

# I Hereby Free My Voice From Fear & Let My Soul Truth Be Heard

*BY LEAHANNE WOODS SMITH*

I spent so many years not using my voice, and it felt like I was caught in a web.

That web was made of all the things I accepted as truth, that were really just part of the noise of fear. The web was made of the social construct I was born into, and those I trusted told me the web was real.

The web was made of those perceived limitations that I held like cement within. The web was made of obstacles that I had taken on as permanent holding walls. The web was all the things I unknowingly kept as secrets.

I sat in paralysis. I watched others thrive. As a school girl, I accepted my death comfortably. I knew I couldn't act, because I knew I couldn't speak. I was a trapped animal within.

But I understand why I got so comfortable sitting there in stillness. You get to take in a lot of life through watching others. Through allowing yourself to sink in and be still, you understand and feel a lot beyond what is said in society.

You get comfortable with the immense beauty and tragedy within people. You become a beacon of compassion. But you also become a confused bucket of fear when it comes to action. I got so nervous when I would have to play baseball in physical education class that I got sick.

For the first half of my life, I had been paralyzed by fear. I've stepped out to do certain things. But anything that would

take a lot of communication with others, I've mostly avoided. I didn't know for a long time that much of my avoidance was due to the voices in my head, which repeated in their own unique way.

***The voices told me that I wasn't good enough, that I wasn't like other people, and that I wasn't capable. I did the world a favor and stayed hidden and quiet. I lived apologetically for my being.***

As I grew older, into teenage years, people's words and actions continually hurt me. I was a dehydrating moth floating into death, in the web strands of others. No one saw me. I was glad. It was more comfortable to be alone if I had to die so vulnerably.

There were times that I felt so dried out and hopeless. I remember realizing that I had no personality of my own. I just reacted in the ways I saw that were considered to be normal or polite when people spoke to me.

I was afraid of my own voice – so afraid that it would cause me to be rejected. I'd much rather that they just stay guessing at who I was. And I'd prefer to have quick moments interacting with people and then be left alone, than try to have meaningful conversations.

Because it's no fun to keep talking when you're pretending to be okay.

That was then. This is now.

***Now I practice sharing my voice with whomever is around me. I've shared my voice enough that the right people wind up around me to hear the messages that are coming from deep in my soul, from spirit.***

I dare myself to dig deeper, to find more, and share it openly. It has become a fun game to play. Life has opened up to me wider each time I break an old agreement of unworthiness and share my truth.

I've found that others were going through the same things that I have been through. Both the good and the bad are beautiful now. There's no need to hide and feel ashamed of truth. It helps others and myself whenever I dare to share. It opens doors into life we never knew was there. Life feels limitless and loving now that I love myself and all of life unconditionally.

Over the continuing markers of my true voice appearing to me, I am realizing that I am no longer a dead carcass hanging in a web. A breeze came.

After I let go of the life I thought was mine – my sufferings, my shyness, my need to hide, my vow to stay silent and hidden – the breeze took me away. But my carcass remained as a marker of where I had been.

I was taken away by death. I floated into life again. Within the same body, in the same lifetime, I am new. I am full. I am well and able. I am my true work which is love and light.

***Instead of waiting for others to ask me a question before I speak, I now share my stories, my experiences, and spirit that moves through me. I love my life. I love my being.***

My grandmother used to tell me, “You have just as much right to be here as anybody else”. She used to worry about me being so shy. I get it now. I thought I got it years ago but I didn’t – not the full message.

I get the message now, much fuller, in my own sweet time, and in my own unique way. I got it the only way I could – through befriending and freeing my voice.

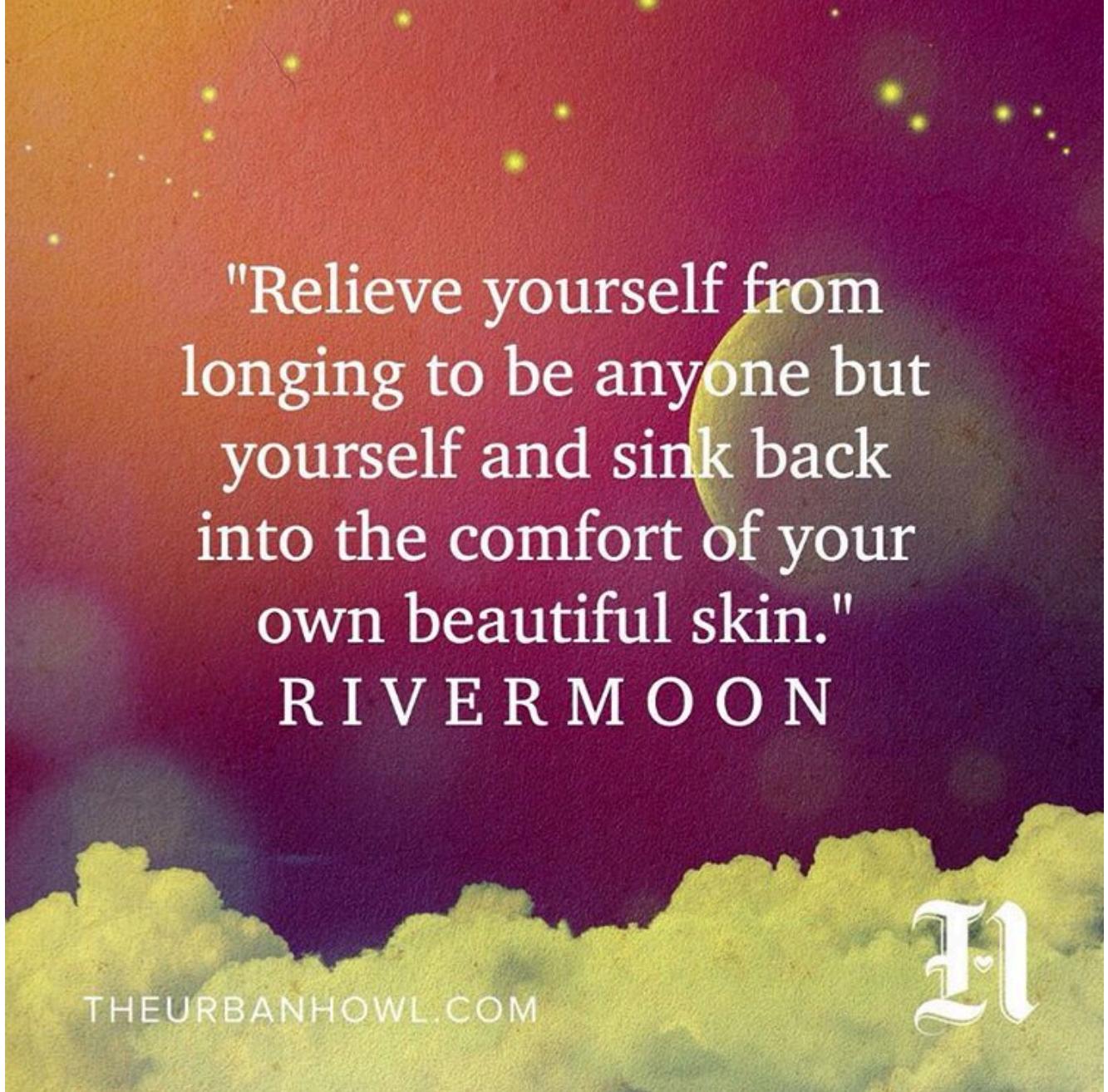
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