

You are not alone



Form seperation to oneness

Mahatma

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Before you start to read

My wish is to support your personal process, by showing you mine. By recognition, but also by the explanations, additions and exercises I put in the book.

The italic pieces, marked grey, tell my interpretation of what happened, written from my present consciousness. This way you can connect to your own situations. The italic text can make you see your life from a different point of view.

The exercises help you to look deeper into a situation and to focus on how to change the problems you're having. Even though I know it's tempting to read the book from a to z, I suggest you do the exercises as they come up. The story prepares you to do the exercises, using them to the fullest.

Mind you: For people who have experienced traumatic things, it's advised to seek professional help to do the exercises. They can have a profound impact. Look closely at your personal development, only you know exactly where you stand. With professional help, you can have a deeper experience than you could have by yourself.

Again, feel what's right for you and let that lead you.

Introduction

August, 1999

My husband Ton and I are on our way back to Holland, after a vacation. It's been good in the south of France. Together with some friends we rented a house with a pool, near Avignon. We spent days doing nothing, but we also had some deep personal encounters. Time flew by and it was exactly what we needed. Our friends are staying another week, but for Ton and I it's time to go home. We drive through the country, we're relaxed. We often leave the motorway and we drive through small country villages that look like time had stopped long ago. We stopped for lunch and now we're on a terrace enjoying the sun. It's hot, but not too hot. I can feel my love for Ton. It's a connection that I've needed for so long, but has been missing for so long. It's good to feel the connection is here now. We enjoy the view and each other. We decide to take an afternoon nap, and we drive into the country, not knowing where we'll end up. It's very quiet here. Not a person in sight. A dusty road leads us up a small hill and we find a place to lie down. Life is good.

I'm a 42 year old woman. I've been married to Ton for six years now. We both work as therapists in Enschede. Ton works with Chinese medicine and, among other things, with acupuncture. I'm a physical oriented therapist. I'm in the last year of the training for neo-hypnotherapy from the Marckhoeve, lead by Siddharta van Langen and Angela van Aubel.

Ton and I both have a practice at home. If you want to be a therapist and help people, you'd better help yourself first. That will truly

enable you to help people from experience. Like this, Ton and I have done a lot of trainings and groups to develop ourselves.

I'm writing this on my laptop, in the grass in the French outdoors. Ton is asleep. I watch him with a soft smile on my face. I'll wake him in a minute, we have to go on home. Let me take you on my journey. The journey of my life. My journey home.

Part One

Illusion

1

Divorce

Friday, September 3, 1999

We have been home for two weeks now and there is a celebration. Ton has two daughters and today Marleen, his youngest, is getting married. They live in a wooded area and it's magical to celebrate the wedding there.

They made a large dancefloor outside next to the house and there are torches everywhere. I am there together with Ton and my grandfather. I feel happy being with Ton, the holiday had been really good for us. It seems like there is more harmony than before.

I picked up my grandfather, I'm so proud of him: he is 97 years old and he's attempting to dance. It's always a pleasure being with him, because he radiates such warmth, joy of living and satisfaction. He talks to everyone and is still very bright. He knows how to hold on to people, that's why Marleen invited him. He is being well cared for this evening and he is enjoying himself very much. I am happy with these two men in my life. Our best friend Carolien is here too. Marleen knows her very well too.

It's a joy to see all these people I love together. With a big smile on my face, I dance the samba with Ton. It doesn't go as smooth as it should, but that's alright. I am enjoying it. Life is a feast!

Friday, November 6, 1999

I just returned from my four day training on the Marckhoeve, and I feel a distance between me and Ton. I don't know exactly what's going on, but it doesn't feel good at all. We start talking and the conversation stops almost right away. He is afraid to express himself, but eventually he sees how calm I am and he opens up. Last month, Ton was assisting at a workshop and he tells me he met a participant who had touched his feelings.

He tells me he hadn't been in contact with her since, until I went to my training four days ago. He started calling her and they spoke for almost an hour everyday that I was gone. At the beginning of our conversation he denies being in love. But more and more he acknowledges his feelings and therefor his love. I am glad he does, because that brings back the feeling of being truly in touch with him. He has had feelings for someone else twice before, since we got married six years ago. Everytime it was very intens, and it brought us into a deep crisis. This time it feels different. I have faith in a good outcome.

Friday, December 3, 1999

Ton went to a workshop in Belgium, to find out what drives him to repeat falling in love with someone else. This time he has taken his responsibility and that pleases me. He is looking at himself now, and that's just what he should do because I don't want to go on like this: every time we seem to be in peace and harmony, he drops a bomb on me. The last few weeks have been a rollercoaster for our relationship. One moment, we are so close, and the next moment we are worlds apart. I believe things will turn out right, but this does tire me.

Monday, December 6, 1999

I am staying with friends for a few days, when the telephone rings. It's Ton and I am happy to hear his voice. After I say hello, he starts talking. Completely out of the blue and in a businesslike way he tells me he wants a divorce. Divorce? It feels like the world disappears from underneath my feet, the ground I stand on is being pulled away and I'm falling, falling, falling into deep, infinite nothing. I don't have the strength to react, to think or even cry. My friends are here for me, but I am totally knocked out. This just can't be happening. After all these years of fighting, we were so close to a complete connection, we were so close. Finally harmony in our relationship. He can't do this, he can't just get up and leave. I can't believe what's happening and I am completely dazed.

