

- THE HEALING -  
*Emporium*

A SENSE OF JOURNEY IS EMBROIDERED ON EVERY SOUL

BY  
DR. RANI SAMUEL



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*To all my patients*

*It has been an honor to journey with you*

# THE HEALING *Emporium*

'A SENSE OF JOURNEY IS EMBROIDERED ON EVERY SOUL'

It was 2 a.m. and Claudia Clements' hospital room was dark. Somehow at this inconvenient hour, her heart and mind colluded to resurrect hurt feelings that needed attention. Psychologist, Jenna David, had heard many tales of the terror of the dawn hours - the wrestling, the emotional toiling and the impossibility of a return to rest. Her twenty year old patient Claudia, also lamented about these torturous hours as well as feeling lost and adrift as a person.

'Jenna, I don't really see any point in being alive. I don't want to be here and I really don't think that I add value to anyone's

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life. Last week I contacted an organization in Switzerland that will assist me in dying if you would just write a letter telling them I am in a stable frame of mind. I just don't want to live anymore, Dr. David, please help.' Jenna listened intently to Claudia's all-too-familiar words of desperation and desire for escape that emanated from her tear-drenched, yet well-sculptured face. She cast her eye at the hospital patient information questionnaire and saw that Claudia used to be an art student and part-time waitress, and was repeatedly admitted for heroin addiction. Claudia wept from a core of deep wounding. Tears ran down her neck and accumulated in a spot of dampness on her psychedelic, punk-rocker T-shirt. She had heard suicidal pleas many times from patients, yet the brokenness of this woman touched something new within her. She wondered how such a young life had suffered so much already.

Claudia was tall, like the catwalk models seen on fashion TV, with an androgynous appeal. There were hints of a well-cut hairstyle but it was really hard to tell between the distraction of the rivulets of tears and

her restlessness from heroin withdrawal. There were no tissues in the hospital consulting rooms today, and Jenna stood to fetch some from the nurses' station. Perhaps this mini-break would allow Claudia to calm down, even if only for a brief moment.

On Jenna's return, Claudia explained that she was heartbroken from the separation of the 'absolute love' of her life - Damian. They had lived together for the past two years in a small flat along Durban's shoreline - The Golden Mile. Initially, moving into their own place was idyllic and Claudia thought she had finally found a place to call home. Although she was but 18 in age, she felt internally like an 'old soul'. Life had been tough for her and this was the first sign that there were better days to come - or so she thought. Claudia grew up in a small Dutch-speaking community in the Western Cape winelands. Her dad was the local preacher as well as the primary school principal. She was the apple of his eye and felt completely loved by him. Her favorite memoirs were of 'singing with dad' at the Sunday morning church services. Life appeared to be perfect. And then the rumors began...



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Claudia was sketchy on the details but remembers intense arguments between her mother and father. The kids at school teased her, saying that her father was sleeping with 'Aunt Judy' who was the local hairdresser and her mum's best friend. It soon became the small town 'headlines' that her father and Aunt Judy were having a baby together. Claudia recalls her mother packing their little pink VW Beetle and both of them driving to Durban to live with family. Claudia had to now grow up really quickly as mum had to begin work for the first time in her life. Life at age 15 was tough; she home-schooled herself and waitressed in the evenings. Her days were sad and bleak - void of any goals. She missed her dad terribly but it was taboo to even mention his name and even worse to talk about wanting to speak to him. She was also deeply hurt by his betrayal and felt replaced by his new baby daughter. The silence and distance grew between them. Frustration, pain and seemingly endless waves of suffering overtook her life. It stayed that way for three years, until she met Damian-the new part-time waiter at the restaurant.

‘What attracted you to him?’ Jenna inquired. At that moment, the line of Claudia’s mouth turned up at one corner. She told the story of meeting Damian who was a talented, reputable, graphic artist who always appeared so intelligent and streetwise. He ran his own small business and served at the eatery during quiet spells. Claudia loved the fact that he was adventurous; having backpacked through India and Nepal. Damian also had the ‘most amazing lean, tanned body and sexy smile’. Claudia was smitten and they soon began to hang out after closing hours.

