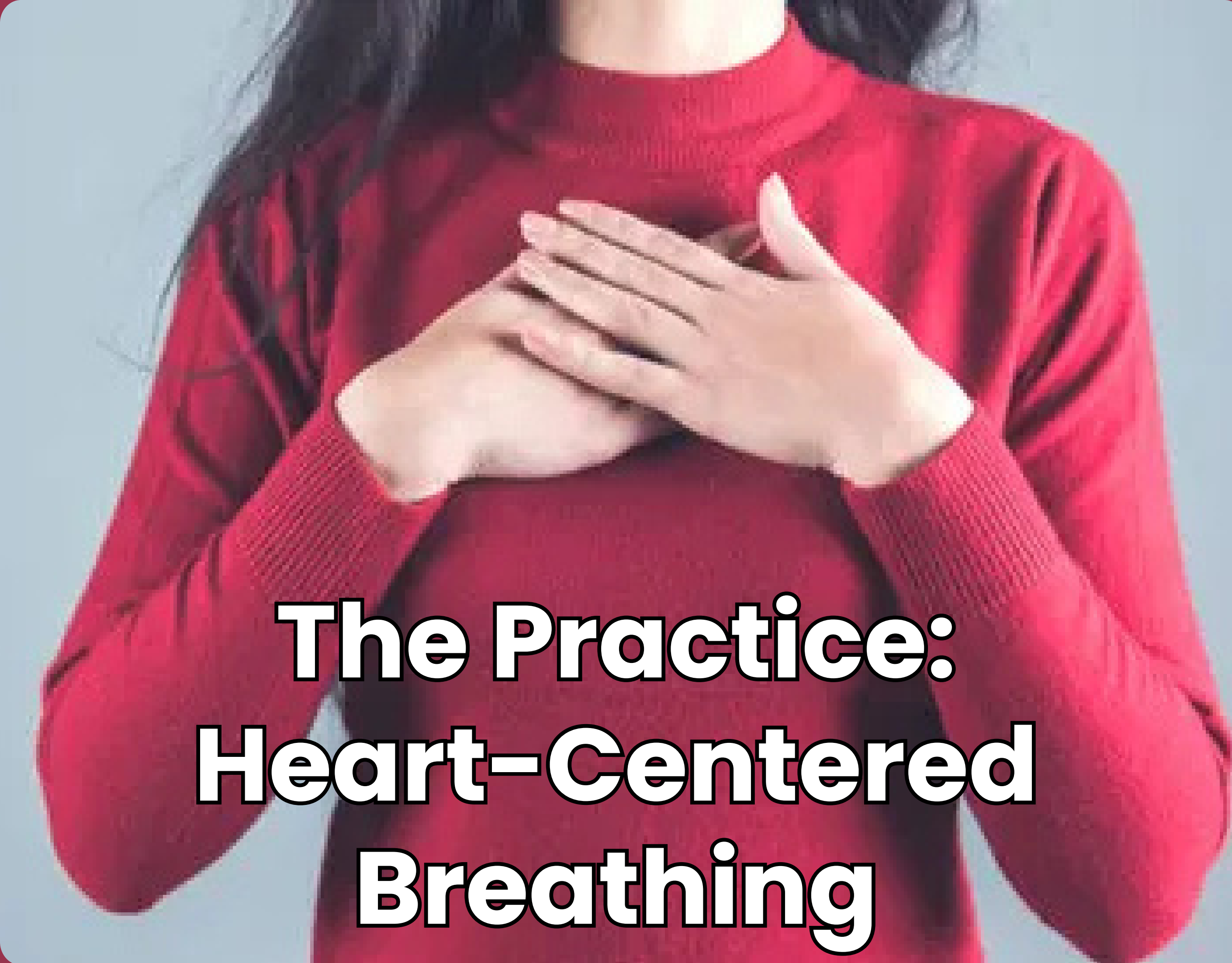
Grief and trauma disconnect you from:

- Your body (you feel numb, detached)
- Other people (you feel isolated, misunderstood)
- Life itself (you're watching from outside)
- Meaning and purpose (nothing makes sense anymore)

Traditional therapy can help you process feelings of loneliness and improve communication skills. But what you actually need is embodied reconnection—feeling your way back into your body, your relationships, and life itself.

