



SPIRITED

Soulful Lessons on Clarity,
Connection + Coming Home (to You)

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THE ESSENCE

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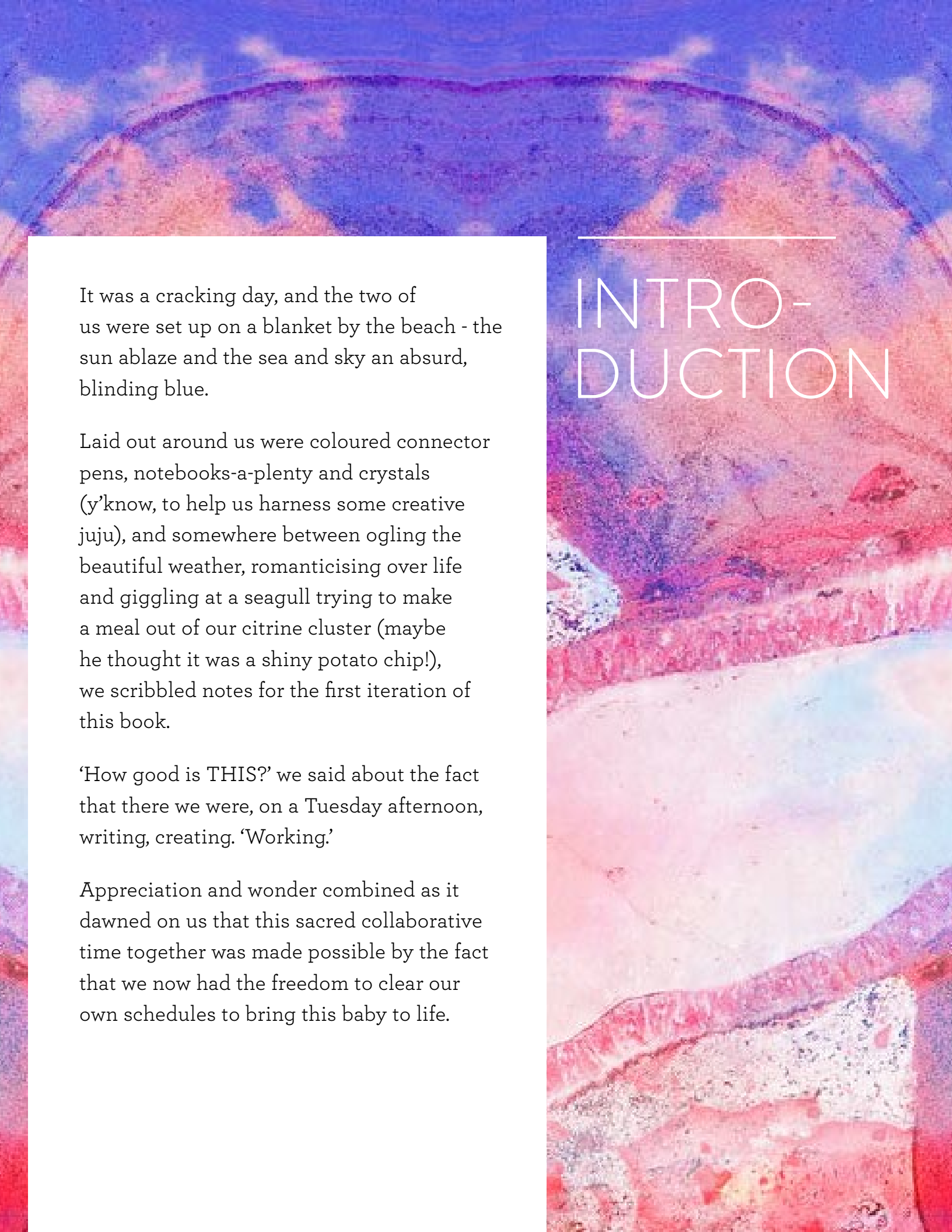
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It was a cracking day, and the two of us were set up on a blanket by the beach - the sun ablaze and the sea and sky an absurd, blinding blue.

Laid out around us were coloured connector pens, notebooks-a-plenty and crystals (y'know, to help us harness some creative juju), and somewhere between ogling the beautiful weather, romanticising over life and giggling at a seagull trying to make a meal out of our citrine cluster (maybe he thought it was a shiny potato chip!), we scribbled notes for the first iteration of this book.

‘How good is THIS?’ we said about the fact that there we were, on a Tuesday afternoon, writing, creating. ‘Working.’

Appreciation and wonder combined as it dawned on us that this sacred collaborative time together was made possible by the fact that we now had the freedom to clear our own schedules to bring this baby to life.

INTRO- DUCTION

There was an unspoken realisation floating between us that, with the killer combo of creativity, friendship, nature and joy all present, we were in fact living the kinds of lives that had once existed on vision boards and in the pages of our Moleskine journals.

The name *Spirited* hadn't revealed itself to us at that stage, but as we were coming around the final creative bend, it showed up unexpectedly, as names tend to do, and we knew it was The One.

To us, being 'Spirited' means a few things:

Feeling alive - vibrantly so

Fully engaging with life

Being plugged in to a deeper sense of purpose

Consciously connecting with Spirit

And the rad thing is, the *Spirited* life is anyone's for the taking.

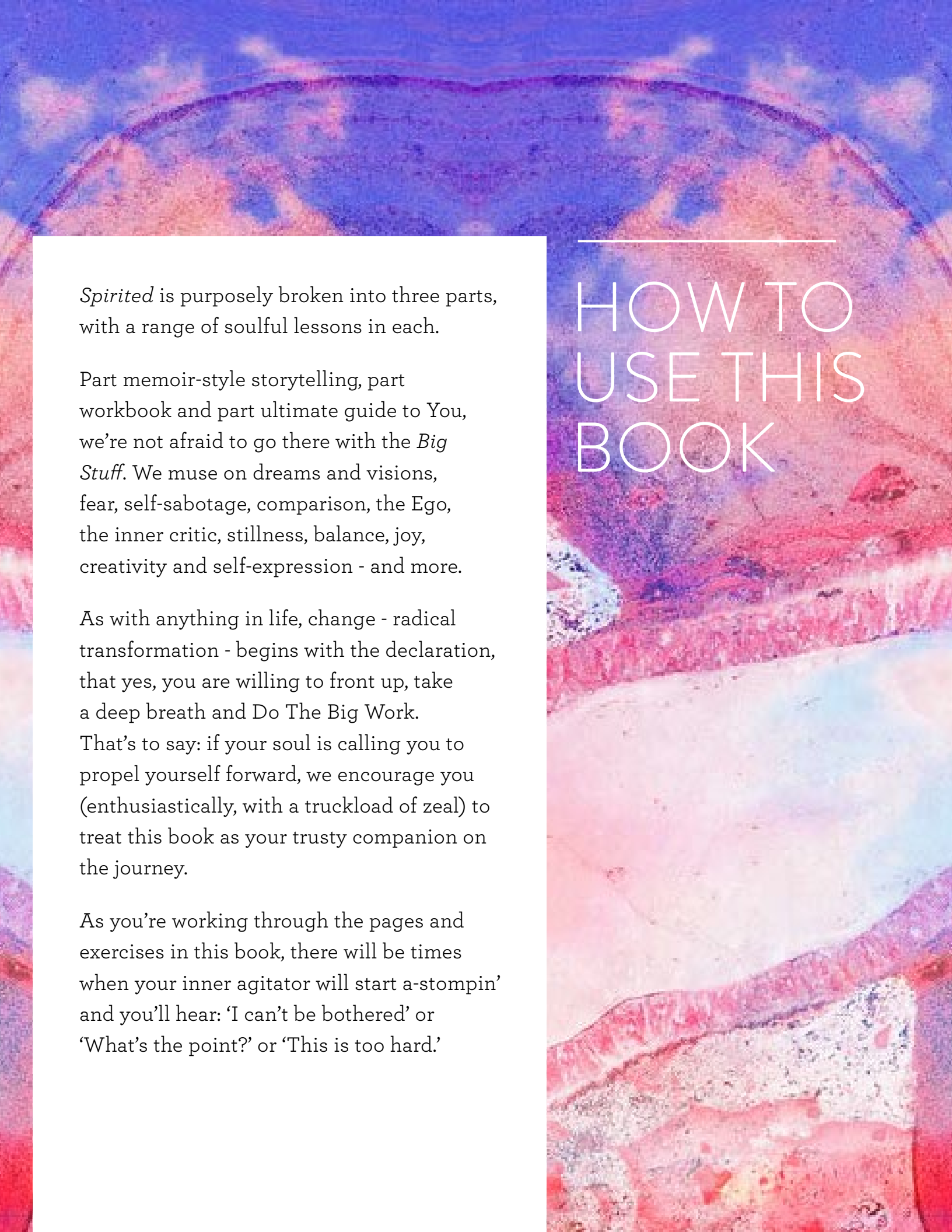
As life coaches, we've guided and championed scores of women as they've busted through the fears that kept them hostage, let go of old stories, identities and limiting beliefs, and honoured that (sometimes tiny) voice that finally speaks up loudly enough to say '*Enough.*'

We've watched on with pure delight as they've emerged from behind the self-created shields erected in front of them, as they've played bigger, owned their inherent worth and allowed their light to shine.

Here's where we share everything that working with these women has taught us.

Just so you know: everything that you're about to read is tried and tested by us. We believe in it wholeheartedly.





Spirited is purposely broken into three parts, with a range of soulful lessons in each.

Part memoir-style storytelling, part workbook and part ultimate guide to You, we're not afraid to go there with the *Big Stuff*. We muse on dreams and visions, fear, self-sabotage, comparison, the Ego, the inner critic, stillness, balance, joy, creativity and self-expression - and more.

As with anything in life, change - radical transformation - begins with the declaration, that yes, you are willing to front up, take a deep breath and Do The Big Work. That's to say: if your soul is calling you to propel yourself forward, we encourage you (enthusiastically, with a truckload of zeal) to treat this book as your trusty companion on the journey.

As you're working through the pages and exercises in this book, there will be times when your inner agitator will start a-stompin' and you'll hear: 'I can't be bothered' or 'What's the point?' or 'This is too hard.'

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

That's the critic. The self-saboteur. The Ego. The part of you that wants to cling to smallness because small is safe.

We're going to call those guys out on their BS.

We ask that as the voices start to chirp up, you flip back to this page for a gentle, wrapped-in-cotton-wool reminder that big shifts and luscious aha! moments – the kind we hope *Spirited* will bring about – happen when you make that profoundly simple, but divinely conscious commitment to your evolution as a human being.

Suck in your breath slowly and affirm: **'Actually, I'm worth it.'**

Thank you – amazing, vibrant, SPIRITED you – for making the choice to be here with us, but more importantly, for making the choice to sit here with yourself.

It's no coincidence that this book called your name.

With endless love + gratitude,

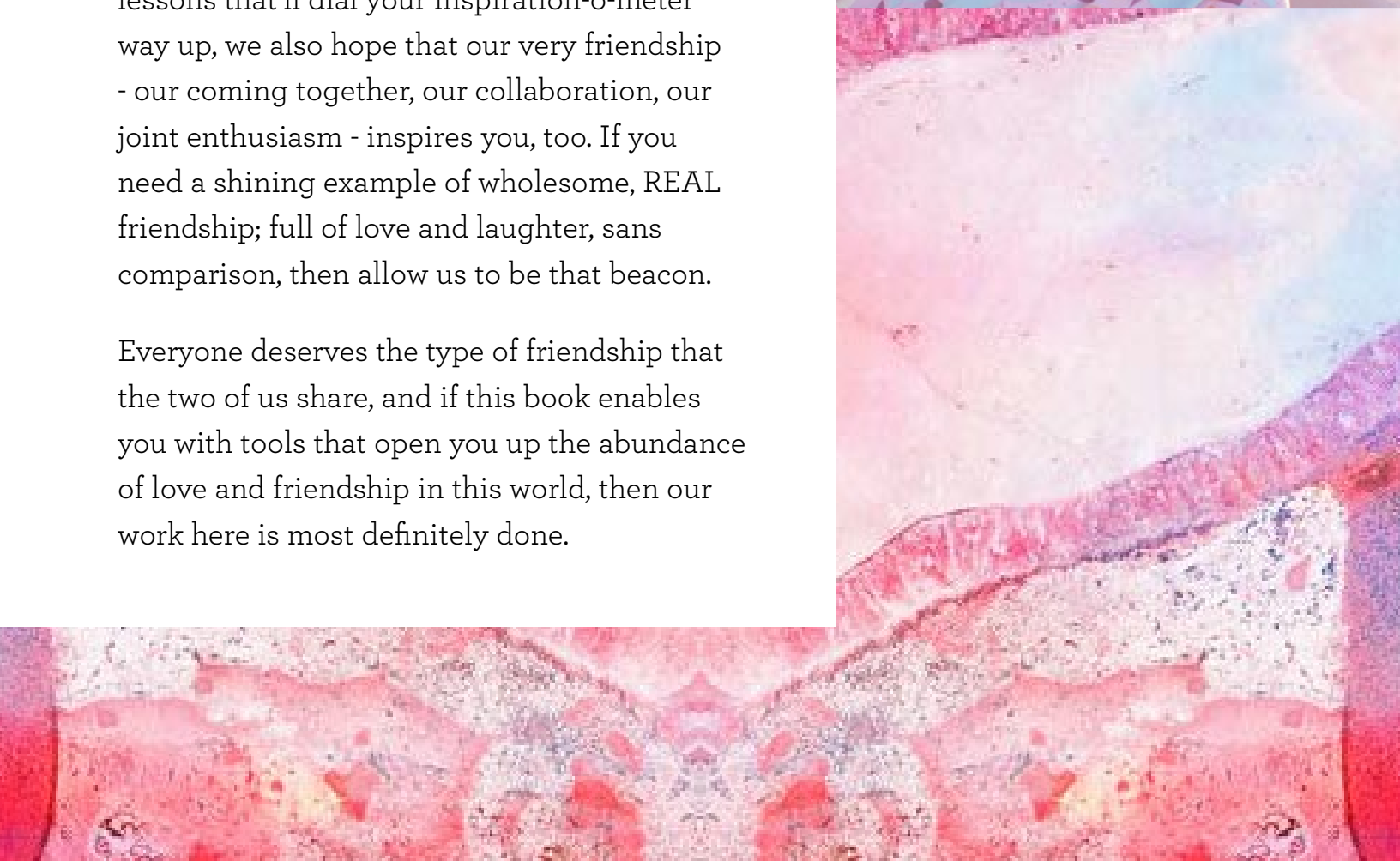
Rain +
Tara

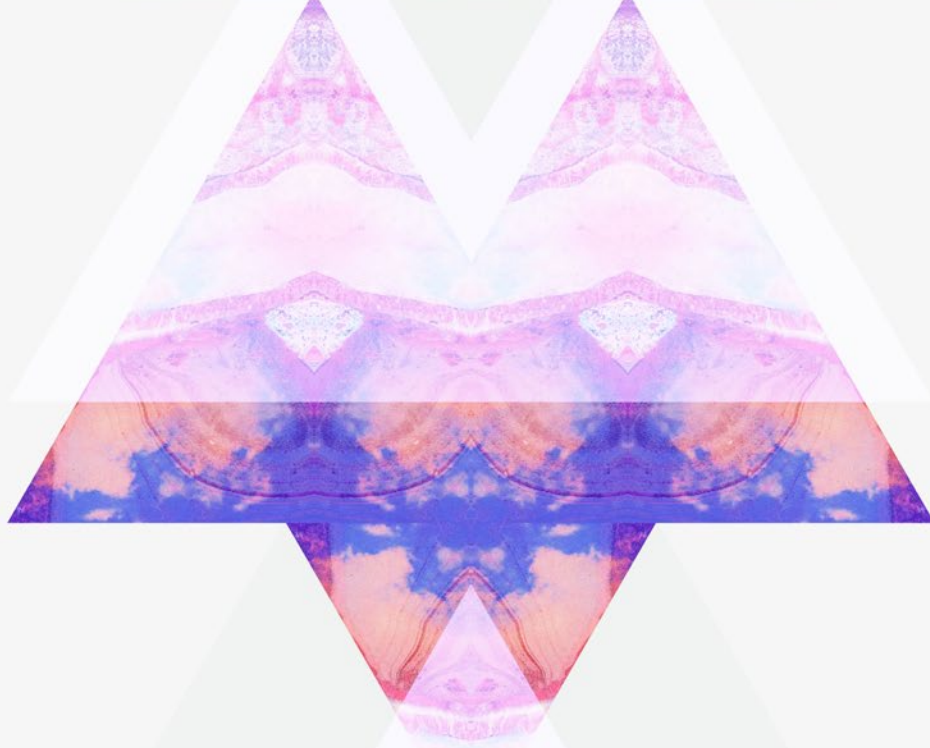


The process of writing this book has been representative of our friendship as a whole. Jubilant text messages, each championing the other when a section was completed - 'Love it babe!' 'Goosebumps!' 'I just had another idea!' 'This is amazing!'