The relationship progressed quickly. Claudia thought of Damian constantly as he was in regular communication with her. She felt that it was romantic when he messaged her the first thing every morning and reminded her that he was thinking about her, and that he could not wait to see her later. Similar messages of affection continued during the day, and soon they were in touch every fifteen minutes. Claudia felt loved, secure and wanted. Damian began to affectionately call her ‘Angel’ and she enjoyed being seen this way by him. Within weeks

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they were enjoying 'electrifying sex' and the phrase 'I love you' flowed freely. Moving in together was a natural next-step. During the first month together she began to notice a certain 'dark mood' that came over Damian. She knew that he dabbled with drugs but soon learned the extent of the experimentation.

It began with a single shot of heroin as part of foreplay. Damian would go to see his dealer while Claudia prepared their bedroom with candles, scented oils and wine in her parents' discarded, cut-glass goblets. They would then 'shoot up' together and have heightened sensual sex. Claudia grew comfortable with this arrangement and soon it needed to happen more than once a day. She noticed that Damian began to swear and have erratic moods. Heroin was a great comforter and conflict eraser. During her two years with him it reached the point where they both eventually smoked the entire day, sold their furniture and completely isolated themselves. They had created a safe haven and lived off credit cards.

Heroin soon replaced sex altogether. Being in oblivion together felt 'heavenly'. Life

changed suddenly when her mum got a court order to remove her from the apartment and place her in drug rehabilitation. A protection order was served against Damian ensuring that he would have zero contact with Claudia.

Therapy sessions occurred daily for the first twenty days of treatment. Claudia grew to look forward to these times as it was the only place she felt she could be honest and not condemned. She did confess that she often found herself drugged and lying on the bedroom floor begging God to 'save her' from this hell, but she could not see a way out. She still loved Damian. Sadly, Damian's disease had exposed Claudia's unspoken emotional illness.

Jenna grew fond of this young woman and knew she had to find a creative way to unlock her healing journey. As the days evolved into weeks, Jenna learned that Claudia enjoyed aromatherapy and mystical stories of romance, adventure and freedom. She was an ideal candidate for the 'Healing Emporium' therapeutic technique. This process would be a guided meditation between Jenna and Claudia. The intention would

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be to get her to identify hidden aspects of what she perceived as obstacles in her healing journey. This was to be done by meeting the wise proprietor of The Healing Emporium - a fabled place that offers an elixir for every human frailty. Jenna told her that the place was very much like a perfumery with shelves of uniquely designed bottles. Each bottle was filled with precious substances that aided a person on their healing path. It was the best place to acquire a bottle of 'courage', 'freedom', 'comfort' or even the elusive bottle of 'peace'. The only rule of the emporium was that it accepted no money of any kind. Every customer had to exchange something of themselves to get a bottle. The emporium proprietor was allowed to ask any question, discuss any subject and finalize a suitable transaction.

Once Claudia's detoxification regime was completed, Jenna introduced her to the mysteries of a secret building that housed The Healing Emporium. Claudia quite enjoyed adding her details to the imagery of this imaginary place. She envisioned an expansive welcoming room with hundreds of neatly-labeled bottles sitting floor-to-ceil-

ing on dark, wooden shelves. The bottles had unusual shapes; each contained liquid in mostly pastel colors. The counter was also filled with unusual objects - balancing scales, measuring containers and ancient maps. She could smell hints of bergamot, patchouli and orange blossoms mingled with gardenias. The atmosphere was relaxing.

Claudia was eager to make her first exchange with the emporium proprietor who was rumored to be over 2000-years-old. He was a wise sage with kind eyes, an inviting smile and legendary negotiation skills. Claudia had decided to use the emporium as a place to confront her many fears and inadequacies.

She decided that she wanted a substantial bottle of 'courage' to help her face a world without heroin or Damian - two potent addictions. Jenna role-played the proprietor. Initially, Claudia offered to exchange her need for heroin for the venetian-blown glass bottle of '*Courage*'. 'Why do you want this bottle?' the proprietor inquired. Claudia shared with him that in her deepest self, she had always felt cowardly. She had run away

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from everything that did not fit into her idea of perfect relationships or the perfect life. She had ignored her father's attempts at contacting her, had chosen to please a man by consuming drugs and emotionally disconnected herself from her troubled mother. She needed courage to face her feelings of inadequacy and fears of never being able to enjoy peaceful relationships again.

