

# **Chapter 49**

## **What Healing Doesn't Give You**

Healing will give you a lot that is good. It will help you reset the past. It will let you experience the past as something that is objectively over. It may help your immune system settle. Healing settles a lot of the old tax that you have had to pay to wake up each day in this world. It can give ease back to your breath and unheavy your chest. It can give you some hope. You might find that you wake up on a random Thursday and find it easier to believe that you can find a place here. Resolving memories does not give you the experience of getting your needs met. It helps prepare you for it, but resolving memories does not give you the experience of secure attachment. EMDR therapy does not give you the things that you have to go out into the world to get. Healing prepares you to put new things at risk, and little that is good comes without some real risk and vulnerability.

As you are doing the hard work of recovery, you have to figure out how to interact with yourself, others, and life in completely new ways. You have to learn how to push through the “boredom” of secure attachment when you have spent decades attached to drama. You have to learn how to set and defend boundaries by setting and defending boundaries. You have to learn how to grieve by letting yourself go there. Healing clears your throat for the words “No” and “Yes,” but you are the one who has to learn to say them with your own voice and mind.

Phase Eight, in the broadest sense, is also a place where our clients with severe trauma are merging back into the full flow of life. While they may be in their 30s, 40s, 50s, or 60s, they may need continued assistance because they carry legacy deficits into the present despite having done a lot of healing. They are learning how to do things that their non-traumatized peers learned at developmentally appropriate times decades ago. Trauma work with clients with complex trauma is more than simply treating their trauma and discharging them for having met their goals. It's helping them launch in ways that are sustainable. It's helping their new unmortgaged nervous systems have experiences that help clarify who they are, what they are worth, and how they deserve to be treated. It's helping them create new identities and ways of being with themselves, others, and the world.