**This is the loss of Prana—life force energy.** When Prana is blocked, you feel cut off from yourself, others, and the world.

A holistic approach addresses this through practices that restore your felt sense of connection—not just talking about connection, but experiencing it in your body and spirit.



# The Practice: Heart-Centered Breathing

**Try this for 5 minutes, anytime you feel alone:**

1. Sit or lie down, hand on heart
2. Close your eyes
3. Breathe naturally, feeling chest rise and fall
4. Inhale: breathe IN warmth, light, love
5. Exhale: breathe OUT loneliness, pain, isolation
6. Say silently: *"I am here. I am alive. I am not alone in my pain."*

**Why this works:**

This reconnects you to your own heartbeat—the most fundamental rhythm of life. Your heart has been beating for you since before birth.

*It hasn't stopped. Neither has your capacity to heal.*



# Why Holistic Healing Is The Complete Answer

Traditional therapy addresses your mind only. But you need ALL of you.

Traditional therapy focuses on:

- Processing emotions through talking
- Understanding patterns through insight
- Challenging unhelpful thoughts through cognitive techniques
- Feeling witnessed through the therapeutic relationship

This is valuable. But it's incomplete.

**Traditional therapy misses:**

- x Your dysregulated nervous system (body-level healing)
- x Physical symptoms + stored trauma in tissues (somatic release)
- x Depleted life force & vital essence (nutritional medicine)
- x Spiritual devastation/loss of meaning (existential healing)
- x The interconnection between mind, body, and spirit



# Holistic Integrated Healing Addresses ALL of You:

## **MIND:**

- Psychological understanding and emotional processing
- Positive psychology principles for resilience
- Family systems awareness (understanding relational dynamics)

## **BODY:**

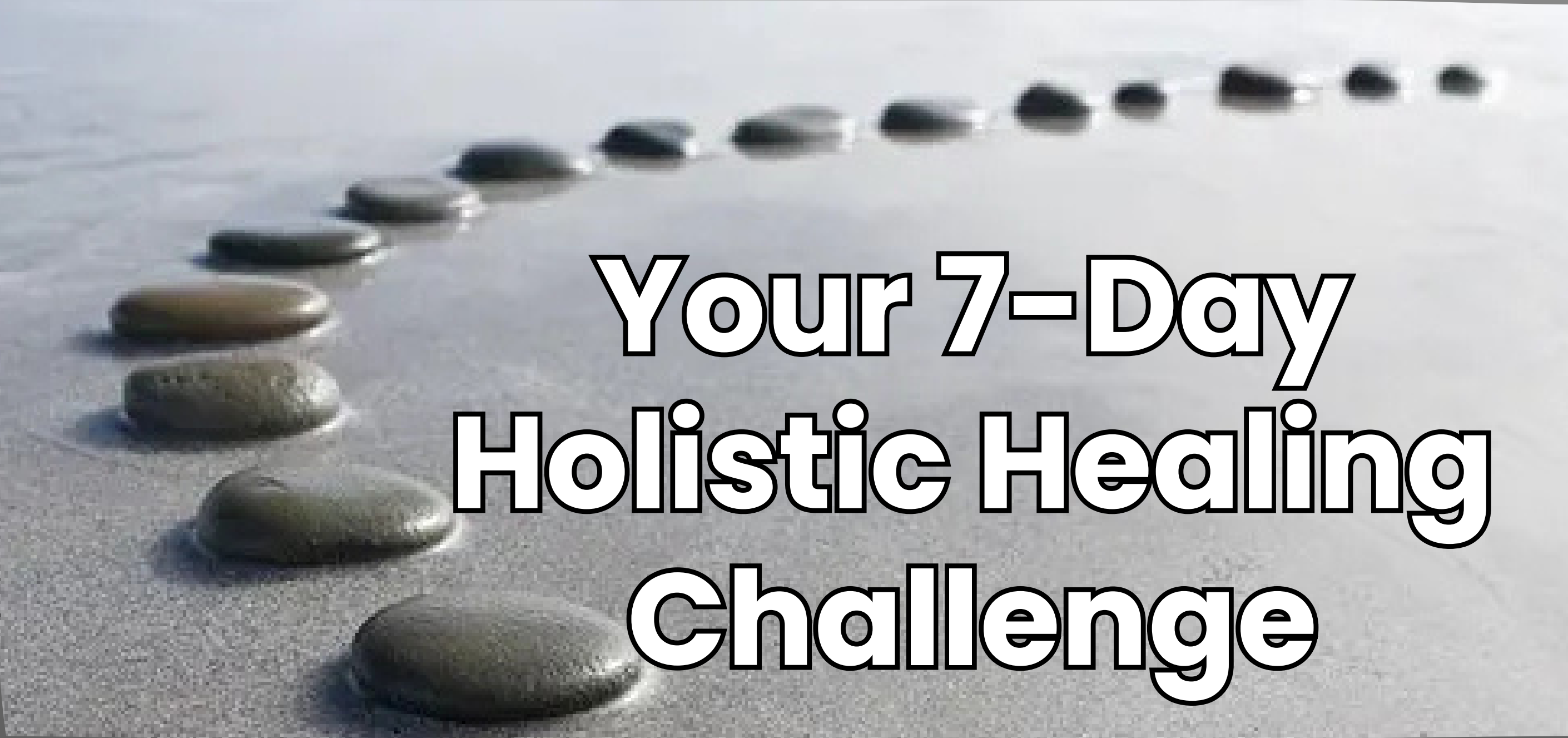
- Nervous system regulation and somatic practices
- Ayurvedic medicine for constitutional healing
- Functional medicine for root-cause physical symptoms
- Yoga and movement for embodied healing

