

Keeper
of the
KEYS

5 KEYS of the SOUL

To Life, Love & Beyond!

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Foreword

For those of us who are teachers, it is true that we often teach what we need to learn. Although I never intended to write this book specifically, the work channeled through me anyway. The 5 KEYS are based on the major life lessons that took me forty years to learn. And since I am here to learn and master the KEYS myself, I thought it might be worthwhile to pass them on to you. Turns out that it was *essential* for me to share the KEYS, for I realized that the world is in need of these principles as much as I am. Collectively we are ready for this. Now is the time!

You are a magnificent and complex soul that is ever-evolving. Your life is the context through which your soul interacts and expands. The 5 KEYS assist you in your daily expansion, but they take practice to master! You have to work at it every day because you are bound to forget and lose focus. Self-mastery is the name of the game. That is the spiritual journey, the climb. It really pays to wake up, take your power back and integrate these principles of love, worth and purpose into your life the best you can. If you do, you will see results! You will arise. It's about progress, not perfection.

The content of this teaching is definitely of a spiritual nature. Your soul cannot experience personal growth without a connection to what is within and around it, seen and unseen (the physical and metaphysical). You are a part of something greater than yourself and yet, you are a mini-universe unto yourself. Please know that my only desire as an author is to inspire and empower you. I am not attached in any way to your spiritual belief system, nor do I need to convert you to anything religious. If the terminology I use bothers you, please make it work for you on your own terms. Call it God, Source, Spirit, Love, the Universe, Heavenly Father, whatever name you want or maybe nothing at all, but a Higher Intelligence is at work behind the scenes of our lives. And I assume that if you are reading this, you are ready (or about to be ready) for the seeds that could very well spark a flame of transformation within you.

Let's change the world together! You hold the KEYS in your hands.

Introduction:

MEET THE KEYS

Since the day you were born, you have held in your hands 5 KEYS to your very own freedom, success and fulfillment. *Hint: All 5 keys have been right under your nose all this time and once you know what they are, you can pull them out and use them at any time!* They are your personal keys, to have and to hold, for life.

Each of the 5 KEYS have the power to open doors at your command. But you have to remember you *have* the keys in order to use them! Otherwise, you'll find yourself locked outside the door, banging on it, standing there waiting. Frustrated that it won't open or that no one is there to let you in.

You see, you have a business to attend to! And that business is called your *life*. It's a pretty major operation that requires you to be awake and focused at the wheel. There are countless moving pieces and you are at the center of it. You will encounter several doors in your lifetime. They are *your* doors. You put them there as a gateway to move beyond obstacles...with your KEYS, of course! The Universe, in its infinite Intelligence, would not have placed you in this obstacle-filled game of Life without them.

You've probably already been using some of your KEYS, but if you're anything like me, there are a couple you didn't even realize you had! Therefore, perhaps your life has been missing those mysterious, yet essential pieces, ultimately preventing you from feeling complete or rock solid on your path. But, not anymore!

The 5 KEYS I'm about to share with you are deceptively simple because they take practice to master. They also require great courage. But I can promise you that

these 5 KEYS have the power to transform the reality of who you think you are... plus significantly increase your sense of lovability, all while minimizing any former sense of victimhood or insecurity. The KEYS allow you to get back up on the horse time and time again and do what you are born to do. Ride, baby!

So, what are the 5 KEYS?

1. WORTH
2. LOVE
3. POWER
4. TALENT
5. PURPOSE

Once you have a handle on the 5 KEYS, something magical happens. You begin to see yourself differently. You stop whining and start living. You start to take your power back, play a bigger game and make your dreams a reality (because you can). You begin to take your eyes off your “little self” and focus your attention on the bigger picture (which includes far more people than you alone). And in a holy instant, both your perception and your life can change for the better.

Let me ask you something. Do you genuinely like who you are? Are you happy with the quality of your life? Do you trust yourself and the decisions you’re making? And if you were to die unexpectedly, would you be remembered fondly by others? If the answer is YES, then that is my definition of personal success: To humbly and profoundly like the person you are and the life you’re living... and to make a positive contribution to others in a way that only you can!

But what if there was more? What if you could **LOVE** even more deeply the person you are, **GIVE** more of yourself to others, and **LIVE** an even richer, more

meaningful life? What if there was so much more you could tap into and free yourself from? What if you stopped holding yourself back from your fullest expression (a.k.a. greatness) and your deepest fulfillment? Then, my friend, you would have to look within to locate the 5 KEYS you were born to use and master.

It all starts with one fundamental question: Who Am I?

If you were to strip away the outer identity of your name, education, titles, what you look like, what you do, how much money you make, your social status, and the face you show the world, do you KNOW who you really are on a deeper level? Without the first key, you can never truly know the core of yourself or be complete; WORTH is the foundational key that holds the answer.

The First Key:

WORTH

The first key is so subtle and understated, you may have missed it all along! But, it is truly the basis of a rich and full and satisfying life. Everything you attract into your life is a direct reflection of your WORTH. That's why it is the first key... and the foundation from which the other keys are built upon.

Having self-worth means that you feel loved and valued by the Universe

AND it also means that you love and value yourself!

Without a healthy self-worth, fulfillment can be fleeting, at best. Here's why: You are the jewel in God's crown. You ARE the beloved: Past, present and future...for all time! If you don't have full knowledge and ownership of how cherished you are within this universe and if you are not yet treating yourself with preciousness and WORTH, then you are missing out on an essential piece of inner peace. **You'll be on a treadmill for life trying to be good enough when you already are.**

Read that again. It's so important! This is the major key I was missing in my life for years. And I didn't even realize it. That's because I confused self-esteem with self-worth. ***A positive self-esteem can give us the illusion of worth.*** For instance, I had cultivated a lovely *self-esteem* through the years, which means that I generally feel good about myself and capable in life. But, deep down, something was missing. I had a subconscious program from childhood that I was not *good enough*. It was based on a child's view of earning love and receiving worth from her parents (or some aspect of the outside world). And neither of my parents could give me my worth because they didn't own the key to theirs. So, I grew up believing I didn't have worth unless I earned it by pleasing people, especially my parents. My worth remained at least partially unfulfilled.

Because, here's the deal, my parents can't give me my worth and they never could. Only God can. And I am the one holding that key. I was born with it and I only need to claim it. My self-worth inherently belongs to me and cannot be taken from me without my consent. It is absolutely unconditional. The same is extended to you, for we are both of equal preciousness and value to the Creator!

Worth is a super-consciousness of grace that radiates from within you. It is not outside of you. It cannot be earned or taken away by anyone (your parents, spouse, ex, son, daughter, sibling, best friend, enemy, neighbor or boss). It is always yours. Claim it! Take it back today. You are a beautiful, talented and unique child of God. No one has the authority to steal that away from you, so stop fighting it. You were born with an innate and divine goodness inside you! Have the courage to embrace it.

It is your job to cherish yourself from the inside out!

Fear is learned. We are not born afraid. Think of any precious and innocent child you know. Think of yourself! YOU are that innocent child...and you always were. That has never changed. ***Every soul, no matter how grown up, has a precious inner child who needs his or her worth acknowledged.*** Guess who needs to acknowledge it? You do! You must acknowledge that child within in you, as well as the jewel you are. It is the very core of you. You must go back to the beginning to discover who you are and who you have always been. Your soul has infinite value and worth. You can start today by acknowledging and claiming your individual worth. It starts with you.

You are like a shooting star.

Bright and beautiful is what you are!

And who you are, you'll always be.

A heart that knows, a soul that sees.

The key of WORTH is symbolized by a jewel. Whatever precious stone resonates with you the most, is the symbol of your essence. You choose the color and cut! You

can be a gem or a crystal or a precious metal. It doesn't matter, as long as you can connect to your precious beauty and divine value. Imagine it. Sense it. Own it.

Your worth is NOT determined by your age, gender, race, sexual orientation, education, appearance, size, shape, popularity, religion, social or economic status, etc.

On a very high level of consciousness, you remember exactly who you are. Buried underneath your personality, there is a part of you that knows you are brave, wise and magnificently powerful! Your soul wears a regal crown of self-worth, goodness and value. Have you forgotten Who created you? Your life is holy and has purpose! All of Life is sacred. No one is more or less superior to anyone else. Everyone is precious in the eyes of God, in spite of appearances. There is humility in knowing we're all in the same boat, whether life's sea is calm or rough. Everyone is equally worthy and valued. If you exist, you are beloved. To this, there are no exceptions.

Why are we so stirred up and disturbed when someone suddenly dies? Even a stranger that we've never met! That's because ***every single person's life has worth and value, including our own.*** We intrinsically know that. If anyone matters, then everyone matters. The bottom line is that you are significant and your life matters. Just by being alive and being you, you have the power to make a positive difference in the world, especially when you know your true WORTH.

We are ALL connected... all the time!

When you honor your own worth and divinity, you automatically honor the worth and divinity of others. They are one and the same. We all share a common worth; a divine heritage that is equally good between all people. ***But, here is my disclaimer: Most people are largely unaware of their worth and yours, so we have a responsibility to cultivate our awareness first and be the change we want to see in the world.*** When our Namaste awareness is activated (the divine in me recognizes the divine in you), a goodwill toward each other is the effortless result. Kindness dissolves hatred.

Generosity brings a shared sense of abundance and freedom. And understanding brings peace to end wars. And guess what? When you come from the awareness you are infinitely loved and your life is valuable, your heart opens. The insanity stops because you start living and understanding! You stop hurting and start healing. And when that hurt dissolves, you no longer have the need to hurt others by lashing out or by being passive aggressive. Nor do you have the desire to tell yourself the same sad or defensive story for the hundredth time.

Self-worth is the undercurrent that determines how you behave toward other people and Allow them to treat you. It's no small thing because it, in fact, rules your life!

You can tell the quality of your worth by what is showing up in your life. What kind of relationships have you attracted? How do you feel about your body? How is the quality of your work? Are you getting paid what you're worth? How well do you treat yourself and allow yourself to be treated by others? Do you honor your time or give it away? How about sex? Do you honor yourself and your body through discretion of sexual partners?

Here's the deal... I know you carry guilt on some level. As well as shame, insecurity, judgement, resentment and fear. I do, too! None of us are perfect. But with the key of WORTH, we can rest more peacefully knowing we are loved and forgiven through grace, in spite of our neurosis and imperfections. *And we can love and forgive ourselves even though we're not perfect. That is self-worth.*

Love yourself totally and completely!

It is the best way to heal and strengthen your worth.

And be impeccable, even though you know all is forgiven in the big picture.

In addition to being unconditionally adored and forgiven by a loving God, you are also divinely guided, protected, and provided for throughout your life. Always! All you have to do is remember to ask... and remember you are worthy to receive it. It may

seem impossible or it may feel like a miracle, but it really isn't. It's how this generous, playful and supportive Universe operates. There is plenty of good to go around and God *loves* to give it to you, especially when your heart is grateful and receptive!

Right here and now you can begin to feel safe in this world, knowing you are divinely protected and worthy of protection. Somehow God has angels all around you and everywhere you walk, a holy entourage of unseen bodyguards attend you (and sometimes will even materialize out of nowhere to save you). But, that doesn't mean you can walk off a steep cliff or wander through a bad neighborhood at night. You still have to be smart! Do not intentionally put yourself in harm's way. Value yourself enough to make wise choices. Avoid obvious danger, but wherever you are, know you are protected and loved. Help will show up when you need it... or you will find the inner strength you need.