The proprietor spoke gently and said that he could see her hurt and pain, but reminded her that 'the heroin was only a symptom and not the root of her pain'. Claudia realized that she had to look deeper and offer some more of herself to the proprietor. After a long pause, mulling over in her mind the trail of broken relationships, she volunteered to give up her feelings of worthlessness for that much needed bottle. She had often felt that she was not worthy of love. Why else was she repeatedly rejected and abandoned? She also thought of Damian - did he ever love her? Was she just someone who would be used to lessen his loneliness and his own brokenness? She felt she was like a worthless object; easy to discard once its usefulness had passed.

The owner nodded and said, 'Now we are on the right path, but I need something more.' *What more could there be?* Claudia wondered. This was not so easy. She walked around the emporium for a long time, deep in thought. Well, she knew that she was full of fear; fear of her past, fear of the present, but especially of the foreboding years ahead. Eventually Claudia said, 'Well, I offer you my feelings of worthlessness and my fear of the unknown.' As the creases in his eyes deepened with a smile of recognition for the truth, the emporium proprietor promptly accepted the transaction. Before she left the emporium he said to her, 'The unknown is what keeps life dynamic and interesting. It is one of life's greatest contradictions; embracing the unknown daily, brings adventure and joy'.

The weeks of therapy that followed were full of exploration. Through this, healing came and diminished the feelings of worthlessness that grew in her soul after her family was split apart. Claudia felt strongly that her father's initial silence meant that she was never of any real value or importance to him. Over time and through much



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soul-searching, she began to accept the frailty of being human - including her father's humanity. She also wrote a series of therapeutic letters to her father examining all the heartache and loneliness of her teenage years. These letters she kept in her diary. Claudia eventually came to a place of peace about several aspects of her early life and was ready to step into an uncertain future. She felt older than her twenty years and for the first time, she realized that she had no close confidantes in her life, as Damian had isolated her from all other relationships. Yet, Claudia was ready to start over and she decided to reconnect with old school friends via social media. They were happy to hear from her.

Therapy appeared to be progressing smoothly but Jenna was experienced enough to know that healing is a journey with many unexpected twists and sudden falls. Claudia now kept weekly sessions at Jenna's private practice. One Tuesday afternoon, she arrived edgy and restless, kicked off her summer sandals and curled up on the comfy, chocolate-brown couch. 'Dr. David, I am having cravings!' Claudia explained

that she had to fight off the relentless urge to sell her laptop in order to get her next fix. 'This is driving me crazy and I am all alone with these scary thoughts,' she confessed. 'I am telling you this now because I am only as sick as my secrets.'

Claudia was now extremely well-read about her addiction and was attending weekly Narcotics Anonymous meetings. Jenna knew about Claudia's need for instant gratification to solve every problem. She prompted her to visit the healing emporium to seek a way forward.

Claudia said the emporium proprietor was pleased to see her again and complimented her on how well she was looking physically, commenting how he saw a hint of inner peace that was not present on her first visit. Her eye was drawn to a shelf that read 'Blessings'. On top of the shelf, She was surprised to see that 'Solitude' was represented there in an organically-shaped hand crafted bottle. How could solitude ever be a blessing? Surely, it was a curse to be as lonely as she was! Her long days and nights of being alone had made her feel that she was a castaway - an emotional leper living on the

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fringe of humanity. She had to have this alluring bottle. She wondered if, in fact, hope could be born in solitude? She was willing to find out.

Claudia offered the proprietor her 'discomfort of silence and quiet'. He offered a slight nod and a faint smile. In his wise voice he said, 'You are on the right track; search deeper and give me a little more of your fears and concerns.' Claudia probed her soul and in the stillness of that moment realized that she needed to also offer her feelings of being lost without a 'love' relationship. The proprietor made the exchange and said his doors were always open on her journey through life.

The therapy sessions that followed were focused on finding Claudia's quiet, inner confidence though solitude. Slowly, she reconnected with her need to create and once again took out her sketch book. The paper was the container where she 'expressed' her feelings. She released her feelings of confusion. Seeing them on the page was cathartic and comforting.

She began to yearn for the quiet times to make her pages come to life. Her mood was

increasingly more upbeat and there was a positive energy in her step. Solitude was becoming her inner sanctuary. Claudia found herself sitting quietly on the beach with her favorite Emily Dickinson novel. She even began to sit on her own in movie theaters while downing her soda and butter-flavored popcorn. She claimed her ultimate achievement was having a three-course dinner on her own with book in hand. Solitude had indeed become a blessing and she felt a divine connection with everything and everyone in her world. She was now clean for five months and ready to resume her fine art studies.

