

10

THINGS TO DO TO IMPROVE  
**OUTCOME**  
AFTER ILLNESS

*DON'T LET STRUGGLE BECOME YOUR IDENTITY*

**DR. PRITHIKA CHARY**



**FIRST AND ONLY LADY IN INDIA  
TO BE QUALIFIED AND PRACTICING AS BOTH  
NEUROPHYSICIAN AND NEUROSURGEON**

# INTRODUCTION

Why do we fall ill? Why do we break down? Why don't we heal? What can we do about it?

When we face sudden illness or a life challenge all these questions pop up in our mind and if we invest all our energy, seeking to know this before we take action to improving the situation, there is a risk we may get stuck and make little or no progress.

Most of us go through the following stages when faced with a contingency:

- It takes us some time to believe that the problem is actually happening to us.
- We lapse into denial "This is not happening to me".
- There must be some mistake somewhere. "The doctor is wrong."
- Or we look for someone or something to blame.
- After further tests and confirmation we learn to accept the situation and either react to it with anger, blame, depression, etc. or respond to it proactively and start seeking methods to improve or resolve the situation.

If the diagnosis is serious like cancer or an incurable illness or a disabling or debilitating illness it is more difficult to handle and cope.

**In this little guide book we suggest certain strategies based on the understanding of the mind-brain-body-immune system link and its impact on health, wellness and recovery from illness.**

Dr. Prithika Chary is a senior Neurophysician cum Neurosurgeon with several years of expertise and experience in guiding patients to co-operate with their treatment and also take an active role in their recovery to regain maximum quality of life no matter what the diagnosis.

## **Healing is always possible even if cure is not!**

The science of psycho-endo-neuro-immunology supports the benefit of tapping into our spirit, mind and brain to heal our bodies.

**We offer here some coping strategies as an introduction to our more intensive program called BE YOUR BEST WITH DR. PRITHIKA CHARY.**

Visit [www.drprithikachary.com](http://www.drprithikachary.com) to see full profile.

BE YOUR BEST WITH \_\_\_\_\_  
**Dr. Prithika Chary**

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# **STRATEGY ONE – CHOICE**

## **CHOICE IS A FUNDAMENTAL POWER OF THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE.**

The choices that really matter

- when it comes to your health,
- when it comes to healing,
- when it comes to positioning yourself,
- when it comes to empowering yourself,

These are what you think are little choices. But these are the most powerful ones. They have the most profound influence

- on your biology,
- your sense of who you are,
- your wellbeing and your whole life map.

Another thing about us, we are born knowing certain things, we are wired for it, and it is in our instinct, it is in our spiritual instincts, it is in our soul DNA. We are born knowing that choice is powerful, it is the most powerful thing going for us.

## **Choice terrifies people. Most people will do anything to postpone making choices.**

*“Between stimulus and response, there is a space  
In that space is our power to choose our response  
In our response lies our growth and freedom”*

–Viktor Frankl

## **Every day we make choices. Keep that power of choice in your hands**

- WE are responsible for what happens to us.
- WE have the power to make our decision.
- WE are accountable for our actions and their results in our lives to reclaim our identity.

## **Reclaim control of your life.**

None of us are too helpless to help ourselves if only we make up our minds to do it. Make a choice to FACE whatever it is – we grow afraid and tired when we want to conquer it.

Just make the choice to look it full in the face and you have started your journey to overcome it.

**“YOU MUST MAKE A CHOICE TO TAKE A CHANCE  
OR YOUR LIFE WILL NEVER CHANGE.”**

# **STRATEGY TWO – SELF AUDIT**

Before embarking on any journey, we need to prepare for it. When faced with a health or life challenge, we need to assess our status, evaluate our resources, replenish our requirements, and plan our way forward.