You are also worthy to receive intuitive guidance to know which direction to take in your life! When to turn right, left, go straight, or turn around. To make sound decisions like quitting your job, starting a new business or job opportunity, retiring from a career, staying home with your kids, writing that book you've always wanted to write, going back to school, taking that trip you've always wanted to take, quitting smoking, remodeling your house (or selling/buying a house), accepting a marriage proposal (or not), starting a family (or not), moving to a new neighborhood/city/state/country (or staying where you are), or deciding to move on from a relationship that has served its purpose.

The more connected you feel, the greater your ability to trust yourself and to discern the still voice of God within you. I think of this still voice as the Holy Spirit (or Spirit, for short). It speaks clear, calm wisdom to your heart and it speaks to everyone. It is the voice that distinguishes right from wrong (peace from unrest). And surely it provides the blessed inner knowing and clarity, which parts the clouds of confusion even at the eleventh hour! But before the clarity descends, there is usually doubt and uncertainty in the mind. The only way to cut through the static is to be still and pay

attention to your feelings. God speaks through your heart, your gut; your body. The truth is always something you can *feel*, if you pay attention.

Lastly, you are worthy to receive every good and perfect provision you need and desire for your life: Food, shelter, clothing, money, companionship, wisdom and resources of all kinds. You deserve to be prosperous, happy and fulfilled where you live and work. You deserve to be fed physically, financially, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually. It is, in fact, righteous and good to be overflowing with prosperity. And more than anything, *prosperity is a state of mind; a feeling of well-being and of having plenty*. It is a generous attitude that spills over into every area of your life, kissing it with a rainbow of possibility and good fortune! And the best part is, it gives back to others. Prosperity is the gift that gives back, as well as receives.

You are WORTHY of prosperity today and every day!

Cultivate Greater Self-Worth by Adopting the Following Mindsets and Habits:

- Your worth is inherent. You've always had it within you, so claim it! Acknowledge the jewel you are today.
- Start by loving, accepting, and forgiving yourself unconditionally. Allow yourself to feel and be authentic. The measure of your worth can be difficult to see at times, so do your best to accept yourself in all states of being and circumstances. Easy to say, more difficult to do.
- Select your friends with care. Surround yourself with loving, supportive and genuine people who let you be yourself. It is so rewarding to be in relationship with people who can see and celebrate the jewel you are. Allow their love for you to penetrate your heart. Let it in, soak it up and love them in return!

- Practice the art of graciously and joyously receiving your good in all forms. This includes compliments, acknowledgments, gifts and money. Be blessed by the abundance. Give the gift of being an excellent receiver. Surprisingly, this takes practice!
- Recognize that there is an energetic difference between a compliment and an acknowledgment! If I tell you that I like your shoes or your outfit or that you look pretty today, that is a nice compliment. However, if I make a deeper comment about you on a soul level, such as your wisdom, beautiful aura, kind heart, a character trait, a brilliant mind or particular talent... that is more of an acknowledgment. Compliments can come and go, depending on the day. Acknowledgments are more lasting and permanent. They stand the test of time because they reflect your true character and essence.
- Grow to appreciate and love your body. It does a lot for you! It also tolerates some abuse from you. One of the ways you can honor yourself is by lovingly taking care of your body.
- Also, honor yourself by taking care of your personal property. Your home, your car, your belongings...and even how you dress, groom and present yourself. All these things are a reflection of you.
- Engage in work (and hobbies) that you love! Work for and with people you like and for a compensation that feels good.
- Practice honoring your worth through: Your time, money, body, sex, quality of work, life and relationships.
- Honor others by respecting their feelings, choices, time, personal space and property. Aim to be courteous. This isn't hard when you surround yourself with courteous people!
- Tell the truth. It's a good practice to be honest and kind to yourself and others. Never intentionally say something to hurt another person. It will come back and hurt you. It pays to be gracious, always! You don't have to be inauthentic, but you can be polite.
- Honor your word. If you make a promise or a commitment, always follow through.
- Establish and maintain healthy boundaries with others. Notice when it feels more honoring to say YES or NO to a request...and to whom. Do NOT make agreements

that do not feel good to you. Never betray yourself. It's the first rule of honoring your worth.

- Know yourself. It's one of the most important things you're here on the planet to figure out and embrace. Then, protect your inherent preciousness. Don't allow anyone to take that from you! Stand up for your life and your divine right to live fully and authentically. In other words, honor, acknowledge and claim your worth. It is YOUR key to have and to hold. It is your responsibility at the end of the day. It is your life, after all! Own every juicy bit of it.

It's as easy as 1 - 2 - 3:

1. **Be yourself!** Make authentic choices and become comfortable in your own skin.
2. **Love yourself!** In spite of your imperfections and in spite of other peoples' opinions.
3. **Never betray yourself!**

- Keep good company. People who genuinely support you in life!
- Do not speak against yourself.
- Do not compromise on your highest values, where it matters most.
- Do not sell-out for any reason.
- Do not put yourself in danger.
- Don't do something if it doesn't feel good or right to you (*listen to your intuition*).
- Never cause intentional harm to yourself (*or others*).
- Trust yourself.

You have a signature, divine essence all your own. Like a rose or a lily. You are divine love. But what is it that ignites a unique flame in your heart? What do you love the most? What inspires you? What are your strengths? What fragrance do you effortlessly wear that makes you so distinct and lovely to others? You are a complex mystery, an

ocean of wonder. Dive into your depths to discover your hidden treasures of talent, essence, purpose, dreams, desires, passions, and even your wounds and fears. It's a treasure trove and ALL of it is there for a reason. Within you is a wise soul that *knows* the truth. It is your job to uncover your truth (by asking the deeper questions), so that you can speak and live it every day. That is freedom! And it is called being authentic. In order to own your worth, you must learn to become authentic. This takes self-awareness and practice...and lots of self-love.

Life is both a challenging and rewarding course in self-mastery. The endless journey of discovery and rediscovery is a part of the fun. YOU are the masterpiece, the jewel. The process of life is designed to sculpt and polish you. So be bold. Take chances and live fully. Dive into your life! Your soul knows how to swim. I promise.

There is something that makes the water warm and inviting for swimming. Something that eliminates unnecessary struggle, dissolves disharmony, and overrides fear. Something magical, healing, and rich with possibility on both a personal and universal level.

LOVE, the Master Key... and wow, is it powerful!

The Second Key:

LOVE

Love is the MASTER KEY that opens every door. It has the power to heal all things...and move mountains. Love is as simple as it is powerful. And it is the single greatest force in the universe. Use it like a secret weapon, a spiritual kung fu, when it comes to making things right in your world. Love will help you set the stage or kill 'em with kindness or whatever you need to do. It works every time! That's because love truly conquers all.

The world won't tend to agree with me on that. In fact, it will go out of its way to prove how necessary defense mechanisms are. How love screwed them, how no one can be trusted (guard your heart), and why there isn't enough good to go around for everyone. The world will certainly tell you that you have to fend for yourself in a dog-eat-dog reality. Every man for himself. Trust no one, ever. Love no one unless they've earned it according to your standards (conditions). Ditch them the moment they fall short of your standards. And definitely don't believe in your dreams! Dreams are for fools. You can fall; you can fail. If you don't want to lose, don't love anything or anyone. Live your life clutching your heart and prizes tightly. But you won't get very far or live very well!

The truth is, love is CRAZY counter-intuitive...

It is the exact opposite of what you think.

If you want to be powerful, help make someone else powerful. If you want to be loved, give it away in generous quantities. If you feel unattractive and inadequate, love and approve of yourself *even more*. Allow others to give their love and appreciation to you, too, especially if it feels uncomfortable to receive it! And love other people, even

when they are acting unlovable (that's a biggie). Give love to *everyone*, most especially your least favorite people, the people who have wronged you or rubbed you the wrong way. This is a tough one! When our ego feels proud, love doesn't taste very good going down, but it's the most powerful medicine to make you feel better fast. Love is always the right choice and thing to do. Love works miracles, in spite of illusion and false appearances. Experience the magic for yourself! Choose love. It is the wonder drug that cures all spiritual and emotional sickness.

Our hearts get sick and broken as we go through life. People hurt us. And we don't always honor our passions or do what we love. This creates sadness and depression. When we feel numb, lifeless, lethargic, depressed, blocked and sad, that is the time to pull out the key of LOVE. That's when we need to remember *what we love...* and connect to it! That's when we need to dream, play, laugh... and be creative. Spend time with a good friend. Forget our troubles and get lost in something completely wonderful. We cannot spiritually afford to feel dead inside. That leads to despair, which can lead to physical death. No, our hearts have to be reawakened and brought back to life! Hearts do best when they are magnetized, open, inspired, connected... and engaged in creativity. We can only achieve that with the key of LOVE.

LOVE is the Master Key:

It magnetizes our ability to feel alive through our personal passions...

Plus it influences every single person and thing that exists surrounding us!

Love is our MOST powerful & effective tool in any circumstance.

One of the toughest personal crises you may potentially ever face in your life is GRIEF. Grief is a force that usually comes on quite suddenly as a result of loss: Death of a loved one or a loss of anything significant, like a job, a pregnancy, a marriage, or even a limb. It requires patience and love while you wait for the emotional storm to pass

and have its way with you. You will lose your sense of identity, faith and of feeling alive... and the hardest part is that you will NOT have control over these symptoms. But, as long as you don't succumb to deep despair (that's when you cause physical harm to yourself or take your own life), you WILL rise from the ashes and come back to life. Love can help you heal your heart. The light within you is stronger and more powerful than grief. Grief cannot keep a grip on you forever!

LOVE is the key to the HEART.

Sometimes when I'm particularly challenged with grief or depression and cannot seem to move out of it, I create some relief by coloring. I pull out a coloring book and some crayons or pens and start to color. It doesn't cure my depression, but it relaxes me and takes my mind off my sadness or worries for a period of time. Sometimes we need a vacation from our anxiety, right? When I feel down, my overactive mind spins and spins, chewing on what I think I should be feeling and doing. (*I should be able to shake this. I know better! Why don't I have the energy to do what I normally do? Why am I feeling blah or overwhelmed? Why does my attitude suck?*) When my mind is spinning and I feel exhausted and depressed, I color. It helps. It's something simple and soothing. And unlike running a marathon, it is super doable in the moment. It's a form of meditation.

Similarly, I enjoy giving myself manicures as a therapy for easing anxiety. I love losing myself in the gentle meditation of trimming my cuticles! Washing a sink full of dishes, taking a long walk or a long drive will do the same thing. A focused, relaxing activity that doesn't require conscious thought is highly beneficial to a taxed mind and soul. When we are really tired and everything feels exhausting, the kindest thing we can do is rest. I'm often afraid that if I rest, I'll never get back up again. But that isn't the case! When I give myself a period of deep rest, I eventually bounce back with far more vitality and inspiration to get moving again, even if it takes a few days or weeks. I have to trust I will get my energy and enthusiasm back, because I always do without fail. Depression is only a season. It passes, but it needs to be handled with great LOVE.

Self-care is an excellent way to love and nurture yourself when life gets tough! Soaking in a fragrant bath with essential oils and muscle-relaxing Epsom salts, booking a 90-minute massage, cutting back your work hours, taking a luxurious nap, going on a retreat or vacation, getting a pedicure, journaling, gardening, practicing yoga and exercising, and eating nourishing food are all ways of taking care of yourself when you need it. It is important to personalize it! If you like to read, take yourself to the bookstore and buy (or download) a new book. If you like to cook or bake, get in the kitchen. If you resonate with nature, spend time on a hiking trail, a ski slope or on a beach. If you enjoy crafts, pull out the scissors and glue. If you enjoy music, listen to your favorite songs. If prayer comforts you, start a conversation with God. And if meditation calls to you, go into the stillness.

