



I hope that they
remember to watch
the video before
reading Module Five

Part 5 – Finding the hand brake

My son was born in the south of Italy. His father and I lived on the property of his parents, which was situated on a steep and narrow road. The hill had lovely views of the sea and the small town, and quite a few people had built their houses there. To get to and from town, we all relied on our cars to go over the narrow two-way road that twisted through the hillside. Cars were all manual back then, and so it happened that this Dutchie, coming from a country as flat as a pancake, became a specialist in manoeuvring an old Fiat manual on the steepest roads. Brake to stop. Handbrake up. Clutch and brake pedal pressed down. Shift into first gear, then slowly release the clutch pedal while carefully accelerating and putting the handbrake down at the same time, all in total synchronicity.

The handbrake was the deal maker. It was your assurance that you wouldn't roll backwards during the instant before continuing your journey.

At this stage of the course, you too are on the move in the right direction. To support the work you have done so far, and to be able to move forward, you are going to create an inner space, or mindset if you prefer, that will function as your handbrake.

When we are confident and skilled at something, we automatically create a positive mindset. But when we struggle, we do the opposite, and this makes it harder to have good results.

In the written part of Module Five, I would like to show you two things by sharing the journey of two of my clients: First, how creating a positive inner space or mindset works. Second, that although the course has a certain sequence, we all resonate with different topics

at different times. So please, as I said in the introduction video, start from where it feels right for you.

Dina

Dina came to me to obtain reassurance regarding her circumstances and her future, hoping that this would ease her anxiety. Dina was in her forties, she was a carer for her grandma, a role she loved, and she had an office job in finance, that stressed her out completely. As almost everything in her life stressed her out, I told her that seeking reassurance, asking questions like 'will my job get better?' and 'will my grandmother be okay?' was counterproductive. What if it turned out that her job would get more stressful and that her grandmother's health would deteriorate? I asked her this after reassuring her that this was not the case, because her level of anxiety was such that it would have spun her out of control, had she thought it to be true.

For poor Dina, life was one big drama. When I met her, she stated that she was ALWAYS anxious and that her grandmother was the ONLY one in the world she could trust.

I started by checking if this was true, because after just twenty minutes into our first session, her anxiety had already noticeably ceased. She admitted that I had the same calming effect on her as her grandmother. "it's because you make me laugh", she said, something I did on purpose. I mocked her dramatic ways a bit, which she somehow loved. She told me that when she was with her Nan, she would at times not be anxious. I encouraged her to look deeper, and it turned out that when Dina had her cat cuddled up with her at night in front of the TV, she wasn't anxious either.

I suggested that therefore it wasn't true that she was ALWAYS anxious, and her grandmother was the ONLY one she trusted. Just

changing her thoughts and words around that, would begin to make a difference.

We then looked at times when the anxiety was still present, but noticeably less, like during the bus ride to work, while cleaning her house and when she was crocheting.

This exercise opened her up to the possibility that maybe things weren't as bad as she thought, and that she could shift some of her anxiety.

I asked her to become present every time she wasn't anxious and to enjoy it! (Module One) Then to try bringing the feeling of peace back when she was only mildly anxious.

During the following session we worked on listening to her fears without freaking out (Module Two).

While moving through Module Three and Four, I did most of the work. She dutifully followed my suggestions: she went for a walk before work and joined a craft club with her grandma, which she enjoyed, but she didn't really connect with the idea of becoming more interested in herself, or to accept herself.

Even though Dina did feel better, when things went wrong in her life, she could still be completely disempowered and overtaken by her anxiety.

The difference was that now she knew there was a way out, but I felt that what reassured her most was knowing she could always book a session with me, not the fact that she could work on herself.

At this point I suggested we find an inner space for her from where she could support herself on her journey towards a more empowered life. To illustrate what I meant, I shared a personal experience from a time when I had found a way to support myself through a difficult moment:

“During several years when I was chronically ill, Graham and I lived and travelled in a motor home. Sleeping wasn’t easy for me, because I was in pain and suffered from anxiety during the night. When I would wake up after just a couple of hours of sleep, my thought pattern would go something like this: “I’ve only slept three hours, I will feel terrible tomorrow. My shoulder is hurting badly, so I won’t be able to move when I get up. We are supposed to pack up, but I don’t think I will be able to help Graham”. This loop thinking gained speed and intensity on the way, and evoked anxiety.