## **SPIRIT:**

- Restoring life force and vital essence
- Reconnecting to meaning, purpose, and the sacred
- Spiritual practices for existential healing
- Yoga philosophy for understanding suffering and transformation

This is not therapy PLUS body work.

This is an integrated system where mind, body, and spirit heal together. When you address all three dimensions simultaneously, healing accelerates exponentially—because you're finally working with your whole being, not just one part of it.



# Your 7-Day Holistic Healing Challenge

Start with one practice. Do it for 7 days. Notice what changes.

## **Pick ONE practice from this guide:**

1. Grounding Through Feet (anxiety, hypervigilance) → Body
2. Ojas-Building Foods (exhaustion, emptiness) → Body + Spirit
3. Morning Ritual (spiritual depletion) → Spirit + Mind
4. Self-Oil Massage (physical pain, tension) → Body
5. Alternate Nostril Breathing (racing mind, rumination) → Mind + Body
6. Heart-Centered Breathing (loneliness, disconnection) → Spirit + Body

Do it every day for 7 days.


Notice:

- Does your sleep improve?
- Does anxiety decrease?
- Does your body feel less tense?
- Do you feel more connected to yourself?

If yes—keep going. Add another practice.

This is how healing happens: One small practice at a time. One day at a time. You don't need to do everything. You need to do something—consistently.

Each practice works on multiple levels simultaneously. When you ground through your feet, you're not just calming your nervous system—you're also reconnecting your spirit to earth and clearing your mind. This is holistic healing.



# What Happens When You Keep Ignoring Your Body & Spirit

Your entire being will not stop asking for help.

If you continue addressing only your mind while ignoring your body and spirit:

## **Physical symptoms will intensify:**

- Chronic pain becomes debilitating
- Mystery illnesses multiply
- Autoimmune conditions flare
- Sleep deteriorates further
- Energy crashes completely

## **Mental symptoms will worsen:**

- Anxiety becomes constant
- Rumination becomes obsessive
- Brain fog becomes disabling
- Depression deepens