One of my favorite means of self-care is going to Banya (the Russian-style bath house). I start by sitting in the steam room, where the intense heat and moisture soften me from head to toe. Tension begins to melt right off me! Then I take a dip in the tepid salt pool to bring my body temperature back to center (and restore lost minerals through sweating). Then, I hit the dry sauna, which is like a pleasant oven. I stay in there as long as I can before jumping in the ice cold plunge pool. I don't give myself time to overthink, I just jump. It is FREEZING and I stay in as long as I can! But I emerge revitalized, after melting like an ice cube in the tepid salt pool once again. Then I repeat about three more times (four or five cycles total). It takes about two hours. What a noticeable difference in the way I feel! The heat dissolves my tension and the cold shocks my system awake. I come away feeling pleasantly energized, yet deeply relaxed.

***Whenever possible, correct your spiritual and physical alignment!
Get a chiropractic adjustment, massage, reiki or intuitive reading as
An occasional tune-up for your body or soul (beyond what you can do by yourself).***

If we're not careful, energy can get stuck in our bodies and auras. So before we can refresh ourselves with self-care or creative inspiration, we have to feel our sore

feelings! This is counter-intuitive, too. When we feel bad or mad or sad, we have to give ourselves permission to *feel it*. Emotions are designed to move, so as not to get stagnant in our cells and create illness and disease. Feeling is the *only* way to heal the heart and move toward love. Tears need to flow. Frustrations need to be vented out loud or in writing. Deep seated anger needs to be acknowledged and voiced. Grief has to run its course before it can transform into acceptance, peace or joy. And although there are no short cuts, gratitude and compassion are excellent tools in emotionally crappy times.

We all benefit from showing compassion to ourselves and others because it frees us from judgement (none of us are perfect). And gratitude is like a vortex that forms around us, attracting more blessings, which is extremely effective at transmuting ill emotions. Even when you are sad, angry or depressed, you can still give thanks for the blessings in your life. It's easy to do, if you can pull yourself out of your funk (self-pity) long enough to remember! It is unproductive to believe that there are no blessings to be found in your life, even in hard times. And it is equally unwise to be unforgiving toward yourself or others. Start every prayer with gratitude and compassion, even when you are upset about something. It will instantly soften your heart and calm your soul. We all have a right to wallow in our bad feelings for a while, but don't stay there TOO long. Be gentle, yet firm with yourself. Let gratitude be the hand that helps pull you out of the pit. Let compassion show the way. Your heart knows the real truth. And the real truth is that you are blessed, if you look again with fresh eyes. In my experience, it always pays to be grateful... and compassionate!

It's important to realize that we are NOT our feelings. That is because feelings are merely transient. They come and go through us, but what they indicate is a sense of alignment or misalignment. Feelings are a part of our heart's guidance system, like a compass. Depression is always a warning to pay attention. **PAIN** is an acronym for **Pay Attention Inward Now**. And if by chance you cannot tell yourself the truth, your feelings will do it for you! So, pay attention to what is surfacing within you. Listen compassionately and have the courage to feel your feelings and acknowledge the secrets you keep locked away in your heart. The truth will set you free!

The soul does not keep secrets very long or very well. It tells the truth through emotions that surface, nagging intuitions, physical pain and illness... or uncontrollably blurts out of your mouth one day! And sometimes as a last resort, your soul will express its truth via a giant 2 x 4 that smacks you upside the head in the form of a crisis as a wake-up call.

Be attentive and listen to your soul with love. So many beautiful truths reside in your heart! And you are the one with the key to unlock it. **Your heart is like a vault that stores everything precious to you: Your hopes, your dreams, your soul's desires and passions and everything you love.** It is important to keep your heart magnetized by doing what you love and surrounding yourself with who and what you love. It pays to keep your passions alive and to fulfill your dreams! But your heart also puts walls up to protect you from more disappointment. Heart walls keep everything painfully locked up inside. Without joy, there is no true living or thriving. Nothing can get in and nothing can get out. Emotions get trapped, leaving you limp, lifeless and cynical.

Moving fully into the pain, in the moment, is the only way to break up the crusty, old wounds. LOVE then has the power to dissolve them. You don't have to feel stuck and broken forever. There is a way out! Feel your feelings and love them. Tell yourself, "I give myself permission to feel sad/hurt/angry". Give your heart permission to tell its truth. Then give yourself permission to move toward what you love again! The heart is remarkably resilient. You'll notice when you've experienced healing. You'll feel energized and inspired. Breakthroughs can happen lightning fast, almost in an instant. Prior to the breakthrough, life can feel heavy. Everything is an *effort*.

***Living from an open, giving, trusting heart is the BEST way to thrive...
It requires courage and discernment, but it is completely worth it!***

With LOVE, life is lighter and full of grace. The heart is able to trust and take chances (this is huge). Love allows old wounds to heal and new doors to open. Love is freedom to trust. Love is freedom from having to control anyone. Love is radical

acceptance of people and circumstances you cannot change. Love is forgiveness. You need forgiveness as much as the person you think you are upset at. We all need forgiveness to move beyond the guilt and shame we all carry on some level.

Love is compassion. We all need that, too, because everyone is more vulnerable than they look on the outside. Most people benefit greatly from the gift of compassion and understanding...and kindness. And most human beings crave acknowledgment, to be seen and heard and valued for who they are. To belong and to feel safe. Love allows this. And lastly, love is grace. In other words, even when we don't deserve it, it is the gift of being shown unconditional love. This is the greatest gift EVER, especially when the chips are down!

Remember, we are not human beings having a spiritual experience.

Rather, we are spirit beings having a human experience!

As human beings (who forget our spiritual nature), we sometimes take life too seriously. And other times, we don't take it seriously enough. Sometimes we don't get it. We make mistakes. We throw away precious opportunities. We squander our precious talents. We waste time. We become frivolous or stingy. We get careless, sloppy and forgetful. We take the people we love for granted. We forget our manners. We fail to give thanks; to bless others. We manipulate, control, whine and complain. We become entitled, judgmental and critical. We hide and we lie. We withhold love and forgiveness. We punish ourselves and others. Can you see why the world needs LOVE? Can you see why this key is essential to improving the quality of your life? Can you imagine how much influence you have on your environment and the people in it by acting from love? You hold the key in your hands! The choice is yours to sow seeds of LOVE.

SELF-WORTH = Seeds of greatness planted in the garden of our hearts.

LOVE = The water and sunshine that nurture and grow the seeds of our greatness.

Love is not a fluffy, vague concept. It is actually a LAW of the universe. The love you freely give to others returns to you multiplied. It works every time, like clockwork! The Law of Love is the highest and most powerful of ALL. Why? Because it is the only force in the universe that can literally override or trump any form of wrong doing or bad karma. It crushes all misgivings and misdoings, dissolving them even at the last moment when you thought it was impossible! Love has the power to overcome any perceived evil, no question. *God is love in and through all things.* It is all there is! Love unites us as spiritual brothers and sisters, allowing our hearts to give freely and radiate goodness without a trace of fear. Love is the Way. It is the ONLY way to a higher path paved with peace, joy, freedom and understanding.

The only reason anyone has ever hurt you, has been out of ignorance or fear. Try not to take it personally, because it isn't. If someone is acting out of deep fear, they are not yet awakened. They are not yet living from truth, which is love. Actually, they are suffering in their own emotional prison. This is where compassion for another's ignorance or fear can heal YOU. Forgiveness is the way you free yourself from a lifetime of resentment, which causes a myriad of illness and disease and disaster in the long run. Would you rather be happy and free or would you rather cling to the fact that you are "right" and potentially make yourself sick? Even if you are 100% right (and someone else is wrong), it is wise to choose peace by letting go of the rope. Stop fighting ANY ongoing battles! It takes too much precious energy and besides, enough is enough. Your only true task, at times, is to stand up for yourself or for what is right. Then let the resentment go. Release the burden. Forgive. Consider making the shift from being AGAINST something undesirable to FOR something you wish to see. For instance, instead of being anti-war, why not be pro-peace?

It all comes down to the fact that love is a choice. It will undoubtedly bless your life, but it cannot promise you a pain free life. There isn't one. But, you can learn to elevate your heart and consciousness to a state of grace every time you use the key of LOVE. Therefore, love is also a habit. It grows stronger the more you use it! So choose love every day, especially in your darker moments (that's the real mastery). The spiritual

pay off and reward are huge in this life and beyond. It's just so worth it! Every time you choose LOVE, everyone comes out smelling like a rose... and the world is automatically and immediately a better place for all.

Put LOVE in Action:

- When you occasionally find yourself in hostile environments, kill 'em with kindness to win every battle. Or walk away peacefully.
- Follow the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.
- Smile! It makes you look and feel better.
- Do your best not to hold a grudge! Be a person who is giving and forgiving.
- Attitude Adjustment: Stop fighting and start healing (opening, softening, trusting).
- Never, ever wish or cause harm to anyone on purpose. It's like a boomerang and will come back around to smack you.
- Aim to be gracious and always respectful.
- Surround yourself with exactly the things, activities and people you love best!
- Do something BOLD and EXCITING (and scary) that you have always wanted to do, but is out of your comfort zone. Experience the magic and joy and exhilaration of new found strength and accomplishment. Bam!
- Get in the habit of speaking to yourself in a loving and caring way. Treat yourself the same way you would treat a cherished child or friend.
- Play with your inner child and do what you used to love as a kid.
- Give yourself a pat on the back every time you recognize a job well done or a choice well made!
- When you see your reflection in the mirror, look yourself in the eye and tell yourself you are precious. Practice loving yourself in any circumstance, even when it's hard.
- Dare to dream! Think it, read it and write it. Create a vision board. Decide to make your dreams a reality.

- Follow your bliss! Pursue your passions. Live in the magic of the moment.
- Rest when you need to. It is a great kindness to your weary soul!
- Practice good self-care. Be in tune with your needs and vow to give them to yourself. Honor yourself and your body at the deepest level. No one else can do it for you.
- Speak words of love. Be a fountain of affirmation to yourself and others.
- Be generous! Do something thoughtful and kind for someone else. Get in the habit of being a blessing to others.
- Whenever someone gives you a compliment, acknowledgment, or a gift (or even money), say *thank you* and receive it graciously.
- Make the planet a better place by loving the animals and taking care of the earth.
- Be kind in thought, word and deed. Cultivate a kind face and soft eyes.
- See yourself as good (at least as a work in progress) and see the good in others.
- Bless others with prayers and loving, positive thoughts.
- Give up the need to be right. It isn't important.
- Make a decision to live well and celebrate life. Don't wait for a special occasion to use the good china, drink the good wine or dress up. Seize the moment!
- Be mindful and give thanks for the many blessings in your life.
- Expect good things to show up in your life and give thanks when they do!
- Put yourself in someone else's shoes. Live as a compassionate being.
- Choose peace. Allow yourself to trust... and eliminate the compulsion to control (which is fear).
- When you feel sadness, fear or anger, allow yourself to really feel those feelings, so you can move through the emotion and begin feeling lighter.
- Pray for understanding... and do the inner work to rise above victimhood.
- Practice unconditional love, acceptance and forgiveness. People will always feel safe around you, which is a gift.
- Open your heart to loving others and being loved in return.
- DO WHAT YOU LOVE, as often as you can!
- Laugh until you cry. It's the best medicine.

Everything Is Possible and Everyone Wins When You

CHOOSE LOVE!