When I read a book in which the writer described how people sometimes identify with their illness and/or disability, I realized that this had happened to me. I decided to stop this thought pattern, as I had done with the sneering voice in my head. I told myself not to get up in the morning, until I had gone into an inner space where illness didn’t exist.

The best – and sometimes only – way, was to catch myself before being fully awake, before my mind could go down the path of anxious doom thinking. If I was too late, it would take a long time to even get a glimpse of a neutral state of mind.

It wasn’t easy, but slowly I created a space for healing. It wasn’t that I stopped feeling ill from that day, but I have never felt as bad about being ill again after I started. Still today, I look back on it as the point when my health began to return.”

Dina loved the idea of finding her ‘sanity spot’, as she would call it, and she decided that she wanted to cultivate a space of inner peace wherein she could retreat whenever she needed to. However, trying to tune into it made her extremely anxious. Together, we looked for a space that was doable for her, but every time we tried something, she became agitated. I then asked her if she could agree to make the

sanity spot - for now - simply a place within where it was okay to not have one yet?

That was her turning point. She had found permission to be kind to herself, and once she realized that not having permission was what she needed to focus on, her sanity spot became a place where it was okay to be anxious. There, she didn't have to make a big deal out of it.

Eventually, she became brave enough to create a sanity spot where it was okay for her to seek help. She found a lovely herbalist and naturopath who supplied her with the right remedies to help steady her nervous system. At her job she let the HR help her find a new position that was less stressful.

Today, Dina's grandma is in care, and Dina managed to organise the move without completely freaking out (her words): she works three out of five days from home now, which has taken a lot of her stress away. She is part of an online crocheting group, which she loves, and she even travels by train and bus to meet up with fellow members every first Sunday of the month.

Dina had to do Module Five to find permission to be kind to herself, and to connect with Module Three. For her, Module Five was the part where her healing truly began.

Neil

For Neil, Module Three was the portal towards his healing. Neil came to me because he was in the process of starting up a new business, but he kept having setbacks and doubts. He couldn't figure out why, because he had worked for himself before, and had been successful.

So far, life hadn't been very kind to Neil: he grew up with his alcoholic father in a trailer camp, after his mother left with his baby brother when Neil was little. As a teenager, he went through a rough patch himself with alcohol and other drugs, but halfway through his twenties he was clean and mostly sober, and ready to start his own business.

Neil spent most of his childhood helping his neighbour, who collected thrown-away motorbikes and parts, and who was always tinkering on one of the many bikes he kept in front of his trailer. When Neil was eleven, he put together his first moped. A couple of years later, he discovered motocross, and with that, he found his passion.

Eventually, he became a mechanic, specializing in motocross bikes, and he started working for himself. His work and his motocross community were his life, until the day an out-of-control bus rear-ended his car, while Neil was waiting at a traffic light.

Neil was badly injured, and when he was finally ready to pick up his life again, both his work and his motocross riding were things of the past. Not only that, but Neil was in a lot of pain, and he had to take heavy painkillers to be able to move at all.

After a while, he realized that the highlights of his day were the times when his pain medication kicked in and he got nicely drowsy. Because of his past with addiction, he thought it best to look for alternative ways to deal with his pain. He started working with a yoga teacher, using meditation, breathwork and gentle yoga poses to wean himself off his painkillers.

This was a success, and eventually Neil was ready to start up a business again, but it turned out to be more complicated than he thought. And this was when he came to see me, recommended by his yoga teacher.

When I tuned into Neil, I saw an image of him being frozen stiff when it came to his business. On telling him, Neil laughed and told me that his yoga teacher always joked that he relaxed as well as a plank. I also saw that the pressure for him to succeed was so big, that it stopped all possible flow and progress.