And while you're about to jump into twelve lessons that'll dial your inspiration-o-meter way up, we also hope that our very friendship - our coming together, our collaboration, our joint enthusiasm - inspires you, too. If you need a shining example of wholesome, REAL friendship; full of love and laughter, sans comparison, then allow us to be that beacon.

Everyone deserves the type of friendship that the two of us share, and if this book enables you with tools that open you up the abundance of love and friendship in this world, then our work here is most definitely done.





Part One

Your Vision, Clarified

“Dream lofty dreams, and as you dream, so shall you become. Your Vision is the promise of what you shall one day be. Your Ideal is the prophecy of what you shall at last unveil.”

JAMES ALLEN



Thought is energy. Dreams are energy. You create your life with every thought, every dream and every intention.

This is powerful stuff.

When you set an intention for more loving, authentic relationships, dazzling opportunities, greater abundance or complete and utter fulfillment, you open yourself up to a brand new perception of how your life can be... and what happens then, is that your highest self kicks off a soul-led, heart-driven mission to bring that dream to fruition.

Pretty magical, huh?

You know that tugging on your consciousness, that whisper in your ear, that flutter in your belly? **That's a dream trying to get your attention.**

BUT... WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A DREAM?

Something can happen when you're bogged down in the every day to-do-ness of life. Your dreams can grind to a halt - and most

LESSON ONE

DREAMS, VISIONS + CRYSTAL- CLEAR INTENTIONS



of the time, you don't even consciously realise it.

Where once, as a child or teen, oversized aspirations were the norm and everything seemed possible, when the years start zooming by, the stuff in front of you begs for your full attention and FEAR shows up... before you know it, you've completely closed the door on your self and don't even know what you want anymore.

Does this sound familiar?

Have your dreams become watered-down, humdrum versions of the ones that used to make your chest puff out to contain the bigness of your heart?

Are your dreams... wait for it... non-existent right now? (*Dreams? What dreams?*)

If you were to get really honest, where in your life are you playing safe, drawing inside the lines?

...and why?

Take a moment to think about these prompts. Whatever pops into your mind first, before your internal editor kicks in, is an expression of your soul. Acknowledge it. Document it. Let it guide you through the next step.





VISUALISATION + INTENTION-SETTING (THAT WORKS)

Want to know the speediest way back to the Land of the Lofty Dreamer?

Visualisation. And following that - using the power of intention to direct the mind to the right course of action to make that vision a reality.

Find a comfortable place with minimal distractions and close your eyes.

Think of the things you love doing. Retrace old memories. Dig to the bottom of your mental treasure chest, plucking out long-ago laughs, buried strengths and talents, the things that come naturally, the hopes and the highlights.

When your life is all-but-over, what do you want to look back on and say *'Yep. Did that?'*

What do you want to CREATE?

Who do you want to BE?

Where do you want to GO/ LIVE/ EXPLORE?



When you've spent some time in your creative right brain, firing those synapses and picturing all that you want to call forth in your life, it's time to set some crystal-clear intentions. If you're fuzzy about what you want, unfortunately, you may find yourself with some fuzzy-funky results. **Clarity is electric.**

When writing your intentions, frame them in the positive present tense. They might sound something like:

I'm sitting on my deck overlooking the beach in Southern California and I'm happier than I've ever been.

My business is now consistently generating _____ dollars, every week.

I am blissfully happy, and married (!), to the man of my dreams.

Give it a go here:

I am _____

My _____



A FRESH PERSPECTIVE

In her groundbreaking piece of work, *The Desire Map*, Danielle LaPorte gives all of humanity the Hall Pass we've subconsciously been aching for – an invitation to forecast a dream life for ourselves based solely on **how we want to feel** on the inside.

When someone asks you, 'So, what's your dream? What are your goals?' instead of mustering up what you feel you should want, or what you used to want that kinda doesn't light you up anymore, you can instead – steadfastly – respond with: *I want to feel generous (or brave, or abundant, or free-as-a-bird – whatever YOUR brand of desire is), so I'll keep doing the things that make me feel that way.*

Let's repeat that. **Do the things that make you feel the way you desire to feel.** Does that flip conventional goal-setting on its head, or what? It's so simple it almost seems comical, but there's no denying we've been approaching our dreams from the wrong side of the fence for so long now.

Instead of 'I want/ need XYZ to be happy,' leading with how we want to feel means getting happy, first, or calling in the happy, then doing more of what makes us happy. It's a process of realignment. It's also a checklist-cum-manifestation-memorandum: *'Will this job make me feel expansive, creative, abundant? Yes? Ok, we have a winner – bring it on Universe. No? Might be time to reassess that dream, sista.'*

A FEW (MORE) IMPORTANT NOTES ON DREAMING

YOUR DREAM IS YOURS ALONE

And it can be as unique as your fingerprint.

It's easy to be swayed by your bestie who wants to sell all her stuff and run away to an Ashram, or the lodged-in-your-grey-matter memory of a relative telling you that you'd make a really awesome teacher. However enticing those thoughts may seem in a moment of dream doubt, if you're more a house-on-



the-beach-with-an-Internet-connection kinda girl and the thought of teaching makes your skin crawl, know that it's okay to want what YOU want. No-one can define what's meaningful for you. *Different strokes for different folks.*

Know that you don't need to alter/ squash/ discard/ tuck away or measure your dream against anyone else's vision for **their** life (or, for that matter, their vision for yours). Universal support has a fancy way of showing up when you're aligned to *your own* true nature – the life that's meant for you.

AMPLIFY YOUR DREAM BY SHARING IT

Talk about it! Shout it from the rooftops! Tell people about your big dream, because when you do, not only do you breathe life into your vision, but you create an environment of accountability that'll support your growth and keep you on your toes. *Double win.*

BABY STEPS = QUANTUM LEAPS

The magic is in the momentum. Small, brave steps forward create a ripple effect out into the world that, once returned backed to you, will blow your mind.

It's the mash up of being energetically aligned to your dream and both determined and consistent in your actions that ultimately creates change. We know first-hand how insanely effective this can be.

Remember: **think BIG and move FORWARD.**

ONE SMALL STEP A DAY

If you really want to pull that dream in from Out Yonder like an iron clipping to a jumbo magnet, challenge yourself to take **just one small step** towards it every day.

Will you write that email, or even – the draft of the email? Publish the post that has you breaking out in a sweat? Will you take the opportunity to speak up, to find a mentor, to let curiosity override



fear, to enrol in the course, to ask your boss for a reduction in hours so you can love-up your passion project?

Will you focus all your energy on building the new, rather than lamenting the (not-so-glittering) present?

Without too much pondering, quickly list five things you could do this week to move closer to your dream:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Pledge to us - but more importantly, to yourself - that you'll act on every one of these small, right actions.

Baby steps. Quantum leaps.



5 WAYS TO SHOW THE UNIVERSE THAT YOU AND YOUR DREAMS MEAN BUSINESS

- Vision board ‘em. Your most audacious (and bodacious!) dreams in technicolour, baby.
- Set daily reminders in your phone. ‘11am. I am bringing to life {your dream here}.’ *Hell yeah, you are.*
- Cover your computer/ fridge/ bathroom mirror/ corkboard with neon Post It’s with positive affirmations scrawled over them (between us, we’re certain we keep Post It in business!)
- Declare your goals to your online community... and watch them take form. Encourage them to ‘buy in’ – start a dream accountability group, a secret forum or a regular feature on your site.
- Seek help. Who do you need to reach out to? Stay in your zone of inspiration, and outsource the rest. Yes, that’s possible. Give it a shot.



Two ships sit oceans apart; one weather-beaten, but having stood the test of time, the other shiny and strong but new to the seas.

Although Shiny and Strong has never seen Old Faithful on the waters, she feels her presence and wisdom when the night is dark and quiet. She feels safe and supported, as though she's not alone.

These ships represent all parts of you - the you that's reading this right now, the you that's living in the now, and your Future self.

Like the shiny ship sitting proudly atop the water, feeling the wake of 'Old Faithful' gently rock it from all those miles away, you can feel the presence of your future self percolate your being. You may not be able to see her, or hold her, or hear her voice, but nonetheless, allow her to simply let you know that she is there. **Allow her to gently rock you.**

Your soul transcends time and space. It doesn't exist Out There; ahead of you, or beyond you. Future YOU resides within you. Alongside you.

LESSON TWO

FUTURE TRIPPIN'... WITH YOURSELF



When I spend time with 80-year-old-Tara, who is so kind and gentle and alight with love; who has deep, deep lines of laughter etched into her skin, I almost always shed a tear or two. I cry because of the profound, humble simplicity of it all. They're tears of honesty and clarity.

80-year-old-Tara smiles at me, holding my face in her hands, with a gaze that says: *Child, look at me - **look at us** - we are okay. We have lived a good, wonderful life. Get your knickers out of this twist, and enjoy yourself.* (Yep, she's got a little 'tude.)

The best part? She says *thank you*. **Without me, she is nothing. Without her, neither am I.**

Tara



“Oh darling, we’ve had some fun,” my 80-year-old self says, her eyes twinkling as she reaches out to place my hand in hers.

She is majestic, this woman in front of me. Two deep oceans of blue and a mess of crevices tell the story of a lifetime of smiles.

Those eyes have seen the world. They’ve cried tears, both of sadness and pure delight.

They’ve seen stuff, those eyes.

I want to ask her so much.

How did we get here?

Well, to answer simply, we woke up each morning and made the decision to embrace whatever life sent our way. Nothing more, nothing less.

Is there anything I need to let go of?

Ahh, there are always more layers to shed, dear one - that’s what it means to be human.

cont...



You are transforming day by precious day, so comfort yourself with this: today's challenge is tomorrow's nugget of wisdom. Keep your feet moving.

What else do I need to know?

I could share, but the beauty is in the un-knowing. Trust it. You are happy. We are happy.

As she walked me to the door she pulled me into a warm embrace and said softly:

'You call on me whenever you need. I'm always here. If there's a decision to be made, or there's something clawing at your conscience, ask: 'What would 80 year old me do?'

Together, we'll work this out.

Rain



This Soul Sesh is broken into two parts:

- An interview with yourself, one year from now.
- A heart-to heart with your 80-year old self.

SOUL SESH

PART ONE

AN INTERVIEW WITH YOURSELF, ONE YEAR FROM NOW.

We've hit the fast-forward button, landed 12 months in the future and you're being interviewed for your favourite blog/ magazine/ book/ big shot publication/ Oprah.

Answer these questions as you would if your life had unfolded *exactly* the way it looks in your dreams today.



What's been your biggest achievement in the past 12 months? What did you absolutely NAIL?

What feelings/ beliefs/ things/ attachments did you need to let go of to get there?



What pursuits made you feel most ‘in the flow,’ ‘connected,’ ‘on purpose?’

What skills did you develop that you didn’t have this time last year? How did you invest in yourself?



What is different about your life today compared with 12 months ago?

What do you believe in?





A HEART-TO-HEART WITH YOUR 80 YEAR OLD SELF.

Now, we're hanging out with the wise and worldly 80-year old version of you.

SOUL SESH

PART TWO



What nuggets of wisdom do you have for me?

What are you proud of me for doing in _____ (current year).





In what areas of my life can I dig my heels in a little more, step it up, shine brighter? Where is my soul gold hiding?

What do you celebrate in me that I can't see yet?



**AWESOME SITE ALERT
FUTUREME.ORG**

“Send your Future Self some words of inspiration. Or maybe give 'em swift kick in the pants. Or just share some thoughts on where you'll be or what you'll be up to in a year, three years...more? And then we'll do some time travel magic and deliver the letter to you. FutureYou, that is.”





Ever been side-swiped by an epic idea? You know the kind: you were minding your own business, most likely carrying out a mundane, ordinary task, and then *bam!* - a golden flash of insight came to play peek-a-boo.

The epic idea filled you with hope. Maybe you heard a sentence or two that would craft a brilliant blog post. Maybe you saw yourself sipping sake in Tokyo after putting out an ‘*Okay-I’m-ready-for-a-holiday-now*’ call to the Universe. Perhaps you were presented a very clear and concise plan of how to deal with a situation that had been plaguing you. Or maybe you were on the receiving end of unshakable, unmistakable guidance like this: ‘Quit the job’, ‘Walk away’, ‘Go for it’, ‘Make the first move’, ‘Just say yes, and work it out later.’

It feels good in your body - this epic idea - good like all truth does when it collides with your cells. Good and real and doable and right. And at lightning fast speed, a plan starts to cosmically arrange itself in your psyche, giving this idea confidence, giving it power.

But the day wears on, and more of those mundane, ordinary tasks start to lessen the

LESSON THREE

DREAMS IN MOTION

(or what to do when inspiration comes a-knockin’)



shine of sheer stoked-ness that arrived alongside this beautiful, meaningful idea. And that initial enthusiasm? It's wavering, *fast*.

It's as though, with a heave-ho, Fear busts its unwelcome ass into the equation, elbowing out that clarity, that glorious feeling of hope, that laser-sharp plan and unmistakable guidance, with:

'Did you really think you could pull that off?'

'Who do you think you are? You're simply not good enough.'

'You don't deserve it. Work harder. Maybe this time next year.'

'No one gives two hoots about what you have to say. What makes you so special anyway?'

Everything will change once you fully grasp that **fear is a natural reaction to intuitive clarity**.

We'll dive into fear further in Part Two, but for now, let's talk about what you can do to capture that spark of creative soul gold, immediately (before the doubts rock up on your doorstep).