The Third Key:

POWER

It has only been in the last few years that I have come into my power. And it has been absolutely life transforming! We have a lot to cover in this chapter and I cannot wait to share this remarkable key with you...

In general most of us are afraid of power, *specifically our own power*. We don't understand the true meaning of it, nor do we understand what it feels like when it's functioning in a healthy way, so we diminish it or create artificial forms of power. ***Most of us either give our power away or behave passive aggressively because we don't know how to assert ourselves, or we hide our power because we're afraid of it or we don't want others to know we have it, or we seek to control.*** The need to control is always rooted in FEAR. But, this is not power. True power is clear and confident, so it naturally allows without force. It freely trusts without the compulsion to manipulate. Attempting to control other people and circumstances is always driven by fear, and therefore false power. When we do this we feel vulnerable and insecure, not to mention, terrified on a deep level.

At the other extreme, some people flat out abuse their power. They simply don't give a damn about another person's feelings and needs (or doing what is ethically or morally right). They are disconnected from their humanity, only thinking about themselves, which is also based in fear. The only way a person like this has any "power" is by selfishly taking it from others (bullying, intimidating, lying, and stealing). But this, too, is not authentic power. It is merely external power, which never endures.

Authentic power is always tempered with LOVE because love is The Power of the Universe. When used correctly, POWER is the key that frees you from the cage you

put yourself in. You see, your power and choices solely belong to YOU. It is rightfully YOUR key forever. No one has the right to take it from you, unless you give it to them. And because your power does not belong in anyone else's hands, don't even share it a little bit. It isn't necessary. ***A person who is truly in their own power will never try to take someone else's away.*** That's because every person on the planet gets to own their own power. In fact, they must. This is why it is imperative to start taking back your power today. This world is not served by one person having the power of hundreds or thousands, while the multitudes have none. Everyone must own their own power. An even distribution of power throughout humanity is key (and the problem we face in today's world). Power is the responsibility of the individual who holds it.

Deep down, you are powerful and you know it.

The first step is becoming aware and informed. Knowledge is power. And I want you to know that you are not a victim and life is not passively happening TO you. Rather, you are a powerful co-creator, playing an active role (both consciously and unconsciously) via your thoughts, feelings, beliefs and choices. ***If you do not learn to wake up and consciously make your own choices, the Universe (or someone else) will make your choices for you.*** And by the way, NOT making a choice is also a choice! Many of you are too afraid to admit what you really, really want. It's the precious treasure buried deep within your heart and you're guarding it. That's either because you're afraid you can't have it or because you're afraid of the *responsibility* of having it.

Maybe you are afraid that people will mock you or discourage you when they find out about the dreams you hold in your heart. Not to mention facing the embarrassing possibility of failure! Or you could simply be afraid to ASK for what you want (that takes courage because you could be told NO and then you have to deal with the disappointment, which is a bummer). In order to own the key of your own power, you have to be willing to face the music by being honest about what you truly want and doing the work if you want the treasure, but that is what most people avoid.

What do you REALLY want?

You have the power and freedom to make your own choices & make it happen!

Personal power has been divinely given to you in the form of free will to be used rightly and wisely in this life. It is the Creator's design. But, it needs to be used in conjunction with the second key of LOVE. If not, there will naturally be consequences. We've all experienced a misuse of our power at one time or another. Thus, we either become smarter and humbler in the process about using our power... or we fear it, give it away or abuse it. But, what is power?

Five Key Areas of POWER:

1. CLARITY
2. ACCOUNTABILITY
3. AUTHENTICITY
4. COMMITMENT & ORDER
5. BOUNDARIES & ENERGY MANAGEMENT

1. CLARITY

Power begins with clarity. It is impossible to be in your power if you do not first possess a degree of clarity in your heart and soul. ***Clarity leads to power because it is "right thinking" that leads you to a clear decision.*** And getting off the fence and making a decision is always powerful! Do NOT be ambivalent about what you need or desire. Be willing to recognize and own your truth. YOU are often the one who is stepping on

your own nose! One of my favorite questions to ask myself is: *What is the truth?* The answer usually surfaces as soon as I ask, because deep down I already know the truth. But, I have to ask the question out loud in order to unbury it from the inner debris. When I'm not in my power, doubt clutters my mind and keeps me from having a clear handle on the truth. It may take some time for my truth to become clear, but I have the power to embrace higher clarity and wisdom by asking my soul questions. You have the same power within you. What questions do you wish to ask your soul? Your soul is wise and has the answer!

It is normal to be out of your power from time to time.

That is why you hold the key to return to it!

Clarity is a higher understanding that allows us to move forward and be our powerful selves in a "righteous way". It is the willingness to see truth clearly and accurately, even if it isn't what we *think* we want to see. But the truth is always provocative and empowering because it invites us to make a new choice: To let go of something that no longer serves us, turn toward something greater, or be more receptive to higher ideas and solutions. Clarity gives us an opportunity to tap into our intuition, forgive others, see something in a new light, and reframe a story we've been attached to.

Reframing the Story is the best method I can think of to heal emotional wounds. I'm talking about the kind where you feel triggered, victimized, deeply hurt and in blame-mode. This is where your ego wants to lash out or hide. And this is where your soul needs healing *before* the trauma sets in too deeply and the damage can be harder to undo. *So the key here is that you want to heal MORE than you want to blame.* And that's because you realize that you are only hurting *yourself* the longer you hold on to a story that triggers you (keeps you out-of-power).

This method involves seeing the big picture of your story from all angles... and finding a creative way through your imagination to reframe it. In order to achieve this, I

find it helpful to view things through a spiritual perceptive (through the eyes of grace, compassion and love). So instead of continuing to take an offense personally, I will choose to reframe my understanding of what happened. For instance, I will reframe an “enemy” or perpetrator into a necessary agent of change or catalyst for greater good in the trajectory of my life. Let’s say that a person gets me unfairly fired from my job. Ouch! But what if that job was no longer serving me and unbeknownst to me, a greater opportunity was awaiting me and the whole situation was actually a BLESSING that led to bigger and better things! That would be cool, right? Reframing the story does NOT change the fact that an event happened. Rather it neutralizes your emotional reaction and attachment to pain by offering a higher understanding. In order to avoid being a victim (out-of-power), it helps to think of every person in your life (good or bad) as a character in your life movie. Even the “bad guys” serve a higher purpose in the end for your higher learning, growth and awakening. Breakdowns always lead to breakthroughs, which ultimately make your soul expand and shine brighter!

Everything showing up in your life is a mirror of yourself.

We see the world as we see ourselves. And unfortunately as a whole, human beings tend to get so wrapped up in the illusions of this world, most of which we buy into or make up! These distortions keep us out of our power. Thank God our beliefs are not set in stone. We have the power to change our beliefs, shift our paradigm and know the truth. And truth is always anchored in LOVE (it doesn’t blame). The truth is simple and easy to comprehend when we strip away the ego’s story. The story that we tell ourselves gets blown out of proportion, it gives us tunnel vision and we become unable to see beyond the offense (or whatever it is). Our excuses are a part of the story. And our blaming is a part of the story, too. All of us are brilliant at setting up all kinds of smoke and mirrors (excuses and diversions) to avoid being in our power and living our truth. As a result, we’re never quite fulfilled and consequently we blame someone else (instead of looking within). We are reluctant to take this responsibility, even though it is ours, and we remain largely unhappy, angry or depressed for years.

“Holding on to anger is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die.”

-Buddha

A note about anger, self-righteousness, and insecurity: We've all been plagued by these out-of-power emotions that make us very unpleasant to be around. This is when we feel either a sense of injustice in the way we've been treated (anger); a superiority (self-righteousness) or inferiority (insecurity) toward others. All of this is a distortion. When we are angry at someone else, we are usually angry at ourselves. Angry at ourselves for being naive or giving more than we wanted to (failing to assert ourselves or listen to our intuition). Or another form of that is to feel triggered through self-righteousness. *How dare someone say or do that to me!* It is going into victim mode, while failing to see the same unhealed trait or tendency in ourselves (past or present). In fact, self-righteousness is a form of insecurity. Whenever we are triggered, there is an opportunity to recognize an ouch we need to heal, so we can set ourselves free!

Forgiving ourselves (and others) is the clearest path to freedom.

Therefore, in order to be free and in our power, we have to be willing to forgive and to tell the truth. But, in order to tell the truth, we have to know our truth! To know our truth, we have to be willing to clearly and honestly reframe the story or trauma through the lens of love. And sometimes that means facing imaginary scary monsters that our mind has distorted. Walk right up to the lion and face your fear. More often than not, the lion becomes a pussy cat. We become so convinced that our fear is real. It takes over our lives or makes us avoid the truth at all costs. That's because we fear that uncovering the truth will create too much difficulty, but when we shine the light upon it, it reveals its simplicity. The truth is simple, clear and easy at the end of the day. That's because telling the truth actually requires *less* energy than telling a lie.

The truth isn't just something we should know intellectually in our minds. We must learn to speak our truth out loud with our voice. The voice is a critical aspect of your power. It allows you to stand up for yourself and others when necessary. To speak honestly and articulate yourself fluidly. It encourages wisdom and self-control to use the power of your words in the direction of truth and love. To be gracious by affirming yourself and blessing others. And to never betray anyone, especially yourself, with words of disgrace. Although we each have a right to respectfully communicate our boundaries, we don't have the right to be cruel with our words.

Spoken and written words have great power because they either create or destroy, so we want to be mindful to uplift, encourage and build, rather than tear down (because you can't undo the damage). Words go forth out into the ether and make manifest the things we declare! Words are energy. We have a responsibility to be honorable in thought, word and deed... both to ourselves and to each other. It makes such a difference in the world! You have that POWER within you. You are accountable to use it wisely.

***You are responsible for the thoughts, feelings, words and actions
You are putting out in the world.***

2. ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is the biggie we all tend to want to avoid at one time or another. Blaming others or mentally checking out is easier than taking responsibility for ourselves. ***And accountability is about taking 100% responsibility for your choices and your life!*** No one else is responsible for your life, but you. Life is about choices. And making choices is about trusting yourself. Deep down, you already know what's right for you and what isn't. I call it "being your own authority". And if you pay attention, you will

feel immediately if you are in alignment or out of alignment with your choices. It takes courage to follow the intuition of your gut or your heart, but you have the power to discern higher or lower possibilities for yourself... and choose accordingly.

We will each get an equal opportunity to learn what we need to in this life. We can choose to be awake and get the coursework done quickly, or we can choose to ignore our intuition and learn our lessons s-l-o-w-l-y. Refusing to be in our personal power is like clipping our wings. It is a self-protective measure that serves a subconscious purpose, however it is bound to backfire because it is rooted in fear. Taking back your power is an act of love (and courage) because it stops the cycle of self-abuse and self-imposed limitations. Don't be afraid to let yourself soar! You may end up making a few mistakes, but you will learn from them. We often grow and expand from daring to try new things.

Do you ever find yourself beating your head up against the same wall over and over? One way to gain wisdom quickly is to stop repeating the same mistakes (or thinking the same ineffective thought patterns). Mistakes teach us valuable lessons, as long as we learn from them! You have the power to recognize negative patterns within yourself, shift your energy, shift your thinking and positively alter the trajectory of your life. And please, whenever possible, avoid unwise choices in the first place. Same goes for intentionally hurting yourself or other people because it will always come back around and hurt YOU in the end.

Disrespect for yourself and others does not stem from love. This is spiritual law. ***When you know better, you are accountable to do better (make better, wiser choices), even if other people around you are not.*** You'll think, *No fair! Why does that person get away with fill-in-the-blank?* They are not getting away with anything. They are simply ignorant, afraid and unawakened. The universe is ordered and fair. There will always be consequences for impure actions. But, if YOU are awakened, then you are accountable for your choices and your life.

