

Deleted Chapter: Out of My Mind (from *A Few Minor Adjustments* by Cherie Kephart)

Journal Entry – January 2009, San Diego

Dear Cherie of the past,

Throughout your childhood, teenage years, twenties, and early thirties, you often felt invincible, performing, engaging, and forcing your body along. Your body was communicating with you often, “Please slow down. Maintain some perspective and balance. Please don’t push me so hard.”

You didn’t listen. You forced yourself past your limits: running, cycling, playing tennis and beach volleyball, swimming, lifting weights, traveling, working multiple jobs. You were addicted to movement. You never rested.

In 2004, your body collapsed, shouting, “You need to stop this madness and let me heal.” This illness forced you into a new stage of life, a slower pace nurturing for your soul.

I’m proud of you for arriving here. Even as you continue to battle this unknown illness, I know you are thankful for everything you have experienced. Yet, you can no longer be the over-achieving, little-time spent sleeping, exercising fanatic. Love the person you were, but delight in the fact that you survived her.

Now, your body and soul are in command, and each day you continue to learn. You learn how to say no, how to slow down, and how to listen.

It’s all about finding balance. Nature does not care about our gluttony. It does not arbitrate. The sun does not discriminate. It burns everyone the same, yet it also nourishes us equally, delivering its radiance upon our flesh. It cares not who you are, where you are from, or where you intend to go. It only knows how to scorch and provide for all the planet’s inhabitants. You need to find the balance between the sun and the shade.

And here it is, the truth, as difficult as it is to admit: you contributed to your own ill health. No, you did not go out searching for Epstein Barr, SVT, Fibromyalgia, Malaria, or to discover a way to inject maggots into your butt, but you have to take responsibility for the supporting role you played in becoming sick. Now you must change.

Cherie, you can’t improve your health by only concentrating on your health. You must concentrate on changing your whole life, body, mind, and spirit.

To Cherie’s body: Help is on the way.

To Cherie’s mind: Be still, listen, and slow the hell down.

With love,
Cherie of now