HONOUR THOSE DREAMS

Whenever my intuition delivers insight in the form of an idea, vision or action plan, I transfer the message onto a sticky-note (or whatever's closest). This is vital.

Take the idea, and give it life. **Caress it down from your mind, onto paper.**

Next, I make a pact. Sometimes, that means verbalising a promise: *'Right. Amazing idea. I don't care what fears get in the way, you deserve my attention and faith, and I won't give up on you.'* Other times, it means having a Mexican stand-off-style stare-down; me and the sticky-note, locking eyes; committing for better or worse.

That little piece of paper is no longer just a sticky-note fixed to my wall or computer screen; it becomes a signpost that continually points to the place, situation, opportunity or outcome that my intuition intended. Thought meets paper meets enthusiastic determination and bright faith. **It's a killer combination.**

Throw in some creative visualisation, intention-setting and vision-boarding, and you've cemented your belief and dedication to the dream. Prepare to be mind-blown.

Tara





WALKING OUR TALK: INSPIRATION (AND FEAR) IN ACTION

I was scattering pebbles along the path about 18 months before actually leaping, headfirst, heart-hammering into the work I'm now doing.

It had started with a dream that had been born years before. There was a rumbling in my stomach: I wanted to empower women on a global scale via an online, location-independent biz where creativity, connection and communication intersected and people left feeling better than when they arrived.

I knew - with unwavering conviction - that this dream was one to be honoured, and although I was working in PR/ digital communications by day, and timing-wise, not yet ready to leap, it was time to find a way to close the gap.

And so I started a blog.

In Spaces Between and the incredible audience that started to show up from day dot - not to mention the soul-sister friendships and divine opportunities since then - have all truly changed my life.

And so it was that, a year and a half into my blogging journey, the call to make good on my vision became loud enough for me to stand to attention and say 'Ok. Let's give this a go. It's the least we can do.'

cont...



Feet lifted from the edge of the cliff; a dive into the Unknown. And these were my parachutes:

SUPPORT + INVESTMENT

My god, are they both epically necessary.

Investing in yourself – whether that’s enlisting the help of a coach or mentor, or saying ‘yes!’ to that online training program that keeps popping up on your radar – has an irrevocable effect on the speed in which your dreams start to materialise. It was key (so, so KEY) for me.

Hugely important, too, is seeking out your tribe and surrounding yourself with people who are on the same journey, and this is where I want to publicly thank Tara, because her love and cheerleading while I made the transition into full time entrepreneurship was seriously invaluable.

Here was this gorgeous, gutsy woman, whom I was so connected to on a soul level, getting in and tackling fear head on while building the kind of life that had been calling her... just as my dream had been calling me.

It inspired the pants off me. I was beyond grateful for her presence in my life. Long chats and excited-or-HOLY-WHOA text messages and breaking it down (or as Tara says ‘taking the size out of it’) paved the

cont...



way for this whole new way of living. And the beautiful thing is, we've been able to do it side-by-side ever since - learning as we go, tweaking, celebrating and revelling in the fact that we allowed our dreams to be bigger than our fears.

FAITH.

While we're on fear, let it be said: periods of discomfort, uncertainty, feeling as if you're floating in the abyss and busting through upper limits are all part of the process.

Hang with the discomfort. Up level. Create a 'new normal.' Trust, trust, trust. You're in the right place, at the right time.

Then — the biggie: ACTION.

And all I want to say here is 'leap and the net will appear.' You WILL be caught... and perhaps it'll be in a way that you can't even fathom right now.

Ram



I was sitting on my mum's deck, sipping on my third or fourth glass of pinot grigio. My man was sitting beside me and we were laughing, playing with the puppies. And then I heard 'The Party Girls Guide to Peaceful Living' – clear as day – bouncing around the right side of my head.

I pulled a *huh?! face*, and took another sip; half hammered by now.

But the damn idea lingered like a bad smell, and so finally, a few days later, I gave it the attention it deserved by allowing all of the fragmented sentences and suggestions to spill out into my journal.

Not long after that, I had a course outline for an online program called the *Party Girls Guide to Peace*.

Relinquishing my inner Party Girl had been a huge part of my story, even at that point. I'd sworn off drugs and steered clear from the clubs, and my marriage was loving and solid (a far cry from the drug-laden lust-fests of the days of yore), and yet there I was, ending each day with a never-ending glass of wine, while preparing a course for women who were struggling with the very same situation. I felt like a Fakey McFake Pants.

Do not be swayed by a fear of fraudulence when you're called upon to step up and serve. (After all, this idea chose you, not the other way round, which means, quite simply, that you're the one for the job).

cont...



I understood that with the PGG2P, I was given an opportunity to guide others through (and out of) their struggles with their Party Girl addictions, but on an inner scale, it was also an opportunity to self-heal even further (plus, it's indecent for the creator of such an experience to guzzle down three glasses of wine a night). I had more inner work to do, and it was the sense of purpose and meaning that arose through serving others that made my own lifestyle clean-up not only imperative, but hugely fulfilling, and easy.

So often we teach what we most need to learn. Be okay with that. **Be more than okay with that.** Forget about striving to be an 'expert-in-your-field' (you've got your whole life for that) and instead, aim first for integrity and authenticity. And pedal-to-the-metal honesty. This is a beautiful, sacred, important place to start.

The PGG2P has become a huge part of my life, and had I not honoured those intuitive hits, I'd have missed out of the soul-shaking experience of watching other women heal themselves and claim back their capacity to make conscious decisions. I'd have missed out on the urgent demands of my soul to clean up my lifestyle and prioritise my own well-being.

It's all about putting one foot in front of the other. **Receive the guidance, acknowledge it, thank it, and then faithfully hit the ground running.**

Tara



Part Two

Fear-Wrangling

“The cave you fear to enter holds the
treasure you seek.”

JOSEPH CAMPBELL



“The ego is quite literally, a fearful thought.”

- *Marianne Williamson*

WHO IS THE EGO?

The narrator. The saboteur. The incessant chitter-chattering soundtrack in your mind that believes in separation, specialness, scarcity, and shame. The *I’m not good enough’s*, and the *There’ll never be enough for me’s* are egoic gospel. It’s responsible for holding onto grudges, limiting beliefs and external identities.

Furthermore - the ego can’t survive in the present, which is why it’s constantly collecting memories from the past and reaching for the future with fearful projections.

Future tripping = hello, anxiety.

As long as you’re human, it’s likely that you’ll be stuck with an ego (at least for this lifetime), and here’s a truthbomb for you - accepting this is key.

Instead of attempting to demolish your ego or turn it into dust, this means approaching this part of you with compassion and learning to co-exist.

LESSON FOUR

THE EGO + YOUR WISEST SELF



Your fears – if you choose to view them through a loving lens – can become a metric for where you’re going next. Everything that arises is an opportunity for healing.

The good news is: your fears won’t kill you.

Your most powerful tool in learning to live peacefully with your ego, is recognising that, just like your brain, your eyes, your little toenail, you have one, but you are not defined by it. You are not your little toenail, and you are not your ego. This is crucial.

Creating space between who you really are – the witnessing observer, higher self, Soul (whatever resonates for you) – and the thoughts that arise as expressions of the ego is vital, because if you’re lacking this awareness, then the ego is damn convincing and identifying with this voice is dangerous.

Let’s bust a whacked-out myth:

Fearlessness is a sign of strength.

This is a radical error that can serve up a side of bravery dysmorphia.

Overcoming fear is what makes us feel courageous.

Acknowledging the fear and deciding to march forward nonetheless – *that’s* what accomplishment feels like.

What would your life be like if you didn’t make it through those moments that had your palms sweating and your heart racing?

Two words spring to mind: boring and unfulfilling. Expanding as human beings means doing just that – creeping outside of our comfort zones – which requires us to look our demons in the eye, take a deep breath and move into the unknown.

Avoid declaring war on the ego.

Attacking those fearful thoughts as if they were an enemy is simply a back-door trick that the ego plays, when essentially, it starts attacking itself. You can’t fight fear with fear, Spirited ones.



In those moments when self-loathing and judgement (the ego!) are-a-clip-clopping around in your mind, you're going to have to harness some serious soul power and simply observe it, with compassion.

We know. It's hard. But this is why your ego is one of the the most profound and significant teachers available to you. Plus, it's free (wink!).

A surefire way to strengthen truthful intuitive bonds and connection with your soul? Stillness. Meditation. Surrender. We'd love to share with you a little about our journey with meditation in the next lesson.

WHO IS THE WISEST SELF?

She's infinite, all loving, ever present and truly, truly divine. Her lifeblood is joy, abundance, good humour and ease, and she's the light that outshines the Ego's trickery (yes, she's awesome).

Your wisest self loves you unconditionally. No exceptions. She's not

bothered by how much you weigh, earn, do with your day, how big you dream or who you've hurt in the past. She's the part of you that accepts you, moment to moment.

She's also what you can feel when you're drawn to HOPE.

When you feel every fibre of your being light up with inspiration.

When goosebumps cover you from head to toe, letting you know that *Oh my god that was the best idea ever*. That's her.

Your wisest self is the Spirited GPS that you can access at any time - all it takes is a deep breath, a silent prayer, an inner ask or a session in your journal.

She may come to you when you're driving, pounding the pavement, mid-argument or while you're taking a long, hot bath; regardless, you'll know, as she speaks an entirely different language to the ego. Soul is limitless love; it's purity and truth. And the ego? Fear, scarcity and falsity.



The ego is particularly insidious because it often hides behind the word ‘I’ – which is a sure-fire way to lure you into identifying with it.

The ego says:

I’m lazy. I should be working/exercising/striving harder.

I don’t have enough time.

I don’t deserve this.

I’m not good/ beautiful/ confident/ qualified enough.

I’ll never be that joyful/ successful/ fit/ loved.

The Wisest Self, on the other hand, often uses ‘you’ language, which feels as though you’re being spoken to, taken care of, blanketed in love – like you would be from a warm, gentle grandmother.

She says things like:

You can do this.

I believe in you.

This isn’t worth the pain. Forgive him.

Put your shoes on and go outside, it’s a beautiful day!

This is exactly where you’re supposed to be.

Make the call.

You are enough.

Who would you rather listen to?





When we're feeling defeated, uninspired, or just a little off our game, it's not unusual for us to impulsively search for answers to questions that very well mightn't need answering in the first place.

We cast our binoculars out there, looking for a swift pick-me-up, when in fact, all that may be required is a willingness to sit in the space of our situation. When we're present, we access clarity - pure clarity, not the: *I've wrapped my head around this a million times and finally I've figured out what's going on here*, manufactured type of 'clarity'. Pure, unadulterated, straight-from-the-source kinda clarity.

Fill in the blanks below to access the guidance of your wisest, never-faltering, always-present self.

SOUL SESH



Hey there, Wisest Part of Me,

I need you to come out and play right now. Please guide me back to what's true.

I'm feeling (stressed, overwhelmed) _____

When I dig deeper, I know that what's really going on is (I feel resentful that I've over-committed/ I'm seeking approval, etc) _____

But you know what?

If I get really honest with myself, even though I'm feeling _____

I know that I am _____ (loved / strong / blessed).

How do I know for sure? Because _____

(evidence) _____

So, right now: all I want, is to feel: _____



What do I need to do to feel that way in this moment?

Do you have anything else you'd like to tell me, Wisest Me?

(amazing, beautiful reminder) _____

Thank you for reminding me of what's real. I appreciate you. I love you.

Now, I feel _____



“I’m simply saying that there is a way to be sane. I’m saying that you can get rid of all this insanity created by the past in you. Just by being a simple witness of your thought processes.

Once the gap is there, you are in for a great surprise, that you are not the mind, that you are the witness. A watcher.” – Osho

Taking Osho’s lead, we reckon it’s time to call BS on the *Avoid Meditation At All Costs* soundtrack that may very well be playing on loop in your mind.

I have a busy mind. *That’s why you need meditation.*

I can’t sit still for long enough. *That’s why you need meditation.*

It seems boring. *That’s why you need meditation – to calm your nervous system, allowing you to ease out of excess outside stimuli.*

I’m just not into that scene. *That’s why you need meditation. To realise that meditation isn’t for a certain type of person. It’s for everyone.*

LESSON FIVE

STILLNESS + SURRENDER



A few reasons why dig the silence:

- Clarity
- Present moment awareness
- A calm and focused mind
- Super-charged creativity
- Mastery of the mind
- Relaxation and peace
- Freedom from suffering
- Connecting to intuition and higher powers
- A relationship with truth/ the essence of the soul





For a while there, every time I would cosy up with a guided meditation, before long, I'd find myself sobbing uncontrollably over the words and music. In those tears, I could feel a deep un-hooking in my chest, like slow and steady *clunk!* It felt vulnerable – and at first, weird – to be sitting in a space of stillness, yet at the same time, be having such a dynamic, heart-opening experience.

It's actually quite difficult for me to explain the emotions, the tears, that unmistakable Cracking Open thing that happened to me in those first few months of meditation. The best I can do in attempting to describe it is to say that I truly felt as though I was coming home. Finally.

I'd resisted it. I didn't understand it, didn't see how it could fit into my life. I couldn't get my head around the point of it when I already felt so bankrupt of time. Things needed doing! And perhaps that's exactly why my journey into the silence was so significant and soul-shaking. What we resist, persists, and the more it persists, the more vulnerable it feels to surrender to it.

I searched for 'ideal Tara' in 6am vodka recovery sessions, mysterious men and job after spirit-depleting job. I travelled the world, hoping I'd learn to love myself more if I could just... find the ... right... place.

cont...



And yet there I was, in bed, perched on my sit bones with closed eyes, crying from my heart space, loving all of me. So much that it hurt a little. It was the spiritual detox I didn't even know I was desperate for.

Today, I meditate for maintenance, clarity and insight. I meditate for LOVE. I meditate ON love.

I meditate because life is, without a doubt, much sweeter when I do. And easier. And this has been made obvious to me countless times – when I feel as if I'm lacking direction, flow, and when my attitude of gratitude isn't dialled right the way up, a little reflection is all it takes to realise, *Oh, yep. Haven't sat for a medi in days.* Every time I have this little *a-ha!* moment, I like to imagine that the Universe has given me a wink, as if to say, *time to get back to work, dear child.*

But the meditative *creme de la creme* – for me – is being shown a world of truth and magic. A world of energy and love and wisdom beyond anything that we can experience out here, in the world of form, with our senses. I love touching base with the unknown, with the mystery of the void, which is all there, behind my eyelids. It's beyond describable. The mind and the soul speak different native tongues, and trying to translate one with the other is near impossible...

But this I do know: I am so, so grateful that Spirit insisted I drop by and say hi. *cont...*



Spiritual practice is responsible for my transformed marriage, the birth of my business, the words I publish on my blog, the abundance of opportunities that float into my life, my friendship with Rach, and indeed this book!

It was in meditation that I was guided to move to Burleigh Heads (where I finally feel at home), hire incredible mentors, work with women, take risks, embrace my femininity and resiliently keep placing one foot in front of the other.