The truth is, life is so much more fulfilling when you are in the driver's seat. You get the sacred responsibility of co-creating your own life path (I believe we are always in divine partnership with the Universe). That means you have to be in tune with your soul enough to listen and take action accordingly. Imagine your life as a road trip. Your soul has roughly mapped out a route. But how you choose to take the journey is up to you. How many stops do you want to make? How many detours? Do you prefer to be leisurely? Or do you want to drive straight through the night? It is ultimately your responsibility to have an adventure that stimulates you AND keeps you safe on the road. By safe, I don't mean staying stuck in the rut of your comfort zone. You have to break out sometimes! Shift your energy. You have the freedom to wander, explore, take your time (or not), visit a few destinations or MANY. You have the freedom to make a new choice, take a certain exit, move in a different direction or simply turn around.

It's exhilarating and a privilege to have the freedom to choose. Anything can happen! I love road trips and I love traveling. I love the freedom and expansion of new terrain. It makes me feel alert and alive. That's what life does, also. Some of my greatest empowerment has come from traveling on my own. It's the adventure and thrill of the unknown. It forces me to focus and trust, complete my journey safely, and thus expand my soul with a greater sense of power, wonder and accomplishment. Taking responsibility empowers me because I step up to the plate and get the job done in a way that only I can.

ACCOUNTABILITY = Taking Responsibility for Your Choices

AUTHENTICITY = Being True To Yourself

3. AUTHENTICITY

The third key of power is AUTHENTICITY. It takes so much energy to be someone or something you are not. And it is truly a relief to stop pretending, to start making your own choices, and to be true to yourself. You will naturally be so much more efficient and in the flow! Authenticity is about being transparent and allowing other people to see who you really are. It is stepping into the fullness of your expression without the need to be fake or hide anything. In other words, being comfortable and at home in your own skin. This takes practice because society (and often times, your family) want to impose its opinions and tell you who they think you should be and how they think you should live! ***But, the true art of authenticity is the ability to be who you are and act from your values, character and integrity, while still being tolerant of how others express their authenticity in the world.*** The more you can accept yourself and be yourself, the more you will be able to accept other people for who they are. *And I'll tell you a little secret, you will far more easily attract people in your life who get you and allow you to express your true self with ease!*

The more you can stand in your integrity and honor your fabulous individuality, the more you will be able to make authentic choices out of love for your soul, not out of fear. And this is huge! Because when you choose from fear, you live in bondage. You live a lie, which gets uncomfortable fast. When you make higher choices based on essence and personal passion you get to LOVE your life! Life becomes a joy. You wake up with a sense of purpose and direction. Everything you do becomes a loving investment in yourself and serves others at the same time (win-win). It gives you the confidence to know you are in your right place, which is what we all seek. A sense of authentic right place, doing our right work; being accepted for who we are.

***Do you find yourself in a career, relationship or space that no longer fits you?
Explore a more joyful, peaceful, authentic path and be true to yourself!***

Being who you are takes courage. We all get singled out, teased and bullied for being different and who wants to go through that? But the truth is, you *are* different and you can't be anyone other than yourself. There is freedom and peace to be had when you can accept yourself for everything you are and everything you are not. Although, you CAN absolutely make necessary adjustments to your attitude, behavior and habits to grow into the highest expression of yourself anytime! But the core, unchangeable part of you (your spirit's essence) will stay the same. You will always be you. A leopard doesn't change its spots... and neither can you. There are certain traits you are born with that remain constant. You can change some things, yes, but not the core essence of who you are. The trick is to bring out the best authentic qualities you have, develop strong habits and character, and integrate the wounded parts of yourself.

Loving and accepting your WHOLE SELF in every situation is called integration. Integration is the same as healing. Let's say that you hate your tendency to be selfish (or lazy or critical). Deep down, it really bothers you and it's taking over your sense of who you believe you are. So, I'm going to suggest something that is counter-intuitive. Own your selfishness and something magical will happen. It will integrate into the whole of who you are over time. Then it will simply become a small *piece* of your energy (not the whole). It will become a mere tinge that adds to the color of your layered soul, but it will not dominate. When you are in fear of your selfishness or potential for selfishness, it will dominate. It will own you. But if you embrace it as an energy that cannot truly threaten you or take over permanently, it will no longer dominate. It will be a small weed in a whole garden of flowers. Not a big deal!

The ironic thing is, only good and earnest people worry about being bad.

You are a complex and multi-faceted individual. Some parts of you are strong. And other parts of you are less developed, but if you love yourself and do your best, it doesn't matter what your inner critic or other people think. Authenticity is about going beyond the opinions of other people (they are only thinking about themselves and

projecting on to you anyway). If you are being true to yourself, the only thing that matters is what YOU think about who you are becoming and the life you are living. This is where it gets interesting! What do you dream of doing with your one precious and wild life? What kind of person do you wish to be?

***POWER makes you more of who you already are,
But many of you underestimate who you really are in the first place.***

Your essence is a wonderful starting point to explore who you are! It is the core of your being. I like to think of it two ways. If you thought of yourself as an instrument, which one would you be and why? What kind of music or sound does your soul make? What energy do you impart to the world? Or let me ask you something, if you could be any kind of precious gemstone, rock or crystal in the world, which one would you be? Which color would your stone be and why? What qualities does your gemstone share with your soul? Your essence mirrors your personal style. What is your timeless style? What do you gravitate towards? What do you value in life? What bothers you deeply about people and the world? What message do you tend to talk about and share over and over again? What is your theme? There is a pattern to your essence, your personal style, your values and your message. There is always a common thread running throughout all of it. You are literally like a mosaic or collage or a patchwork quilt. You are a masterpiece with many facets that are invaluable to the whole.

It's powerful when you can begin to see the whole picture of your whole and magnificent self. Confidence is cultivated. Only then can you be alive with purpose! When your POWER is strong, so is your will to live. Power often comes down to a decision. Are you staying or are you going? Are you living or are you withering? Getting off the fence and making a decision will strengthen your life force (power), every time. Providence moves when you do! When you make a decision, the universe conspires to help you make it happen. Every single dream in your heart can be unlocked with the key of LOVE, but it often requires the additional key of POWER (the decision, focus and commitment part) to get the job done.

***LOVE is the Wizard,
POWER is the Warrior.***

When it comes to making bigger choices and taking bolder action for our lives, we usually feel afraid. *Fear precedes POWER.* The warrior does not become powerful before first facing the fear! We have to come face to face with our fear before we can achieve anything new and extraordinary. But first, we are always afraid. That's when you have to believe in yourself more than ever and stay committed to your convictions. Trust Yourself! Do what you decided to do. Feel the fear and do it anyway. It's not easy, but it always so worth it. The reward is getting to feel like a million dollars...like a champion! On the other hand, you will pay dearly for inauthentic choices and the choice to bail on the dreams that whisper to your heart. It's NEVER worth it, so learn to trust the whispers and act on them. Always trust your heart and stay committed to what matters.

4. COMMITMENT & ORDER

Keeping your word and honoring your commitments is another essential key to cultivating your personal power. *This is what shows your character more than anything else.* When you say YES to something, do it! Keep your promises to yourself and to others. Do not agree to something if you're not really willing to follow through on it. In the end, keeping your commitments is an energy that will always come back to serve you for two reasons. The first being that showing up for others consistently proves to be a blessing in disguise that serves *you* in the end. The second reason is that some things in life fall under the category of "the right thing to do". I'm a big believer in doing what I feel is right by others, even if it isn't always convenient or comfortable to me. I always

keep my promises because I aim to treat others the way I wish to be treated. In essence, this is the Law of Attraction.

I want to invite you to listen to your gut and get in the habit of honoring yourself in every agreement you make. Always honor yourself first and foremost, but do challenge yourself to keep the commitments you make. Keeping your commitments shows a respect for both you and the person or group you made the commitment to. I really respect people who can follow through on their commitments because I know I can count on them. It means so much to me and those are the people I keep around in my life. People do notice your dependability or lack of it.

***Treat yourself (and others) with respect & do your best.
Be a person with class, integrity and virtue!***

It is important to cultivate a strong character by developing good habits. One good habit is being organized. ***Scattered energy is weak energy.*** We all have things we need to do and accomplish in our lives, so we need to be on top of our business! To have a sense of what is ours to do each day and to execute it creates a tremendous sense of self-respect, which is empowering. I'm not talking about being extreme or trying to be perfect because we're never going to get every single thing done every single day without driving ourselves too hard (we aren't machines). Rather, I'm simply talking about showing up more fully and being your personal best. Feeling confident rather than feeling guilty and ashamed because your sense of follow-through is weak.

Guilt and shame are among the lowest vibrational emotions on the spectrum. Beware of living in those emotional states! When I was in college and living an inauthentic life, I was extremely weak in my follow-through and organization. I was in a constant state of survival; chronic tardiness and procrastination, which made me feel guilty and I didn't respect myself as much as I could have. But by becoming more authentic through the years and by making more authentic choices, it has allowed me to live a more fulfilling and honest life that is my own. Now I want to do the things that are

mine to do because it serves my soul and fills my heart! I'm no longer living a lie, therefore I've shed my former need to be forgetful and flaky all the time.

Divine Order Keeps Your Energy Focused & Grounded

Whatever it takes for me to be on top of things, I now do. I'm a firm believer in divine order. It's a marvelous mix of structure and flow that supports efficiency in my life. I write appointments and birthdays in a calendar, I make to-do lists, I keep track of my finances and I always put things where they belong because it eliminates clutter and helps my mind to stay organized. It also prevents me from losing things! But the most important thing of all for me, is maintaining a moderate schedule. I never want my day to be so jam packed that I lose track of things or become exhausted. Life is a balance. I need time to relax and be spontaneous.

It's easy to overdo our good intentions in life. We sometimes become too focused, too serious, too busy and overly responsible, carrying the weight of the world on our shoulders. Sometimes we put ourselves in overdrive mode, powering our way through life all the time. That makes us edgy; not soft and pliable where we need to be. On the other hand, we can also get too passive and lazy. Find the balance that works for you because it is just that, a balance. We need room to live in the moment; to respond to what the moment brings. And we need downtime to ourselves. We all need a little time to dream and muse and delight in the little things we enjoy! We need to rest, work, play and take care of ourselves.

5. BOUNDARIES & ENERGY MANAGEMENT

In addition to balance, we need boundaries to take better care of ourselves. It is important to know your personal needs and limits and values! You can't say yes to every request, but you cannot say no to everything either. You have to cultivate the inner ability to discern when it feels best to volunteer yourself willingly or to accept or decline a request of your time, energy or money. It is always favorable to be generous with your time, talent and treasure, however it is also wise to know your personal limits. If you give to the point of resentment or if you give out of obligation, the giving won't feel good. Giving has to come from an inspired, pure place to be a win-win for everyone.

When I pay attention to my inner guidance, I always receive a definitive sense of what is mine to give or do for others. It will feel clear and settled in my heart because there isn't any opposition from within. I am always more peaceful and complete when I can be and give freely and authentically. And it is essential for me to be mindful of my tendency to over-give and feel depleted. I am sensitive and empathic. That's when I have to pull back a bit by establishing a new boundary to restore my energy (a loving thing to do for myself). Never give more than what intuitively feels right to you. That is a good rule of thumb!

