When we suffer from any kind of pain—physical, emotional, or spiritual, including a painful relationship—our emotions send messages to the body and mind about the need to return to balance. Responding to this call in a positive way can help us find energy and a sense of happiness, vitality, and joy.

During 35 years of clinical work as a psychotherapist and energy counsellor, I have heard people tell me that chronic pain goes away only when they deal with its root causes. There is an end to suffering, and we can find it through practices that include deep breathing...
and visualization during meditation. These practices must acknowledge that pain does indeed hurt. At the same time individuals can develop a conscious, open, flowing, and energetic reconnection with what I call the Source and others call cosmic energy, prana (in Hinduism, the life-giving force), or qi (in some Chinese philosophies, the physical life force). Ayurveda, the 5,000-year-old medicine of India, states that we are primarily energy and consciousness. Most recent science agrees.

"After decades of being 'off limits' to academic science and medicine, . . . there is a growing appreciation that all medicine is energy medicine and that the energetic perspective holds the key to the future of the entire medical enterprise," writes Dr. James Oschman in his book Energy Medicine in Therapeutics and Human Performance (Butterworth Heinemann, 2003). Energy medicine is the holistic approach to healing.

Healing the four energy bodies
The goal in energy medicine is to bring into balance our four energy bodies: the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physiological. "Dis-ease" results from a spiritual disconnection, poor mental attitudes with outdated beliefs, painful blocked emotions such as anger, grief, and fear, and physiological-biochemical imbalances. The quest for spiritual meaning, mental clarity, and emotional clearing and openness are as important as treating the physical body.

Dr. Carl Jung was keen to point out that the primary concern of every one of his clients was finding spiritual meaning and purpose in life. An individual's spiritual separation is the primary cause of illness. If not dealt with, it will later cause imbalance and illness in the mental, emotional, and physical bodies. Although there are many powerful techniques for healing the four energy bodies, only two are outlined here—deep diaphragmatic breathing and full breathing with light visualization during meditation. Both techniques focus on emotions inside the body.

Deep breathing
Sit comfortably and breathe deeply into the diaphragm. Breathe in slowly and deeply to fill your lower abdomen so that your lower belly moves outward two to three inches. As you exhale, let your abdominal muscles pull back toward the spine, forcing out the dead air. Breathing this way charges your body with oxygen to increase energy levels.

Visualization during meditation
As you breathe in and out, see, sense, and intuit a beautiful golden white light being brought in with every breath and filling every space, atom, DNA, cell, tissue, and organ within you. This healing light will go to areas of pain and release the distress you feel there. Inhale more golden white light; exhale the dark pain outside. Realize the truth that you are not the pain or suffering. You are cosmic light full of energy and consciousness.

While visualizing and meditating to heal and release pain, focus on the physical discomfort blocked within your physical body and intuitively access the blocked emotions there. Is your body telling you something about your healing? Allow the golden white light to release blocked emotions. Just as you are not your pain, you are not your past, job, life and gender roles, age, health status, or anything else. You are the love you were created to be. Deal with the causes of your pain and suffering in a self-responsible, self-empowering manner. Have fun with this. Be the love you are.

Focus to heal
Psychoneuroimmunology research has shown that the techniques outlined here can help the mind to focus and produce healing in the physical body, including the immune system. These lifestyle changes can promote wellness and manage chronic illness. For training in psychoneuroimmunology, ask your complementary medicine practitioner.

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"Realize thy simple self, embrace thy original nature."
—Tao Te Ching, XIX