

Announcer: [00:00](#) Welcome to a teaspoon of Healing where we explore the pathways to wellness and vibrant living. Listen to personal stories of Healing and interviews with experts. It's time to open a doorway to Healing in your life through positive changes. Here is your host, Dawn DiMare.

Dawn DiMare: [00:19](#) I'm Dawn DiMare and you're listening to a teaspoon of Healing. This is episode nine of the podcast. Today we're going to be talking to a holistic physical therapist and author based in Maryland. Her name is Laura di Franco. Laura is the author of a book living, Healing, and taekwondo, as well as a series of warrior journals. She also teaches intuitive writing workshops are healers and for anyone interested in learning about intuitive writing. Lastly, we'll be talking about writing as a path to Healing. When you sit down and tap into your intuition, that's where Healing can happen, and those of you out there who are healers yourself well, that profession comes with a lot of burnout and there also is a lot of self Healing that you have to do to be able to provide Healing for others. So intuitive writing can help you tap in to your intuition, heal yourself, so you're able to heal others. I'm really excited to chat with Laura about this. If you want to listen to previous episodes of this podcast, download transcripts, read show notes, or read my blog. Is it a teaspoon with Healing.com? You can also contact me at dawn at Teaspoon of Healing, Well, let's talk to Laura right now.

Announcer: [01:35](#) This podcas is for informational purposes only and does not constitute medical advice. Please consult a physician or other health professional before undertaking changes in lifestyle or wellness habits. The author claims no responsibility to any person or entity for any liability, loss or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly as a result of use, application or interpretation of the information presented here in.

New Speaker: [01:54](#) And before we get into our interview, let's hear from one of our sponsors Goff tours.

Speaker 4: [02:02](#) Hi, this is Goff owner of Goff tours, specializing in standup paddle boarding or surfing lessons. I Even do snorkeling. You can reach me here. Orange County has what you're looking for. You can contact me via email - gofftoursatgmail.com, or mobile number is nine four, nine three, three, eight, five, nine, three seven Goff tours.com.

New Speaker: [02:37](#) Hi, I'm Dawn DiMare and you're listening to a teaspoon of Healing today. We have a guest, Laura di Franco. She's a holistic physical therapist based in Maryland. She's also an author and

she hosts Healing workshops and she's written a few books actually. So Laura. Hi. Welcome to the show. Hey Dawn. Thanks for having me today. Yeah, thanks a lot for being on the podcast. So you are a holistic physical therapist. How does that differ from traditional physical therapy?

guest: [03:08](#) Well, thanks for asking that question. It's one of my favorite to answer because back when I started putting the word holistic before the physical therapists, I really started believing in the integration of mind, body, and soul. So when you come to me, I assess and treat all of you, not just the one body part that you were sent from the doctor to be treated and I really think that that is going to be the way of healthcare in the future is to treat the whole of a person, not only the entire body system, but also the mind, the thoughts, the emotions, and the passions of the person. I really, really love to talk about that twist because a lot of people who have had physical therapy in a traditional setting Dawn't know the difference yet. They haven't been to any one like me, so they're not really sure what that's all about.

New Speaker: [04:01](#) Where did you get trained for physical therapy? Where did you go to school?

guest: [04:05](#) I went to school out in California. It's where I grew up in the San Francisco area, so I did my Undergrad at San Francisco State University. That was a pre physical therapy program and that basically groomed you for Grad school. So when I went to physical therapy school at the time it was a master's program. The college was Samuel Merritt College in Oakland, California, so ended up with my masters and actually I believe the entry level degree now is a. is a dpt, a doctorate in physical therapy, so they play upleveled that since I graduated.