If you develop and communicate healthy boundaries, people will tend to respect you. If you are wishy-washy about your boundaries, people tend to take advantage and it won't feel good. So the moral of the story is to respect yourself by having appropriate boundaries with others. No one has the right to diminish your WORTH or your POWER, unless you allow it. No one has the right to take you on a guilt trip or convince you into doing or giving anything, unless you are willing. You have the power and the right to agree or disagree to preserve your integrity and energy. You should never have to tolerate abuse from anyone in any form. Your intuition will alert you through feelings of uneasiness. And beware of energy vampires. People who are needy and draining and

always have problems they want to lay on you. You don't need that (and please don't be that person, either). You cannot fix, change or save anyone anyway. Everyone is accountable to learn their own life lessons and own their own power. You are not responsible, so cut the cord with people who are either manipulative, controlling or needy. The best way to support others is with honest compassion and respect that is detached from drama.

Everyone is responsible for their own energy.

Your energy is your energy. Keep it strong. When you buy into other people's drama and have weak boundaries, you leak energy and lose power. I'm not talking about healthy intimacy with a trusted loved one. I'm talking about being out in the world and interacting with a whole host of people who either rub off on you or want to feed off you. Being in public is like swimming in a giant pot of soup. You can't help but absorb the energy and flavor of some of the contents. No matter how positive or negative the energy surrounding you is, you absorb it! Whenever I return home after being out, I usually wash my hands, face and feet and get my personal energy back to me. And if I've had a really big day out, I take a full-body shower. It cleans my aura and leaves me renewed!

It is extremely wise to learn how to effectively manage your own energy. And to essentially know what gives you energy, what calms your energy, and what drains your energy. If you're an introvert, you may or may not enjoy being social, but you always receive energy best by being alone. However, if you're an extrovert, you receive energy best by being with other people (generally without the need to recharge afterwards).

Being in your power means understanding what you need to optimize your energy...

AND being responsible for giving it to yourself!

Tips To Manage Your Energy:

- Allow yourself adequate time to rest. That could mean taking a nap when you need to, going to bed early or sleeping in late.
- Adjust your schedule to be more moderate or more active, depending on what you need.
- Be alone when you need to process or think something through.
- Go on a retreat / Take a seminar / Read an inspiring book
- Journal your dreams, thoughts and feelings. It is healing to tell your truth!
- Be in nature or work in the garden.
- Listen to music that uplifts, soothes or energizes you.
- Eat in a way that is in harmony with YOUR body (not someone else's).
- Take supplements that you can actually feel a difference when YOU take them.
- Get to work or complete a project. Feel productive!
- Clean your home, office or car.
- Organize or donate something to eliminate clutter.
- Manage your money (it holds a lot of energy, too).
- Brighten your mood with color (clothes, make-up, bedding, painted walls, etc.)
- Dress up or dress down, depending on what feels good.
- Make a decision about something weighing on your heart.
- Do something creative (even if it's with crayons and a coloring book)
- Socialize when you need to / Go out and have FUN! / Converse with a good friend
- Move your body (and your energy) through exercise, dance, laughter or singing.
- Get a massage (or other type of healing session)
- Drink enough water or juice to get enough electrolytes.
- Breathe fresh, clean air.
- Shower, bathe, swim or soak in a body of water.

Exercise and deep breathing are very efficient ways to renew your energy and sustain your power. Our bodies are designed to move. We need some form of exercise to oxygenate and get our blood flowing! And you are alive because of your breath. Your breath gives you power. The stronger your ability to breathe fully and deeply, the

stronger your life force will be. Learning how to breathe from your diaphragm is one of the best tools in the world for a healthier body and spirit. It instantly realigns and relaxes you, filling you with fresh new energy AND releasing toxic energy. Deep breathing while stretching is heaven. Once you start this practice, your body will crave it! I drop down at the waist and touch my toes and let my body hang in that stretch while exhaling slowly multiple times throughout the day. I also love to stretch my arms up and out. Stretching is a wonderful practice to increase your flow of energy, remain supple and limber...and to feel great!

***Take good care of yourself.
Breathe & stretch throughout the day!***

The key of POWER supports you in feeling stronger, clearer and more aligned on many levels. It helps you grow more confident in your capabilities. It helps you play a bigger game. It is a springboard for inspired action! It gives you the freedom to tell the truth and live in an expansive state. Power gives you divine authority over your own life. It challenges you to face your fears, make good choices and honor yourself in all ways. It imparts courage to do what is in your heart and to do what is right. It allows you to earn the things you want. And to believe in yourself. To follow through on your promises. And to persist in life without blaming others.

***Keep growing!
You can achieve ANYTHING with a clear, focused intention.***

POWER in Healthy Expression:

- Powerful people accept themselves for who they are and allow other people to be who they are.
- Powerful people never intimidate or bully others.
- Powerful people always empower and motivate others, bringing out the best in them!
- Powerful people are awake at the wheel of their lives.
- Powerful people grow themselves into the best human beings they can be!
- Powerful people aren't afraid to take chances! They live boldly.
- Powerful people make deliberate decisions based on honor, intuition, truth and love.
- Powerful people take responsibility for their lives and allow others to be responsible for theirs.
- Powerful people don't take on other people's drama, nor are they drama kings or queens themselves.
- Powerful people have healthy boundaries!
- Powerful people do not go out of their way to speak poorly of others.
- Powerful people have integrity, tell the truth and do their personal best.
- Powerful people honor their word and keep their commitments.
- Powerful people do not blame anyone, including themselves.
- Powerful people do not have to prove they are right.
- Powerful people listen to their inner truth and courageously act on it.
- Powerful people feel their fear and fulfill their dreams anyway.
- Powerful people seize the moment and take inspired action!
- Powerful people overcome doubt by believing in themselves.
- Powerful people have learned to trust themselves.
- Powerful people do not have to be in control all the time nor be in control of others.
- Powerful people respect themselves and others!
- Powerful people are disinterested in being manipulative in any way.
- Powerful people are not worried about following the crowd or being popular.
- Powerful people are committed to being honest, authentic and accountable.

- Powerful people have a strong sense of organization and flow.
- Powerful people are secure enough to be independent thinkers and trail-blazers.
- Powerful people have needs, but they are never needy.
- Powerful people are unafraid of intimacy and partnership. They trust.
- Powerful people are vulnerable and emotionally connected. This is power.
- Powerful people know how to be their own authority; to discern what is correct for themselves.
- Powerful people speak up and take a stand for what they feel is right.
- Powerful people are strong in their convictions without alienating others.
- Powerful people honor their worth, time, money, and body.
- Powerful people earn the trust of others. They don't demand it.
- Powerful people take care of themselves and carry themselves with confidence.
- Powerful people do what needs to be done in their life! They finish what they start.

The Fourth Key:

TALENT

We live in a society that doesn't always embrace the idea of openly talking about our personal talents. We are expected to beat around the bush, at best. Acknowledging our talents vividly, candidly and out loud to other people can sometimes upset the apple cart. Why? Because people tend to be insecure and offended by someone who appears brazen. Besides, it's considered vain and rude to toot your own horn. In fact, some of you have gotten so good at NOT tooting your own horn that you've convinced yourself that you don't have any real talents! I encourage you to push past this false barrier because having talent is not about being obnoxiously boastful or arrogant (which is distasteful). Talent is about *stewardship* (righteous ownership). We can think of our talents as gifts or strengths or abilities. It doesn't matter what we label them, but we all have our own areas of innate genius (talent) that belong to us. Therefore, we also have a key to use and access them.

Talents are things you naturally excel at and have been entrusted with to use in the world. They are aptitudes that come easily to you and give you the power and ability to bless others, anytime you choose. That's why we are supposed to make generous use of them throughout our lives! But, it makes sense that you must recognize you have talent in the first place.

In fact, you have *multiple* talents that are unique to you. That is the first step. To recognize and acknowledge your gifts that you have. The second step is to embrace them, nurture them and develop them. The third step is to believe in yourself so you can share your talents with confidence throughout the course of your life. Believing in yourself can be the hardest part! It's so easy to minimize your talents or doubt them all together. But this is a cop-out rooted in fear. The subconscious reasoning is, if you don't

have any real talents, then you don't have to do any hard work or take any risks to put yourself out there. Essentially, that's taking the easy road and skating out of doing what you came here to do.

The problem is that by choosing not to use and share your talents, you run a greater risk of feeling insignificant and unfulfilled inside. That's because your talent is directly linked to your passions! Without passion, we all lack the fire that makes us feel alive and divinely on purpose. Everyone is here to contribute something to humanity, whether it's raising good kids, making people laugh, being kind to strangers, or inventing something useful.

You may use your talents to earn a living or not. What's more important is for you to own, develop and utilize your talents to serve humanity regardless of your professional livelihood. That way everyone works together to make the world go around. Don't be fooled! Even the most modest of talents have the power to make the world a better place. Kindness is one of those talents. It is deceptively simple, but kindness is a powerhouse talent. It fills the greatest need humanity has ever known, given the density of this planet. And for those of you who believe you do not have talent, think again! Yes, you do and more than one.

Some talents are obvious, like the ability to paint a masterpiece, compose a symphony or play in the NFL. Others are more subtle. Don't fall into the trap of overlooking or undervaluing a talent because it seems inconsequential. Maybe your strength is in being patient. Patience is a talent! So is comic timing, compassion, and beautiful hand-writing. There are lots of talents you already use and take for granted that other people admire in you. Pay attention to the compliments and acknowledgments you receive from others. They are a strong indicator of your talents, big and small. Maybe you are exceptional at decorating a home or putting great outfits together or finding the right people to hire. These are talents, too! Or maybe you have a knack for attracting money, negotiating deals, conversing easily or giving advice. Talents are as vast as the people in the world.

A Rainbow of Talents:

- Organization, Punctuality & Attention to Detail
- Being an Excellent Listener
- Having a Good Eye (Fashion, Decorating, Art)
- Being a Loyal and Supportive Friend
- Parenting Skills
- Being Diplomatic / Tactful
- Being Trustworthy or Dependable
- Graceful Demeanor & Movement
- Prayer / Having Faith
- Strong Communication / Partnership Skills
- Being Tech Savvy
- Fixing or Building Things
- Math / Accounting / Budgeting / Good With Numbers
- Staying Calm Under Pressure
- Photographic or Good Memory
- Acting / Directing / Performing
- Having a Musical Ear
- Good with Animals or Children
- Cooking / Baking / Crafting Recipes
- Fitness, Nutrition & Athletic Ability
- Healing Arts
- Slight-of-Hand Magic
- Sales / Negotiation / Marketing Skills
- Art of Gentle Persuasion
- Good with Networking & People
- Dance, Music & Artistry of all Forms

- Homemaking Skills
- Leadership
- Curiosity / Asking Questions / Discernment
- Public Speaking / Ministry / Inspiring Others
- Being Articulate
- Innovation & Invention
- Making Friends Easily / Good Conversationalist
- Storytelling
- Patient with Disabled or Elderly People
- Seeing Both Sides of an Issue
- Counseling / Coaching / Teaching
- Good Driver / Sense of Direction
- Management, Business or Administrative Skills
- Avid Reading, Writing, Spelling or Editing Skills
- Good Sense of Timing or Reflexes
- Coming Up With Ideas
- Gift Wrapping
- Photography
- Song Writing / Music Composition
- Clear Intuition / Psychic Ability
- Philosophical Nature / Forgiving Easily
- Following or Taking Direction Well
- Locating Great Finds & Deals (Real Estate, Clothing, Antiques, etc.)
- Medicine / Nursing / Care-taking
- Solving Mysteries
- Flower Arranging
- Jewelry Making
- Make-up / Hair Styling
- Being Personable / Charming
- Research Skills or Problem Solving
- Being Responsive in an Emergency Situation

- Stamina / Persistence / Resilience
- Adventurous Spirit / Strong Stomach
- Improvisation / Resourcefulness
- Event or Travel Planning
- Gardening / Landscaping / Nature
- Playfulness / Being Young at Heart
- Maturity, Wisdom & Depth
- Being Vulnerable or Expressive
- Being Photogenic / Good in Front of a Camera
- Being Centered, Balanced & Even-Tempered
- Being a Sharp or Colorful Dresser
- Being Charitable or Thoughtful
- Adapting Well to Change
- Putting Things Together (Information, Outfits, Decor, Puzzles)
- Law / Advocate of Truth / Implementing Structure
- Strong Work Ethic / Discipline
- Being Coordinated / Strong Sense of Balance
- Life of the Party / Sense of Humor / Good-Natured
- Precision / Having a Steady Hand
- Foreign Language Aptitude
- An Ability to Put People At Ease
- Evoking Passion in Others

I hope this gets you thinking about the vast array of talents that exist in the world. Can you think of anything to add to the list? Which talents do you recognize in yourself? I'm sure you have tons! In fact, I'd love for you to take a moment make a list of your talents. Acknowledge and celebrate every single one! Once you know your talents, you can nurture them, cultivate them and grow them. And, of course, USE them in the world! Whether you're at home, at work, running errands, with friends, with strangers, or while traveling... you can use your talents EVERYWHERE. It's up to you to use the key.

