

Reaching for the Light Transcript

Hello dear and welcome back!

We are in week three, which carries our inner garden metaphor to the place of: the tendency to rise. I came up with this part of the course, drew the correlation between the tendency to rise, and the concept of Play Elevators that Natalie Kinsey came up with, which is a fundamental part of Emotional Design work -- I came up with it in late spring, when I was working in my home garden and seeing a lot of things pushing up, just like, Wow, this is a force! This is a very natural force.

Abraham Hicks talks about how if we don't hold a cork underwater, the cork being our emotional state of being, our connection to all that is, that cork is going to rise. I love that feeling of how if we aren't purposefully doing things to bring ourselves down, it's our natural state to be floating along on the surface, and the surface is that connected-to-your-merged-perspective state, it's when we're on the top half of the emotional ladder.

I love the reaching for the light chapter, because it brings the emotional design work into a really moment-by-moment kind of practice.

So, first I wanna tell you a little story about what that looked like for me the other day. On Tuesday, I went on a big drive, and I brought my daughter to her dad's house. Most of the day was driving. So then Wednesday, it was like, Cool, I'm home, my daughter's not here, I could rest, I could watch a show that I wouldn't normally watch with her around. Oh this is so nice! And got into this content, basking kind of place. And then, it turned over for me into being bored, but there was already that momentum going of resting and being in the show and Oh, I'm too tired to do anything else, I'll just keep going. And that goes down the ladder into kind of a depressive state where I was like, Ugh what's the point of doing anything? (Laughs) From that place, I'm clearly not in my all-connected, merged-perspective state where it's like, There's a LOT of points, and it's just fun to do what I want to do! But I wasn't available to any of that.

I really had, in that moment, to swing myself up, jump myself up out of that groove of bored-becoming-depressive momentum. And I used a play elevator. The way I like to think of Play Elevators is, wherever you're at on the Emotional/Vibrational ladder, there are balloon strings that are available that you can reach at different points in your ladder. And grabbing onto them can lift you up to another spot on the ladder. Or like an elevator, Ding! Now I'm here! One of my very basic play elevators is to go outside and to look at the plants. So, I did that, I went and looked around our garden, and we have little baby fava beans sprouting up through the dirt, and it was so beautiful seeing that, and then realizing, Reaching for the Light! That's the course material that I want to make today, and here it is! I got inspired to start filming the plants. And then, another play elevator of mine is cleaning, and so I started doing some dishes. As I was doing the dishes, I started singing, and I made up the song that I put with the plant footage and it made the intro video for this week's material.

I'm telling you all this to say that play doesn't just mean goofing off or being silly. It means, to me, that you are following your own sense of inner engagement in what you're choosing and directing yourself towards, in a way that opens you up and brings more of you into it. So, for me, it wasn't being silly or wild or hysterically laughing, but it was a genuine play elevator for me to go outside and see the plants.

It's not a distraction to play. It's actually bringing you deeper into your path of what you're here for. I love the concept of destiny lines, that there's things that light each of us up. Things that we're here to play with and explore. For me, going out and following this light-hearted play elevator, was like Oh, the plants! Reaching for the light! My course! Of course! This is what I wanna do! I'm gonna make a video! It wasn't a distraction. It brought me into my sense of who I am and why I'm here.

A play elevator, it's funny to put it in week three because it's pretty central, but first you have to know about feeling your feelings and doing the focus wheel/making it rain exercise, because sometimes even a play elevator feels out-of-reach, or the play elevator is to feel your feelings or to do the making it rain exercise. That can be a way of showing up fully in the moment and taking charge of how you're feeling. So those are really great practices. But, to have a set of what your play elevators are, to know what works for you personally, is incredibly powerful. I think sometimes people think if we're grumpy we need to stay in it and figure it out, hash it out in the moment. When actually if we, sometimes we need to feel our feelings or do a making it rain thing to be available to other play elevators. If we can start to elevate ourselves up, sometimes that problem disappears, it's not even real at another emotional level. Or, the solution becomes incredibly clear, it becomes like no big deal, just do this and then this, like Bing! Of course! Or we're drawn into something that clarifies something for us, gives us a missing piece of information, gives a dose of compassion, gives us, sometimes it's like play elevators, I just really want to watch this movie right now! And then in the movie, the character says something that gives you this Aha! Moment of Oh yes! Of course! I needed that! So it's really a practice of following your bright lights. Following the feeling of lifting and lightening. I love using the balloon metaphor for it.

