

lump on your head and a headache of all headaches. It was one of those “hit your head, out for a sec, think you’re okay, but you’re really not” kind of accidents.

I came to New York City as an artist from Washington, D.C. in 2004, wondering if I’d be working primarily in the stunt or the music industry. Up until my move, I’d been a performer: working as a singer, dancer, and actress in musicals, TV, and film, as a voice-over artist, as well as a stunt person for film and TV. The latter, along with voice-over work, had been my bread and butter for the past three to four years. In addition to all of this, during the last few years prior to my move to New York, I’d also begun writing music, beginning with two musicals and quickly moving to stand-alone songs. Although I felt after all my adventures within the entertainment industry, I’d found—or rather, gone back to—my calling as a singer/songwriter, I knew that the stunt business paid. It was unionized and not only paid well for each job, but also provided me with continuous residuals for airings on television, cable, and DVD. When I arrived in New York City, I figured I’d accept work as it came. As life would have it, stunts came my way and the music took a back seat.

Life was moving forward in my new city. I was getting work, I had an apartment (which is no small feat in The Big Apple), and was beginning to make friends in this fast paced city. Then I had that stupid accident: And no matter how I tried to ignore it, the accident laid me up for quite a while. Caught in a relatively helpless state of pain, I was subjected to a barrage of tests, injections, and drug experiments, all in the hopes that the intense pain would eventually end.

I found the accident physically tough, but nothing compared to the emotional pain I felt being alone with the recovery process in a brand new city like New York. I’d come from a family of supreme denial and complete absence from as far back as I could remember when it came to my well-being in times of pain or crisis. Other things my family was good at: emotionally being there—not so much. This fact made me both extremely independent and resourceful from a very early age. I’m sure they were doing the best they knew how at the time, and I firmly believe that people can and do change, but it didn’t make the experience any easier. Even with those highly honed coping skills, this was a test I felt completely unprepared for.

Since I wasn’t able to work, I found it lonely and tough to keep my head above water both financially and emotionally. Now, without a career, I tried to rekindle my self-worth. I found myself getting lost in my music, delving deeper and deeper into my creativity every day, writing more and more. At times I would venture out to try and play open mics at local bars and clubs. I often left, though, before I even went onstage because, like clockwork, after an hour or so, the pain would return. But I kept focusing on my music.

Luckily, after almost a year of what seemed like a slew of inept doctors poking and prodding me with no positive results, I was drawn to someone I now believe to be a healer, Alex. She and I became fast friends. Remarkably, Alex had started out as a professional guitar player, worked at numerous record labels in Nashville and New York City, and was now a practitioner of Feldenkrais, a specified branch within physical therapy focusing on retraining the body, in midtown Manhattan. Her story is also one of perseverance, much like many of her clients. Having battled rheumatoid all her life, she found Feldenkrais to be the only thing that allowed her to function pain-free. I believe now that’s what makes her such a master of healing, because she’s been there herself.