You have your own special way of expressing and using your talents! No one else can do them exactly the way you would. This is where *stewardship* comes in. Your unique talents are entrusted to YOU. It is up to you to responsibly manage and take care of your talents. You cannot wait for or expect others to carry that responsibility for you. It is your personal and spiritual duty to nurture, protect and share your individual gifts with the world. If you don't, it can leave a dark hole of regret or emptiness inside of you. It can even cause depression or despair. That's because we are born to express and use our talents. And other people need to receive the gifts that our talents bring!

You Are Special

Each one of us has the potential for...

**A special job to do*

**A special task to perform*

**A special contribution to make to the world.*

You and only you can identify that work

And then accomplish that which

You and only you can do.

And if you do not perform your unique task

It will remain forever undone.

For no one else can do it

Just the way you would.

-Thomas Keith Midgley

Talents challenge us to stretch further, reach higher, be our best selves and to play bigger. They aren't merely for our own happiness and growth; they are for the

joyous benefit of others, also. Sometimes we are called to rise above our own discomfort to be of service for a higher cause. We are called to share our gifts and stop withholding them. Go beyond the self-imposed limits of doubt and fear that trouble our minds. Once you go beyond the fear, it's easy to experience the joy of selfless giving! It is impossible to feel self-pity and depression when you are busy giving. Sharing your talents is the ultimate joy and a privilege because it brings gratitude to the hearts of others. Talents can improve the quality of your life by improving the lives of others. And they help you keep your head held high by giving you something to contribute and be proud of. Talents can foster confidence in yourself and inspire *others* to tap into their own abilities (which is huge). When shared in the spirit of love and generosity, talents are a win-win for everyone!

And because the key of TALENT is yours to keep, you have to protect it. There are people who may knowingly or unknowingly discourage you from believing in your abilities. Some people may feel jealous, threatened or intimidated by your gifts. These people, who don't believe in *themselves*, may plant seeds of doubt that can hinder the use of your talents. ***Talents require YOU, the steward, to believe in yourself.*** Without confidence and faith, the whole train can come off the tracks! Talents need to be lovingly guarded, tended, nurtured and fertilized daily with plenty of sunshine and warm affirmative thoughts...and PRACTICE. They need to become an integral part of your life. Ingrained and automatic. And they ideally need to be encouraged and affirmed by the caring angels in your life who see your higher potential. It's best if our talents are supported by our tribe (family, friends, community)...but they primarily need to be supported by us from within, as individuals!

The inner conviction ultimately needs to come from within you (no excuses). You need to generate your own motivation because the whole world *usually* doesn't stand against you, more than you stand against yourself unknowingly. You are generally the person who will get in your own way with your own excuses. And that's just fear. It happens to all of us. The majority of people in your life will more than likely encourage you, but there may be a minority who aren't fully on board... and you could be tempted

to give up. That's a sign of weakness and insecurity within, but it CAN be strengthened if you become aware of the negative pattern (this has been my greatest deterrent with my own talents). Don't be discouraged! You CAN succeed if you are willing to do what it takes, stand in your power and believe in yourself. Give it your best shot! Carry on and shine anyway. The world needs the gift that your unique talents bring.

“The trouble is, if you don't risk anything, you risk even more!”

-Erica Jong

Our talents beg to be shared. We really must use them. But sometimes, there are roadblocks or difficulties to overcome. Let's say you are taking lessons or classes to develop your talent, but you hit a wall. At some point, you cannot seem to master an aspect of your craft and it discourages you deeply. You think, *'See! I can't do this. I knew I couldn't do it. I'm just not talented enough to _____!'* Or maybe you get injured. Maybe an unexpected illness or tragedy happens (death of a loved one) and you lose your footing and your faith. Or maybe you feel overwhelmed by what your talent requires! You may feel pressured to succeed or be perfect (that one is mine). It can be immense and take a lot of training, discipline and persistence. Maybe money is an issue for you. Talents often require money to invest in equipment or schooling. Or maybe you simply come up against your own laziness, procrastination or stubbornness (also mine). You think, *'Nah, I don't want to fulfill my talent, thank you. It's too hard!'* This is a total cop-out on yourself and the world. I know this from experience because I've done it multiple times with my singing talent throughout my life.

So, dust yourself off and begin again, if need be. Keep going! Talent requires an I CAN DO IT attitude and mindset. An I WILL DO MY BEST approach. It is showing up to the best of your ability. Talent takes commitment, determination and willingness to overcome fear and doubt, to block out the naysayers and do your thing anyway. To come out the other side smiling, accomplished and proud. Wouldn't that feel good? You bet it would!

Believe in yourself like never before.

Be grateful and humbled by the talents you have. Talents come in all sizes and styles. The world needs them all! Some people are bestowed with larger talents than others. The bigger your talent is, the greater your responsibility will be. You don't get something for nothing. Your talent is given to you, but in order to maximize it, you will probably earn it through training, practice and persistence. You will pay your dues and sometimes crash and burn. There are times your talent will be tested on the path to mastery. Even when you make it to the top of your game, you can be faced with additional challenges. Either battling your own inner demons or some form of sabotage from others. You can lose your spark, passion or inspiration for what you love. You can temporarily lose your way. Or sadly, if you don't use your talent, over time you can lose your chops. Also with age, your talent can diminish. As depressing as it sounds, these things can happen!

That's why it's important to make good use of your talents while you are physically and mentally able. Life is short. Take the opportunity while you have it to explore and use your talents and do what is in your heart to do! Accept your talents for what they are. You have your own style, strengths and limitations. Do the best you can with the talents you've been given. And remember, you always carry within you a special way to bless others no matter the season of life you are in. Spread the wealth. You have the power to make a positive difference. Your talent matters...and it always has.

“Go confidently in the direction of your dreams! Live the life you've imagined.”

-Henry David Thoreau

It's vital to know what you value and what matters to you in life! That way you can do what you came here to do...and give what you came here to give. Simply put, your talents play a HUGE role in your life purpose. And PURPOSE is the final and fifth key.

Like an engine that drives your life forward, purpose always seeks completion. Or in other words, your purpose is always seeking fulfillment through YOU!

The Fifth Key:

PURPOSE

The thread that runs through the center of your life from beginning to end is your PURPOSE. It strings together all the people, events and seasons from your birth to the present day. It is your divine reason for being on the planet. And it is a powerful, driving force that propels you to complete what you came here to do. Each of us came here for a personal purpose and mission: *To make a contribution by sharing our unique talents and to learn our individual life lessons (and therefore to grow and expand)*. Many of us go through life trying to figure out what our unique life purpose is, but the truth is, you are already living it! You've been living your purpose your entire life. It comes so naturally and effortlessly to you, you may not have been aware of it all this time. Or perhaps, on some level you have!

My whole life, I've consistently been drawn to making people feel warmly seen, heard and accepted through my caring demeanor. I'm the girl who always took it upon myself to welcome the new kid at school or the new person at church or work, etc. I have always had a bubbly, upbeat and friendly personality. And also a keen ability to understand people and therefore, to be tolerant. In addition, I adore making my loved ones feel cared for by being thoughtful and generous. This is one of my primary, but general purposes in life: To be kind, caring, welcoming, understanding, affirmative and generous in spirit. It comes easily to me and I almost can't help myself. It's my superpower and it's who I am. On the flip side of that, my life lesson to learn how to temper my kindness with healthy boundaries, so people are not constantly taking advantage of me or sucking all my energy.

What is YOUR superpower?

What have you naturally been doing and giving all along, without being asked?

***And what do you think the accompanying life lesson is
That goes hand-in-hand with your purpose?***

All of us have a basic, general purpose to experience joy, love and expansion in our lifetimes. We are literally here to live, give, laugh and love. We are here to HAVE FUN and enjoy ourselves along the way! After all, it's delightful to discover ourselves and our world! Sometimes we are at play and sometimes we are at work. Other times we find ourselves standing right on the edge looking down at a metaphorical cliff, full of adrenaline/doubt/fear having an adventure (either planned or unplanned). Life is smooth sailing sometimes, and densely challenging at other times. Throughout your life, you will have an opportunity to face your greatest fears and to learn to love yourself in the process. And that is a huge lesson and purpose in and of itself!

Deep within, your soul is always inviting you to awaken to something BIGGER. To show up more fully and step into a greater calling. Over time, this calling will evolve into your life work, your spiritual mission, your ministry or vocation; a specialized niche of your own. It is something worth fighting for, advocating for...and living for. Once you take ownership of it, it becomes your heartfelt dedication to serving humanity. It will be a sacred commitment that gives your life richer meaning, joy and fulfillment. It is quite literally your destiny and also your LEGACY.

***It's not the length of your life that matters.
What counts so much MORE is the quality of your life
And the conscious completion of your life purpose.***

Your life is not about how *long* you live, rather it is about the quality of how *well* you live and what you *give* to others. Some people achieve their purpose at twenty years old and die young. Other people live to be a hundred. Your purpose will always seek to be fulfilled. It will knock at your door until you answer, but you have to be awake. If you are not awake, you will be spiritually numb via distractions: Heavy drinking, casual lovers, taking drugs (in multiple forms), excessive television, gaming and media,

lethargy, constant busyness, procrastination, excuses, blaming, meddling in other people's lives (and not living your own), depression; ill-fitting jobs and relationships, etc. It is time to wake up. If you are consciously seeking your purpose, your purpose is also seeking you! You cannot miss the train that is your purpose if you are awake. Your soul will absolutely get you to the station right on time. Trusting in this is essential.

***As you graduate into higher levels of learning and mastery,
You will also be called to higher levels of responsibility and service to others!***

There is a big picture to your life, but you can only see individual pieces at a time until you acquire enough life experiences to patch them together. And as you gain wisdom, learn from mistakes and become stronger and more whole, you become ready to elevate into an expanded, higher purpose. You ultimately begin to rise above the fear of your ego to find your higher and rightful place in the world; a greater, selfless contribution to humanity that allows you to do your work with an inner conviction. You become a willing channel, a conduit for the work, the art, or the divine message to come through. Whether you are really out there, visible in this work or anonymous behind-the-scenes, you are confident in what you are doing and a part of. This can occur in any season of your life whether you are young, middle-aged or older. We all have a time to bloom!