What I'd love for you to do this week is to draw out or write out your emotional/vibrational ladder, the spectrum, and then come up with things that really genuinely work for you to help you, to uplift you, when you're at each different space on the ladder.

For example, here's my cute one! When I'm really low and in depression and fear, it helps me to: Take a bath. To rest. To be with some strong-feeling books or movies that help me to feel my own feelings. It's a play elevator for me to ask for help, to let people close-in to me know how I'm feeling and that I'm struggling and maybe need to take some stuff off of my plate. It helps me to stretch and do self-massage.

When I'm in anger or worry, it helps me to do a focus wheel, to focus on my breath or go for a walk.

If I'm at the bored or frustrated level, I will reach for "What's pretty around me?" I will use this if I'm ever kind of in a good-feeling state and I notice myself starting to slide down into worry, grumpiness, starting to feel tight, I will, it's like a life raft I can throw myself of "What's beautiful around me?" And I'll just look around. It lifts me straight up into appreciation.

If I'm feeling content, but not feeling the big winds of excitement or celebration or knowing that everything is working out, that I'm just kind of content, I think it's fun to do what feels good and what feels light in that moment. Sometimes to find out what that is I'll do a Yes Storm.

A Yes Storm is where you make a list, it's like a brainstorm, of things that feel bright, maybe not even super bright, just throw ideas out there of what you might want to do, and then scan it with the feeling of what feels the brightest, the most exciting, and then go ahead and do that thing first.

Next up on the list is excited / eager. That's when I love to play, to imagine, to do the emotional design work of ridding which we're going to get into next week. This is when I like to do my personal creative work. And when I get lifted up into that place of singing, joy, love, appreciation, yes, I'll sing, sometimes I'll just bask, I'll smile, I'll feel like a wind of inspiration to do something, to reach out to someone, to go somewhere, and I love to follow those urges. That's when I love to create and make art and follow inspiration.

SO there's the over-arching sense of what play elevators as activities work for different emotional states to lift you up the ladder. Then there's also the moment-by-moment inner guidance we can access any time and have that help us to determine if something's going to lift us up or bring us down.

In addition to having a sense of what our personal play elevator activities are, I'd like for you to find a way to talk about and be with your inner guidance. What does that look like and feel like for you? I'm going to give you several examples.

First of all, I wanna talk to you about what I've learned from Natalie Kinsey's examples of that inner guidance moment. She has a couple different metaphors for it. One is, she calls it thinking On The Beam Thoughts. And I love that sense of it, where you're on a balance beam and you're really purposefully and inwardly can feel that sense of like, this feels like a good thought, this feels like a good thought, and then you can get distracted and start to worry, or resent or get into a funk, and then back to On The Beam Thoughts, what's my next on the beam thought?

Another way I've heard her talk about it is Forking. That is when you feel like you keep choosing the lighter or better feeling thought. I could think that, but how could I fork in a lightening direction?

Another practice is logrolling, which is another word for consciously staying on the surface of, if your logs are rolling down a river and you're having to hop from log to log, and it starts to turn

and go under, you have to hop onto the next log or you'll get pulled under, so it's this hopping from a good feeling thought to a good feeling thought.

For me, I'm a very visual thinker, also, so I love having a vision to call to my mind when I'm considering making a decision. For example, I'll hold in my mind an idea, of like "I think I wanna stretch for a while" and I'll imagine a balloon in my mind. And I'll see if the balloon stays where it is, if it lifts up, or if it falls down. Sometimes it pops. Sometimes it's a thousand balloons rising. And it gives me a sense of if all-that-I-am agrees that it's a good thing to do or if it's actually gonna bring me down. Sometimes it's surprising, but it's just bringing to the surface what my vibrational mix is on that subject. It's showing me that like, oh ya, I believe that'll be incredible, or oh I have doubts about that working out. In addition to imagining a balloon, sometimes I'll imagine a flower, and hold an idea in mind and see if the flower blooms or closes up. I like to move towards what has me blooming.

