



YOUR
HEALING
Story

KARYN SHANKS MD



Do You Have a Story that Keeps You Sick and Tired and Stuck? (Let's Write You a New One!)

This is how it is. This is how it will be. This is my diagnosis. This will never change. This is my truth. This illness is my destiny. There's no hope for me.

Whoa! You need a great big hug and an empowering new story. A *healing* story.



How do I know? Because I've been right where you are now.

Fatigue. Suffering. Loss of hope from the energy drain of illness or life stress that doesn't go away. Too exhausted and stuck in survival mode to experience the joys of life or to reach the potential you know you have inside you.

It's what you feel. What you know. How it's been.

But can I let you in on a secret? Well, it's not really a secret, but a powerful truth you may have lost sight of in your energy smackdown.

That's right—those are stories. Every last one.

It's what you feel. What you know. How it's been.



Stories that may have kept you alive or helped you sort out your pain. But they're stories that keep you sick and tired. That stifle your potential. That crush your spirit and keep you down. That stand squarely in the way of healing and your bright new future. Your vibrant new you.

Sweet angel, we need to write you a new story! A powerful new healing story.

We All Have a Healing Story

We all have stories, don't we?

Fatigue and chronic illness are stories. The diagnosis is a story. Pain and suffering are stories.

Healing and recovery are stories too.

These may be stories someone else wrote and handed to us, like the “experts” we've asked to fix us or who we think know more about what we need than we do.

Fatigue and chronic illness are stories. The diagnosis is a story. Pain and suffering are stories.

Or perhaps they're stories we created ourselves to wrap our minds around fatigue and suffering and disappointment.

Yes, You Have a Healing Story



But answer this: Is your healing story ennobling? Does it elevate you? Does it leave room for hope?

Or has your story slammed the door on all possibilities for a positive outcome? For healing? For a better future?

How to Know if a Story Stands in the Way of Your Healing

Your First Clues that a Soul Crushing Story Stands in Your Way

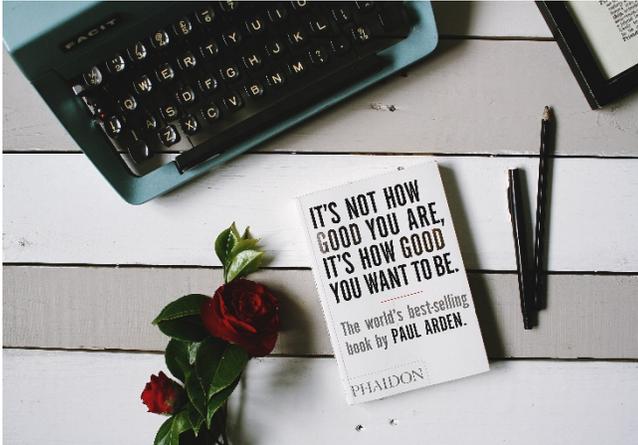
Ever catch yourself saying these?

- *I can't.*
- *Who am I to... ?*
- *I don't have time.*

These are stories. *Always.* Soul-crushing, potential-smashing stories.

They're preambles we use to say we're stuck. Stuck in powerful life stories that stand squarely in the way of healing.

Which of These Five Stories are Yours to Be Reckoned With?



While our disempowering stories crush us and put the brakes on our healing, it's also important to remember that each of them, often fearful products of our cautious primal brains, can also become stories of strength and potential for growth.

So, dig deep, answer these questions honestly, and begin to write your shiny new healing story. We start right here with the truth.

The Story of Your Power

- *My doctor is the expert on me.*
- *My diagnosis is [fill in the blank]. This is what I have. This is certain.*
- *I don't trust my own inner guidance about what's best for me—I let the experts decide and tell me what to do.*
- *I've been told there's nothing wrong with me. I know I'm sick but I don't know what to do next.*

Any yeses? Time to call back the power (yes, *your* power) you've given away to the “experts” who don't know you as well as you do. Time to get to know and learn to trust your own deep well of inner wisdom.

We start right here with the truth.

The Story of Your Worth

Do you ever catch yourself saying these?

- *Who am I to make my needs a top priority in my life?*
- *Who am I to ask for help?*
- *My illness makes me less valuable to my family, friends, and community.*
- *I'm a failure as a [wife, mother, friend, daughter] because of my illness or energy wipe-out.*

Any yeses? Here's your challenge: to recall your inherent beauty and worth.