## **The way to do this is a Self-Audit**

- Write down on a piece of paper what is actually happening to you. Give a name to each of your pain points.
- Then list out what you really want and what you don't want E.g. I can tolerate vomiting, but I cannot bear pain
- Assess whether each of these can be resolved by you alone or whether you need help
- Then find out who can help you with the things you need assistance with
- Make contact with them and find out the extent to which they can help you
- Make available all the resources you will need – money, insurance, people to assist you, choosing the right health care provider, back up finances and help with daily living on returning home after hospitalization, etc.

Meet your healthcare provider or the main person helping you with this life or health challenge and be open with them. Expose your vulnerability, don't be shy or afraid – tell them your fears, where you need support and make a plan. When we do this as a systematic, intentional activity it smoothens the entire path in dealing with the problem and helps those who care for you to understand how and where and when and to what extent they can help you.



# **STRATEGY THREE – INTEGRITY**

Really ask yourself this. It means being honest with yourself, about where you are, what is working for you and what is not.

## **Where are you holding yourself captive?**

Decide to live a life of integrity! Be honest with yourself.

- I am going to make my choices according to what I say, what I believe and live that life.
- I am not going to betray myself. I am not going to compromise myself.
- I am not going to put myself in a situation or circumstance, or if I am in a circumstance I am getting out.
- I won't force another person to be in a circumstance in which I know they are uncomfortable in order to please me.
- I won't hold another person and myself captive, because that has no integrity.
- I will not do that.

## **Don't lie to yourself. Your body, your mind, heart and soul know you did that.**

To truly heal you have to commit to an action and actually do it for your biology to respond. One of the great learnings is that life will never be that wonderful, rich thing we want it to be, which is what we call "fair". It will never be that. It will never be, "Oh that is why it happened" Some of the grief and injuries that have happened to people are so horrible, it is unbelievable. The truth is nothing can make that go away, nothing can make that better. The model of healing that we have to have is a model that says healing is not about ever forgetting those things, it's not about forgetting. It is about looking at what has happened to us and saying:

*"This will never defeat me, it will never defeat me and I will not live in this. I have to somehow turn this into my source of wisdom, but I will not live in woe."*

# **STRATEGY FOUR – RISK TAKING**

## **TAKE SOME RISKS!**

**Don't sink into the regret stage when you fall ill. Then you will feel as if your life force starts to diminish.**

Whenever you always hit the regret stage – oh I should have done this, I should have done that – you will always hit that place, as if you feel yourself weakening, even if you are going to get up. In the regret stage you will wish, the life you wish you would have lived.

When you are making decisions on what to do, don't look backwards for guidance because there is nothing back there. Don't look in the “rear view mirror” to move forwards. The reason you are where you are now is because that part of your life is over. Don't look for 'over' to chart 'new'. When it is time to make a decision “I don't know what to do next” do not go to who you were, what you did, because it will pull back perhaps even to places that don't exist anymore, to images of yourself that are no more.

## **You are not that person anymore !**

One of the things that weakens you is that, it causes you to long for things that are no longer appropriate and they are not in the field yet to come.

*What builds vitality, what builds your desire to live your life fully and be present is for you to say “It is time for something new”*

*Be in the newness, do not be afraid of it. Get into it and be there without fear.*

The neurobiology of risk taking has psychological and behavioural aspects to it:

- There is an element of sensation seeking when we go for the thrill.
- More important is reward sensitivity – when we know taking a risk, the action will bring a reward.
- Both of these are under cognitive control (we can choose) and be influenced by self-regulation (how far are we willing to go – this is sometimes based on past experience).
- When it comes to health, make sure your desire to take a few risks are linked to tangible benefits e.g. if I exercise daily even if I am in pain, I will become more physically fit and be able to overcome this illness.



# **STRATEGY FIVE – NEW VOCABULARY**

If we understood the power of our thoughts, we would guard them more closely. If we understood the awesome power of our words, we would prefer silence to almost anything negative in our thoughts and words. We create our own weaknesses and our own strengths. Don't underestimate the power of thoughts and words.

