


BY CINDY HODNETT

Thriving—Ow to Wow!


AMBER ROSE DULLEA

In December 2002, Amber Rose Dullea was in a car accident that changed her life. Although there was no blood, her car was totaled and she was shaken up in every sense. As a massage therapist, Dullea was familiar with whiplash injuries and felt she would recover easily with the right treatment. She saw a chiropractor and a massage therapist for a few months, but instead of improving, her pain, mental fog, memory issues and emotionality grew worse.

Two weeks before the accident, she had published her wellness book, *Path of Heart: Personal and Planetary Healing*. In it she defined healing as “recognizing the wholeness that already exists.” This was a definition that went from theoretical to real life very quickly for Dullea.  By 2008, after rounds of chiropractic care, massage therapy, acupuncture, physical therapy, antidepressants, muscle relaxants and sleeping aids, she was still in such pain she thought she’d never be able to work again. She applied for Social Security Disability.

Dullea says, “It was humbling and humiliating. I needed a friend to help me with the application because I couldn’t focus or concentrate. Even as a close friend, she was surprised by how much the pain truly affected me.” After being turned down, which happens often for first-time chronic pain applicants, Dullea reached out for support from Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

“I had tried everything I knew how to do and I wasn’t able to function. If Social Security thought I should be able to function, I needed help to make that happen or find a third party to witness my attempts,” says Dullea. She found support, and a job coaching college students on how to be successful in school.

Through the long, painful process from suffering to thriving, Dullea developed a method she calls “The 5 Steps from Ow to Wow!” Everyone’s pain and journey to thriving is different, and Dullea says there are steps that can support the shift from suffering to gaining  our life back.

Seven years later, she coaches others who live with chronic pain—specializing in fibromyalgia and post-whiplash chronic pain—to find their way to thrive. Dullea’s approach is unique; it combines a whole-systems design approach, her personal experience, knowledge of alternative and allopathic approaches, teaching and coaching skills, and an infectious laugh that blends with information, encouragement and resources into a practical action plan.

The 5 Steps from Ow to Wow

- {1} Become an expert on yourself.
- {2} Find treatment options and pain management techniques that work for you.
- {3} Support ask, accept, give.
- {4} Engage purpose, meaning and/or creativity.
- {5} Accept what is and thrive!

“It took this experience to help me find my purpose in life,” says Dullea. “Living with chronic pain can wear you down. I wish I had known a coach who could have supported me and helped me define concrete steps. It would have accelerated my path to thriving!” she says.



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LEARN MORE ABOUT AMBER ROSE DULLEA AND THRIVING WITH PAIN COACHING AT WWW.THRIVINGWITHPAIN.COM.