Neil responded that he understood that, because if he couldn't be part of society by making his own money, he would just be a waste of space. Nobody would employ a cripple like him (his words), and he didn't have much education, nor any talents that would make him money.

This 'having to make his own money to deserve a right to exist' was a stark contrast to what I saw his life path was about. Which was about love. About him learning to open his heart and to help others open theirs too.

"I never got any love", he said, in such a matter-of-fact way, that I felt all the pain he couldn't.

The goal was for Neil to become aligned with his future business, by shifting his belief that he had to make his own money to be worthy of taking up space in life. He was on a disability pension, and he had received a decent payout, so this was not as much about money, as about Neil having to earn the right to exist. This belief was sabotaging his project.

I didn't have to work with Neil on Module One, because this guy could get into a state of mind that worked as well as his codeine tablets had! Respect. I praised Neil straight into heaven for it, but I had a rude awakening when I tried to work on Module Two with him: it turned out that learning not to feel pain and fear was what he had taught himself since he could remember. It had been a survival skill and man, had he mastered it!

Asking Neil to notice what came up when he stilled his mind, was a waste of time. When I tried to move to Module Three by asking him if he thought that he prevented himself from becoming a (legal) drug addict out of self-love, he shrugged and said, "I did it because druggies are losers".

At this point, I told him that instead of working on his feelings, we would work on his intuition. Neil looked doubtful, but I assured him that what I was talking about was simply the inner knowing he had when riding his bike: how to take a certain hill and curve, and how to manoeuvre. The fact that he had been a much sought-after mechanic meant that he also used his inner knowing when working on bikes.

This made sense to him, so I asked him if he could picture himself at the starting line of a competition, with the bike representing his new business. How did his bike/business feel?

"Off", he answered right away. "I don't want to race with it".

"How does it feel as the rider?" I continued, "knowing you are forcing yourself to go ahead with the race anyway?"

"Uncomfortable?" he suggested. "Tense and scared?" I replied. He shrugged, but I could feel that he understood where I was going.

I asked him to go back to when he was a small child, alone at night, not knowing if his father would come home. How did he feel then? Was his body relaxed or tense?

Neil nodded silently.

There was nowhere you could go for safety, and there was no one to listen to you and help you with your fears, so you learned to suppress your feelings. That is how you survived your childhood.

I asked him to go back to the scene where he and his motorbike (new business) were moving towards the starting line.... was he going to race?

Neil shook his head and was quiet for a long time, before he said: "can you teach me how to feel again?"

At the end of the session Neil promised to get massages to release some of the trauma in his body, and we decided to work with mantras, even if Neil couldn't feel them.

All throughout our time of working together, Neil kept an 'Embrace the suck' and 'Feel the fear and do it anyway' kind of vibe, while I was leaning more towards 'It is now safe to relax' and 'It is now safe to feel'. 'Always have your own back' was the one we had in common, and that became our aim.

Neil wasn't looking to heal himself completely; he just wanted to be able to support himself in the best possible way through life. Or, as he put it: "I want to be as tuned in with myself, as I used to be with motorbikes".

Once he felt he had reached that stage, he stopped coming regularly. I have only seen Neil three times in the last five years. He did go on to become a supplier of specialty motorbike parts, just as he had planned, but he keeps his business intentionally small, because he has more important stuff to do these days.

Neil fell in love with a kind woman, a primary school teacher. When she shared her desire to have children, Neil told her that his dream was to become a foster parent for a child like himself, but that he didn't know if he was physically and mentally capable of being a foster parent. They agreed to take in one foster child at a time, of school-going age, but when the call came for an emergency placement for a three-year-old and his toddler brother, Neil couldn't

bear to think of the boys being separated, so he said yes. They are now in the process of adopting both boys.

For Neil, the big moment was realizing how little he could feel or even remember from his childhood. He saw the importance of getting to know himself enough to have his own back in every situation. He always held onto the motorbike metaphor. To him, self-love became about understanding his own mechanics and working with that: to change what didn't work, and to accept what couldn't be changed, so that he could stop trying to force closed doors open.

His problem was the opposite of being scared to move forward: Neil moved like a bulldozer once he started going, but he was limited in feeling or knowing when it was right to do so.

