

Step change

"A hat, a stick, an um-brel-la, and forward, backward, sideways, on... A hat, a stick, an um-brel-la, and forward, backward, sideways, ..." I can still see us walking home from our primary school, sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly, jumping down as many steps as possible on the long staircase leading down from the hill where our school was located. Spending our afternoons playing with the other children "Come along, run away!", "Tree, change places!", „foot defence", hopscotch, dodgeball, climbing on trees, playing in the park lush with greenery. A happy childhood, Mama's "little kitten", Papa's "Gabi". Being well-behaved was very important!

I met my "sandbox girlfriend" after my family moved to the city when we were both 4 years old. Together we went through the ups and downs of puberty by exchanging letters, sharing meaningful poems and walking while immersed in deep conversations on summer evening strolls into the city centre.

Girls' grammar school, "work first, pleasure second" and 'no pain, no gain', so be diligent, high school diploma, still time for the first boyfriend, ... double degree in German Studies/Folklore/ Psychology and teaching qualification for primary school in German-History-Biology-Art – I enjoy learning!

Second boyfriend, on top of the world, utterly depressed, a relationship with fluctuating emotions. First state exam, exam period, positive university graduation, but a dramatic end to the student love. I froze inside myself as I held his letter in my hands, saying that we would not move into our recently rented apartment, that it was all over...After a weekend of overthinking I knew: He had broken up with me <x> times already. Now....— it's enough. I don't want to cry anymore! I want to breathe freely again ...

First own apartment, the training period continued with the preparatory service. At the same time pursuing a doctorate at the university, gradually I forgot the '... and on' from the above-mentioned motion rhyme. Reaching my own centre became increasingly difficult. Intense migraines, again and again, strong rheumatic medication was supposed to make me functional again quickly.

But then, at some point, I felt like I was in a suit of armour, somehow trapped. The first suspicion of MS seemed unfounded after the 'witch trial' at the neurologist's, who measured the length of the nerve pathways. All good!? Transfer to Upper Bavaria, which lead to the interruption of my doctoral studies, my second own apartment, standing on my own two feet.

The 'suit of armour feeling' just disappeared again. Fulfilment in my profession, I take joy in accompanying children in their education, but everything around it was quite stressful.

Nevertheless, it went on for 10 years:... met my dear husband, moved in together with him in Austria, got married, brought a very sweet daughter into the world, moved into a house... MS diagnosis, cortisone, injections, and so on... For 11 years, I dutifully followed all the medical advice, yet things went on regardless. I repressed the onset of the disease, trusted conventional medicine, but my body became increasingly vocal...

A change in perspective blossomed within me over time.
Some initial practices which lead me onto my self-healing journey,
which I still believe in, were

yoga
qi gong
physiotherapy
mindfulness
religion
dietary change
brain training
positive thinking
gratitude
and consciously selected literature...

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A hat, a stick, an um-brel-la, and forward, backward, sideways, ..."?
And life goes on...

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