New Speaker: [04:40](#) When did you decide to make the switch or incorporate holistic mind, body and soul methods into your practice?

guest: [04:47](#) Well, I was one of the super lucky ones and when I had my very first job, actually my internship before the first job, one of my mentors at the National Rehabilitation Hospital in DC was a practitioner of craniosacral therapy and myofascial release. And because I started learning some alternative techniques right away. Again, I'm so lucky that I had those kinds of teachers because they were doing things that I had never learned in school and all of the, you know, all of a sudden I'm under these amazing mentors, learning alternative techniques, holistic techniques for the mind body, and I knew right away that it wasn't going to be a traditional thing for me. So we have to take classes to keep our license and physical therapy and I was able

to take some of those alternative classes right away and I've been doing this for over 24 years now. So it's a lot of classes.

New Speaker: [05:52](#)

Wow, that's great. Thank you for sharing that. So let's talk a little bit about your book. You have a couple books out. You have a series of warrior journals which other poets and artists you've worked with and you've also written a book about living Healing and taekwondo. And maybe let's talk about the second one first living, Healing and taekwondo is obviously about martial arts. And what prompted you to write this and do you feel that martial arts is Healing you recommended in your practice? Maybe as a physical therapist?

guest: [06:28](#)

Well, yes to all of those last questions. And you know, I've been a writer for as long as I can remember. I used my journals as a teenager to kind of process what was going on and in my life. And when I became a physical therapist there was always a pull to write and to write to help other people. I knew that one day I'd write a book, it just took me a long time to come up with the book that I was going to write and fair amount into my career. When my son was about five and a half, I was working full time as a physical therapist. We started a journey together in taekwondo and honestly he was just looking. We were looking for an activity for him to do something to try something fun to do, and we went in and looked at a taekwondo class together and we walked out afterward and I looked at him and I said, so what do you think bud?

guest: [07:24](#)

And he said, well, I'll do it if you do it mom. So six years later we ended up earning our black belts together and what? At that point I had journaled our journey because I have always been an avid journaler. So that six year period was sitting there in my journals stories, the different things I was going through in my Healing career with my son, with taekwondo. Just everything about that Healing journey. And one day I literally just looked up to the sky and thought, oh my gosh, here's my book. And so living Healing and taekwondo self published that memoir about the Healing journey that six year period of time with my son and it was fantastic. It was also one of the first times I got my words out loud into the world for other people to read, like real stories about my own Healing process. So publishing that book was super awesome and it was completely terrifying at the same time.

New Speaker: [08:33](#)

It sounds awesome and terrifying. I think it's wonderful that that you did that. You both had a journey from white belt, black belt together and probably really strengthened your relationship.

guest: [08:43](#) Oh, for sure. It was such a gift to be able to have that time with him. And at one point I had both of my kids in taekwondo with me at the same time. My daughter practiced it for a while with us, but it wasn't her saying, but even to have both of the kids for a short period of time was, was a really big gift. You know, martial arts, it's really about a lifestyle and about awareness and about self confidence. So being in the martial arts as a kid I think is also a gift. You get to learn things that you never would learn in another kind of sport. I love sports in general, but this one in particular is outstanding for all of those kinds of things. So I loved that. They both did it with me.

New Speaker: [09:34](#) That's wonderful. And now you said it was also a Healing journey. Was there something that you were Healing from or were you trying to maybe just examine it as a Healing journey and maybe this is a lot of questions, but how was it Healing? How was the martial arts? How did it heal you?

guest: [09:49](#) Well, you know, that's a really great question because not everybody would probably use that word, but not everybody chooses a combat sport to play around with. You know, our master master John Holloway has been teaching taekwondo his entire life and we really, again had received another gift by finding him and having him as our teacher. Things like facing your fears and when you're in class and you're meant to perform in front of other people or you are up there trying to break a board and half for the first time or you are. You've got all your sparring gear on and you're sparring different opponents. There's a lot to be said for moving through the fear and getting to the other side of it and really how I've described taekwondo in the past is you really figure out what you're made of. So I consider those types of things a Healing journey. They really have been for me.