Once you 'sit', you can never go back to the way life was before. It's a mesmerising experience as you observe the impact that practice has on your external experience of life. **It truly warms the heart.**

“I think that anyone who meditates seriously and turns inward, is going to sooner or later realise that there's help coming from a subtler or higher source that they're turning into, when they're aligned in their practice.” - Sally Kempton

Tara



My first experience with meditation was when I was 11 years old and, while riding the waves of separation, divorce, death, and everything in between, my parents started exploring a different kind of spirituality to the one they'd been raised with – and with that seeking, came New Age CD's and spiritual circles... and plenty of stillness.

Spread out on the floor and wiggling my toes, I could appreciate that, sure, the process felt 'kinda relaxing,' but at that tender, energetic age, biking around the neighbourhood was infinitely more fun than listening to trickling waterfall sounds, so I shelved the meditation thing and off I went.

In my mid-20's, I rediscovered meditation and, like Tara, resisted it and made it bigger than it needed to be – another 'should' on my to-do list. It was something I simply didn't make room for in my life. I embraced those heart-altering, cell-expanding meditative minutes in corpse pose at the end of a yoga class, or when I really needed a reprieve from over-thinking and over-doing, but it still hadn't become a priority or 'relationship.' Yet.

Just like anything, no one else can truly know for you when it's The Right Time to embrace a regular practice. In my experience, you decide one day to answer the call of your heart – perhaps the very same call that's been whispering your name for years – and once you

cont...



do, the desire to soften and surrender inches out whatever else is standing in the way.

In choosing to commune compassionately with myself, my life started working better.

My life *works* better.

Meditation prises open parts of you that haven't yet discovered, but by the same token, feel like you've known all along.

Guidance lands gently in your lap.

Your energy shifts, fear subsides. You sit closer to truth. You feel different.

Your cup is filled, first, from within. You expand creatively, magically.

It's profound and alchemical.

Instead of feeling like I need to **get away** from my mind, meditation has taught me that it's completely possible to find a way to rest **within** my mind - right there beside the hopes and dreams and wedged in with the muck and chaos.

Today, my practice continues to deepen. Whether I'm clearing my chakras, releasing worry and low-vibe thoughts, asking for guidance

cont...



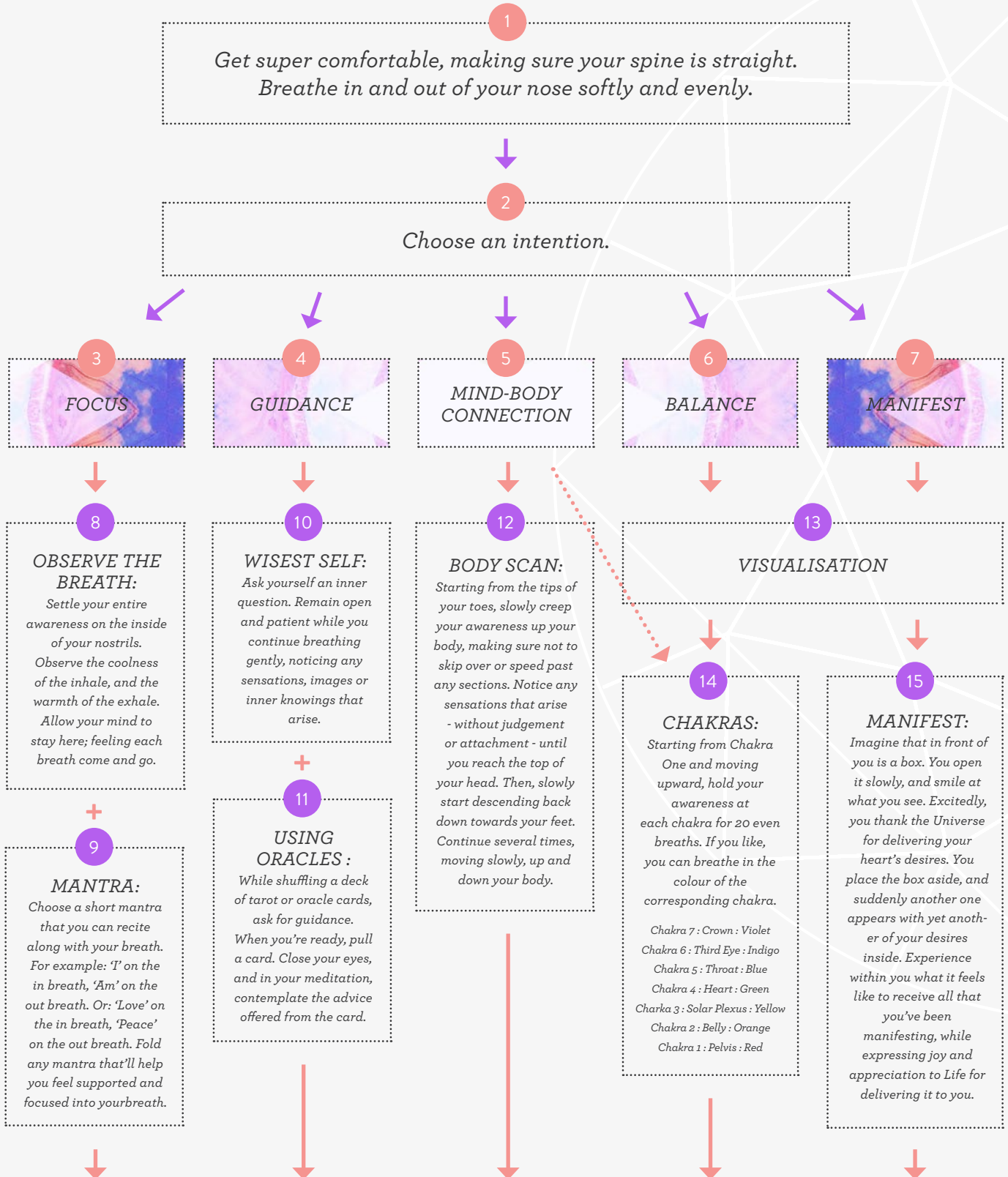
or taking a visual journey into my subconscious, in tapping into that wound-down mode of consciousness, I'm unquestionably **more loving, more compassionate** and **more grounded** in my approach to my relationships, my business, my entire life. It's seeing the world with new eyes.

Joy is knowing that when I choose to sit my booty down or lie in prone position on my mat/ daybed/ Guatemalan beach blanket, I'm instantly a quantum leap closer to peace. Out of my head. Into my heart. Wrapped in love.

Rain

SOUL SESH

Choose Your Own Meditation Adventure



16

Remember, just as your heart beats, your mind thinks. Be gentle with yourself, and continually - without judgement - pull your awareness back to your breath / chakras / mantra / visualisation.

17

Continue with your meditation; giving yourself this permission to slow down and be present for yourself.

18

Start to deepen your breathing; filling up your chest and belly with oxygen-rich breaths. Invite a little movement into your toes, fingers, neck and spine.

19

Before you open your eyes, take a moment to extend love to the world around you from your heart centre. Cultivate inner gratitude for people in your life who love you, teach you and cheer you on. Offer them a silent thank you. Reflect on opportunities that you're grateful for, and again, say thank you. Finally, acknowledge your body, mind and spirit, and smile inwardly to yourself, before slowly cracking your eyes open.

You can get creative and bring ritual into your meditation space by:

- Lighting candles.
- Smudging the area with sage.
- Holding onto your favourite crystal.
- Wearing white clothing.
- Meditating with friends to seriously up the ante.
- Journaling your experience.



ARE YOU SELF-SABOTAGING?

By doing things like:

- Passionately declaring your brightest intentions (to yourself/ your blog readers/ family/ business partner/ anyone who will listen), then tripping yourself up continually, ensuring those noble goals just don't ever happen.
- Alternatively, reaching your goal, freaking the hell out, and finding a way to scoot back to the safe confines of your comfort zone, a myriad of excuses in tow.
- Procrastinating. Perfecting. Failing to finish. Half-baked projects littering the trail of your disgust.
- Manifesting illness – just before your biggest breakthrough.
- Sliding back into nasty habits and self-destructive behaviours that no longer serve you.
- Going back to that guy. Again. Yep. The Jerk. That one.

LESSON SIX

FREEDOM FROM SELF- SABOTAGE



- Missing the deadline to apply for your dream job because you were ‘too busy’ or it ‘slipped your mind’ (when you know it was all you were thinking about).
- Frivolously burning through the cash you’ve been saving for your big, scary, exciting, totally out-of-your-comfort-zone move across the country.
- Creating a life that’s so outrageously busy it keeps you from stepping fully into The Thing You Were Born to Do.

Any of that sound familiar?

We present: the Saboteur in action.

Self-sabotage is, like Marianne Williamson famously said, fearing your light.

“It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, ‘Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?’ Actually, who are you not to be?”

Let’s imagine, for the sake of the story, you’re running your own business and a golden opportunity comes flying across your desk.

It’s a biggie. We’re talking all-new terrain. Saying yes will mean ‘putting yourself out there’ in a way you’re currently totally unaccustomed to, but one that you know – you absolutely KNOW – will not only magnify your work, but expand you a thousand-fold on a soul level.

So, yeah, it’s got some weight, this opportunity.

And then comes the fear. The deeply-buried baggage from which self-sabotage finds its wings.

Your initial elation at being considered for this divine assignment fades in a heartbeat and you find yourself in a state of mild anxiety, self-doubt growing by the second.



You feel... suffocated. Like you've found yourself in the deep end and just remembered you can't swim.

Imagine what would happen if you – before getting yourself completely in a flap, before sabotaging your success by shrinking down and ducking for cover – got still for a moment and probed a little.

How am I feeling?

Fearful. Doubt-ridden. Anxious. Terrified. Uncertain. Unprepared. Small.

(Good. We've called that jazz out now and thrown it on the table. The bigness eradicated in one fell swoop).

Then why am I feeling like this?

Because I want this so bad.

Okay, so what's really going on here?

I've been working for this moment for so long now. And it's here. And I'm scared. What if I'm not cut out for it? What if I get criticised, or I fall down, or I leave

people behind and they don't like who I become?

OR... or, what if this was the case...

What if stepping into The Unknown with childlike curiosity, senses ablaze, awareness peaking, the pressure gauge flipped to OFF, wasn't anywhere near as hairy as your mind convinced you it would be?

What if it was actually the best effing thing you've ever done?

What if it changed the course of your whole life and you woke up each day drenched in gratitude for that time you said 'Ok, I'm scared, but YES.'

You're never given anything you aren't ready for.

Make this your shiny, new mantra for magical transformation:

IT IS TIME FOR ME TO BE SEEN.

Out of the shadows, into the light.



A - quite frankly - mind-boggling case of self-sabotage that stands out in my mind happened when I was at uni studying journalism and had applied to do work experience at Cosmo magazine.

At the time, for this wannabe wordsmith/ magazine devotee, working at Cosmo was an experience that I had plonked right up there on a glittery rainbow pedestal with pony-hair tassels. An absolute 'dream.'

So the phone rang. I got the gig. We need you to fly to Sydney in two weeks, they said, and pumping my fists as I tap-danced around the house, I said OF COURSE I'M IN. Perfect. How exciting. *I can't wait.*

Mentally, I lost myself in visions of strutting down the corridors alongside the gorgeously glam women of the Mysterious World of Magazines, waiting for that career-defining moment that I'd be called into the editor's office to be asked 'So, when can you start, for real? We need you here. Permanently.'

But then the doubt barrelled in like a semi-trailer and mowed me down. Without warning. A full-force, egoic attack of epic proportions. In my body, there was this simmering fire in the pit of my stomach and my head was awash with questions. Oh, the questioning!

What if I screw it up? What if I hate it? What about my none-too-stable relationship? Will he leave while I'm gone? He will! What if this life isn't for me? Who will I be if I'm not good enough for this and HOLY IDENTITY CRISIS.

cont...



You can almost guess what happens next, can't you?

I did what any self-sabotaging, self-attacking 20 year old would do and maxed out my credit card (there goes my flight, and goodbye accommodation), made up a truly feeble excuse about why I couldn't make it on the dates required, and turned my back on a brilliant opportunity because I was so damn busy future tripping on the 'what if's.'

Instead of choosing to be brave and curious, imperfectly me - wide-eyed and ready to learn - I let fear grab me by the shoulders and whisper in my ear 'You'll never be able to pull this off.'

Rain



Let's cultivate some awareness of this saboteur behaviour. Jot down all the ways you've been sabotaging your success.

SOUL SESH



RELATIONSHIPS

*For example: I keep creating drama in my marriage.
I shy away from opportunities with people who I deem
Untouchable.*





WORK

*For example: I don't promote my services.
An incredible opportunity came my way last week and I
still haven't responded.*



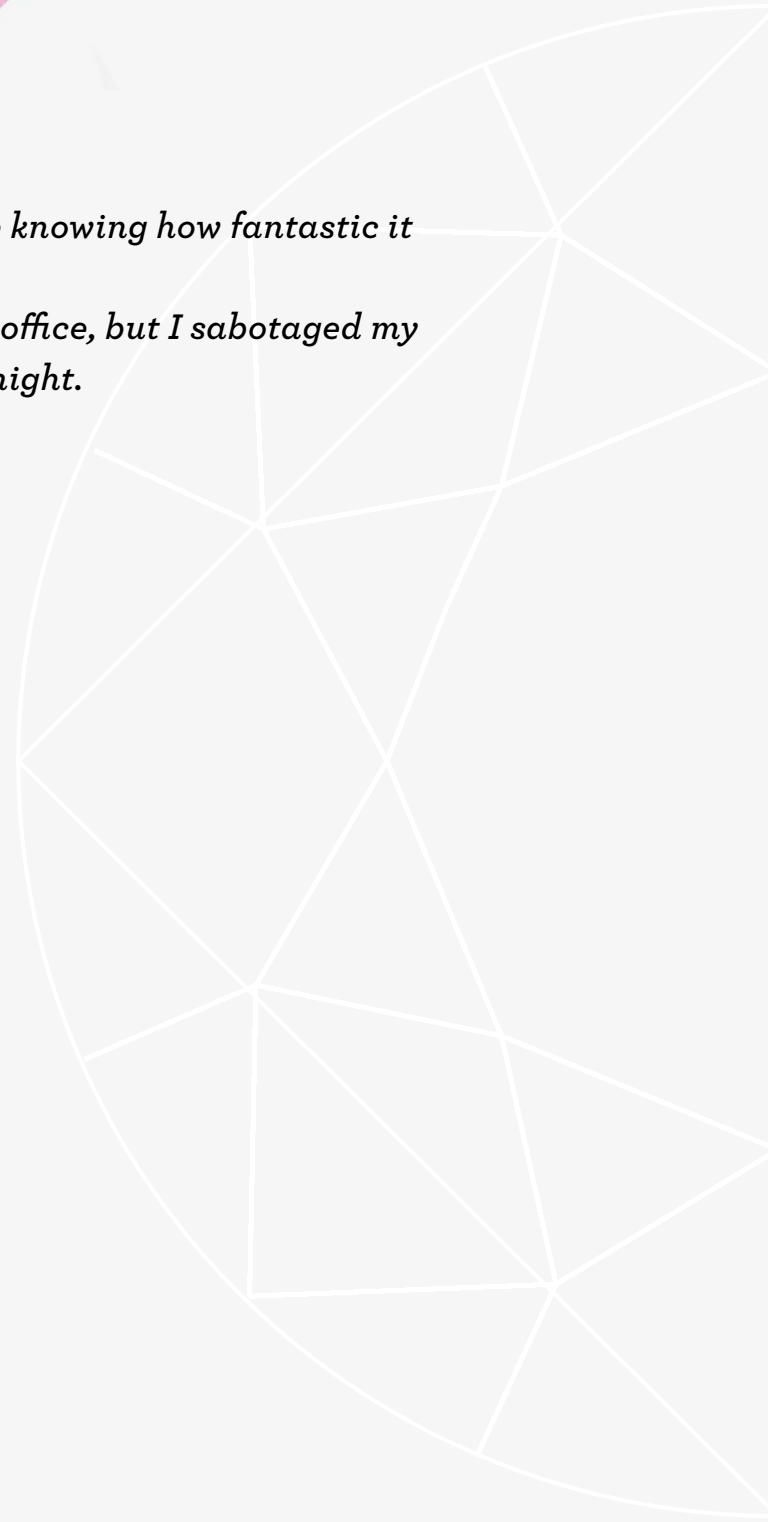


HEALTH

For example:

I resist meditation, despite knowing how fantastic it makes me feel.