## **Spiritual symptoms will deepen:**

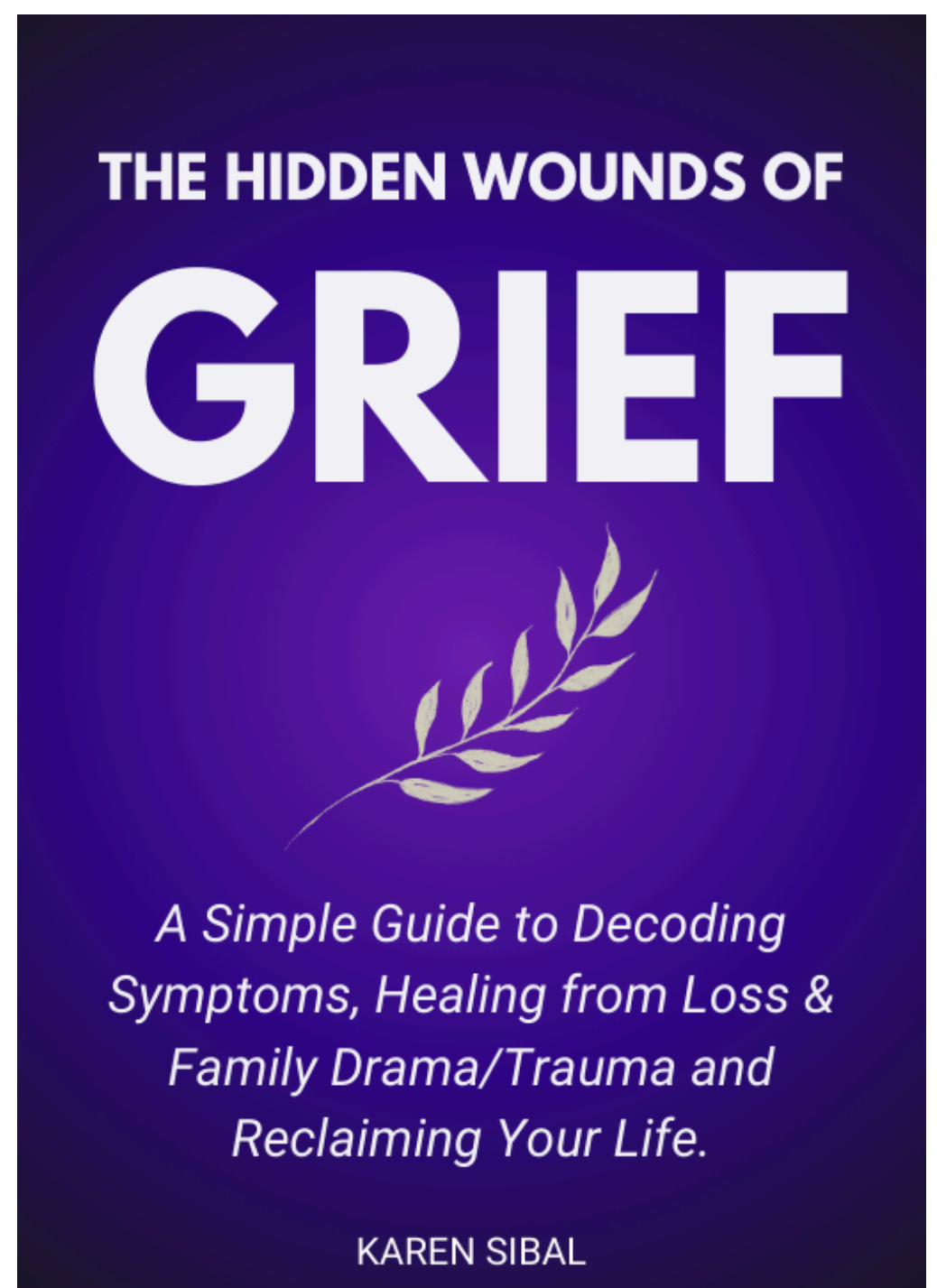
- Life feels increasingly meaningless
- Disconnection becomes numbness
- Isolation becomes unbearable
- Your spark dims to near-extinction

The longer you wait, the more layers of healing you'll need.

Your mind, body, and spirit have been asking—begging—for integrated healing. The question is: How much longer will you make them wait?

# The Complete Symptom- Relief System

Your body is begging for answers.  
Here they are.



**The Hidden Wounds of Grief:** The Simple Guide to Decoding Your Symptoms, Healing from Loss, Family Drama/Trauma and Reclaiming Your Life — \$47 The practical guide your breaking body has been waiting for.