The Story of How You Belong

- *I worry about what people will think about me as I choose a different way to eat, sleep, move, work, and take care of myself.*
- *I'm disturbed by the backlash, criticism, or lack of support from my family or friends as I take care of myself.*
- *I feel lonely on my healing journey.*
- *I feel like a freak as I stand apart from the crowd.*



Any yeses? Yes, the healing path is lonely at times, but you're being called to a healing life, a better life, a vibrant life. This takes serious guts. But know this: it's never fatal, the rewards are eternal, and there are a bunch of us just like you out here. And, yes, you have it in you!

The Story of Your Fear about Uncertainty and Change

- *Change scares me.*
- *I worry about how feeling well will change my relationships—will they still love and take care of me?*
- *I worry about what people will think of me if I become amazing, strong, and powerful.*
- *I obsess about the worst-case-scenarios of what will happen as I change.*

Yes, the healing path is lonely at times, but you're being called to a healing life, a better life, a vibrant life.



Any yeses? Of course, change scares all of us! Time to recall that *change is your only source of untapped potential*. It's your unlimited amazing future. You've got what it takes!

The Story of Not Having Enough Time

- *I don't have time to implement the food plan I know would be good for me.*
- *I don't have time to sleep enough.*
- *I don't have time to relax or play.*
- *I don't have time for me—others first!*

Any yeses? I'm not going to lie—this one is really, really hard. But you've *got to* know: the story of not having enough time is an excuse. Or a euphemism for "I'm scared." We always have time for what we care about, or feel we're worthy of, don't we?

We always have time for what we care about, or feel we're worthy of, don't we?

Let's Empower Your Healing Story

This is where we're headed: we're going to rewrite your story. We're going to shake off that toxic, disempowering story. And we're going to empower your *healing* story.

Not to change the facts or make things up. But to stop thinking we have all the facts



when we don't. To stop the audacity of despair when we have no idea what the future holds. To claim our power to change, to shift our perspectives, to grow, and to heal.

And we don't have to depend on outside sources to find them. To write them. To make them ours.

Yes, my friends, I'm talking about creating stories of hope and promise to help you rise and discover your true potential. Knowing you are the architects of your stories however unknowingly you've adopted them or lovingly you've crafted them.

Our Stories Are Not Fixed

See, our stories aren't fixed.

Our minds get fixed on simple ideas we're told and don't know how to change. But we get to write our own stories the way we want. We get to call our power back.

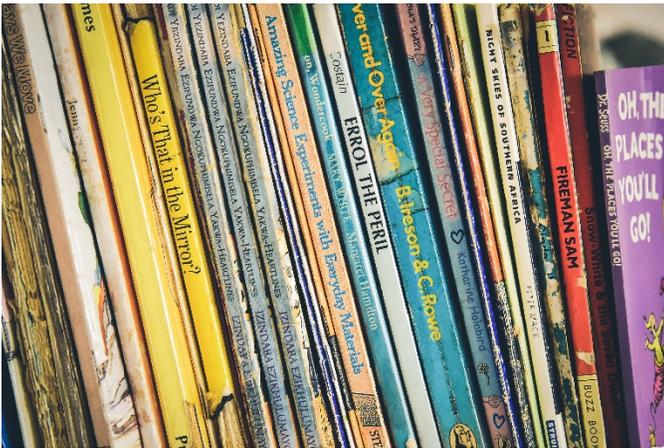
Our stories can change. We're *wired* for change. As we apply the science of human potential—epigenetics, neuroplasticity, core biology, and body-mind psychology—we'll recognize our old worn out stories, reimagine them, and create new empowered healing stories.

How? How Do We Empower Our Stories?

*Our stories can change.
We're wired for change.*

By calling out our dead-end perspectives. By looking for new possibilities. By choosing hope. By seeking inspiration and ideas and alternative viewpoints.

Let's breathe life into those worn out old stories that hold you back from the healing that is your true potential.



Call Back Your Power

Let's call your power back from the "experts" who you've asked to heal you but who don't know you as you know yourself. And from the culture that defines what you deserve or should expect, undermining the truth of what you know is best for you.

Honor Yourself

Let's honor how you *know* you deserve more. Can expect more. Are worthy of more.

