



## My Personal Story:

So, my “journey” Howdid Stephe Be Wellbeing come about?

To be honest, it's not been an easy road. I think the tipping point was when I was at University. I was in an abusive relationship and had some pretty traumatic experiences with this guy. I gave him my everything. I was young and naïve and was groomed into a relationship with someone a few years older than me. Turns out he had been unfaithful to me, on several occasions with several different women, on top of the abuse. I found the courage to leave him, but still supported him, with grace when he attempted to get me back by threatening to jump off a bridge. But I wasn't falling for it anymore, somewhere I found courage and self-respect and released his controlling narcissistic energy from my life.

I finished my degree with a first class honours and started a job I loved in the same city. I was single for the first time in a long time. From the outside I looked prosperous, within a few months of working for the company; I was co-managing it with my gorgeous soul friend Becky, who I had met at work. The work piled on and I took it on. I was known as “sparkle and shine queen” I always had a smile on my face, had a solution to everything, had a positive mindset and would help anyone and everyone.

I thought I was happy, little did I know that I really was not. I had the unresolved trauma lingering in my body, even if it wasn't even in my mind. I did not even know I had experienced a trauma. I had the mindset of keep busy; I think this was both a subconscious response to avoid the pain and a subconscious action which I thought would prove my worth.

I pushed all my negative feelings down and I felt shame and guilt in the pit of my stomach. I had sub-conscious self-limiting beliefs; that I was not good enough, not worthy, not deserving not wanted and that other people's wellbeing was a priority over my own. These beliefs were formed in childhood due to my upbringing and then strengthened by this experience I had at University. I started working- A LOT, I started going to the gym- A LOT, I started Eating- A LOT LESS, you see where this is going.

I developed an eating disorder and OCD. The thing is, we are humans and humans are meant to feel, ALL of the emotions, not just the good ones. I was too scared and ashamed to feel the negative ones so I pushed them down and my way of processing them was with food.

I had no support system around me as all my University friends moved away when we graduated. I isolated myself and found it impossible to spend any money on myself. I lived in a dingy room in the cheapest house share I could find in a dodgy part of the city. At one point I would only £8 a week on my weekly shopping and eat out of date food to avoid waste. As I write this now, I grieve and hurt for that past version of me, that young woman who had such little self-worth, self-love, who felt she was so undeserving and did not value herself.

I was sick, I was really sick, and I did not even know it, from the exterior I was sparkle and shine queen who loved unicorns and rainbows. The eating disorder manifested as a result of the unresolved trauma and it totally fooled me. It made me think that I was not good enough, not worthy, not deserving, unattractive and the rest of the rubbish negative self-talk that comes with it.

When did I realise I was unwell? My parents came to visit me and we went out for a meal. I was panicking over the menu. I had a few bites of my food to try and fool my parents that I was fine but inside I was having a complete melt down, in total fear of the food I was putting into my body and what it would do to me. I felt awful for eating it and was riddled with guilt. I went to the bathroom and never returned. My concerned Mother came to find me passed out in my own faeces.

I had a vassal vagal response. My body was so malnourished; it did not have the energy to digest the food I had just eaten. I came round and went to hospital. Following that my parents scooped me up, we travelled the motorway to their house where I ended up staying for months.



In these months I was seen by various medical professionals, I still could not recognise why I was losing weight, I was blinded by the mental illness. I was examined for all sorts of medical conditions to see what the cause of weight loss was. No one once asked about my mental health; I was having heart and liver failure because I was so malnourished.

Until one day my very worried Mother spoke to my GP and he referred me to an eating disorder charity; their support changed my life. I looked around and saw the pain I was causing my family; I was overwhelmed with guilt and anxiety. Something had to change.

By chance, a dance and movement psychotherapy student was on placement at the centre. I was seen by her straight away, I cannot believe how the Universe had aligned for me as this experience saved my life. Within 15 sessions I was on the road to recovery.

I had gone from malnourishment, organ failure and mental turmoil, to starting to understand the root causes of my situation, to acknowledging and rewiring my belief system, to learning techniques to help manage anxiety. I learned that I was safe in my body, my home, I learned the power of letting go of control and unhealthy feelings of guilt and shame, I learned to practice self-love and care, I reconnected with my creativity and identity, I was able to see the situation clearly; all with the power of my own body. I do not believe I would have had the same experience with a talking therapy.

