



Growing Forward

Welcome to The Growing Forward

Hello and welcome to the Growing Forward Soul School. Oh my gosh, I am so glad you're here. I'm Dr. Stacey. My full name is Dr. Stacey Thomas. I'm a psychologist and I created this space for all of us. A place that you can come to with tools and resources. community to help you grow forward through whatever life brings.

Believe it or not, you, as a human being, have been uniquely designed to evolve through challenge. As a human being, we understand the challenges that we choose. Why do we do that? Why do we choose to learn how to run and jump over objects and do that over and over again? Why do we sit there and practice scales on the piano over and over and over?

For what? Somehow we have this unique drive within us to overcome the physicality of our material world and to evolve, and to experience this, this elevation, this, to have these transcendent experiences where somehow we are just in a state of presence doing things that we didn't think were possible.

It's almost like in those moments we experience a little taste of heaven. This is what we are driven to do, to create challenges, and everything we see around us is a result of this drive. We somehow, though, don't seem to like so much the challenges that befall us, that come into our lives, that we would rather not experience.

And I get it, I'm a human too. You know, we're sold this bill of goods that life is just roses, we should be happy all the time. And quite honestly, we haven't been equipped with the tools from the time we were young to help us work through those challenging circumstances. In fact, most of us have not been, have the ability to witness others actually work through difficult emotions.

Some of us don't even know what's going on inside. It feels like this murky, mysterious place that we just cannot approach. And so, you know, that is not anyone's fault. It's just we haven't really focused in on how to do this thing right. Well, believe it or not, just as

there are physical trainers and teachers and all other Occupations or sports or performance performance activities.

There are people like myself who have spent many years hours studying how we actually can move through experiences and not just to return to what was before but to actually come into a new way of being That's actually a better version, which I would argue is even closer to the brilliance that you truly are, that you were from the start, which is your authentic self.

So this school looks at challenges very differently. Everyone here, and you're welcome to come on in. And I'm going to talk to you in a few moments about everything you'll find here, but the overarching philosophy is that this life is for us. And this challenge is really, what it's really doing is shaking up our understanding of who we are, of how this world works.

And we can either resist that, Which is, creates a whole other layer of stress. Or we can stop, look, and learn how to listen. And orient ourselves in a fundamentally different way to our lives. And when we do that, I have to tell you, it is a game changer. It truly is. When people adopt this mindset, and use the tools to support themselves, there is this growing sense of being able to flow with life.

We no longer live in resistance and we start to wake up in a new way. Seeing these challenges literally as opportunities. Like that athlete, we understand that it is uncomfortable. Growth is always uncomfortable. Okay? But if we can have some acceptance for that and move out of that place of resistance all of a sudden we recognize our strength and a whole bunch of other qualities Understandings that may have been hidden from us before in the way we were living but are now more apparent.

And so this school is all about nurturing your soul at a time when your level of consciousness is heightened. When things are in turmoil and the world seems upside down, the function of that, let's face it, it feels chaotic. The function of that chaos is for, for us to look around. Learn how to choose.

Understand some of the things that no longer serve us. And to do that, we need to make room for the soul to speak, okay? So one of the fundamental tools you're going to find here is this. This is how it all started. This journal. When I was in my own place of turmoil in response to all of the chaos I was seeing all around.

What I understood from my own inner work, my own practice, as I asked how can I be of help? How am I to respond to what I'm seeing around me? The message that came

through was that we need people to understand what I understand as a result of walking beside and guiding thousands of people within a space like this, my office.

And what I, I deeply understand. is that we all have to answer. I honestly never have to tell anyone what it is they need to do. They know it, and you know it. The answer is in there. The problem is, there's a lot of other ideas that don't belong to you, that you're wrestling with. The problem is, you're also not used to listening.

We are raised to look to the outside for answers. This is about learning how to look within. And so the best way to do that is one, to create an atmosphere of radical self acceptance and giving room for the voice to speak. And one of the best ways I know is through expressive writing. That is no whole barge letting just flow out of the pen, I'm going to say a pen or a pencil, this kind of writing, and seeing what emerges.