He had been looking for years for his baby-brother, whose whereabouts were lost in the shuffle of multiple foster homes. The truth was that Neil was chasing a guy who did not want to be found by his family, and this included Neil. In the end, the message came through in a very painful way. Neil said that looking back, he had known the truth for a long time.

During his racing years, he had been known by his fellow bikers as 'reckless'. During his rehabilitation, he had on several occasions sabotaged his own recovery by pushing past his limits.

His version of creating a space of inner knowing, was to stop his thoughts and become present (like he had learned from his yoga teacher). Then he would check in with himself and feel whether something felt right or wrong.

For Dina, her breakthrough didn't happen until Module Five, and from there she began to work backwards. Once she created an inner space of permission, she could take small steps in the right direction, then she opened up to a deeper understanding of herself.

Peter had his big moment when he realized he didn't have to give all his attention to his mind. He started to listen to his inner knowing instead, which is what Module Two is about.

Neil already knew how to overcome his pain mind, but self-love was unfamiliar territory. As soon as he understood that self-love meant self-knowing, he had his breakthrough. (Module Three)

For me, Module One was the big breakthrough. I sometimes feel like the moment I started to question my mind, everything changed. I moved continents, found my love and found my calling. Every part of the course is important to me, but it is my capacity to consciously stop for a moment that allows me to feel my inner truth, check if I am acting with self-love and self-acceptance, find a way forward, and go to a helpful inner space.

I don't know if Dina will continue to work backwards through the course until she meets her inner truth, which would reveal what lies behind her anxiety. She might be content to have quieted the anxiety enough to enjoy life... or she may be doing a mighty past-life regression as we speak, and she will become a globe-trotting crocheting guru.

Peter's recovery program for people with injuries might only be a moderate success, and this might be good enough for him. After all, he used to be stuck in life, and now he has choices and possibilities... or he may become so popular, he will have to start turning clients away.

Neil has opened doors that lead to a happy and fulfilling life, but – for now – he is living with some firmly locked away inner demons. His children though, may well be his therapy, and give him a full heart-opening. I can see him winning a ‘father of the year’ award one day.

Don’t worry about how far you think you still ‘have to’ go. Improved mindsets often happen behind our own back.

The moment I questioned who I would have been without the nasty voice in my head, my whole journey happened. Once you see it, you won’t unsee it.

For Peter, being a personal trainer was there from the moment Self ignored Mind and kept waiting for an answer from Peter.

For Dina, enjoying life started when she learned there was something called creating an inner space.

Neil became a father the moment he realized he needed to learn how to love himself, so he could feel.

Therefore, never let your mind tell you that things didn’t work for you. Don’t let it tell you that it will be a long and difficult journey. Whatever progress you are reaching for, it is already here, even if you can’t see it yet.

Peter Sage talks about how internal change takes time to show up in external life. He compares it to expecting change to happen like a remote-controlled toy sailing boat on a lake – one tap and it turns. Real change though is more like steering an oil tanker at sea. You can press the button, but it takes a while before you see it shift direction.

In sessions, when helping someone find the right inner space or mindset, I often ask them to tune into their intuition. Together we discover what feels right and safe for them. People don't always feel as confident though, when they do it on their own.

In this regard Module Five picks up from Module Two. It is about recognizing the difference between your mind and intuition - but it takes it a step further. As we have seen, being tuned into our intuition doesn't necessarily mean that we are ready to act on it. This is where the inner spaces we create serve as internal stepping stones, helping us towards the desired outcome. Let me give you an example:

You have been trying to leave your partner for years because the spark has faded, but somehow you can't make yourself do it. Your intuition is telling you that leaving is the right thing to do, so 'it is now safe to leave' might feel like the right mindset to create. If that thought makes you anxious or doesn't sit right with you, it doesn't mean that your intuition is wrong, or that leaving is wrong. It just means that you are not ready for this inner space yet.

Instead of giving up and thinking you are back at square one, return to square one of this course and walk yourself through it:

Become present by taking a deep breath and pausing for a moment, then do something else for a bit. Take the dog for a walk or have a banana.