To this day I practice daily yoga, meditation, breathing, movement and dancing to keep me in tune, aligned, and grounded.

(I am in the midst of creating a 7 step program to offer you based on my recovery journey).

I managed to get to a healthy weight and build my independence back up. I started a new job in mental health. However, the eating disorder triggered the onset of Myalgia Encephalomyelitis (M.E.) which I still manage today.



But I was managing it; I was loving life, I felt confident I wasn't struggling with my mental health any more, I felt free and single. I went travelling on my own to Bali and then met up with my older sister who is an actress, she was performing in Singapore so I went there and we took a holiday to the Philippines together. My soul felt free when I was travelling, I was relaxed and at ease the whole time, I felt fit and healthy and the sun healed my spirit. I was going to festivals, including Glastonbury! (Which was incredible by the way) and I did not let my illness define or control me. I loved my job in mental health as I had true empathy and understanding for the people I was working with and made a true difference to their lives.

A new job came a few years later which involved working with the NHS as part of a new project to get mental health workers into GP practices. I went for it and I got it! I loved the job, hard at times of course because I was working with really vulnerable people, but I really valued and rewarded work.

But one day I started feeling the effects of my M.E again, I was tired all the time. I was dragging myself into work and dragging myself back again, with barely enough energy to cook myself tea. I was run down and constantly picking up colds and getting repeated chest infections. But my work was so important to me that I ignored all the signs, work came first, the people I worked with came first. I put my every ounce of energy I had into working and everything else came second.

Until I hit breaking point...again. I was on repeated antibiotics and steroids for my chest and sinuses and had worryingly low iron levels. I was drained and fatigued. I had to take several months off from work, I woke up every day with chronic pain and was diagnosed with fibromyalgia. I was so angry with myself at the time, I knew I wasn't well and I did not listen. I still put other people's needs first. I got to the point where I could not help anyone and needed help myself. Some days I wasn't even well enough to make myself a brew! (the real medicine).



I was upset because I thought I had learnt the lessons I had needed to learn, I thought I was doing better at looking after myself at not self-sabotaging, in believing in myself, in knowing my worth and implementing healthy boundaries but, apparently not.



I felt guilt every day for letting people down and having to take time off work. I was eager to get back but I knew if I did not listen to the Dr I would end up in a worse position.

So I rested, I took time, I healed some more, and I am so grateful for this time. I had time to reconnect with me again, to listen to my souls desires, to work on myself, to prioritise me and to listen to what the universe was trying to tell me. This was the second time I had hit burnout, giving too much and taking too little, not listening to my needs.

The universe was being serious this time, something had to change, I did not want to spend the rest of my life in my pjs, in bed, in pain, missing out on what was going on in the world around me, it is not who I am. So, I listened to my heart and it whispered quietly (follow your dreams, start your business). "Me? Impossible, I am not good enough to start a business, no one want to hear from me, blah blah blah." All the negative self-talk. I refused to let the voices of my past still control me.

Time to cut off ties and step into the person I was meant to be. I did the inner work, worked on my mindset and belief system and just like magic here I am (even if it did take a lot of work). I decided I had to be the change I wanted to see in the world. If I want to see people truly loving and accepting themselves for who they are and embrace all their fabulousness... then it is my duty to role-model that.



trained as a coach and started my own business! (que happydance). I can still do the work I love; truly supporting, enabling and empowering people and helping them on their journey whilst looking after my own health and wellbeing, choosing my hours depending on my health AND I can incorporate all the therapeutic modalities I am trained in without feeling restricted. I can have my fabulous pie! I can make true connections with people and utilise my skills and select the ones that I feel will resonate with each individual as everyone is different.

I am so passionate about the work I do, the greatest part of it is seeing my clients feeling liberated and free from their mental and emotional pain; living a life of joy and abundance, confidence and growth; letting their light shine out to the world; holding themselves in love and kindness; standing with pride of who they are and with an inner knowing of who they are and what their gifts to the world are.

I am here to bring you hope my love, you deserve everything your heart desires, you are enough and you are loved and cherished for who you are. Be the light you were born to be.

So that's the very long story to how I started my own business!

If it resonates with you, let's connect! I would love to hear your story.