- What you tell yourself every morning will set your mind and life on that path.
- Thoughts and words are energy.
- They have physical power. It all begins in your mind.
- What you give power to, has power over you, if you allow it.
- Do not use negative words and language.
- Do not curse your illness or life situation, or complain, blame or give excuses
- Stay hopeful and have faith that *"This too shall pass"*.
- Talk lovingly to your body and those who are helping you heal.
- This is sometimes difficult when we are in agony or pain.
- Consciously appreciate that your body and everyone around you are doing their best to make you better.
- Keep track – What are the words you say to yourself. What are the words you should never be saying to yourself?

**Your vocabulary is so toxic that the vibration of your neurology that includes thoughts, includes frequencies that is so toxic that even if you are positive in your attitude, you harm yourself.**

*Choose to get up every day and bless your day and say "I have no idea what my day will be like, but it is blessed, because I am alive."*

**Don't base your gratitude for your life on what you have or how you feel, but just because you are here now.**

# **STRATEGY SIX – FACE YOUR FEAR**

Some situations make us so scared that we believe we have no other options. We often think there is no other way and this scares us some more.

## **How often do we kidnap ourselves?**

Often we kidnap ourselves from the life that we actually want because we think that a different path is going to help us survive and meet our needs. It doesn't have to be that way.

**Ask yourself “Where am I kidnapping myself from the life I really want  
“How am I giving away my power, giving in to fear, just to meet my needs  
in the world.”**

When we give in to fear, we give away our power and disconnect from who we really are, and what we really want.

- Educate yourself about your fears.
- Understand about the worst possible outcome involved.
- Think about these things, learn the facts and then face your fears.
- Take your time and push slowly. Don't jump in head first.
- This could cause you to panic and then become even more afraid of what you are afraid of.
- Take one step at a time.
- Slowly push yourself to endure more and more of what makes you cringe. It will not be easy at first, but it will get easier the more steps that you take.
- Talk to your fears.
- Share your fears with someone you trust.

Talk to your fears. I know it may seem silly, but you should confront your fears verbally. Ask your fears why you are so afraid of them, and then allow yourself to give the answer as if your fears were speaking with you. As you learn things from yourself, you will realize that you have created your phobia and these things are not as frightening as they seem.

## **This is one of the things you will address in your self-audit.**

Share your fears with someone you trust.

You can talk to a good friend about them. Sharing too much will make others use your fears against you. But to share with a friend that you trust gives you a support system. You don't necessarily share your fears for a solution, rather, you share in order to have a sounding board.

Again, you get to hear yourself talk about your fears, and you get to see just how unfounded they really are. If your trustworthy friend does offer solutions, then this is an added bonus.

*Accept the truth. If you can simply accept that you are afraid of something, then that's one step closer to conquering that thing. You cannot get anywhere if you constantly deny your fears – the importance of integrity.*

## **Focus on the positive.**

Another way to face our fears is to starve them of attention. The more you dwell on what frightens you, the more you will feed the fear. So, in order to embark upon the road to healing, you must learn to focus all your energies on your goals and dreams of getting better or returning to normal.



# **STRATEGY SEVEN – GRATITUDE**

Consciously practice gratitude every day, several times a day if you are unwell.

***“Let us rise up and be thankful, for if we did not learn a lot today, at least we learned a little; and if we did not learn a little, at least we did not get sick, and if we got sick, at least we did not die: so let us all be thankful.”***

-Buddha

## **Maintain a gratitude journal.**

- Thank your treatment for helping heal you.
- Thank those who are helping you in your journey to recovery.
- Thank your illness for making you take time off to reflect on what really matters in your life.
- Thank the inconvenience of being unwell to analyse how you got there, what can you change and be grateful for the opportunity to improve your wellness.
- Talk to your body lovingly, tell it you understand that this setback is temporary and necessary at this time.
- Ask it to forgive you for doing things which could have contributed to this – wrong eating, smoking, too little exercise and sleep, self-medication, etc. and say you are sorry.
- Send out love to every cell in your body and raise your vibrations to enable healing.
- There are many effective and beautiful subliminal healing videos on the internet which you can listen to even if you are bedridden.
- A Hawaiian concept called Hopoponomo may be worth exploring.

