

4

STEPS TO  
BEAT YOUR

# Inner Resistance

AND UNLEASH ITS

*Healing Forces*

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# 4 Steps To Beat Your Inner Resistance

## & UNLEASH ITS HEALING FORCES

BY IRENE LYON

Resistance has become a buzzword these days – one that is used to describe a phenomenon that often occurs in the worlds of creativity and work productivity – a sense of being “stuck” or unable to move forward and push ahead. But, it’s also a perfect term when talking about any attempt to improve, shift, change and transform any, and all, lifestyle and health/fitness-related behaviours.

Two books in my library come to mind when I think of resistance. The first is Steven Pressfield’s book *The War of Art* and the second is Seth Godin’s *Linchpin*. Both are wonderful reads and are incredibly useful for tackling resistance from a behavioural and even emotional perspective, but I’d like to bring this one step deeper into the body and biology.

## HOW THE OLD WAY OF DEALING WITH RESISTANCE FAILS US

What commonly happens when we try to face resistance is that we stay in our head. We strategize, plan and make goals. More planning isn’t always going to serve when the resistance is actually a deep-seeded wound from the past.

Refer back to my article to review this idea:  
<http://irenelyon.com/2015/12/29/untapped-life-force/>

Here’s a different, less talked about way to approach resistance.

The approach I’m going to give you gives resistance a positive spin. It’s a way of seeing resistance as potential energy that can be harnessed via the development of self-awareness and biological embodiment.

## THE 1ST RULE OF HEALING RESISTANCE: SELF-AWARENESS

“You can’t do what you want, until you know what you do.”

- Moshé Feldenkrais, Founder of Feldenkraisian Mind-Body Science

Moshé Feldenkrais, was a pioneer in something called Neuroplastic Learning / Healing (and it is one of the practices I use with my clients and students) and he realized that in order to make significant change at any level of human experience (how we think, act, move, behave, sing, dance... you name it!), we must first gain an astute level of self-awareness as to how we do our current habits, actions, behaviours, etc.

In other words: **change comes second, self-awareness must come first.**

To do this, we must develop an awareness of our inner experience and this means learning (and practicing) how to be-friend the resistance and all of its qualities, sensations, emotions - everything.

## THE 2ND RULE OF HEALING RESISTANCE: BE-FRIEND ALL OF IT

You know that saying, “**What we resist persists?**”

This classic adage reminds us that if we ignore and push away the anguish, strife, feelings of uncomfortableness and all the “I don’t like this” thoughts that might bubble up when we feel resistance – they’ll all keep coming back to visit (haunt) us. Guaranteed.

Said another way: not only do we need to notice and become aware of the resistance, but we also have to be-friend the variety of physical sensations, challenging emotions and the “not-so-nice” memories that might pop up too. (This is where Biological Embodiment comes in.)

## HERE ARE 4 SIMPLE STEPS TO TRY WHEN RESISTANCE VISITS:

### 1

#### STEP 1 NOTICE YOUR BODY

When you feel a resistant edge that is trying to stop you from moving forward with something in your life, be it an important deadline, a difficult conversation, or a new behaviour such as getting out and exercising:

1. Pause and STOP what you're doing.
2. Bring attention to the contact your body has with the environment (I've linked up an audio exercise below to help you with this).

3. Keep sensing your body, in space, and in connection with the surface you are on.
4. Shift the focus AWAY from "strategy" and "thought." (See my mini-appendix for more on this.)

*QUICK REVIEW: This first step is about getting present to the here and now. It is challenging you to not distract yourself, not do any deep breaths or yoga poses or forms of mind-body based movement to try and "clear out the junk." Just Be. Pause. Stop. Notice your body.*

### 2

#### STEP 2 LOCATE THE SENSATION

I once heard Peter Levine, the founder of Somatic Experiencing, say "Pain is trapped sensation."