## **Inside:**

- ✓ Complete symptom decoder - Every physical symptom grief creates (exhaustion, pain, digestive chaos, brain fog, hair loss) and exactly what to do
- ✓ Your 7-Day Relief Protocol - Day-by-day practices + gut-healing nutrition guide + environmental detox
- ✓ 5 Unique Grief Symptom Patterns - Discover which pattern matches YOUR grief response and get customized practices
- ✓ 30-Day Healing Tracker - Stay consistent, notice progress, and build momentum
- ✓ Special Hair Loss Section - If you're losing hair from stress (telogen effluvium), this protocol addresses root causes
- ✓ Quick Reference Guide - Symptom → Practice cheat sheet for fast relief

**This isn't theory. It's body-based medicine that works.** This guide contains everything I learned on my healing journey — so you don't have to suffer alone.

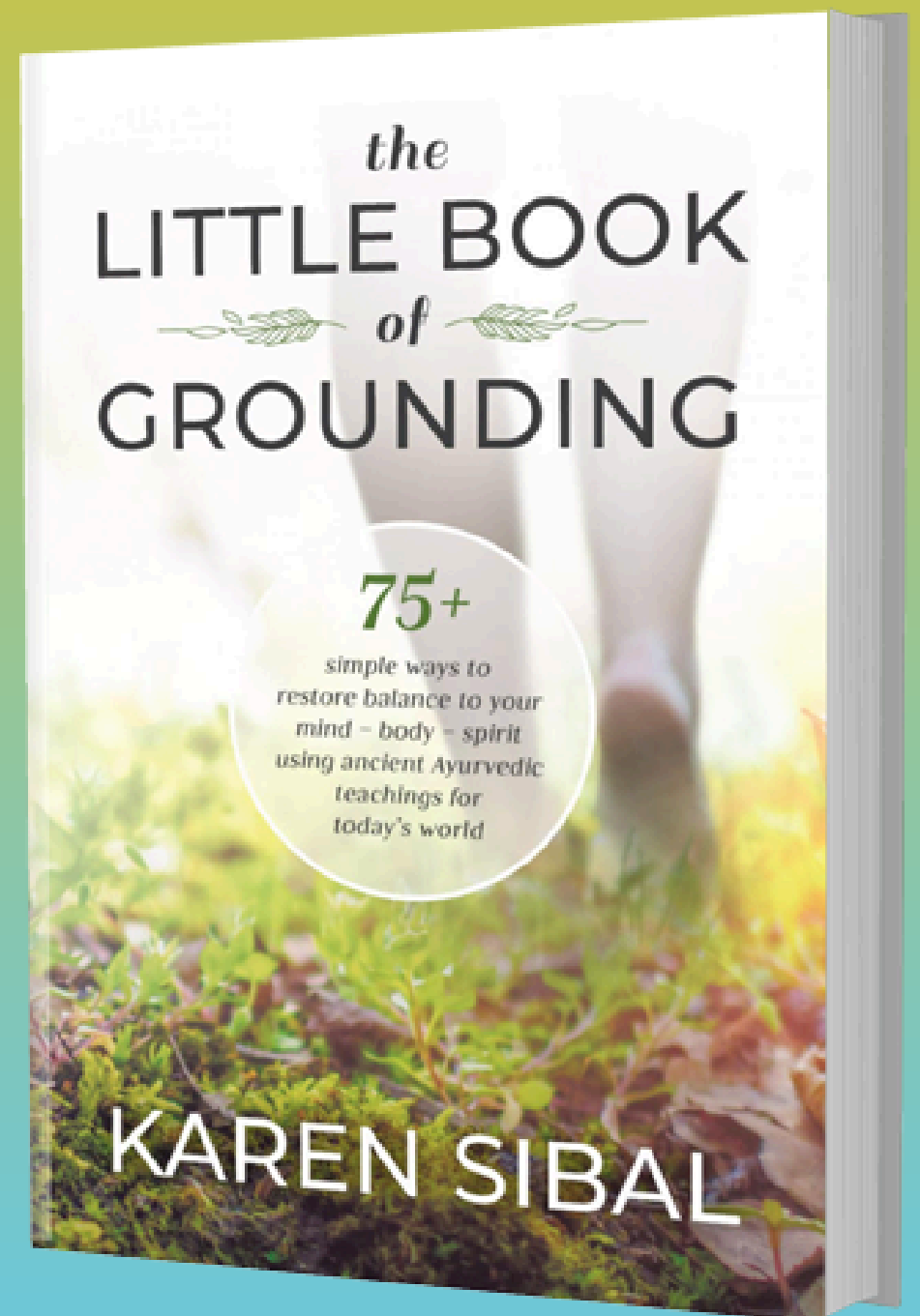
**GRAB IT NOW - JUST \$47 ([click here](#))**