Jenna felt positive about this young woman's progress but knew that re-engaging with her university studies was not going to be easy. Claudia proudly showed Jenna her new student card and requested that she be allowed to visit the healing emporium during her therapy session. Jenna had a sense that Claudia had thought this exchange through during the week. Claudia reported during the exercise that the proprietor was once again pleased to see her and that she boldly stepped up to his counter and asked

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for a bottle of 'Mystery'. 'Why do you desire this bottle?' he inquired. She explained that in her artistic mind it was impossible to live without a sense of mystery; which she explained was about being interested and curious about everything in the world. She also told the proprietor that mystery would allow her to keep her sense of wonder and perspective and maybe give her the impetus to embrace the possibilities locked inside each day. The proprietor raised his grey eyebrows and presented an elongated bottle with a unique, petal-shaped lid. 'What are you offering for this priceless essence?' he politely asked. Claudia gave a confident smile and responded, 'I offer you all the things I cannot control'. There was a sparkle in the proprietor's eyes as he stretched out his right hand, touched her shoulder and then handed her the bottle of 'Mystery'. Claudia bounced out of the store as most 20-somethings would.

A week later, she found herself running up the university stairs to her first lecture. She could hear the conversations of excited fellow students. She was ready to make new friends but knew she would also be

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quite content reading her art history book in the busy cafeteria where students gathered. *What was that exciting stirring on her insides? Could it be hope? she mused, or was it just so beautiful to be high on life?!*

The Beginning.

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Note from Dr Rani Samuel -

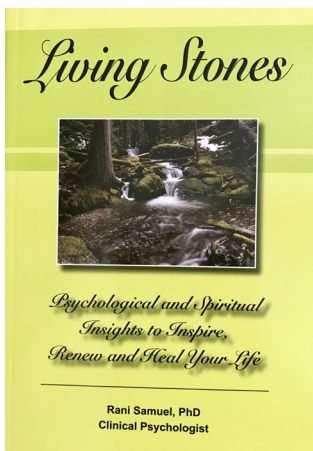
Every season of life brings new questions that lead to new perspectives. If you could visit The Healing Emporium today, What bottles would you ask for? What aspects of yourself, that no longer serve you, would you be willing to release?

Blessings on your journey...

**Connect with Dr. Rani Samuel**  
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Purchase Dr. Rani's first self publishing book,  
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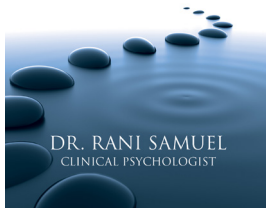


Welcome to Living Stones...  
A space for newness and adventurous  
possibilities

Clarity or Confusion?  
Faith or Fear?  
Harmony or Haphazardness?  
Wisdom or wilderness?

This is a book about giving ourselves permission to heal and dream again. It is replete with personal experiences of individuals who decided to make fresh, more significant choices for their lives. Reading these chronicles will give you a positive opportunity to transform and impact your own existence.

STEPPING  
STONES  
TO  
EMOTIONAL  
HEALING



Emotional trauma affects a multitude of people across the world. Many look for a pathway through their circumstances, but few can find their way out alone. With the help of a therapist, one can begin to explore ways to work towards emotional healing to find their pathway to their new beginning.

Just as a surgeon performs surgery to fix what is in need of repair, a therapist performs emotional surgery which is just the beginning of the healing process. There are many 'stepping stones' unique to each individual's walk, but it is not always a linear, logical pathway; it is a journey that is often guided by a therapist who helps to identify the next stone on the path.

Stepping Stones to Emotional Healing illustrates intentional ways you can begin to take the next step on your own path toward healing. Dr. Samuel's practical pointers and touching stories of patients who have gone through their own healing journeys, identify workable tools that were crucial to her patients' success. Through the personal reflection questions and action steps provided within, your journey to emotional healing can begin now. When you identify your next 'stepping stone' and courageously move forward, your life will begin to transform as you begin the next chapter.

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Dr. Rani Samuel is a Clinical Psychologist with extensive experience in the area of emotional healing and wholeness. She works in a private practice as a psychotherapist seeing both hospital inpatients and outpatients. Her work is centered on guiding

patients through healing journeys from a place of crisis to one of calm and contentment, in spite of the storms of life. The processes that her patients embrace deals with both the psychological and spiritual aspects of healing.

Dr Samuel is passionate about releasing people into the fullness of their divine potential and purpose so that they may become more fully alive!