New Speaker: [10:58](#) Definitely. I think it's a great way to heal. To face your fears. I think a lot of what causes some of our problems, anxieties and know the gut health connection. You have a lot of anxieties and fear facing fear and being able to say, oh look, I did that. I smashed a board in half and help you in other ways of your life, you know, tackle other fears and help your stomach. So I'm all for that. So the Warrior Journal as another book, theories you wrote, maybe tell, tell our listeners a little bit about that

guest: [11:29](#) through the process of, you know, choosing Healing as a career and practicing with others. Building my own private practice, going for training. I did a lot of work on myself and you kind of have to, if you're a healer, to be able to hold a Healing space for other people. I have to do my own Healing work and that

includes what I was talking about before. Mind, body and soul type of work. Well, one of the modalities that I use is called John Barnes myofascial release and it's a mind body technique to help people with pain and restriction what's leftover from any traumatic thing that's happened including surgery or accident. And I was in a class that I took and ended up standing up in front of the room that day to read a journal entry that I have written, which ended up being one of 48 poems that moved through me after this particular Healing class.

guest:

[12:36](#)

And I know I'm kind of shortening the story a little for you and I want you to know how profound it was to be able to stand up in the middle of 220 people and read a poem when I hadn't formally Dawne any public speaking before that and I could talk to you all day long about the Healing process and what allowed me to get through that fear and stand up and speak. But what I really want to tell you is what happened after. And honestly, I believe inside of me. I became the poet that day. And what were your love? A journal to inspire. You're fiercely alive. Whole self was a book of those poems and I collaborated with some amazing artists. And so what I did was we added poems and artwork and then blank pages for people to write on as a journal. And because the poems were coming so fast and furiously, there ended up being for warrior journals.

guest:

[13:36](#)

So I now have warrior joy, warrior, soul. And the last one published in 2017 was warrior dreams. And many of those are collaborations. The last one was again, all my poetry, so that's been a kind of a, an amazing journey of writing and feeling like the writing was moving through me because of the Healing process that I had Dawne. Pretty cool. And what does being a warrior mean to you? Another really great question because in the beginning when I started using that word in my books, I was getting questioned about it because people think of war and violence when they think of warrior, and actually I use it in a in a different way. I think that when we're warriors inside of our own lives, it means that we're practicing awareness and we are practicing things like gratitude and compassion and love, and we're practicing things like being vulnerable and so our real warriors strengths is their vulnerability is their ability to stay aware and the moments of their life and respond to their life rather than constantly having to react. So how's that for a definition for you?

New Speaker:

[14:59](#)

That's great, and I love that. When you look at the word warrior, it does seem like war, but really it's very empowering. I think it's a very Healing. So you also do Healing workshops, so you teach in your town, you teach Healing, what kind of Healing do you

teach? And maybe talk a little bit about your workshops that you have. Yeah.

guest:

[15:20](#)

Honestly, this is such a huge passion of mine recently. So a few years back, I'm married two things together and that was the body awareness that I was teaching my clients in my Healing practice with the therapeutic writing that I had been practicing on my own and what I did was created one of the classes that I teach called writing as a path to Healing where I'm guiding people through body awareness exercises and connecting them to really. It's an unlimited source of creativity. One of the things that I've been seeing recently is writer's block is for sissies. And I'm kinda joking, you know, everyone kind of feels that once in a while, but when you're connected to the source that I'm talking about, this embodied empowered source, you really will not have an issue with with things like writer's block and things like creativity. So the workshop has been amazing.

guest:

[16:22](#)