We could easily replace the word "pain" with "resistance," as in: **Resistance is trapped sensation.**

1. Dive a little deeper from the basics of **STEP 1 Notice Your Body**, and:
2. Can you pinpoint anywhere in your body that might be "holding" onto resistance?

## COMMON AREAS THAT TEND TO HOLD ONTO RESISTANCE AND KEEP IT TRAPPED ARE:

- **The throat** (often connected with needing to speak and be heard)
- **Back of the eyes** (often connected with tears, sadness)
- **Jaw** (often connected with anger)
- **Chest/heart area** (often connected with deep grief)
- **Belly/stomach** (often connected with gut knowing and avoiding it)
- **Diaphragm/breath** (often connected with fear and fright, helplessness, threat)
- **The groin/perineum/genital area** (often connected with power, or lack thereof)
- When you start to PAUSE, SENSE and LOCATE where various sensations might be residing in your body, you start to harness the energy of those sensations.

*QUICK REVIEW: Sensations are like gold. As is being able to locate where in the body those sensations are living. Where are they breathing and being? If we can't do this – they get stuck and the resistance sticks. For example, all too often, the word “anxiety” is used when someone is feeling a bit overwhelmed and resistant to doing a task, but when we actually investigate that ‘anxiety’ a little deeper, it always seems to be living in a certain area of the body, and it has a quality of life to it that needs to be felt and expressed. Which leads us to the next step...*

### 3

## STEP 3 BE-FRIEND THE SENSATION

Body sensations come in all shapes and sizes and for the most part our industrialized and civilized society has robbed us of a lot of good wholesome internal sensory awareness. I've found that my clients live on two opposite ends of the spectrum: either they are way too sensitive to the sensations and stimuli that they feel externally and internally, or they don't feel a darn thing.

It is important to have (and build) a healthy relationship to our internal sensations so we can listen to our body's needs.

Now, back to that resistance. Once you've gone through **STEP 1 - Notice Your Body** and **STEP 2 - Locate The Sensation**, the next step is to, be-friend it.

## BE-FRIENDING MEANS

1. Stick with the uncomfortable squirmy sensations, and there'll be a greater chance for that resistance and its sensations and stories to dissolve and dissipate.
2. Can you name or identify the sensations that you've located?  
  
Here's some common adjectives that people use to describe body sensation:
  - Hot, warm, cool, cold
  - Tense, constricted, loose
  - Tight, electric, tingly, buzzy, bubbly, zingy, static
  - Dead, black, light, clear, foggy, dense
  - Sharp, achy, dull
3. Let's say you do locate a sensation, or a series of sensations, you can take it another step further and become curious about how it might express itself a little more:
  - a. If that sensation could speak what would it say?
  - b. Does that sensation have a colour, shape or texture?
  - c. Is there a movement of the body that wants to come out of that sensation?
4. Stick with the sensation and all its facets as long as you can. Then, as you stick with it, see if it changes into something else.

*QUICK REVIEW: We rarely stay with our body sensations long enough for them to dissolve and release. And we rarely take the time to process the bubbling up of resistance in a way that is body-based and sensation-based. When we can become intimate and be-friend what might be lying underneath our resistant behaviours, we have the opportunity to transform them into powerful energy that can propel us forward. We begin to heal from the wounds of the past.*

# 4

## STEP 4 REPEAT STEP 1-3 DAILY

### Practice makes progress.

Working at this level is not simply about strategy and goal setting. It is working at the neurochemical and physiological levels of our body system. To change patterns at this level takes practice and diligence and then, over time, new positive neuropathways get set in place and the process of diving into our body and finding sensations become second nature.

At first it might seem like a foreign language, but trust me - the body wants to process resistance this way: it's the body's way of healing from those deep cellular wounds.