Everything in your life has been leading you to this moment. There are lessons you've needed to learn in order to assist others in the future. You've needed to be ready. You've needed to have successes and failures. The universe has needed you to spiritually grow taller and stronger with deeper roots. Everything is in divine order and always has been. There are no accidents. No mistakes. The exact places you've been and the exact place you are now is perfect. Something greater is unfolding.

Can you feel it? Maybe it drives you crazy! *What is my purpose, you ask?* You search in vain until your frustration gives way to a spiritual tantrum or your inner child curls up in the fetal position crying. Exhausted and weary. You KNOW you have a

purpose! You want to be *living* it. You want to be crystal clear about it and you want to have a direction. You desire greater meaning and fulfillment in your life beyond a mundane routine; beyond basic day-to-day survival... or living only for your own whims and pleasure. I know this feeling well. You're looking for the missing puzzle piece to complete your life and it's so close you can taste it!

Discovering your purpose takes time; it is like peeling an onion.

You've been carrying your higher purpose within you since birth. It is one of your keys! But, several things usually have to unfold before you can really live it and give your life to it. For instance, since I was a little girl, one of my clear and obvious talents was singing. Music has been my lifelong journey to awakening to ALL FIVE keys within me... that's how this book was conceived and written! And although I've always known that singing is a significant chunk of my purpose, I've also known that it wasn't the *whole thing*. It's far more layered than that. First of all, I have several other talents that play into my purpose as a whole. And my lesson (surrounding my purpose) has been learning to believe in myself and my singing talent, learning to be more persistent (and not give up so readily when I feel discouraged), and growing more whole vocally and personally. In other words, I've been learning lessons of empowerment. And guess what I'm here to teach? I am here to help others become more empowered, by supporting them in their vocal and personal development!

I am here to be seen and heard as a leader, teacher and performer. And I am here to help others expand themselves to be seen and heard for *their* higher purpose. And I'm feeling particularly called to mentor young people lately. My higher purpose in the world beyond being caring and compassionate, is to lead and inspire. To empower others to their higher potential and purpose. This work comes through the talents of my voice: *Singing, speaking and writing*. All the while, I am using what I consider to be my superpower talent, sharing love and light from my grace-filled heart. That's the part of me that nurtures humanity.

So there is no doubt about it! I have been pursuing and living my purpose all along, even though it took me a decade (or more) to figure things out and put the pieces together. Even when I appeared to go through major detours and thought I had surely given up on singing and teaching, my purpose was still on track. My higher self had been guiding me all along! I was never permanently lost. And any time I got off course, I never *stayed* off course because number one, it didn't feel right and number two, it wasn't my path to remain on the incorrect path. Destiny always took the lead! It has taken time for me to gain necessary experience and to become all that I am today.

I had to be ready for this moment. I needed time to dabble and wander and find my way. I needed to experience different jobs, relationships, homes, and even different voice teachers. I needed to party and travel and live life. I also needed to *lose* my way and give up several times... to find my way back home to my higher calling, which was always with me, even before I was born. I discovered my purpose several years ago at a seminar in Pasadena, California where I was guided through a meditation that took me all the way back to being in the womb. The message that Spirit gave me, when I dropped into my body was, "*TO LEAD AND INSPIRE*". It is the true core of my life purpose here on earth!

Your higher purpose is the vehicle that combines your passions, values, talents and dreams, but the twist is...sometimes it will take a *different form* than what you imagined! That may be the piece you don't see or know yet. The three most fulfilling jobs I've ever had have been: Waiting tables, music ministry, and teaching voice lessons. None of these came from any preconceived notions and dreams that I had on my own! For instance, I never dreamed of being a fine dining server when I grew up, but it joyously combines all my talents (except singing) in an effortless and fulfilling way. It is fun and rewarding, and best of all, waiting tables has proven over the years to be a "stealth ministry". I get to be an undercover angel who builds rapport with a wide range of people, making them feel special and cared for and helping them create lasting memories through meaningful shared experiences. I never would have guessed that I

would end up having a fascinating career in the restaurant industry. One that would have me serving celebrities and meeting amazing people from all over the world!

You simply never know what form your life purpose will take. It'll often surprise you! My childhood dream (up until I was 25) was to be a pop star, like Celine Dion. I moved to Southern California to make that dream a reality and six years later, I found myself in music ministry instead. I didn't even know music ministry was an option because I didn't know it existed. Leading a congregation to worship through song on Sunday mornings was not the high-profile performing gig I thought I dreamed of, but it was perfect for me. I had found my niche that combined music, leadership, performing, and nurturing people.

Likewise, I never dreamed of professionally giving voice lessons. In fact, I was stubbornly resistant to being a voice coach. However, too many people through the years started asking me for lessons and I eventually said YES because I've always been a teacher at heart. Even as a kid, I enjoyed playing "school" and was *always* the teacher. The truth is, I love using my intuition to empower people. I love sharing my hard-earned wisdom. And I love boosting a person's confidence and self-esteem through mentorship. So even as a kid, I dreamed of being a singer and a teacher. Now I'm doing it! A singer-teacher-nurturer is who I've always been, therefore my purpose is not all that surprising at the end of the day. But here's the crazy thing, I still searched under every rock for my purpose...for years. It was right under my nose the whole time!

You CANNOT lose your purpose...

It divinely belongs to you!

It is very important to follow your bliss. Follow the thread that makes you feel alive and richly whole. Pay attention to the interests and activities you love such as reading, music, history, cooking, designing, decorating, drawing, crafts, fitness, sports, fashion, socializing, researching, acting, modeling, marketing, writing, traveling, performing, comedy, mathematics, strategizing, planning, organizing, gaming,

gardening, being in nature, teaching, parenting and pets. You'll recognize your bliss by the joy and fulfillment you feel and by how effortlessly the time passes. You'll recognize what makes your heart sing because you enjoy it so much, you would do it for free!

Passion is essential to feel aligned and alive!

It infuses your life with joy and purpose.

Your purpose contains the essence of all the things you love and are passionate about. It might be something you loved as a kid, but don't allow yourself to do anymore because you or someone else told you that you couldn't (or shouldn't) and you stopped. Remember... follow the thread! It's been there all along. Your purpose is something that you inherently love, are interested in, and probably excel at, even if you tend to deny it. You will definitely be drawn to it, even if you've been trying to ignore it or can't see how it connects to the whole. Your purpose is a dynamic vehicle that has *multiple* pieces connected to it. And ALL the pieces are absolutely essential and fit together cohesively, especially when the correct circumstances and people align for it to make sense. It could simply be about right timing. Either you aren't ready yet, or the world isn't quite ready either. The right things may need to fall into or out of place first. Divine order is the way of the universe.

Another clue: Your purpose could be connected to something you notice is sorely missing in the world. And it will excite or bother you! It may inspire you to take action in some way. It may cause you to recognize a business opportunity or innovate something practical, new, or even daring. It might inspire you to educate or coach other people. Maybe you can't help but notice that certain people lack manners, morals or fashion sense and you want to help them. Or maybe you feel that people suck at relationships, mismanage their money or make poor health choices. If you're passionate about it, you'll want to bring this necessary information to the masses through education, advertising, a product or a service. But no matter what it is, be an advocate for greater good. Be a champion and use your superpower in an enlightened way that blesses others... and you will be blessed too!

5 Steps to Living Your Higher Purpose:

- 1. Do what you LOVE and follow your bliss!**
- 2. Gain clarity on your talents, values, passions, dreams, life theme and message.**
- 3. Figure out how these pieces best fit together to serve the world... and create a niche of your own!** (This part of the puzzle takes the most time, usually.)
- 4. Say YES to the calling once you recognize that it's rightfully yours to do!** (Don't be surprised if you say NO first, due to stubborn resistance, fear or lack of clarity.)
- 5. Wait for the correct, divine timing to launch... green light, GO!**

I can promise you this, if you are seeking your purpose, you will find it. Your purpose will find its way to YOU, actually. You cannot lose it, ever! It already belongs to you. It is deeply embedded in your subconscious and sewn into the fabric of your heart. You ARE on the right track to uncovering it. Why else would you be reading this book? Keep following the yellow brick road as it unfolds in front of you. Along the way, you will become more of the person you need to be in order to responsibly handle your higher purpose when it's unveiled to you. Be patient and keep listening to your soul as it whispers its truth to you. Pay attention to feelings and signs. Keep doing what you love and be willing to help others. Be a liver of life and a giver of love. In other words, whenever possible, choose to LIVE & GIVE & LOVE! The answers WILL come and your niche will become more transparent. Admittedly the answers can take forever to reveal themselves, but when they do, the clarity on your life purpose can occur in a holy instant. So hang on to your hat!

In the meantime, live in the mystery of the question.

Trust that you will know exactly what you need to know, when the timing is right.

If you are TOO focused on finding your purpose that you can't see the clues that are right under your nose (because although you mean well, you're desperately pushing and obsessing, rather than trusting) and need an objective view of your purpose, hiring

a life coach can be an excellent investment. A good life coach can listen for the truth in what you say and help you lay out all the patchwork pieces of your “life purpose quilt”. Imagine that every square of your “life quilt” represents a significant aspect of your purpose: *Dreams, passions, inspirations, values, talents, and essentially anything that gives your life joy and meaning.* All the pieces go together in harmony when placed and sewn in the correct order. But, trust me, all the pieces of fabric ARE there to sew your quilt and therefore to live your purpose in the highest, most beautiful way. Let it unfold and keep the faith!

The important thing is to pay attention. Know that you have a life purpose that is as unique as you are! You are already living it to a great extent. It comes so naturally to you, it’s like breathing. And as you grow stronger, wiser and more generous, the calling within you will definitely expand. That’s when you need to be the most tuned in and alert so you can say YES to consciously and joyfully serving the world in the way that only you can.

All will be revealed when your soul is ready and the timing is right. Your PURPOSE is a steady, lifelong energy that never leaves your side. Stay open and watch the magic unfold. The magic is YOU!

“And just when the caterpillar thought the world was over, it became a butterfly!”

- Proverb

Conclusion:

OWN YOUR MAGIC

You have the power and ability to awaken and transform. It's like a magic superpower within you. It may be dormant, but I assure you that it's there! The answers and fulfillment you seek are 100% accessible through your 5 KEYS. Each of the keys reside in your heart, where they have always been safely tucked away for future use. With a little awareness and practice, you can pull them out to gain mastery and open any door! You have always been WORTHY. You are created in the image of LOVE. You are wonderfully made... and full of goodness, POWER, potential and TALENTS to share. Your life has great PURPOSE. You are magnificent, cherished and valued beyond imagining. The whole Universe supports you!

You don't have to have your life all figured out. And you don't have to be perfect, either. You are a work in progress. Enjoy the journey and do your best!

Be the unique one-of-a-kind gem you are. You have your own unique path to walk. The KEYS that fit the blueprint of your life are uniquely tailored to you. No one else has the exact same essence and treasure that you do. May you generously share your spirit with others and joyfully fulfill your purpose. Your future is bursting with potential and possibility! Within you lays a sleeping giant just waiting to awaken to greater WORTH, LOVE, POWER, TALENT and PURPOSE. Everything you need to succeed lays within you, not outside of you. Dare to be fully open and alive! Don't give up. Keep climbing, shining and moving forward every day.

Your destiny awaits and only YOU can answer the call.

You ARE the Keeper of Your Keys!

Act from WORTH.

Choose LOVE.

Stand in your POWER.

Use your TALENTS.

Live your PURPOSE.