A nice big chunk of the Play Elevator world is the realm of gratitude games. I'm sure you've heard about the importance of being grateful and counting your blessings. When you start to value your emotional ladder and are tapped into it and interested in gauging where you're at in it, then gratitude games become like, not just a frivolous or a "should" thing, but that is my wrench, or that is my hammer, that is a tool that I use to make a difference in my emotional state of being that works.

Often it doesn't make sense to me if I'm really low. A way that I can tweak a gratitude game is making a list of things that don't suck. Make a list of things that are okay. Making a listing of reasons that I am okay. You know, it can be like Everything sucks! Nothing's okay! But then, to be like, I'm breathing. My legs aren't broken. You know, basic things can start to make sense and start to scoot up the ladder a bit.

From other places, like from a bored or even a kind of frustrated place, making a list of what's working out, what's going well, what am I excited about, why is this situation actually perfect for me or helping me to build skills that I need to have in the future. Those are all really powerful ways to align yourself with that uplifting energy.

In that vein of gratitude games, it can be a very powerful play elevating practice to be aware of what you're celebrating. TO have a practice of, at some point in your day, maybe it's the first thing in the morning or last thing at night, play in celebrating things, or counting your blessings, or coming up with at least ten things you're grateful for. I find that that has ripples throughout my entire life, because if I am cultivating a sense of what's going well for me then that is more likely to be on top of my mind, so if I encounter a friend or a grocery store clerk or someone calls me and is like "hey, how's it going?" I have this easy catch-bag of celebrations that I get to give more momentum to. Every time that we talk it about it with somebody, and celebrate it and are feeling good about those things, that pathway is actually getting deeper of a groove. Remember last week we were talking about the grooves and our expectations? Every time that we're celebrating a celebration, it's becoming a deeper groove that is calling more energy into it, and

so it's a way that we can create rivers of celebration in our lives that will grow really happy thriving plants of experiences that match that tone.

A couple more gratitude games are:

UR 10 is a game that Natalie Kinsey came up with, which is basically coming up with 10 things that you appreciate about someone else and sending it to them. I think that that is one of the most powerful things that we can do because it lifts us up the emotional ladder, and it lifts somebody else up the emotional ladder. If you're wanting to have some positive ripples go out in the world, one of the best things you can do is send some appreciation to somebody out there.

Similarly, in that vein, another gratitude game we can play that lifts us up and lifts up people that we love or wanna play with, is the game Top Five. That's where you give each other topics to say our five favorite things about it. It can be fun, you can give somebody a challenge round of what are your top five about cardboard, or about socks, or about dirty socks, you know. That might be a hard level. So if someone's really into it, you can go there.

Or you can keep it really simple: what's your top five for the color blue or what are your top five for sweaters? Or you can direct it into things you know that person loves, like what are your top five for chisels?

It's a great way to get to know somebody. I believe that when we're playing with somebody and seeing somebody in that appreciative state, it's really hard not to just see really who they are and to just love them for exactly who they are. I love to bust out the top five game at a family gathering, on a long car ride, it helps to lift everybody up, to find things to celebrate.

What your practice prompt is for the week is I would love you to play in finding, what are your play elevators for different places on your vibrational-emotional ladder spectrum.

The second piece of your practice prompt is I would love for you to play a gratitude game with somebody this week. You could just send them appreciation or you can say Hey, you wanna play this game, top five? You can play it on the phone, through texting, or voice memos, in person, on a walk, on a car ride, while cooking dinner. These are all really sweet forms of connection.

Something else I love about play elevators is it is so much more helpful to offer to somebody who is struggling a play elevator than it is to say "Wow you're really grumpy right now." Like, if someone says that to me, I'm like I KNOW I'M GRUMPY! But if instead my partner says to me, "Hannah, what are your top five favorite things about summer dresses?" Then all of a sudden my mind is totally switching gears and I'm starting to think about how much I love twirling and how much I love floral prints and I'm in a totally different reality, in a totally different in my mind, I'm in a river of celebration. So I hope these help you to activate your rivers of celebration.

I'm really excited to hear what play elevators work for you guys, and how much you're enjoying your gratitude games, and if you have any questions or experiences or things you wanna share, please share with us in the forums. I'm excited to play with you guys in the weekly Zoom session on Sunday. Yay! Have a beautiful uplifting perfect-for-you kind of week.