# **STRATEGY EIGHT – JOY**

We experience joy when we learn to trust. Trust that God will not burden us with more than we can bear. Trust that the Universe will give us what we need and want if we open up to it and do our bit in attracting abundance. We trust that all is as it should be and unfolding exactly as it is supposed to.

## **Consciously choose joy everyday**

How do you recognize joy around you? Where do you derive joy in your life?

To experience joy we do not need grandiose, or expensive events to happen a truly joyful life is enjoying and celebrating all the little things we go through in our lives in a mindful manner.

- Watching the sun rise or set
- Exercise
- Spending time in nature
- A warm or cold shower depending on the weather
- A hot cup of coffee
- Volunteering or helping someone ( gives you the helper's high )
- Shopping
- Doing something creative
- Spending time with children or pets
- Deep breathing, meditation
- Dancing, listening to music
- Grabbing a nap
- Doing a good deed
- Having a good laugh
- Reading a good book
- Smile for no reason
- Sing your heart out
- Enjoy the sunlight
- Play in the rain
- Savour good times in your photo album
- Pamper yourself, etc.

There are hundreds of things you can do to raise your joy meter if you take time and trouble to try.

### **Choose joy as a habit.**

- The opportunities for enjoyment in your life are limitless.
- If you feel you are not experiencing enough joy, you have only yourself to blame.
- **START A JOY JOURNAL.** Everyday write down the things that give or gave you joy.

If you see your Gratitude and Joy journal often you will understand how wonderful your life really is even at the worst of times. It will cheer you up and shift your mood.



# **STRATEGY NINE – BE IN THE PRESENT**

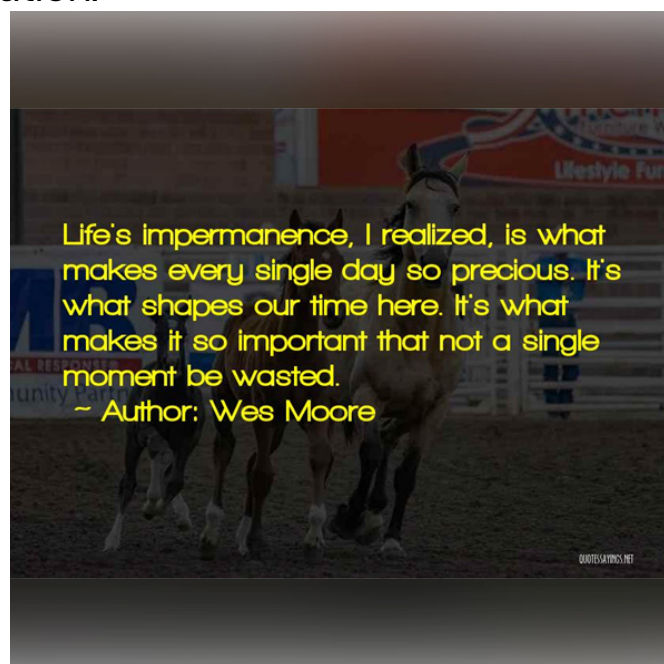
**Be in the present. Remind yourself this moment, this hour, this day will never come again. Infuse maximum value into it.**

## **And hold in your heart this prayer**

*“This day of my life will never come again. I will never see the people I am looking at again. I will never see this sunrise again and I will never see that sunset. I will never see the person having breakfast with me again. Just this way. No, nothing in my life will ever come again.”*

That alone, that choice alone, should take out of your heart every bitter taste there is/ that it should shape the life around you with such grace and such beauty, that it would make you only want to see the present with great gratitude and love.

- Don't spend your time moaning, groaning, complaining, blaming even if you are in grief and pain and suffering.
- Something happening right now could be better than yesterday or this morning.
- If the pain is less be grateful for that.
- If you could do something small today you could not do earlier, celebrate it – maybe you could lift your paralyzed arm half a centimetre higher, or you could control your urine a few minutes longer – if we look for it we can always find something to be grateful for even in the worst situation.





