

Epigenetic Insurance – Rewiring Trauma Experiences

By Kathleen Hendrickson

“Epigenetics –Biology resulting from external rather than genetic influences.” The New Oxford American Dictionary, Oxford U. Press, 2001

Awakening from an early morning dream, a curious theme in a continuous loop captivates my attention. There is a bill charged to me - \$654 for insurance tied to a Chinese-like treatment: The purpose is to alter and heal aspects of my DNA. As I emerge into an awake state, what comes clearly to mind is my interest in epigenetics and on-going self-study in re-programming the traumatic tensions I carry in my physical being, some of which may connect back to my birth or earlier.

My thoughts go to my son, asleep in the adjacent room, visiting from Burma for a few weeks. Time spent with my sons often trigger recall of unreleased past events that retain negative charges – memories that lie in the shadow of my unconscious mind waiting their turn for recognition and release. He is exhausted from his twenty-two hour travel, the time change 11 ½ hours earlier than home, and our east coast mild summer heat and humidity compared to Southeast Asia at this time of year. Perhaps his exhaustion provides a mirror for something that exhausts me.

My attention dances easily to my frequent early morning headaches located in the back lower right quadrant of my skull. I wait to see what lies in wait for my awareness and release. In a firefly flash of a moment, a memory appears in my mind’s eye.



It is a crisp, clear fall day on Long Island, New York and I am driving the white 1969 Fastback Mustang down the straight-run of exit road from Brookhaven National Laboratory. I have just deposited my three year old to the care of Mrs. Carroll and her aide at the two day a week pre-school where there is a mix of three and four year old children whose parents comprise an international mix of scientists at BNL. Like most mornings, I feel exhaustion.

A traffic light connects the exit road at the William Floyd Parkway. The Mustang, an early issue of the Ford Mustang model, is not what you would think of as a family car, yet here I am, driving a zippy car with two child car seats in the back. My one-year-old son is fastened in his infant seat positioned in the back right side.

As I approach the traffic light, it turns green. A car is approaching the light on the William Floyd to my left. His light would be red since mine is green. I assume he will stop. I continue through the green light and in an instant, we collide. The impact is to my driver's side of the car. I later learn that he is a NYC off-duty police officer, who did not see the light at the intersection until it was too late. He has traveled out east for a day of hunting.

Shaken by the suddenness of the collision, a trip to Brookhaven Memorial Hospital Emergency Care rules out serious injury – a moment of grace leaves us unharmed. The car can be repaired. By the time I am home, the whiplash surfaces and I am advised to wear a neck brace, accompanied by Tylenol as needed.



In present time, I create a mental checklist of facts. I recall that we had seat belts. Research indicates they were an option in this model car. We were fortunate to have them. There were no airbags, no regulated child safety seats. If there were treatments for whiplash, I did not find them with my conventional medical doctor. Over the course of many years, I have had treatments to adjust the residual effects to my spine and musculature related to the crash. Headaches have been a part of my life for many years and this accident seems to have a strong connection to this injury. I am reminded that it is time to treat the emotional/spiritual component of this event.

How often in my bursts of zest for life and movement forward do I assume – do I act, as if I own the world? In so assuming, it is as if the world moves at my behest – an amusing, egocentric view. I recall those youthful days when I assumed some sort of right to give birth to three dear children who are in my care. I recall many assumptions that I made at twenty-six about my life working the way I intended. I suspect that I was more naïve than many. Perhaps I was also bolder than many in my views of how life works.



I begin a meditation/imagery session, and travel in my mind's eye to those moments in 1971. I open to bring understanding to the headaches that begin each time in the same area in my body. After years of meditation practice, healing therapies and more, I realize that the headaches act as a signal that speak through physical sensation – pain: *“pay attention,” “listen,” “think about what you are doing.”* I become quiet as I ease through the pain with the help of an Excedrin. I feel my mind and body soften. I open to the insight that arrives from a deep place and transforms the headache into a state of presence.

Bringing my current porthole-sized window of understanding to the possibility of reprogramming genomes, I meditate. I am in the event as I re-evolve the memories from those moments in time. Added to the frequent exhaustion of caring for my two small children, I naively assumed safety. The green light symbolizes a series of myths from which I navigated my world: *“rules are followed; there are no mistakes; others need to clear out of the way – here I come!”* I replay each moment of the scene. This time, I visualize a near miss with no collision. I drive defensively as my father so carefully taught me. Following the near miss, I pull to the side of the William Floyd to calm myself and take a few deep breaths, being grateful that we did not collide; that my precious cargo and I were safe.

In bringing awareness to my physical body, deeply within comes the sense of relaxation into safety. In that moment of grace forty-five years ago, there was a gentle lesson for me to heed and cherish - *Mindfulness in action, each action, each moment, facilitates navigation in this often chaotic and challenging time.*

Research is affirming that in states of presence, we have the ability to alter aspects of our DNA. I hold the working hypotheses that we can re-program and transform deeply held past tensions. I am ready to move forward - listening to my body wisdom as it reveals other trauma for recognition and re-wiring.

Note about myths – myths fuel our shadow. Through extensive work with EFT, emotional freedom technique, I find understanding of the elements of our shadow that include fear, shame, and guilt that incubate self-hatred and doubt - waiting to be released. Thank you, Gary Craig for the beautiful EFT system and phrase, “I completely accept and love myself. I am doing the best that I can.”

©KathleenHendrickson2016