I had a brilliant day in the office, but I sabotaged my happiness by bingeing all night.





We know that wasn't an easy exercise, but you made it! Take a niiiice big breath.

Locking eyes consciously with these behavioural patterns means that the hard work is over, because now you're aware of the role that self-sabotage plays in your life. It's a mechanism that insists you stay safe while riding the plateau. But guess what? You're not here to live an ordinary, flat-lined life. Hurdles were made for jumpin' and boundaries were made for pushin'. So again, take a deep breath, allow yourself to become a little bigger in your body, and give yourself permission to transform:

What are you going to say yes to... and why?

And...

What behaviour needs to be addressed in conversation?

For example, if you've identified that you and your partner often find yourselves in niggling arguments after spending a day full-o-love together, consider connecting soul to soul with a conversation that might go something along the lines of this...

Babe, I think I realise why I've been acting a little irrational lately. It's almost as if when we're enjoying each other's company I don't feel worthy, and subconsciously I try to pull the two of us back down to an unworthy energy. But I'm aware of this now, and I'll be more observant. You mean the world to me. I love you.



{Write your answer here}



Make a point to connect with someone to talk this stuff out; whether it's your husband, your bestie or a coach.

REAFFIRM: IT IS TIME FOR ME TO BE SEEN. IT IS SAFE FOR ME TO BE HEARD.





Cast your mind back to school for a moment and conjure up an image of the wild, rowdy kid from the broken home – the ‘bad one’ who – now – with years of awareness under our collective belt, we’re able to recognise as simply the ‘confused one,’ silently battling an inner tsunami of suffering.

We can all think of an example here. Hey, maybe it was you.

The kid is acting out. Going nuts. Their hurt is bubbling up and bleeding out right there in front of everyone, and the teacher responds.

A brutal dressing down.

Humiliation.

Scorn.

Rejection.

Judgement.

Punishment.

We remember it well. The palpable tension as these two wage a turbulent war against each other from across the classroom.

LESSON SEVEN

MAKING PEACE WITH YOUR INNER CRITIC



In an alternate universe, lives another teacher who encounters this defiant soul and decides to pull them aside to acknowledge that hurt, instead of beating it down.

‘I see you.’

The kid stops and looks up.

‘I hear you.’

‘The you I see and hear is **not** this behaviour.’

When it comes to responding to our inner critic, we can take the approach of the first teacher or the second.

We can act from **fear** or we can act from **love**.

We can put our critic in its place by judging, berating and chasing it away with a big stick, or we can turn our gaze inward, get still and start by saying “Ahh, there you are.”

Let’s choose to be tender with ourselves.

We’re going to explore some of the ways you can love up that belittling voice in your head, but before that, a few inner critic insights to chew on:

The favoured weapons of the inner ‘critical voice’ are shame, judgment, perfectionism, self-doubt, self-sabotage and guilt. If we were to bundle all those emotions into a big box and scrawl a label across it in black marker, that label would be FEAR.

The Inner Critic is also fond of showing up as the Imposter Complex - that (nagging, debilitating, all-too-frequent) feeling of being “a fraud” and that it’s only a matter of time before you’re “found out.”

Trying to ignore, deny or suppress the inner critic rarely (if ever) works, and in actual fact, can result in the opposite happening, where the very spirit-sucking thoughts and emotions you’re trying to run away from show up more often and with greater intensity.

Witness the inner critic as the vulnerable part of you that craves reassurance



and nurturing. It also happens to be the protective part that abhors change, so when you're growing, transforming and expanding into a bigger version of being, be conscious that this voice WILL pipe up (think: fear, hesitation, dread,

insecurity, what if's) but only because you're moving forward. And that's a beautiful thing.

**MANTRA: I AM SAFE. THIS IS SAFE.
I CAN DO ANYTHING I SET MY MIND TO.**





BEFRIENDING YOUR INNER VOICE

ONE: IDENTIFY THE SOURCE.

'Excuse me, irrational voice in my head, where exactly do you come from?'

There's a mighty power in making the ask, then tuning in, carefully. More often than not, the critical voice is simply an adult replay (on loop) of a childhood experience that's waiting to be healed.

Think back: Is there a defining moment, or moments, where you felt rejected? Made to feel not good enough? On the receiving end of disapproval or disappointment?

Could it be an expectation you, or others, have put on you to measure up or 'be the best?' A by-product of your attitude towards winning and losing?

How about comparison and the (false, limiting) belief that there isn't enough to go 'round, or enough space for us all to shine?

**Remember: love is the only way out of pain, so in completing this exercise, come back to forgiveness - of yourself and others. Heal those age-old wounds, and thank the experiences for the lessons learnt. Life works better that way. (Trust us on that one).*



TWO: CHANGE YOUR WORDS.

As your negative self-talk really cranks up and you sit in the discomfort of the feelings of unworthiness, anxiety, embarrassment or self-doubt, instead of saying *'I shouldn't be feeling this way'* or *'Dammit, I should know better'* or *'What is WRONG with me?'* simply start changing your words. Judging the judgment will only amplify it.

Swap: 'I'm not doing enough.'

For: '{INNER CRITIC'S NAME}' thinks I'm not doing enough.'

Swap: 'I'll fail.'

For: 'There's a story playing in my head about failure. It's only an assumption, so I know it's not TRUTH.'

Take the 'I' out of it. A tiny tweak to your internal dialogue goes a long way in creating distance between the attack thought and what is real.

THREE: THINK SEPARATION.

Put this killer inner critic trick from best-selling author, SARK, into action:

Separate yourself from critical inner energy by using what's called red energy and saying "NO!"

Most people are merged with their inner critic voices but in doing this exercise, you can immediately separate the all-powerful YOU, your Inner Wise Self, from the clutches of this negative dialogue.

When the noise begins... stand up and get into a position where you can make a chopping motion with one of your hands coming down. Then, with great emphasis, say the word "NO!" (and keep repeating if needed).

Check in: how do you feel now?



What's your Inner Critic's name?

(If she/he doesn't have one, use this opportunity to name her. Important side note: Try to avoid naming her after someone you dislike, or calling her Bitchface/ Evil Good-For-Nothin' Cow. Instead, give her a neutral name - one that doesn't stir any immediate emotion within you.)

My Inner Critic's name is:

What does she/he often say?

SOUL
SESH



Approaching your Inner Critic from a place of love, compassion and understanding – what is she/he actually afraid of?

*The next time your Inner Critic appears, you can dial down her/his power by reminding yourself that:
(counter statement/ affirmation)*



TURNING DOWN THE VOLUME ON THE OUTER CRITIC

Equally as important as hushing down the voice in your mind that leaps at any chance to sabotage you, is recognising and appropriately dealing with a similar sounding voice - the one who instead critiques those around you.

Have you ever been aware of or had to sit with aspects of yourself that you're not entirely proud of?

Could these very aspects be mirrors that you judge in others?

The Universe is forever reflecting behaviours and beliefs back at you. Your strengths and soul essences, yes, but also, your shadows. Your 'dark' side. Each and every mirror will present you an opportunity to observe it, sit with it and transform it.

Looking your shadow in the eye doesn't come without a side serve of humility. It can feel uncomfortable and let's be honest, unnecessary, but by observing your reaction to others, you'll be made aware of the parts of you that mould and manipulate to suit your environment, the parts of you that are tunnel-visioned and self-serving, the parts of you that are stubborn, strong-willed and a little pushy. Or impatient, or greedy, or ignorant.

"When you judge another, you do not define them. You define yourself." - Wayne Dyer

+++



A while back, I bomb-dived my way into a pool of judgement after doing something pretty significant for a couple of people I know.

I could feel the judgement creeping up in my body the next day – a visceral reaction to their lack of gratitude (the words ‘thank’ and ‘you’ were never heard, and this wasn’t your garden variety ‘helping a friend out’ sitch).

The annoyance played on my mind for hours. I had a choice. To fight it or to use it as a chance to dig a little deeper into my psyche.

And so, uncomfortably, I sat, and even though there was a voice saying “Well, I do think that’s pretty rude,” another voice asked: “Okay, what can I learn here? Why am I reacting? What’s being reflected back to me?”

In response, I heard:

Sometimes, we’ll come across people with different morals, different values, different upbringings, different ways of doing life. We can’t change them. Let it go.

Sometimes, we’ll give our all and receive nothing in return. Detach.

cont...



Sometimes, a situation will bring up your stuff because you've already done the work on that part of yourself, and when something that feels out of alignment with that truth crops up, you'll feel triggered. *Use it as a reminder of how far you've come.*

In unshackling myself from the need for acknowledgement, I was able to let go of all expectation and see the situation as nothing more than (yet) another opportunity to go within. And - of course - the biggest nugget of goodness - to stay super-grateful for the people and situations in my own life, always.

Rain



Months ago, I found myself crinkling my forehead at people online who I'd been labelling as 'inauthentic'.

This was reason enough for me to step back, slow down, pry myself away from my ego like velcro, and ask myself: Okay Tara, where in life are YOU being inauthentic? What's feeling fraudulent and a little ick?

And sure enough, after a little investigative work, I found it. Dammit.

After bringing a hell of a lot of awareness to the table, it was impossible not to recognise that I was projecting my own behaviour onto those who I was judging, and in that realisation lay a precious little gem of a lesson.

Those folks were not longer those who I was merely annoyed at. They became teachers of mine.

Tara



When it comes to recognising friction within relationships in your life, maybe the issue isn't that you're not resonating with someone; perhaps the opposite is true.

Could you in fact be resonating so strongly that it tears at a nerve somewhere deep within, and somehow leaves you feeling swollen and a little inflamed?

This might be something for you to mull over in your journal, or during a meditation next time you – for whatever reason – find yourself casting judgement on those around you.

Awareness is the lighthouse.

Awareness of these shadows is the tool which allows you to shift gears – from mental-attack-mode, to intrinsic contemplation.

Awareness is the soft voice of grace that mends separation with an affirmative '*I can see you*'.

It's the catalyst for acceptance, forgiveness and knowingness of a higher truth.

It allows us to step away from the war in our minds and adapt the magic word: compassion.

Listen up to those you're judging. Listen to what your shadow has to say.

Judge less, beautiful, and put an end to condemning yourself, also.



*What type of personality/behaviour/attitude
have you been judging negatively?*

SOUL SESH

*How does this represent something present
within you?*



Softened reflection: How do you feel NOW about those you were judging?





*“Competition as we know it is dead.
Collaboration is the new competition. It’s
about working with each other, not against.
Together we all win.” - Rich German*

LESSON EIGHT

KICKING THE COMPARISON CURSE



I remember the very first time I clicked on over to Rach's website.

My whole body froze a little. I could feel my chest tighten as that clammy, claustrophobic sensation of comparison took over.

Her blog was beautiful. Simple. Elegant. So rich with content and wisdom.

I clicked back over to my website, sighed with disappointment, then closed my laptop.

Unbeknownst to me, the Universal match-makers had other plans, because I was continually guided back to Rach's gorgeous online space, and with each and every post that she threw out to us, I felt closer to her. I'd soak in her words and deeply resonate with her ideas and cheer on her wins. I'd decided that she was a pretty rad chicka who'd obviously worked hard to create such a beautiful, meaningful home in cyber space.

Beyond the occasional comment and tweet, we started to become friends. And it happened again. The 'I'm not really worthy of such company' behaviour started resurfacing (see: previous lesson on self sabotage), and it was uncomfortable for me. I truly, deeply, felt that I simply couldn't hold the container for such a rich friendship.

cont...



Rach persisted, not because she knew that behind the scenes I was battling with insane amounts of insecurity. She persisted because that's simply what she does. She's a giving angel, who reaches out, sends love, texts regularly and hugs hard. That's her style; it's how she rolls. LOVE is her signature dance move.

When I removed that pedestal that I placed beneath Rach – that invisible pedestal that wedged a shield of separation between us – a tsunami of relief flooded me.

Here she was – this incredibly gorgeous human, with an incredibly gorgeous soul. My partner in crime. Who was I to deny her friendship?

As you press on through life, there will come times when you'll have to cut yourself a break.

You'll have to look in the mirror and bravely declare that you are worthy of great, abundant love; from wherever it stems.

You'll have to find that Jealousy switch, and flick it hard and fast; turning on the light of love and inspiration.

You'll have to surrender to beautiful friendships, to divine opportunities, to 'this is too good to be true' experiences.

You deserve to receive it. **Catch it with both hands.**

Tara



It gripped me. Seriously. *Just quit now.* You can't compete with this. Actually, you suck. Have I told you how much you suck lately? And not just at writing, because if we're going to get really honest here, you suck at **everything**.

Well, *that's* uplifting. Hello Ego, how kind of you to drop by.

When your self-approval rating takes a nose-dive, comparing yourself to others has the tendency to buckle your knees, and for me and the case in point, the trigger was a nagging feeling that I wasn't truly living up to my potential.

The author - whose gorgeously-crafted analogies, perfect vocabulary and superior storytelling swallowed me whole - had left me feeling inadequate because I wasn't putting pen to paper at the time. That was it. It had nothing to do with her at all (and I knew it); it was self-inflicted suffering, and I wanted out. *Quickly.*

But still I kept reading, like a love-sick teen reading text messages from her bad boy ex.

I devoured her words, envy rolling through me. There was a heaviness in my belly. A head-screwy ménage-a-trois of thoughts on *What I Wanted to Be Doing, What I Wasn't Doing and Look at This*

cont...



Spectacular Masterpiece! knocked me right off centre, and in that moment, I was convinced I wasn't enough (for dramatic purposes, because the Ego loves a bit o' melodrama, I also decided I would **never** be enough.)

Comparison(itis) convinces us we're separate. *We're anything but.*

It tells us we need to size ourselves up on imaginary measuring sticks. *There's not a stick in existence that can measure the giant that resides within our soul.*

Comparison was the loving nudge I need to get (back) to work. *Let it fuel you too.*

Rain



CRUSHING COMPARISON

First: pause and observe.