I think I'm a little biased about it, but I've been getting some wonderful comments about this work being transformational because I think what it does is it gives you a little window inside your soul. The writing it, I call it free writing. It's been called a lot of different things, but the writing really surprises you when you connect it to the body and the feelings senses. The writing comes from a different kind of place than that usual mind that so chatterly and analytical and always wanting to solve a problem. We kind of move away from that and come into the feeling senses and when the writing comes from there, the writing really comes alive, so there've been all kinds of people taking them. My workshops, I teach locally here at the writer center in Bethesda, Maryland in writing as a path to Healing. There's been a six week course. I'm taking people through topics like awareness, the inner critic, fear, and then moving them onto things like using gratitude and love. Flipping the switch mindset practice. A lot of really wonderful things and most recently I tweaked the workshop to help out other healers, which makes a lot of sense for me because I've had a career Healing and now I'm a healer. That's also a writer, so now I'm helping other healers, right? Words that heal themselves and the world. That is a big mission of mine in this New Year of 2018.

New Speaker:

[18:04](#)

I love that, and with intuitive writing, you're letting go of your senses. You're letting your senses flow rather than coming from like writing an analytical essay or a paper or even a journalistic article. Can you describe the process if someone wants to do this, I know you teach courses as well about this online, but do

you have any tips that you could share with our listeners and what they could learn from you? From a teacher like you?

guest: [18:28](#) Yes, definitely. You know, maybe we should talk about the word intuition for just a moment. You know, everybody has an intuition. It's just a matter of connecting to it and I know that there was a point in time where I really didn't trust my own. I was living according to everyone else's rules, you know, asking for permission basically to be myself because I wasn't trusting my own feeling and my own intuition about my life, about the decisions I had to make and the path that I wanted to choose. And so when somebody helped me connect to that powerful place where what I was feeling could give me a clear answer, a yes or a no. And inside of you you've got a feeling pretty much about everything. Your intuition is talking to you all day long. It's just that possibly you weren't taught that it's in the matter of feelings, senses.

guest: [19:30](#) And you know, a lot of us were taught not to feel. You might recognize the thing that we always say maybe more about boys than girls, but Dawn't cry, you know, just get back up and brush it off. That type of thing. So I think there's a generation of people that have been encouraged not to feel and what we've Dawne is disconnect people from their intuition by doing that. And so another one of the missions with the intuitive writing is to get people connected to their feelings, senses so that their writing can come from that place, that intuitive place, the place that knows what's good and healthy and right for you. And that's what's really, really important about this process. Whatever kind of writing you're doing is that it comes from that place that's fully authentic, fully you place. So one of the first things that you can begin to do before you write journal, any kind of writing, so dust doesn't have to be any writing that anyone's ever going to see.

guest: [20:31](#) It could just be your own personal journaling, but the tip would be to connect with your body. So to relax into it, to practice feeling what you feel, to connect with your breath, to understand how that feels in your. Honestly. It's really about slowing down long enough to have a sense of what your body feels like. And listeners can do this right now wherever they're at. Maybe you're sitting listening to this and the car. Maybe you're at home listening to it and you can just feel what your body feels like sitting in your seat, relax all of the muscles breathe, inhale, exhale. So it's that type of thing and what I do in the workshops is we are raring to go with our notebooks and after going through some of that guided body awareness, we go right into the writing and I think the biggest tip I could give you

guys about the writing would be to get out of your own way. Dawn't censor yourself so we're so full of inner critic messages and voices and chattering all day. We can barely get through that to what the real messages got to get out of your own way. Dawn't sensor your writing just to let it move through and I love to say this about the writing. Let your writing come from your heart out the pen to the page, and the magic really is in that process of doing those two things connected to each other. Sounds simple, right?