# Continuing Your Healing Journey

## **The Little Book of Grounding – \$18.99 on Amazon**

75+ simple grounding practices for when your body is breaking from grief & loss. Perfect for keeping by your bedside or in your bag for moments when you need immediate nervous system support.

These are the practices I return to again and again when life feels overwhelming. Buy it [now](#).



## **75-Minute Holistic Assessment Call – \$125.**

Not sure where to start? Book a 75-minute session with me.

We'll:


- Identify your most urgent symptoms: mind, body, and spirit
- Determine which healing approach fits your unique situation
- Create your personalized first steps
- Discuss whether my programs are right for you

This isn't a sales call. It's a genuine assessment to help you find clarity and direction for your holistic healing journey, along with immediate steps you can take to begin feeling better.

Book your call [here](#).

## **Got questions?**

Send me an email at [seniorsgriefcircle@gmail.com](mailto:seniorsgriefcircle@gmail.com) with a list of your questions - I am happy to answer them to see if we're a fit.



# You Are Not Broken

**You are *responding*.** And complete healing is possible.

If you've been told (or told yourself):

- "I should be over this by now"
- "Why can't I just move on?"
- "What's wrong with me?"

**Here's the truth:**

*Nothing is wrong with you.*

Your mind, body, and spirit are doing exactly what they do when they experience loss, betrayal, and trauma.

Your nervous system is protecting you. Your body is holding what you couldn't process. Your spirit is asking for time and space to heal.

This is not weakness. This is your entire being's wisdom. And complete healing is possible—when you address all three dimensions of who you are.

Not just your mind. Not just your body. Not just your spirit.  
*All of you.*

**Together. Integrated. Whole.**

# My Promise to You



**Hi, I'm Karen.  
I've been where you are.**

I've lost 7 people in 6 years and I'm estranged from 3 more. My body broke after loss and family betrayal. I tried traditional therapy for years.

It helped me understand what happened. But it didn't help my body release what it was holding. And it didn't restore my shattered spirit.

That's when I began my journey into holistic healing—studying Ayurveda, functional medicine, yoga, and somatic practices while integrating them with my background in positive psychology and family counseling.

And slowly—practice by practice, day by day—my entire being remembered how to feel safe again.

Not just my mind understanding what happened. Not just my body releasing stored trauma. Not just my spirit finding meaning again.

All of me. Healing together. You can heal too.

Not by thinking your way through it alone. Not by talking your way through it alone.


By healing all of you—mind, body, and spirit—as the integrated whole you are.

*You deserve healing that honors every dimension of who you are.*

# Connect With Me

👉 Read my weekly blogs inside *The Truth About Grief* on Substack. Click [here](#).

 Karen Sibal on LinkedIn  
Click [here](#)

 @seniorsgriefcircle on Instagram. Click [here](#).

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



With care and deep respect for your journey,

*Karen* ♥

Karen Sibal, MA FMCHC

Holistic Grief and Trauma Recovery Practitioner

Integrating:

- Positive Psychology & Family Systems
- Ayurvedic Health Coaching
- Functional Medicine Health Coaching
- Therapeutic Yoga

Author of the internationally acclaimed book, [The Little Book of Grounding](#).

*You are not alone.*

*You are not broken.*

*And you ARE healing—  
mind, body, and spirit—*

*one breath, one practice, one day at a time.*