When you are ready, think about why it didn't work. Most probably, you became scared, and you tried to push through.

Accept that maybe you aren't ready to go straight for 'it is now safe to leave'.

See if you are ready to find something that is less scary.

You know when something doesn't work for you, when it feels off, and you become restless or even anxious. Instead of insisting on new thoughts that don't fit (yet), you might have to settle for an inner space of 'It will happen. I will leave one day'.

Make it a habit to create these inner stepping stones. They are very useful, as long as they are exactly right for you. When you become impatient and you start thinking that you should be able to do better, it won't work.

Exercise

In the first part of the exercise, I would like you to reflect on where you already have developed a better inner space, just by having done the work. For example, while Dina will think that the first healthier mindset she created was the one where she found permission, in reality she had already changed from 'I am always anxious', and 'I don't trust anyone' to 'I am often anxious, and I have difficulty trusting'. This was the first inner steppingstone that created the pathway forward.

Becoming aware of even the most subtle changes, helps you realize you are moving forward, and this awareness is empowering.

For example, you have been resentful towards your family since forever, thinking that you should be treated better, and that you should be able to make them treat you better. Lately, you have stopped trying to please them, and it feels natural and right. This means that you have created space for positive change. Maybe next you find yourself going to a family celebration, staying long enough to be polite, and then leaving. Soon, that will feel natural too. And so it goes.

So please, dig deep, count every little change in your thinking and in your actions, as this will solidify the knowledge that you have a choice. That you are not a puppet on a string when it comes to the negative emotions surrounding your issue.

You may be propelled back into them at times, but you will be a visitor, not a prisoner. Remind yourself that your cell door is open. You have proven this to yourself by coming this far.

When you have finished celebrating discovering all your wins so far (Go You!!!), think of what would be the next step that is doable for you.

As I explained in the video, on your journey to create positive mindsets, you will be presented with underlying issues. You will also have times when you feel you can handle anything, because that is what creating better mindsets does. It can be a bit of a rollercoaster, full of highs and lows.

I would like you to find a way to stay in balance. Again, you have a choice now, so please use that choice to protect your healthier inner space. To stick with the example of family troubles: after creating several positive mindsets, you now feel so confident that you want to call your whole family together and let all your frustration, pain and resentment loose on them. In your imagination, they are standing in front of you, speechless after hearing what you have been through, then, full of remorse, they tell you they understand you completely, and they beg you for forgiveness....

That sounds great in theory, but in reality, you could be in for a rude awakening. It might be better to practice in front of the mirror, and check whether you truly want to confront your family, and whether you are ready. If it still feels right, you could begin with the most approachable family member and go from there.

As I mentioned in the video, this isn't about holding yourself back or settling for mediocre results. It is about remembering that when you are working through a special needs issue, it is crucial to have enough balance and foundation to keep moving forward – or at least to avoid sliding all the way back if things don't go as planned.

During my time working on this course, I have had my own highs and lows. Last December, my energy levels plummeted to the point that all I could do was sit quietly, stare at the trees and rest. When I regained some energy, the only mindset I could handle was 'I will finish this course one day'. Not very exciting for someone who could easily win a medal for perseverance anyway!

Before that, I had created the right mindset for any potentially challenging occasion, to make sure I was walking my talk while writing Module Five. At the time, I had to deal with a lot of bureaucracy, which is a weak point of mine. I can be negative about non-conclusive appointments and filling out never-ending forms. My pre-meditations before every appointment worked so very well, that I started creating positive mindsets for everything in my life. I felt unstoppable in the process.

Prior to making this course, I used to work with my mindset in a matter-of-fact way. I checked in on my thoughts at the start of my day, and for the rest I only paid attention if something specific came up. It was like doing a few quick stretches after coming out of bed in the morning, and checking myself in the mirror before going out. If something didn't feel or look right, I would quickly adjust it and move on. You could say that I did this module's exercise as a daily habit: checking my thoughts and improving them where needed.

It wasn't until my energy levels started to return, that I realized I had lived my non-active episode differently. I hadn't fought it like I normally did. I accepted it and just saw it as time out. I had learned to allow instead of push.