*QUICK REVIEW: When we start to see resistance as our friend, and not as a "bad" thing that we must conquer, manage or get away from, it can become a unique (even secret) tool that we can learn from.*

## HERE'S QUICK RECAP OF THOSE STEPS AGAIN:

**Step 1:** Notice Your Body

**Step 2:** Locate The Sensation

**Step 3:** Be-Friend The Sensation

**Step 4:** Repeat Step 1-3 DAILY

If resistance keeps showing, I believe this means it has been waiting for us patiently, all these years, waiting to help propel us forward. It just needs the correct sequencing to unlock its potential.

## BONUS STEP 5

### AUDIO NEUROSENSORY EXERCISE



CLICK HERE FOR A 17-MINUTE  
NEUROSENSORY EXERCISE



I mentioned in STEP 1 an audio exercise...  
so, if you click over here  
<http://www.irenelyon.com/mp3/4-steps-to-beat-resistance.mp4> - you'll find a  
17-minute neurosensory exercise that will  
guide you through a body scan that will

help you connect with your body and your  
environment. In our day and age, we've  
become so disconnected from these simple  
elements of human experience, so I suggest  
you give this a try.

Practice these five steps and watch resistance turn into a potent healing force.

*Irene*

## FREE RESOURCES PAGE

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audio downloads and my self-study online

programs that you can start at anytime  
so you can begin your nervous system  
healing journey.

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## MINI-APPENDIX

Only using strategy, thought and behaviour-change to beat resistance can keep our wheels spinning, and not actually get us anywhere.

Let's say this resistance really is a deeper wound from the past that keeps us in a constant flurry of survival-fight, flight, freeze-instinct physiology - in such a case, those initial wounds were most likely sensory and body-based: we felt them in our insides. Things like gut wrenching sadness, or toxic shame and feeling worthless are common areas that bubble up when we are put to the test and risk our levels of comfort.

In our culture, we tend to cover up these sensations and more uncomfortable feelings via:

### 1. GIVING YOURSELF A PEP TALK TO KEEP GOING AND PUSH THROUGH.

While I understand that sometimes this is unavoidable, it is important to not continually suppress emotional and sensorial qualities that might be popping up.

### 2. PLANNING OUT A REWARD THAT IS RECEIVED WHEN THE JOB / TASK / CONVERSATION IS COMPLETED.

This is actually an important one that may seem like an innocent ritual, but it holds a lot of negative charge if we aren't careful. Think about this common bribe that parents (unfortunately) do: rewarding a child with

a dessert for eating their vegetables. When this becomes a habit, a child becomes fixated on the fact that the vegetables must be awful if they get a reward (a sweet treat) whenever they eat them. Although this parallel might seem a little too simple, it actually isn't. If we constantly need to bribe ourselves with even minor rewards to keep moving forward and getting things done, then we lose the internal drive to just "DO" for the sake of doing.

### 3. TAKING A VERY DEEP BREATH OR EXERCISING AS A COPING MECHANISM FOR AVOIDING WHAT IS UNDER THAT RESISTANCE.

While one might think that deep breathing and exercising are wonderful, safe, drug-free ways to deal with resistance, they can, if we aren't careful, be a band-aid. Deep breathing exercises and various forms of breath work can bypass uncomfortable feelings and sensations, as can exercise. And while we need to breathe and be physically active with our body, we must also grow our biological self-awareness so we don't miss an opportunity to transform old stuck stuff (aka: survival stress and stored trauma).



# Irene Lyon

## PROFESSIONAL BIOGRAPHY

Irene Lyon, MSC. and nervous system expert, teaches people around the world how to work with the nervous system to transform trauma, heal body and mind, and live full, creative lives. To date, her online programs have reached thousands of people in over 60 countries. Irene has a Master's Degree in Biomedical and Health Science and also has a knack for making complex info easy for ALL of us to understand and

apply to our lives. She has extensively studied and practices the works of Dr. Moshé Feldenkrais, Peter Levine (founder of Somatic Experiencing) and Kathy Kain (founder of Somatic Practice). Irene spends her free time eating delicious food, hiking in the mountains or walking along the Pacific Ocean in her hometown of Vancouver, British Columbia.