Say "Yes" to Your Healing

Let's say "yes" to your healing journey. Of claiming the truth of who you are and what you know, the truth of your worthiness to heal, and the truth of your strength to do this for yourself. Let's say "yes."

Recall How Healing is the Primary Urge of Nature

Let's recall how healing is a primary urge of nature and as an integral part of the natural world *you are no exception*.

Just as we see lands ravaged by fire or tornados recover and thrive once again, often in unexpected and spectacular ways, so can we. We must remember that. We can heal from suffering and devastation. We get to play a powerful role in this healing and direct it to our advantage.

Let's recall how healing is a primary urge of nature and as an integral part of the natural world you are no exception.

Greet Your Fellow Travelers on This Healing Journey



And you know what's truly mind-blowing? We get to align ourselves with fellow travelers on this healing journey. Comrades who, just like us, question the unacceptable status quo, seek the truth, and are willing to stand apart from the rest to claim the truth of who they are and what they need to heal. That's so us as well!

Shine Your Light—Heal the World

Let's empower your healing story as you find your strength and beauty and light. Because as you heal, your light will shine more brightly. You'll get to radiate this light all around you, becoming beacons to others searching for a better way. In this way your healing also heals the world. (You are so powerful!)

In this way your healing also heals the world. (You are so powerful!)



Start Now

Let's start now. Give yourself permission to begin this healing journey. To claim your power, your resourcefulness, and your wisdom to know what's best, to own your body.

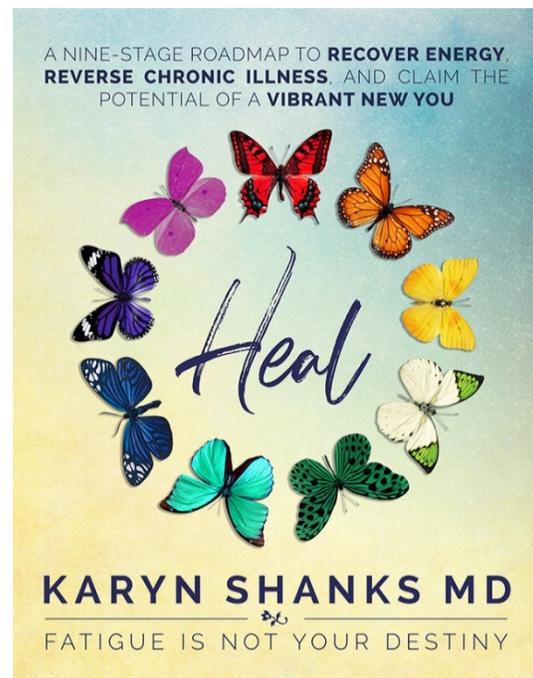
I am so grateful you are here. Let's empower your healing journey—your story of healing—together.

Karyn

p.s. I invite you to dig more deeply into your personal stories, to see them in the clear light of your soul's wisdom, and to discard the false truths that don't serve you. I invite you to step into the light of your own healing wisdom and access your mind's infinite potential. *Your* infinite potential. Your energy and healing.

Learn the deep art and practice of story mining in my new book, [**HEAL: A Nine-Stage Roadmap to Recover Energy, Reverse Chronic Illness, and Claim the Potential of a Vibrant New You.**](#)

Explore story mining in my series of articles: [**Empower Your Healing Story.**](#)



About the Author



Karyn Shanks, MD is a physician who lives and practices in Iowa City. Her work is inspired by the revolutionary science of Functional Medicine, body-mind principles, and wisdom gleaned from the transformational journeys of thousands of clients over her twenty-eight year career.

She believes that the bones of healing are in what we do for ourselves. Visit her work at KarynShanksMD.com.

Text copyright 2019 Karyn Shanks, MD.

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced in any form without permission from the copyright holder, except as permitted by U.S. copyright law. For permission contact: karyn@karynshanksmd.com.

Cover and interior design by Robin Deutschendorf

References:

Norman Doidge, MD. *The Brain's Way of Healing: Remarkable Discoveries and Recoveries from the Frontiers of Neuroplasticity*. 2015. Explores neuroplasticity—the biology of stories.

Norman Doidge, MD. *The Brain That Changes Itself: Stories of Personal Triumph from the Frontiers of Brain Science*. 2007.

Kenneth R. Pelletier. *Change Your Genes, Change Your Life: Creating Optimal Health with the New Science of Epigenetics*. 2018.