

*The Translucent Revolution by Arjuna Ardagh*  
*From Chapter Six:*  
*The Big Pain*

Feminine translucent practice is not always easy. As we start to say yes, everything that we have pushed away will return to be embraced. However deeply we may have been touched by an awakening, however committed we may be to living life from the depth of realization, to really feel without defense, demands great courage. Almost all transluents describe this practice as a work in progress. To really live without a story, without why and because, to really live in vulnerable, naked communion with each feeling that arises, is to live in an unbroken river of mystery. It is to die to each moment as you are born to the next. This does not always feel good. It does not even mostly feel good. Most of what we have repressed was painful, so the practice of returning to feeling instead of running with emotion requires facing discomfort. But do not be disheartened. Just to live with this as your vision and to fail again and again is in itself fulfilling. It is a much richer life than to succeed in denying feeling. It is a glorious failure. The reward is not pleasure, but depth, real connection with our world and ourselves.

With practice, all our most resisted, dark feelings become pathways into the Big Love. A translucent person knows the magic when grief, for example, comes to visit. Unresisted grief will take you down through itself into something much deeper. Since this process is not generally pleasurable, it therefore only becomes really interesting once we discover a dimension to ourselves beyond pleasure and pain. Pain is inevitable in life; suffering is optional. When we let go of clinging to feeling good and avoiding pain, we pass down through them both into our deeper heart, and the net result is that we are ejected into the Big Love. Always.

Marlena S. Lyons and Jett Psaris, who co-authored *Undefended Love*, teach men and women how to feel with courage. Marlena reflected with me:

*Let it pierce you, and if it disturbs you let it disturb you. If it tortures you let it torture you, because that's what the awakening is. There is a misconception of awakening as always bliss. Ultimately that is where we end up, but awakening stirs up whatever is within you so that it can find its path to its ultimate unfolding. Let it disturb you, let it pierce you, and find out what within you is having difficulty with the present moment.*

Translucent practice allows us to respond to new situations differently. When your lover doesn't call, when you get less appreciation than you wanted, when someone behaves rudely or with anger, instead of reacting emotionally, you know how to feel more deeply, how to surf the feeling home into the Big Love. And then, as news of this cease-fire reaches the far-off corners of your kingdom, old feelings, long ago banished, begin to show their faces again. They return home because they are family and know they must be reunited for the kingdom to be whole again. Old feelings return to be met, without any obvious external stimulation. In other words, stuff comes up.

It might come up when you are quiet and alone, or in meditation, or in nature. You might feel overwhelmed with feeling, for no apparent reason at all. Walking through the woods in the early morning, hearing the sounds of the birds, feeling the contact of your feet with the ground, you see a squirrel running up a tree, and 'what is this unbearable grief? Old pain, banished long ago as too overwhelming, stuffed down into the tissues of the long-suffering body, returns to be transformed through soft presence. It has emerged from what Eckhart Tolle calls 'the Pain Body.' And who even knows its full history? It may not even be pain from your lifetime. This body you call 'mine' was formed from the bodies of your mother and father. You inherited their noses and eyes, their DNA and their gifts, and their buried pain too. The inheritance may even be cultural. The sudden wave of anger you feel when you see poverty, the guilt you feel arising out of nowhere when you hear of a child abused, these may have nothing to do with the small story you call 'my' past.

We may reach a point when our relationship to feeling is almost entirely friendly, where our habit to repress or dramatize has almost entirely disappeared. We are still operating a human vehicle, however; we are still part of the collective human race. All over this planet there is injustice, needless cruelty, unchecked greed, wanton acts of violence and destruction. Every day we can see on our TVs, and then feel in our hearts, the results of military attacks on civilians and of terrorist bombings. The victims are all somebody's mother or father or brother or sister or child. As you become more translucent, as the awakening deepens, not only to the impersonal and transcendental but also to the very human dimension, you feel all this, too. Feeling is feeling. And as you feel your own present and past pain more responsibly, you also feel that everything on this earth is, in a certain way, happening to you. ShantiMayi has made this capacity to open more and more deeply to feeling all humanity, all living beings, the primary focus of her work in the world:

*Sometimes it frightens people, that they will feel the pain of everyone. But this pain is quite different from personal pain, because it dissolves the borders of the heart. It is this resonance where humans just feel love. That is all there is to it. It is the pain of real true love, rather than the pain of personal drama or personal disappointment. It's very sweet. It's very bittersweet. People don't mind feeling this, because they've felt it in themselves all the time. It's certainly not the same thing as personal pain. It is felt, and it is wonderful. It is deep and tearful and pushing all of your heart borders down, and very painful. It gives your awakening a deeper vista than personal pain, which always constricts your view. This pain is worth it. The pain of compassion is like the sun shining. Wherever you sense a border in your heart, that is where this pain comes from. Wherever there is even the most subtle separation, when compassion is flowing, you'll feel that as pain, as compassionate, heartfelt pain.*

The Dalai Lama calls this the capacity to bear the unbearable. When you feel this kind of pain, it does not mean you are just in a dark mood. It may be the result of opening yourself enough to feel the suffering all over this earth. It may be that your skin is getting less hard, the armor that separated my feelings from My feelings, the big Me that is connected to everything else. It is otherwise so easy to use spirituality as an escape, a way to avoid feeling any of that. Translucents

report that the more they can be here as love and compassion, the greater becomes their capacity to feel the suffering of humanity in an undefended way. You can experience great emotional pain, deeper, richer, and much more profoundly than when you were trapped in your own little story.

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