This attitude has stayed with me. To juggle doing all the essentials in my life while working on this course, I previously would have needed a superpower.

Fears around not having enough time were always around. I struggled to say 'no' to people who asked for my company. I suffered from mood swings and didn't allow myself time to relax.

I also felt more excited about life than I had done in years. I would glow after each piece of the course puzzle that fell into place. Even though I often didn't feel like seeing people, my love and gratitude for them only grew stronger.

I took it all in my stride and steadily moved forward. Somewhere along the way, I had added balance to my mindset-check routine, behind my own back. My inner space became the ability to work with whatever came up. I had learned to put my highs and lows in perspective.

At first, I thought that my revelations weren't spectacular enough to finish the course with, but then I realized that this was exactly the outcome I had wished for. Because if you can keep your inner balance, no matter what comes up, you will always be able to keep going.

You might not always be able to move forward: Sometimes, the greatest achievement will be to not slide backwards. But in your own pace, in your own way, in your own beautiful uniqueness, you will be able to live your potential. The journey towards your goals will be fulfilling, no matter where you are on your path.

I couldn't ask for more than that. For you and for me.

To speak with the words of the late Wayne Dyer: 'Don't die with your music still in you.'

I wish for you to get all your music out there. In whatever form it takes.

All my love,

Melita



Afterword

When you are reading this page, you have either just watched the videos and read through the text for the first time, or you finished doing the course.

For me, this page will be the last page of writing here, but it feels more like a new beginning than an ending.

I trust that this is the same for you, that you won't stop here. That this course has inspired you to continue, that it has strengthened you, and given you more patience with yourself, and more understanding. I think that is at the core of it. And with that patience comes the ability to be present. When you realize there is nothing wrong with you, you don't have to run away from yourself.

This is also not the end of our work together. We will continue with some complementary follow-up group coaching sessions on Zoom.

The main motivation for me to do them is because up until now, I have been talking about what matters most from my point of view. Now I am curious to see what has come up for you.

Let me briefly explain how it will work:

If you feel inclined, you can let me know in advance what it is that you would like to have addressed in the upcoming session. When possible, I will bring the topic up during our time together. All participants will be muted throughout the entire session, but the Zoom chat will be open. I will channel the same way as I do in my one-on-one sessions, only my channel will be mainly on the chosen topics, not on a specific person.

Any feedback is welcome, whether it is something that resonated with you, something you found difficult, a request for clarity, or a

topic that you would like to explore on a deeper level. I can't guarantee that your topic will be chosen, that does depend on the amount of feedback I receive, but I will do my best.

All Zoom sessions will be recorded and uploaded to the same course page where you access the downloads and videos. That way, you can revisit them anytime — or watch them later if you can't attend live.

The session times will be suitable for participants in Australia, New Zealand, Asia, India, Europe and South Africa.

I will let you know the topics upfront when I send you the date, time and Zoom link.

- My apologies to the people in North or South America. Our times don't match very well. If there is enough interest, I am happy to find alternative times that suit better –

Acknowledgements

I literally couldn't have done this without having had clients, so a big thank you to all of you once again.

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Andrea, for doing the course. What more could a mother ask for?

Richelle, for being a role model of how to live a passionate life, by always putting your creative visions into reality. I have clung to you energetically these last months.

Francis. Ah, the luxury of having a bestie who knows everything about the creative process, and who is always willing to listen and to assist when I get stuck. It helps a lot!

Eva, for being the other half of Evita, our safe place where we put all our creative ideas on the table. And for helping me stay connected to an important cause, when I couldn't do it on my own. It meant the world.

Graham, or should I say, Saint Graham? Nobody should have to live with me when I write, and certainly not in such a small place. But we did it. You are the very best friend ever.

Apologies to anyone who has helped me and who I have forgotten. Know that it is not from lack of appreciation. I am truly sorry if I did. I have been single-mindedly focussed on getting this course ready and I have had little room for anything else.

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Page Name: The Art of Allowing instead of Pushing

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I would love to see you there