1. Witness the trigger (whether it's someone's blog, business, body, style or relationship).
2. Feel the sensation in your body (this could be the burn of jealousy, the heaviness of hopelessness or the prickle of self judgement).
3. Become aware that **the sensation is where this comparison resides**, and it, like all things in life, will pass. Bringing your awareness to the area in your body does just that - *brings you back into your body* - rather than allowing your mind to suck you into the vortex of Planet I'm Not Good Enough before you can say *What the hell just happened?!*

Then: time for a reality check.

Remember, this person is in fact (yes, really) a human being; not just a blog or a business or a long yogic body or owner of The Perfect Everything. She's a human, just like you - going through the same

stuff that you go through, conquering the same challenges, hearing the whisper of a critical inner voice of their own. There is no separateness.

Following that: see yourself in her success.

What you desire outside of you **already** lives inside of you. Accepting that your 'competition' is merely a reflection of your potential is empowering, insightful and better yet, it kick-starts hope.

Take stock of your sphere of influence; the people you surround yourself with. Is it changing? Are you hanging with a different crowd? Being drawn to crazily vibrant vision-eers? Instead of comparing your life to theirs, instead, understand that you're stepping up into a similar energy as them. Cast the voice of the ego aside as it attempts to trick you into believing that it's You vs. Them. Your highest, most Spirited self is drawing those that reflect your light into your life. That's worth smiling at.





In my experience, I've found acknowledging that the person's hard work and efforts have paid off fruitfully for them, gives me hope and re-inspires me to keep going. Rather than jealously reacting to someone else's success, I find myself being soulfully led to put foot in front of the other. Jealousy and inspiration are two totally different experiences, and it all comes down to which one you **choose**.

Tara

And finally: celebrate the bejesus out of her.

William Hazlitt said: "Just as much as we see in others, we have in ourselves," so tuck that thought in your pocket and remember that as you applaud the achievements of others, you're inviting that same abundance into your own life.

From a place of gratitude, count your blessings that the world is filled with so many talented people that continually inspire you to rise up and shine in your life.

Breathe. Smile. Retweet her stuff. Comment with love. Wish her every success possible. Beam her light when she's being incredible. Send her a soulful email, supporting all that she does. Go the extra mile here. Coffee? Phone call? Skype?

Choose not to be swallowed up by comparison and judgement. It's low vibin' junk, and we don't know about you, but we wanna be HIGH on friendship and celebration. The sooner you start celebrating the fruits of her labour, the sooner you can acknowledge your own potentiality.



When you wave a flag of recognition for your Spirited sister who's doing awesome things, take note of the feelings within your body. Everything starts to shift. Anxiety gives way to hope. Defeat becomes possibility. Stagnant energy unblocks. The world looks infinitely rosier, and feels softer, calmer, better.

Just keep bringing it back to 'oneness.' We're all in this together.

Rain

There's no such thing as competition. Really. No really, we mean it.

No one can possibly write the way you write, or communicate or express or laugh or love the way you do. You are radical and unique, and when it clicks within you that comparison is nothing but the ego's way of keeping us small, you can instead create room for friendships, community and graceful ease in your life. You can choose BIG.

Here's a hope of ours. It's that, starting now, you will:

Be a leader, not a follower. Focus on your own journey - your own dance through life - and show up and give it. Give them you - delightful quirks and all.

Focus on what is astounding, unique, revolutionary, downright awesome about you and the super special way YOU do it. Your own power is already there. That certain j'ne sais qoui you have? All yours. No one else can share this genius with the world. We're all counting on you to innovate and unleash, so please - go do it.



In your saddest and most triggered moments, you might feel you have nothing to offer the world, but this ain't true sister. Look at feelings as messages from your soul. They'll tell you when you need to make adjustments, love yourself a little deeper, or flip your perspective to uncover the lesson in the situation. Dig. And dig some more.

And above all, remember that the only real competitor you should ever have is yourself.

There's room enough in this big, wide world for all of us to shine brightly and boldly. Take a deep breath and stand in your power. There's only one YOU and let it be said - you are perfect just the way you are!





Re-write the letter below, filling in the blanks, and tune in to feel your triggered feelings dissolve.

Shame, guilt and comparison thrive on silence, so by expressing how you feel, you immediately dial down the power those feelings have over you. Win.

SOUL SESH



Dear _____

*I have a confession. I'm feeling really jealous about your _____
(relationship, body, success _____).*

*You have/are _____, and it seems so far removed from
what's possible for me right now.*

*My jealousy/comparison/resentment feels like _____ in my body.
This is not how I want to feel.*

The specific things that are triggering these feelings are:

1.

because _____

2.

because _____

3.

because _____

*So what I've decided to do, because I'm ready to release this heaviness in my heart,
is transform this comparison-itis into a celebration of you.*



I'm celebrating your greatness because I know, deep, deep within me, that you represent all that's possible for me.

I'm celebrating the fact that you're in my life because you're aligned with where I'm going. You encompass all that I'm capable of.

I'm celebrating you because you deserve to be celebrated!

Even though I might struggle to realise it from time to time, things don't always happen as easily as they appear, and in applauding you today, I'm honouring your commitment and dedication to living a beautiful life.

You've inspired me to create the same.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Your joy is my joy.

Comparing no more,

_____ (signature)



Part Three

Coming Home (to you).

“You are the one you’ve been waiting for.”

BYRON KATIE





Attempting to shapeshift your life from the outside in is a round-about, fear-driven, exhaustive process that rarely - if ever - delivers the results you desire.

When we're feeling fatigued, fed up, or in a funk, often it's our inner-awareness that dissolves first, making room for the sonic boom of our ego.

Her voice, combined with the noise and busyness of the outside world, takes over and we become more concerned with what we have to cross off our to-do list as we hunt for some semblance of sanity, than we are about cultivating composure and grace. **Balance.**

In times of turmoil - and this could manifest as anything from festering fears, to a breakdown in communication with your beloved, to all-out-chaos - instead of attempting to bandage your situation with Out There solutions, intend to become reflective. Take the seat of the observer; the YOU that feels and senses and notices the world around you. Remove yourself from the argument, the traffic jam, the mess and the drama, and become curious as to whether

LESSON NINE

REDEFINING BALANCE



life as you know it is simply shining an external light on your inner experience.

It bears mentioning that usually it's only the brave and the spirited (you!) who are willing to take a step back and witness their behavioural patterns, honestly and compassionately.

This type of self-responsibility can at first leave you feeling shaken up and vulnerable as all hell. When it dawns on you that you can no longer hide from or Band-Aid the inner workings of the Universe, and that your outside experience is forever (with no exceptions) a copycat theatre of goings on inside of you, you can feel pried open, and embarrassed, and as if you haven't quite been smashing this thing called Life out of the park.

It's not always easy to accept that Life serves us up a trail of red lights and long queues and crying babies in 'quiet' places in those moments when we're feeling particularly inconvenienced and annoyed.

Or that tension in the workplace may be directly correlated to the tug-of-war of our own heart, which may not be practicing self love.

But beyond that initial entree of confrontation, is a main course of juiced-up, revolutionary, puff-your-chest-out empowerment. **Choice! Intention! Awareness!**

If you're keen as mustard to load up your balance arsenal (and we're assuming you are), fill it with these three. Because time-management systems, goal-setting and Doing It All are all secondary to your inner environment. Nothing that you can see, touch, smell, taste, hear or make comes anywhere near as close to fulfilling you as much as realising that the key to living a balanced life is knowing that the key itself lies within you.



OUR BRAND OF BALANCE

BRINGING AN AWARENESS TO UNIVERSAL ENERGIES. Knowing when to unfold into feminine, yin cycles (when we're feeling sensitive and withdrawn), and when to up the ante with a more masculine, yang tempo (when it's creative go time and we're being called into action).

AN UNDENIABLE, UNSHAKABLE, STURDY BELIEF THAT CONSTANTLY WHISPERS: EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE OKAY. Even if that means that life takes form in a way we're not asking for, or expecting.

A BODY THAT KNOWS IT'S BEING LISTENED TO.

AND...

HAPPY, SINGING CHAKRAS.

Once you start studying the chakras, and observing your own (and we highly recommend you do) life will never be the same again.

You'll feel connected like never before to your lifeblood, the vital force that flows through you, you'll have about 783637 light bulb moments, and you'll smile in smug appreciation as you realise: *Oh.*

That's *why I am the way I am.*



READ THIS FROM THE BOTTOM, UP - STARTING AT CHAKRA 1



CHAKRA SEVEN

If Chakra Seven is out of balance, you'll fall victim to *I Don't Know What I Want To Do With My Life syndrome* that will swallow you whole and leave you craving direction and focus. Boredom creeps in, so does restlessness. You may feel isolated and disconnected.

The most incredible thing about having a balanced **Crown Chakra** – we believe – is an undeniable awareness of the encompassing cosmic support that nurtures you.

When you sit in your own company; knowing that you're never alone.



CHAKRA SIX

Chakra Six, your third eye, is the throne of your intuition. It's the chakra of insight and awareness, and it's also the portal that allows you to communicate directly with your soul. Hells yeah.

When it's imbalanced, you might feel exhausted, up-in-the-clouds, and you may have trouble making mindful decisions. Stubbornness is a signal that you may not be seeing things correctly.

If the third eye is open, you'll have magnificent spiritual sight. This doesn't necessarily mean that you'll see prophetic images and hear succinct messages from Spirit, but you'll be more aware of intuitive messages in your body, more aware of life's signals and signs (and you'll smile at them), more aware of yourself as you move through your day.

When you can close your eyes with a silent question, and feel your way into the answer.

When you can feel Life itself embrace you, instilling you with a sense of purpose.



CHAKRA FIVE

Think of Chakra Five as your energetic PA system. **Depending on the health of this chakra, it could be muted or raring at full volume with double bass.** It governs truth, honest expression, communication and authenticity.

Our fourth and fifth chakras collaborate in order for us to speak from our heart.

Our third and fourth chakras join forces so that we can speak with purpose and confidence – sticking up for what’s good and right.

If chakra five is funky, you may feel silenced, as though you literally don’t have a voice, frustrated, shy, misunderstood. The throat is where the head and the heart meet, which often explains why - when we’re emotional - we have trouble projecting our voice. Energy builds, forming a ‘lump in our throat’ – an expressive blockage.

When the throat is open and spinning, expression flows with ease and joy. Honesty and integrity spill from you.



CHAKRA FOUR

Chakra Four, the heart, is our temple of tenderness. It extends and receives love, offers empathy, gives generously and unfolds easily. It’s not afraid to be vulnerable, authentic, and honest, unless it’s imbalanced, in which case you might feel desperate and clingy for romantic love, jealous and resentful of those closest to you, or completely withdrawn in attempt to ‘protect’ yourself from the ‘heartbreak’ of love.

When your heart chakra is spinning freely, you’ll compassionately see yourself in those around you. The world of separateness dissolves and instead, you’ll view life through a lens of oneness and gratitude.

An open heart allows you to receive life’s bounty in all of its abundance - opportunities, cash, clients, love, a good night’s sleep! The heart is your miracle magnet that activates the Law of Attraction, affirming your belief in the powers of the cosmos by delivering you synchronicity after synchronicity (gotta love that).



CHAKRA THREE

Chakra Three – the big, bright, yellow sun in your belly – is the chakra that enlivens you with life force energy and self esteem and confidence. It's responsible for the 'gut feeling' that tells you when to GO!, when to STAY! and when to WAIT JUST A LITTLE! (the voice that we so often ignore).

When Chakra Three is happy and singing, you'll stand taller, you'll back yourself and you'll be aglow with radiant energy. You'll enforce healthy moment-to-moment boundaries, say 'yes' with joy, and 'no, thank you' with a polite smile.



CHAKRA TWO

Chakra Two is where the ego takes its seat. It represents reproduction, sexuality, creativity, and playfulness. If it's imbalanced, you might find yourself in a constant state of craving.

An overactive Chakra Two is a breeding ground for addiction; whether it's sex, chocolate, drugs, food or media (celebrities, fashion, status). Think of a Chakra Two imbalance as either a gorging, greedy, gimme gimme gimme energy, or a There's Never Enough energy.

If it's balanced, you'll feel creatively open and fulfilled, sure and comfortable with your sexuality, satisfied and accepting of your current situation and you'll know when to say no to craving triggers.



CHAKRA ONE

Chakra One represents survival. Basic needs. Instincts. It's primal.

If it's imbalanced, money fears might manifest, as well as a sense of not 'belonging' - to the people around you, to your home, to your workplace.

If it's balanced, you'll feel grounded, focused and at ease with the uncertainty of life.





Investigating YOUR chakras proves that there's no such thing as a Balance Blueprint.

There's no template for a life well lived; not even when you cram it full with a perfect schedule, six yoga sessions, and five lunch dates with your besties.

In fact if you're aiming to cruise through life constantly in fifth gear, then you'd be defying the very rhythms of life which - quite literally - make the world go round. The rhythms of the moon. Of the seasons. **Of your monthly cycle as a woman.**

We can be so consumed with the idea of what our life should look like, that **we miss opportunities to capitalise on the moment**, which is intrinsically linked to the creative and destructive cycles of life itself.

Let's say for example, that you awaken to discover your period. You become immediately sensitive, frustrated, and let's be honest, a little pissed off. You had plans that involved that dress, or that bikini, or that super-hot lover.

There's a seemingly prevalent, yet radically ridiculous and harmful, societal belief that the menstrual cycle is not only something to control, but something to be looked upon as a giant pain in the ass. A perpetual inconvenience. And this is dangerous.

Think for a moment about how you usually react to this sacred, magical and natural cycle. Do you become obsessed with longing for an increase in energy to return? With getting your glowing skin back, and with wishing away your bloated belly? If you do (and you're not alone, we've been there ourselves) then you're missing the gifts of the cycle. The creative, behind-the-scenes, divinely feminine gifts.

This time of the month is a time for us to quieten, slow down and retreat. When we hush and turn inward, we're better able to listen to the inner goings on of both our body and the planet.

It's a mystical time where ideas are born out of the void. We gain insight



and become more intuitive, and while we may not have the physical energy to bring these insights into form just yet, we needn't need to, because just as this cycle has stripped you of energy (drawing you inward), so to will it return it to you (enabling you to outwardly express yourself).

This phase of the cycle is about releasing the last month and preparing for the approaching one.

Retreating is important. Allowing yourself to be pushed and pulled by the cyclic nature of life is important. Condemning yourself for missing your morning run this morning when you felt swollen and tired is not.

Are you willing to sit in the void? To embrace yourself fully?

+++

Introducing simple, intentional rituals into your everyday life will help you in feeling connected to the energy moving through and beyond you.

Here are a few ideas to inspire you.

When you feel your mood darkening and your energy dwindling (the premenstrual phase), light a dark purple or black candle and breathe for five minutes with closed eyes - recognising and accepting this new phase, rather than suppressing it.

Acknowledge that this shift in energy is here to encourage you to turn inward and hone your intuitive abilities.

On the first day of your period, light a red candle. Again, close your eyes and breathe, this time nursing your belly.

Imagine that the moon itself is floating in your womb, and give silent thanks for the gift of womanhood and femininity. You may like to re-light this candle every night for the duration of this phase, as a visual reminder to cast your awareness back into your body.