# **STRATEGY TEN – ENGAGE & TAKE ACTION**

**All this knowledge is useless if you do not engage, commit and take action. Reach out to whoever you need to help you get started.**

- Taking action is the most important step towards success.
- There will be joyful moments, teething problems, hiccups, sickness and healing along the way but this is part of the process.
- Dream it, think it, plan it, then do it.
- Execution is the secret ingredient.
- Taking the first step is usually the hardest part of the journey.
- Sometimes we think that we have to take big steps to start out and this becomes a paralyzing thought.
- Take baby steps. Start where you are, right now.
- Action implements ideas. Simply start. Action strengthens you. Action increases your confidence and leads to more action.

**Taking action gives birth to momentum. By taking action you get things done.**

It won't be all smooth sailing, you will stumble and make missteps along the way but firmly picture the end result on your mind as you keep pushing forward and making focused progress towards your success.

**Perseverance is key – take regular small steps.** You will feel fearful, confused, paralyzed, overwhelmed, worried, anxious and apprehensive when it comes time to start. The agony is even more intense especially if you are doing something for the first time. So start small. Little steps taken over time have the potential to make a difference. The small steps and actions add up over time incrementally. No step is too small. Keep building on it.

One positive aspect of starting small is you discover what works and what doesn't. Don't fear restarting. Sometimes you will start and restart a number of times as you try to get the right footing. A baby learns to walk by taking one step at a time; they stand up walk and fall down, then they rise up again walk fall down. Slow and steady wins the race.



The main things to remember in starting small and taking baby steps are:

- Take small regular steps.
- Don't try to grow too quickly.
- Make incremental changes and improvements over time.
- Don't try to do too much at once.
- Don't try to jump in one big leap.
- Work on one piece at a time improving and evolving as you go, and don't be afraid to start small.
- Everything big that you see around you started small – a tree started from a seed, a building started from one brick.

SMALL, REGULAR, DAILY STEPS LEAD TO MASSIVE SUCCESS. Perfectionism is the enemy of action. It is a mask we wear when we are afraid.

**Clarity comes from engagement. It does not come from thought. If you want to be powerful, look at your list, show up, see what the Universe gives you, make a commitment and know that you can course correct along the way.**



# **CONCLUSION**

Dr. Prithika Chary is a senior citizen and a cancer survivor having been diagnosed with a Grade III cancer rectum in 2016.

In 2014 she had an unexplained, unexpected head injury and a blood clot in the brain which led to strange, disabling symptoms which she overcame with conservative treatment.

As a child she had severe asthma which she overcame with an intensive exercise and fitness program in high school and has not needed any specific treatment in adulthood.

She genuinely believes that we can recover from illness or even bring illness upon ourselves not just through the commonly known risk factors like high cholesterol, smoking, and other lifestyle physical factors, but also through our thoughts, words and attitudes, i.e. the spirit- mind-brain-body-immune system link.

Based on this precept she has helped many of her patients not only with the appropriate medical or surgical treatment but by inducing favourable behavioural and cognitive change to give them maximum quality of life.

She has therefore launched a new initiative called

*BE YOUR BEST WITH* —————  
***Dr. Prithika Chary***

To enable healthy people to learn how to be “STRESS FIT” and those who are ill to improve outcome after illness or a life challenge.

For more information on forthcoming webinars and courses and group coaching sessions

## **Contact details**

Website: **[www.drprithikachary.com](http://www.drprithikachary.com)**

Email: **[drprithikacharyonline@gmail.com](mailto:drprithikacharyonline@gmail.com)**

Phone: **+91 95661 24222/+91 73388 38752**

**“We dont develop courage by  
being happy everyday.  
We develop it by surviving  
difficult times and  
challenging adversity”**

**- Barbara De Anglis**



**BE YOUR BEST**  
**WITH DR. PRITHIKA CHARY**

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BETTER HEALTH OUTCOMES | BALANCED HAPPY LIVES  
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