With this attitude of total acceptance, compassion, kindness. There's nothing you could possibly say, think, or feel that would ever compromise my love. We'll be practicing that. That's what this is. This is at the fundamental core a practice of unconditional love, acceptance for the self, and making room for the soul to speak so we can hear it.

And keep doing that over and over and over again. So just learning how to access your voice, giving it lots of room to express whatever needs to be expressed. It's where the real meat is in this process, but it's balanced with some other tools. We know build resiliency at any time in life, but in particular during times when things feel chaotic, because as much as things are stressful, there are some also some other things that are going on like some good moments, right?

Gratitude, joy, and understanding the things that you're actually good at. These are the things that we also practice here together. The whole method of this is about replicating and making a practice with all of the tools that we know build resiliency in times of struggle. And this is not, I want to be clear, this is not about returning to the way things were.

We can't go backwards in time. But what I'm asking you to be open to is the very real possibility and reality for thousands of transforming into your even better, more brilliant version. And I understand that right now it doesn't feel good. So how is this possible? But just as you will see that brilliant athlete crossing the finish line at the Olympics, They went through a lot of struggle to get there, and what I'm telling you is that they never did it alone either.

So, not only will you have this tool at your disposal, but other supportive tools that again have a lot of research behind them. So, as you look around in the community, in the

school, you're going to find meditation. These are practices that guide you through a place of quiet, which is all about dimming the noise of up here.

When we're in soul school, we're learning to listen from a different place. Not necessarily a logical place. A place of deep understanding. It's located somewhere in here. Often in the body. In the heart. Okay? So you'll see that there are some meditations here for you to make use of. And some of them are very specific to different chapters in the journal.

Where you'll see specific ideas that come out of teachings related to mindfulness. This is a mindful practice, meditation is a mindful practice, and together they're incredibly powerful. But what's even more powerful is when we can engage in this together. This is my dream, to be honest. Because as much as I have done this on my own, I've also witnessed this process with my clients.

And I've had the opportunity to be in large groups. where we've had these mini workshops, I've been talking 15 minutes, of this kind of exercise. And the feedback I've had, what I've experienced in the room, is truly transformative. The thing is, as a psychologist, with having the opportunity and privilege of hearing people's truth, I have benefited tremendously.

There's so much wisdom that has come through and so much inspiration to walk with and beside someone as they transform. It's, it's just off the charts and I gotta think, like, why is it that one person or a few in this privileged role gets to benefit from it? This should be something that everyone has access to and so that's why we do this here in community.

You will have your own individual process, but there is a whole community of people that are on this journey that understand what this is about, are willing to dive in and take that responsibility, and to share their experiences with you, both for themselves, to solidify their learning, but also to inspire others.

So I invite you to do the same. And so these are the essential elements of This soul school, the Growing Forward Soul School. There are tools like this, there are guided meditations, there's a community, and there's even some opportunity for live events, workshops, sitting together with a prompt, doing the expressive writing and coming together afterwards to share our insights.

It's all here for you, right here in this soul school, a unique school that doesn't really exist in our everyday lives. So when I tell you... I give you my gratitude for being here. I need

you to understand that I feel that on a very deep level. Because it's your willingness to do this inner work that allows the rest of us to understand just how brilliant you are.

That you are getting closer to being your authentic self through this process. And that has ripple effects like you would not believe. I know it's difficult, but you are not alone. Everyone here is on that path. And so I invite you to come on in. If I could, I'd give you that big bear hug. Okay. I'm sending that to you right now.

I hope you can absorb it. Feel it in your soul. We're all in this together. Take a look around. Introduce yourself. Dabble here and there. But I really encourage you to take that deep dive. Really make use of everything that the school has for you. Because let's face it, you're here, which means you're ready.

I'll see you soon. I can't wait to meet you.