What colour represents ‘energy’ to you? Or ‘creativity’? Or ‘flow’? Again, light a suitably coloured candle, close your eyes, and give thanks for these changing energies. Know that this phase, too, shall pass, but express gratitude for it while it’s here.

If you view the world through a lens of symbolism, you can self-prescribe rituals that enable you to sink deeper into spiritual practice.

For example, if you’re ‘in your head’, preparing a grounding meal and chewing it slowly will bring you ‘back down to earth’. Think: root vegetables and whole grains.

If life feels full, frantic and clammy, consider decluttering your home, pantry and inbox.

+++

Balance is your ability to connect with your inner world, no matter your external circumstances. It’s about being aware of the flow of life and choosing to align with it.

How would your life be different if you cast aside the collective ideal of what it should look like to be a woman in this world, and instead, were committed to tending to your inner garden?

To filling your cup.

Slowing down the pace (or picking it up, depending on your cycle).

Making time for yourself so you can be deliciously present for others.

Receiving the message of the moment, and moving forward with ease.

If the world around you is screaming and shouting and ruffling your feathers, take comfort in knowing that tending to yourself can and will transform your life experiences.

Some call it self-responsibility. We like to think of it more like CREATIVITY IN ACTION.

You can’t **find** balance. You can’t **get** it or chase its tail. But you can sure as hell soften into it and let it rise up from within.



*How do you feel:
When you get your period?*

During a full moon?

During Winter?

During Spring?

SOUL SESH

Notice how the world around you and your internal condition reflect each other, depending on the cycle or season? BALANCE is honouring yourself in the here and now.



Rapid fire (YES/NO answers):

Off the top of your head, can you identify where in your cycle you feel the most:

Creative?

Scattered?

Sporty?

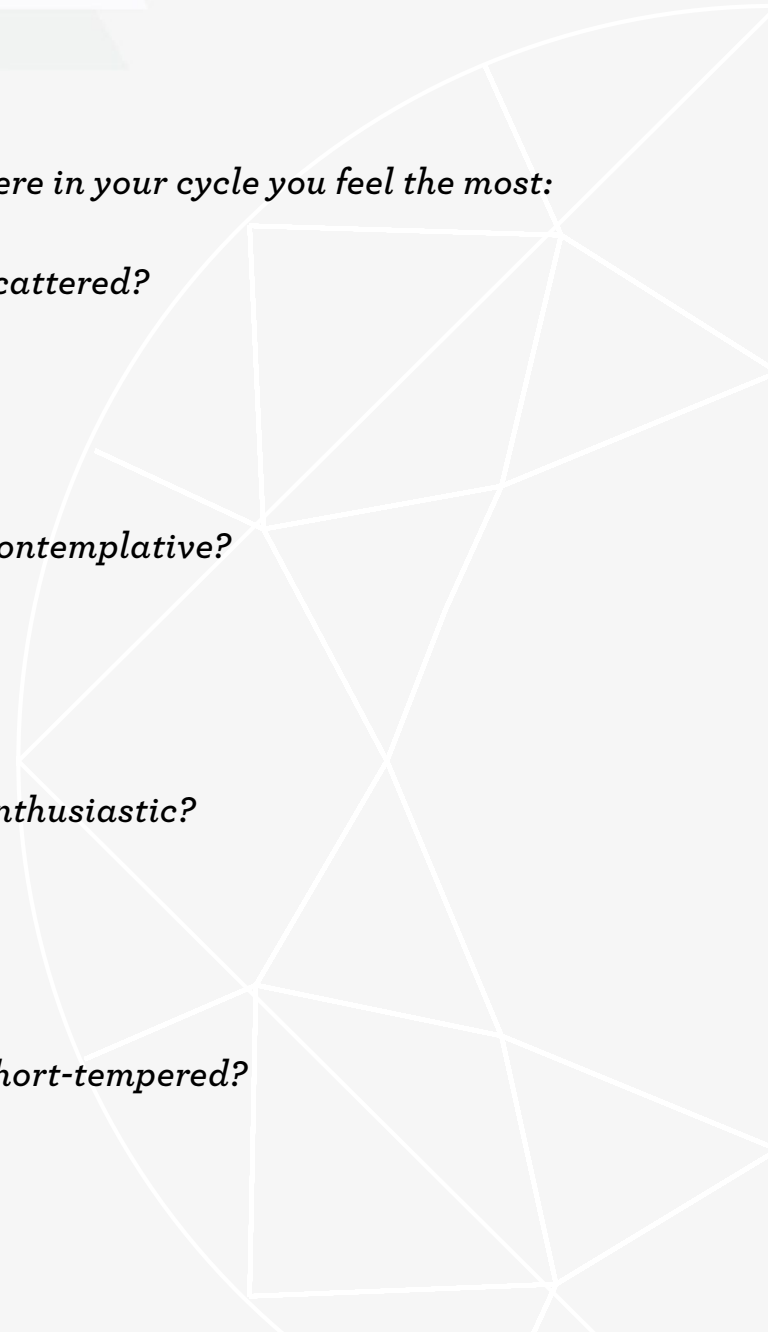
Contemplative?

Withdrawn?

Enthusiastic?

Crave-driven?

Short-tempered?



AWESOME BOOK ALERT

Red Moon, an incredible book written by Miranda Gray, explains the spiritual, creative and sexual gifts of the menstrual cycle beautifully. The book also explains how to study your cycle using a moon dial.

Highly recommended reading if you want to connect with your cyclic nature and that of the moon and seasons.



Reading over the Chakra Section, provide a quick summary of the state in which you FEEL each of your chakras are in?

Chakra One:

Chakra Two:

Chakra Three:

Chakra Four:





Chakra Five:

Chakra Six:

Chakra Seven:



Moving forward, what's YOUR brand of balance?



Sweating – from a place of self-love – is revolutionary... but it's never going to feel revolutionary unless you make a conscious decision to move your body in a way that resonates with **you**.

We are all so different. Different vibrations turn us on and pump us up; some of us yearn to move fast and sweat hard, others prefer gentle, breath governed flow.

Despite your flavour preference, there's an undeniable consensus and that is that exercise is some-kinda-special, and when we commit to it, we're **better people** because of it.

Exercise opens the floodgates within your body. With movement, comes a shift in energy, and when those meridians are activated, that all-powerful vital force runs through you, clearing the channel and blissing you out with a strong, beating heart, a flushed face and endorphins-a-plenty.

Yes, there's something captivating about visually noticing how your body responds to movement from a place of self-love, but health, weight and fitness goals aside, something

LESSON TEN

MOVIN' YOUR BODY



much bigger is at play here. They don't call it a yoga glow for nothing; **mindfully** moving brings you closer to Spirit. You become a container for oxygen, creativity, and grounded focus.

More of that please.

Make exercise part of your spiritual practice. Feel your feet hit the ground, feel your chest expand with each breath, feel the space you're moving into in down dog.

+++

FINDING THE PERFECT EXERCISE FOR YOU.

How do these options **feel** in your body?

Jogging with a friend

Hitting the gym

Cross Fit

Solo walks in nature

Yoga

Boxing/ Kickboxing

Pilates

Bootcamp

Expressive movement (Nia, pole dancing, etc)

Group sports (basketball, touch football, etc)

Pay attention to which of these jump out at you, then set about investigating how to make this form of exercise a reality in your life.

Experiment! Treat exercise like an adventure.

Get super-creative and seek out trailblazing ways to enjoy your sacred exercise time even more.

If jogging is your thing - how about hitting the beach instead. Bare-foot beach jogging at dusk?

If you're hooked on yoga, are there any crazy yogic festivals or yoga raves in your area? What if, for your home practice, instead of peacefully rolling out onto your mat in the morning, you turn



the volume up on Rihanna and bring a sensual vibe to your practice?

If you love lifting weights, but are getting a little tired of the sterile environment of a gym, how about Google searching weightlifting programs especially for women? Dynamic. Supportive. Personalised. Results focused. Communal.

Shun the ‘Shoulds.’

Watch your language. If you catch yourself saying ‘Oh, I really should go to the gym today’, take pause and check in. Remember, ‘should’ is egoic gospel, and we’re leaning away from that type of language, replacing it instead with high-vibin’, spirited slang.

Aim for joy.

That’s what this is all about. Life has it’s day to day demands, so we encourage you to consciously **find solace within your own body** with an exercise practice that lights you up.

EXERCISE DOESN’T HAVE TO BE AN ESCAPE. IT CAN BE A COMING HOME PARTY – EACH AND EVERY TIME.

Hit us up on Twitter and tell us:

@rachelmagahy @tara_bliss

*My perfect kinda sweat
is _____ because _____*

#Spirited

OR

@rachelmagahy @tara_bliss

LOVED your piece on exercise!

This week, I’m going to try

_____ #spirited



When did we forget how to have fun?

Between the mountainous to-do lists, the dramas and demands, the rushing around trying to be all things to everyone, the work/kids/ saying yes/ social media upkeep, we've squeezed it out. We're exhausted. Spent. Maxed out to the... max.

Ever notice these words roll off your tongue like the practiced lines of some great performance?

"I just don't have time for that stuff anymore. Too busy. Sorry."

"My fun used to be blowing off steam at the bar. Seriously, what do you even do for fun as an adult that doesn't involve knocking back a dozen vodka lime and sodas with the girls?"

"Prioritising play? Ha. Sure. That'll happen... never."

Seems that somewhere along the way we've decided as a collective that 'fun,' 'play,' 'joyful, unstructured moments in time' are in fact, a waste of time. Or too much effort. Or maybe, just a distant memory of freer days. Yearned-for times that now feel completely out of reach.

LESSON ELEVEN

FINDING JOY





But, you know us – we’re all for flipping That Which Limits Us on its head, so let us pose a few q’s here...

What if fun and joy are not experiences we wave goodbye to once we dance out of childhood, and instead something truly significant, stunningly necessary?

What if total fulfillment – the kind you’re clutching onto with those pat-on-the-back achievements – lies, simply, in embracing presence?

What if you gave yourself permission* to unhook from all shoulds and gottas

– sidelining the illusion of what you must embody as a good entrepreneur/ employee/ mother/ wife/ human - and instead, said hell yay to play? What would THAT feel like in your bones?

Life expands when you choose presence and play (and that’s a guarantee).

If your soul is whispering yes, yes, *YES!* right now, read on for some *Spirited* suggestions to joy-up your days.

** Or, hey, we can do that for you if you’d like. Consider this your permission slip.*



JOYFUL REMINDERS

I've been carrying around a now-crumpled, dog-eared index card in my wallet for the past two years that says: 'Choose joy. Expect miracles.'

Magic-filled mantras serve to anchor you straight back into the present moment (when you need that anchoring most).

So what is it - a Post-It on your computer? A phone alarm that goes off at noon everyday with 'I am a limitless being, living a magnificent life!' It's your choice, *sista*. Just like the decision to lean in. Go there.

Rain



CREATE POCKETS OF JOY

Sometimes, I bounce on my mini tramp in between emails.

Sometimes, I dance around in my undies to house music.

Sometimes, I walk over to the beach and talk to the ocean for a wee bit. It makes me feel better. It clears my noggin.

Sometimes, I don't do much at all- and still feel as though my day unfolded beautifully.

The secret to a joyful life? Consistent, tiny pockets of goodness, dotted throughout your days.

Tara

Bliss Bombs: 33 Joyful Acts

THROW A BACKYARD RAW DESSERT PARTY.

Required ingredients: your besties, an eclectic menu of raw goodies made by each of you, a camera and some laidback beats. Perfection.

Tap a stranger on the shoulder and tell them they have gorgeous hair/skin/eyes. Or shoes.

Dance in the moonlight when the moon is full. Let your biggest, boldest, most audacious intentions roll off your tongue as the light tickles your skin.

Let your intuition guide you to just the right gem for a beloved friend or client. Ask: what does she really, really need right now?

Lie with your lover on a blanket in the park on a summer's afternoon, feeding each other fresh fruit and appreciation.

AT A GATHERING OF FRIENDS, BE THE ONE THAT SAYS YES TO THE KIDS ASKING TO BE TAKEN TO THE PARK. Then... jump on the slide with them. Push them on the swings and relish in their little person chuckles as they throw their heads back and say 'Higher! Higher!'

Take to a huge white sheet of paper with coloured pens/pencils/crayons and a boatload of enthusiasm. Be intuitive about your art. Let whatever unfolds, unfold.

WRITE POETRY... FOR YOUR EYES ONLY.

Bliss Bombs: 33 Joyful Acts

Continued...

DATE DAY, WITH A TWIST.

'I'll play a round of golf with you if you allow me to teach you some yoga poses.' Bring a cheeky, playful element to your relationship, with the added bonus of getting you out of your comfort zone.

AS THE SUN COMES DOWN, PERCH ON A CLIFF/ ROCK/ GRASSY KNOLL AND SIP A GLASS OF CHILLED WHITE WINE SLOWLY FROM A VINTAGE GLASS.

Instigate an impromptu kitchen dance-off. Booty-dips, hands waving high above your head, crumpin' it out – the works.

DATE NIGHT. MAKE IT HAPPEN.

Email someone you admire and share how their presence has changed your life.

VOLUNTEER AT AN ANIMAL SHELTER. Cuddling cute furry creatures – a sure-fire way to sky-rocket your joy stocks.

Crank old tunes while you're driving down the highway. Sing it – LOUD.

BUILD AN ORGANIC VEGGIE PATCH OR A BALCONY HERB GARDEN.

Step – wobbly-kneed, tingly-toed – out of your comfort zone and join a spiritual circle.

Strip down to nothing at the beach and race your lover to the water and back to your towels again. First one back, wins... something.

Host an at-home spa retreat. Music, candles, aromatherapy oils, face masks, friends. You got it.

Bliss Bombs: 33 Joyful Acts

Continued...

WEAR YOUR BEST LINGERIE.

On a Tuesday. Just 'cause.

Concoct the perfect mug of hot chocolate on a cold winter's night with cacao, almond milk and honey.

Declare this year the year you'll hand-make all your Christmas gifts.

Climb the peak, finish the hike, cross the line or ski to the bottom. Relish in that moment when your face is flushed and your heart is full and you're literally high on life.

Whip up a piece of wall art with driftwood, twine and trinkets from your travels. Add to it as the years go by.

SURRENDER TO THE CULTURE AND PACE OF A NEW COUNTRY.

That divine moment when you can feel your grip loosening, allowing the city to swallow you up, spit you out, and rock and roll all over you.

Get horizontal in a big, flower-filled field and make shapes out of the clouds.

Search 'Honey Badger' on YouTube (language warning). Proceed to laugh yo' butt off.

ALSO: BOOK THE FLIGHTS.

Take ridiculous photos of yourself on Photobooth (Mac) - hello pinched alien face! - and email them to someone who needs a giggle.

Send handwritten love letters to friends and family, finishing the sentence 'What I love most about you...'

Bliss Bombs: 33 Joyful Acts

Continued...

FILL YOUR HOUSE WITH FRESHLY PICKED FLOWERS. BLOOMS OF DIFFERENT COLOURS, TYPES, SCENTS.

Create a gratitude ritual with your family at dinnertime. 'The three best things about today were...'

Devour a book that dissolves time and leaves you aching for the written word.

LOOK YOUR LOVE IN THE EYE, AND SAY: You're incredible, you know that? (without expecting anything in return).