New Speaker: [22:10](#)

It is, but it isn't. It isn't. I'm a writer as well. I used to do a lot more of it and sometimes it's easier for me to write analytical things because I am closed off and when you're closed off does sometimes to your emotions, which I haven't been working on and I'm way better than I was a few years ago. When you write more from the heart, I actually think it flows better. It's hard to sometimes shut that off though when you have to write analytical papers or journals, so I could see that that's very Healing and it could also be Healing for healers. So if you're a healer getting into your intuition, it's got to be really important.

guest: [22:45](#)

Definitely. I think for everybody who does any kind of Healing work, it's we're relying on our intuition to know, to help us know what's right for a client, even to back up and say what's right for ourselves. Because a lot of healers are. We are all caregivers. We're all over givers probably in some sense, and so to make sure that we're giving back to ourselves and really recharging and rejuvenating our own, you know, well, so that we're giving from an overflow versus our reserves, you know, healers are notorious for burning out for that reason. We're giving, giving, giving, and we haven't figured out how to take that back and fill ourselves up again. So the writing processes, one of those ways to connect with yourself and to give yourself the time to process the different things that are going on with you and slow down, you know,

New Speaker: [23:45](#)

three the little. Absolutely. I can see how that would be very beneficial and you're right, when you're a healer, you have to watch out for burnout and you also have to heal yourself. Starting a Healing path. Myself, I changed changing careers mid life. So it's interesting. You actually discovered a lot of stuff about yourself. I digress.

guest: [24:06](#)

Perfect. It's exactly what happens in making a career change is super brave and you know, funny enough, probably a third, at least a third and possibly more in of people in my physical therapy graduate class were career change. People were moving into a Healing career from things like business or

finance or other, you know, other jobs and I always thought way back then how brave they were to do that. I mean some of them already had families and they were completely switching things up. Going back to school

- New Speaker: [24:42](#) and you know, I do have my dad's a physician and my mom's a nurse and I worked in his office growing up. I think I kind of rebelled against it, so I was a journalism major. I enjoy writing, but it's always stuck with me. And then some family members, health crisis, a friend that passed away, I felt like a calling to me and also the heal my own soul because a lot of healers are wounded as well, their souls and Healing for me. So
- guest: [25:07](#) yes. Oh my gosh, that is so true.
- New Speaker: [25:10](#) I'm interested in your workshop, the writing workshop. I'm interested in signing up, so do you have any online courses?
- guest: [25:15](#) Yes, and the next version is called the intuitive writing for healers and people always ask me, well then you know, what kind of healer do you have to be to take it? Well, you can be somebody who serves others and I actually consider writers to all be healers because we're sharing our stories with people and inside of those stories is Healing for us, the writer and it's. And there's Healing for you, the reader in each story that we share. Right. So intuitive writing for healers is coming up. It'll be online. I'm going to use zoom. It'll be every other Sunday, starting February fourth and we'll do that in the morning. Eastern standard time, but you can, you guys can find everything on brave healer.com under my workshops tab.
- New Speaker: [26:05](#) Excellent. So it's brave healer.com and they can also contact you there. And where are your books available? I believe I saw them on Amazon, but I just want to make sure.
- guest: [26:16](#) Yes, you can find everything on Amazon that come living, Healing and taekwondo and all of the warrior journals. I have a few of those up on my website as well, but Amazon, you know, boy, what would we do without Amazon these days? Huh?
- New Speaker: [26:32](#) Excellent. Well thank you so much for joining us today on a teaspoon of Healing and is there anything you wanted to share with our listeners before we sign off?
- guest: [26:40](#) You know, I think I'll leave you with a message of pick the things in life that turn you on, do something everyday that you love so much. You lose track of time and you will be quickly moving

toward your deepest dreams and desires if you make that part of your day every day. And thank you so much Dawn, for having me. I love chatting about this stuff.

- New Speaker: [27:06](#) Me Too. Thank you so much for coming on the podcast. I really enjoyed this chat we had and I'm going to look into those writing workshops. That's. That really sounds wonderful. So thank you Laura. Thanks a lot. Dawne. Thank you for listening to this episode of a teaspoon of Healing. If you have any questions for me or for Laura, is it my website, [teaspoon appHealing.com](http://teaspoonapphealing.com)? Click on contact and you can fill out the form and it will send your question to me. You can also visit my facebook page, [facebook.com/teaspoon of Healing](https://facebook.com/teaspoonofHealing), or my instagram at [inaudible]
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