When you were you, but much younger, you created masterpieces out of play-doh, immersed yourself in jigsaw puzzles, took to paint with your fingers, made stamps out of potatoes and drew members of your family as stick figures with no necks. And it was glorious and giggle-filled. Pure and uncensored.

As we grow, the shine of our creative spark starts to lessen as the world around us demands that we show up on time, in uniform, and with a brain full of facts and figures. And in our adult years, so many of us find ourselves longing for a return to the simpler times – for the courage to be creative again, and to enjoy the little things that made us smile.

Creative expression is not a destination, and being ‘creative’ isn’t a label that you need to earn. Please, don’t make creativity itself a goal; doing so suggests that it’s a force separate from you, rather than realising that creativity is you.

No matter if you don’t consider yourself a wordsmith or an artist.

LESSON TWELVE

CREATIVITY + SELF- EXPRESSION



No matter if you don't have a keen eye for interior design or if the composition in your photos is never perfect.

Who defines perfect, anyway?

Intending to harness your creative juices – and we're talking the hands-on, get your fingernails dirty, immerse yourself in a soul project kinda creative – feels beautiful because, for the most part, it's an egoless process.

It removes you from clock time, from the rat race, from the saturation of social media, and instead, allows you to get truly lost in the bright, colourful, joy-filled moment. It brings you home. And the more you create/ design/ explore stuff without judging either yourself or the process, the closer to home you'll find yourself.

So at this point, the Mama Bears out there might raise an eyebrow, thinking *Where the bloody hell am I going to find the time to paint and blog and take photographs?*

Breathe deeply mama, and start where it's easy.

Create a container for creativity in the everyday life of your family. Encourage your children to make art, permit them to get dirty, encourage the mess.

When they're elbows deep in play-doh, join them! Let their uninhibited, wild joy inspire you and remind you of what this life is about: feeling deeply fulfilled, connected, and as though you have something beautiful to offer the world (even if it is just a picture of a stick man drawn with a Sharpie).

+++

LET'S HELP YOU RECONNECT WITH YOUR INNER CREATIVE FORCE WITH THESE IDEAS:

JOURNALLING

Oh, the sweet power of pen to paper. Ideas and thoughts and words flowing unencumbered onto the pages from the ether. There are no how-to's when it



comes to journalling; no template. Here is, however, some food for thought:

STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS JOURNALLING

Let rip! No editing. No censoring. No judgement. No dilly-dallying over your messy handwriting. Let your journal have it.

Unload your fears, insecurities, inner questions and deepest joys. Allow it to be cryptic and disjointed and immature if it needs to be – remember, this is for your eyes only.

While the majority of your journal entry may appear to resemble word vomit, often towards the end, once you've emptied your mind onto the page, you'll find a nugget or two of golden wisdom. That's the voice of grace. That's the guidance/ answer/ support/ affirmation you were looking for. That's creativity.

+++

RECORD YOUR DREAMS AND CYCLE

Keeping a record of your dreams is a fantastical exercise, particularly if you're examining your menstrual cycle.

Try keeping a journal of how you feel and what you experience during your 28 (or 29, 30) day cycle for a few months (note energy levels, dreams, cravings and how your body feels – bloated, in pain, trim, strong).

After a few months you'll notice a pattern of where in your cycle you're most active, creative, sexual and intuitive.



A COUPLE OF OTHER CREATIVE PURSUITS

- Use watercolours, create posters of your favourite quotes, or paint your very own manifestos!
- Create a 'Things I'll Make' board in Pinterest after trawling the site for fun, engaging and inspiring DIY projects.
- Hunt markets and second-hand stores for treasures that are begging for a little love and attention.
- Rearrange the furniture in your living room. Celebrate the change by placing a huge vase of fresh flowers on the coffee table.
- Consider planting your own garden, or growing herbs in pots. There's something about watching something that you're tending to grow, right in front of your eyes...



In a more professional sense, if you're a writer, then **write everyday**. Even if it's just for thirty minutes. Even if it's just replying to your emails. Even if it means that your words will never see the light of day.

If you're more visual (art, photography, design), **make art every day**. Even if it's just one brush stroke. One shot captured on your iPhone. Or one idea that gets given priority on your inspiration board.

If your body is your creative weapon (yogi, dancer, trainer), move your body - intentionally - every day. Whether it's just one round of sun salutations, a 15

minute stroll or a strip tease for your lover... **express yourself. Daily.**

We lead busy lives, and the busier we become, the more likely it is that we sacrifice self-expression and self-care.

You don't have to put aside a whole weekend to write a poem or create a vision board. **Time is not the enemy.** You can paint in muted ad breaks, sing while you're cooking dinner and make sandcastles with your children.

Never forget how creative you are.

show us some

INSTY LOVE

Share the manifesto over the page and holler out to us



@rachelmagahy
@tara_bliss

#Spirited



A Manifesto for Spirited souls

START EACH DAY WITH A GRATEFUL HEART
SAY YES TO YOUR
CURIOSITIES

EMBRACE LOFTY LOVE

CELEBRATE YOUR CONTRADICTIONS

keep shedding - beliefs, fears, worn-out ways of living

MAKE PEACE WITH YOUR PAST
FINE-TUNE YOUR INTUITION

TRUST

LAUGH LOUDLY, FROM THE DEEPEST PART OF YOUR BEING

SMILE THROUGH THE STRUGGLE COMPARE NO MORE

GIVE FREELY, AND OFTEN

**MAKE THE
RULES**

be the light... and beam it out, big

**BREAK
THE RULES**

ANSWER THE CALL OF THAT WHICH ENLIVENS YOU

DEMAND ADVENTURE





Remember...

YOU ARE A SPIRITUAL BEING
HAVING A HUMAN EXPERIENCE

YOU ARE WRITING YOUR STORY, EVERY DAY

And that means: you have permission to change your mind

*THERE ARE GALAXIES AND STARS AND
WORLDS OF WONDER INSIDE OF YOU*

WHAT YOU FOCUS ON INCREASES

CHOOSE JOY. EXPECT MIRACLES





ON MAKING THE ASK

We began this book on dreams and intention-setting, and we're going to meander our way back there by closing on 'prayer' - or if this word lands better for you, 'asking.'

When it comes to of intention, we identify something we want and for our desire to come to form, which might sound something like:

'I intend to be a published author' or 'I am now a published author' (depending on how you want to frame it.)

But here's something magnificent - there's a way to take that big dream declaration one step further, and all you gotta do is make the ask. It's not weak; it's Universal Law: **'Those who ask for help always receive it.'**

Your prayer/ ask/ declaration to the Powers that Be could be:

'I'm having trouble moving past this situation. It hurts, and I'm angry. How can I see this differently?'

'Bring it on, Universe! I KNOW I deserve this opportunity, so I'm not running anymore.'

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Show me what I need to do.'

Or simply...

'What is it that I need to know?'

We can be so reluctant to ask for help in the external world – thinking we have to buckle ourselves in and forge ahead alone – that we forget about asking for a little spiritual leg-up, too.

Forget stuffy-serious prayers that fail to make your insides dance. Forget needing to do it a certain way. Forget what you've been taught/ resisted/ had hammered into you once upon a time and know this:

Your prayer can be whatever you want it to be.

If you speak with swagger, rock out that way in your ask.

If you're well articulated and get off on perfect pronunciation, then bring your finest, most regal words to the prayer table.

Do it your way. The way that feels good. The way that feels *natural*.

And with that, we'd like to wrap up all the words and messages and stories of this book on Spirited living with a prayer that we hope you'll feel radiating from us – to you – and out into Life.

IF YOU'RE UNSURE OF WHERE TO START, START HERE:

"I ask the Spirited life to reveal itself to me.

I ask that any blocks be removed, and that only the best possible outcomes show up in my life.

I ask that the Universe be persistent with me, and provide me with the courage I need to move forward.

I am ready now."

AND FINALLY... ON SIMPLICITY, GRATITUDE + (LOTS OF) LOVE

So often we feel that the depth of our pain, stress or fear requires us to dig deep into the trenches of robust solutions.

It doesn't have to be this way.

It is our greatest hope that through the tools in this book, we've been able to share you with an optional (scenic, nourishing, enlivening) route:

Spirited living is the art of returning to simplicity.

You can find solace in stressful moments by turning to your deck of oracle cards, tear-streaked face, and all.

You can access pure clarity in one.deep.
slow.breath.

Expressing gratitude – for the small stuff, and the monumental – can change everything.

In BIG moments, when life itself feels like a pressure cooker of rat-racin' and comparison and guilt, sinking into that pocket of appreciation within you (no matter how tiny it may be) will remind you that right now - in this very moment - you have everything you need. And you always will.

Remember:

* **You needn't improve.** Making the journey home is what matters.

* **You are never, ever alone.** Even when the world around you suggests otherwise.

* **You are a Spirit among Spirits.** We see you. And we love you.

Welcome home.

Rain +
Tara



BOOKS

ENTREPRENEURSHIP + BUSINESS

The Charge - Brendan Burchard

The Fire Starter Sessions - Danielle LaPorte

How to Win Friends and Influence People - Dale Carnegie

7 Spiritual Laws of Success - Deepak Chopra

Career Renegade - Jonathan Fields

Now, Discover Your Strengths - Marcus Buckingham

The Law of Divine Compensation - Marianne Williamson

Escape Cubicle Nation - Pamela Slim

Start With Why - Simon Sinek

Turning Pro - Steven Pressfield

The War of Art - Steven Pressfield

Do the Work - Steven Pressfield

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Gifts of Imperfection - Brené Brown

Daring Greatly - Brené Brown

RADICAL RE- SOURCES

ALL COME WITH A
DOUBLE-THUMBS
UP FROM US (OF
COURSE)

Loving What Is - Byron Katie
Anatomy of the Spirit - Carolyn Myss
The Desire Map - Danielle LaPorte
The Power of Now- Eckhart Tolle
A New Earth - Eckhart Tolle
The Big Leap - Gay Hendricks
Spirit Junkie - Gabrielle Bernstein
You Can Heal Your Life - Louise Hay
A Return to Love - Marianne Williamson
Finding Your Own North Star - Martha Beck
The Power of Intention - Wayne Dyer
Key to Yourself - Venice Bloodworth

HEALTH

Perfect Health - Deepak Chopra
Eating For Beauty - David Wolfe
Crazy Sexy Diet - Kris Carr
In Defence of Food - Michael Pollan
Red Moon - Miranda Gray

MEMOIR

Wild - Cheryl Strayed
Eat Pray Love - Elizabeth Gilbert

Mama Mia - Mia Freedman
This I Know - Susannah Conway
Love With a Chance of Drowning - Torre DeRoche

MEDITATIONS

Chakra Clearing Meditation - Belinda Davidson
Gabrielle Bernstein - Gabrielle Bernstein
Spirit Junkie Guided Meditations - Gabrielle Bernstein
Deepak Chopra Meditations - available on iTunes

ORACLE + AFFIRMATION CARDS

Goddess Guidance Angel Cards - Doreen Virtue
Life Purpose Oracle Cards - Doreen Virtue
I Can Do It! Affirmation Cards - Louise Hay
Shadowsapes Tarot
Wild Unknown Tarot Cards
Self Love Cards - Sacred Self

FREEBIES

More Magic, All the Time -

Rachel MacDonald (available on
inspacesbetween.com)

Make Magic Daily Planner -

Rachel MacDonald (available on
inspacesbetween.com)

Free video training series - Tara Bliss
(available on suchdifferentskies.com)

AstroTwins Weekly + Monthly
Horoscopes - astrostyle.com

AstrologyZone Monthly Horoscopes -
astrologyzone.com

Notes from the Universe - tut.com



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



SIAN RICHARDSON: DESIGN

Sian made this book LOOK like what it FELT like to create. The two of us squealed - tearily - on the phone to each other when we saw the first proof. She captured the essence of our message like an absolute freakin' boss. She's the best of the best.

FIND HER HERE:



HANNAH MILLERICK: PHOTOGRAPHY

Hannah is luminous and full of super-charged energy! Her ability to capture the honesty and pure love of our friendship left us swirling in delight. This wedding and lifestyle photographer extraordinnaire has a killer instinct at reading the light, and by placing us within it, she left us feeling *beautiful*, like Goddesses. Looking for a photographer? Here she is!

FIND HER HERE:



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



SOPHIE BELL: STYLING

Sophie is one of the most divinely generous souls we know, and her eye for beauty and style is unmatched. In a race against the setting sun, she transformed a blank canvas beach setting into our Spirited sanctuary. If you've got a special occasion or stellar event on the cards, you need this woman on your team.

FIND HER HERE:



ELISE TOMLIN: FLOWERS

We sent Elise a photo of the front cover of *Spirited*, and with her intuitive flower powers, she delivered us blooms that could not have been any more perfect. Grateful doesn't even come close. After working with her on numerous occasions, it was a no brainer to get her on board to supply the flowers, and she comes with glowing recommendations from us.

FIND HER HERE:



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE UNIVERSE: DIVINE TIMING

Hiro Boga is an energy alchemist and business strategist who speaks beautifully about the energy of creativity. She explains that our businesses are born within us, but that we do not own them. They have their own soul – their own energy ecology – and need to be tended to as well as given room to grow; much like a child.

That's exactly how this process has felt for the two of us. Early in 2013, we joined forces to create a guide in surviving the throes of online business. To say that Spirited has evolved from its inception would be the understatement of the century! Like a rebellious teenager, this book hid away for months on end; sometimes peering its head out to offer a nugget or two of insight, but often, keeping to itself.

And so, we gave it room. But we kept the faith.

And like all good things in life, when you step back, loosen your grip, and come in fresh with an open heart and a new perspective, energy starts to flow again. The process becomes easier, the words appear out of nowhere, and the vision becomes crystallised; instilling a newfound sense of true purpose.

Bowing our heads to the Universe for pressing the pause button for us early in this process. We wouldn't have had it any other way.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



TARA BLISS is a spirit-fuelled coach and healer, motivational speaker, and creator of **The Party Girls Guide to Peace**. Her mission? To kick-start an avalanche of gutsy, fear-busting confidence and love (all with a side serve of swagger)! Think of her as your crystal-toting, skateboard-riding, raw-dessert-loving lumière, unveiling the path to peace and freedom. Her original medicine? Fierce and curious vulnerability. It's time to embrace self-love. Seize adventure. Revel in unconventionality.



RACHEL MACDONALD is a life and blog/business coach, soul-centred writer and speaker, and was selected as one of **ProBlogger's 'Top 15 Bloggers to Watch in 2013.'** With unwavering enthusiasm, electric insights and a whole lotta heart, Rachel guides passion-fuelled women out of fear and uncertainty, and into lives and businesses they love (and truly desire).

Rachel believes in big ideas, fresh perspectives, freedom, self-love, beach runs and your innate brilliance. Clarity meets creativity, intention meets inspired action. That's her special brand of magic.

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SPREAD THE LOVE

It goes without saying that our mission is to spread the love far and wide, and, *you know*, change the world.

Generosity and sweet, sweet love sit at the core of everything we do, so it is with hopeful hearts that we ask that if Spirited has inspired, excited and (re)ignited the fire within you, you give it a social media shout out. **Let's see you radiate.**

#Spirited