Wednesday, December 8, 1999

Back home, and with Ton here, everything that seemed theoretical before, starts to kick in in, up to every fiber of my body. I can feel that he really wants to leave me. How is this possible? The distance he created, even though he is physically so near, cuts endlessly right through my heart. I can't be together with him in one room anymore. If he really wants to leave, he'd better do it quickly.

Friday, December 10, 1999

It's like I'm in a nightmare, but still there is a strong feeling that things will work out between us. I think Ton has to live it up in order to come back to me. He is not leaving me because of the woman he fell in love with, she was just the trigger. He is leaving because he feels he can't find true happiness with me. He is moving to Arnhem this weekend and that's why I went to Utrecht – I don't want to see our house being emptied. I'm confused en I feel over-strained. I

cancelled all my patients for indefinite time last week, because I feel this is too much for me. In this situation, I need all my time and attention for myself.

Sunday, December 12, 1999

Our house is mostly empty. There are empty spaces everywhere. The tables are gone, paintings are gone, my precious Indian, the statue we bought on our honeymoon to the United States, is gone. Ton didn't take more than we agreed, but reality starts kicking in. I am lucky to have neighbours who care for me. This is really intense – every time I see an empty space in the house, a sharp pain goes through my body. I walk through the house feeling numb. The bedroom is almost empty. Ton took the bed. That's alright, because it's his, but it's yet another kick in the stomach. I put a mattress in my practice-room because I can't bear sleeping in our bedroom. I will keep that door closed for now. I still can't believe it. I'm alone and Ton is gone. My Ton, the man I love so much. I feel the hope that he will come around. He loves me, I know that. I just don't know what he's running from. I think he's terrified of real commitment. How is this possible?

Thursday, December 16, 1999

Sometimes I feel really bad and I walk through the house crying out loud, or I run to my neighbours across the street, Tim, Irma or José. Yesterday, José took me away. While I was gone, Irma and Tim set up a christmas tree for me. With balls, lights that were on and a top. And there was a dining-table. It matched nicely with the four chairs that had stood there sort of lost across each other. So much warmth and care around me in these dark days.

Ton still works at the house two days a week, so I will be seeing him. It feels ambiguous. On the one hand, I am happy to still see him, on the other hand it hurts so much. Still, I can't and don't want to let him go completely.

Monday, December 20, 1999

For Christmas and New Year's I will go to a spiritual centre that is owned by people I know. They guide two groups of people who want to spend Christmas and New Year's in a peaceful and beautiful surrounding. I don't see myself in Utrecht right now. My family is throwing a big party to celebrate the millennium, but I don't feel up to it. I am afraid of losing myself in all my pain when I go there. I need cherishing and care.

Sunday, December 26, 1999

I am together with fourteen other people in the centre. It looks like a remodelled farm that is beautifully situated nearby the river IJssel. I have a small room for myself and I have made it my own. It feels good, I can be here with all my feelings. I am wearing a dress, because there is a chic dinner-party. How I would have loved to be with Ton, I can't believe I'm spending the holidays without him.

Tuesday, December 28, 1999

I survived Christmas and the group of people who stayed until after Christmas has left. I am now together with Frits, the only other person who stayed. Frits is a nice forty-year-old man. He is very ill, because he has cirrhosis and he needs a new liver. We are two cripples and we're having a good time. He needs a lot of rest and care. I need a lot of rest and warmth.

Friday, December 31, 1999

I feel completely lost. I don't know which way is up today, I feel powerless and desperate. The pain of being separated from Ton these days is excruciating. A moment ago, with Frits, I yelled out my pain, that gave me some relief. I go for a walk and talk to myself for as long as half an hour – I'm really not well, I have to find myself again.

Tonight is a celebration. A celebration, with my heart so raw.

Saturday, January 1, 2000

Tears and celebrations. Loneliness and unity, it's all here. I'm so happy New Year's Eve is over. I dreaded it terribly, it was a huge obstacle for me to take, but I survived this too. Unbelievable! A month ago I couldn't imagine spending the holidays without Ton. I think life is really tough.

Sunday, January 2, 2000

I took Frits home yesterday because he can't be by himself, he needs care. It's hard on me. On the one hand it's a blessing to have someone in my house, but on the other hand I don't have much to give right now, so it's hard. Frits is not feeling well at the moment.

Monday, January 3, 2000

I want to go to Utrecht for my sister Valerie's birthday. The whole family is there now. Too bad Frits' health has taken a turn for the worse and he is being brought to the hospital in Groningen. I'll go with him because he doesn't have anybody else. My family, and especially my grandfather who is 98 years old now, are very unhappy

and disappointed because again I won't come to Utrecht. I feel the duel in me, but I can't just leave Frits. So I go with him and I sleep in the hospital's guesthouse.

Wednesday, January 5, 2000

I saw Frits for a short time this morning. He just has the flu, but in his condition it is dangerous. What a strange life I lead; from one moment to another I don't know what's happening. Unpredictable and intense is how I experience life right now.

Back home again I run into Ton. We talk and I see his pain. There's still a part of me that won't believe we're in a divorce, that he doesn't want to continue with me. We fought so hard together. I thought we were finally there. Now I have to let go within love, I don't have a choice.

Tuesday, January 25, 2000

Do I want Ton back from love or is it only the need? If I don't need Ton, do I still want him as my partner? These are the questions I wrestle with.

Connecting within love.

Letting go within love.

Be connected with myself within love.

Wednesday, January 26, 2000

For the first time I'm with Dad Timmermans, Ton's father. I spoke with him about Ton and I feel the chance of Ton and I getting back together getting slimmer.

I decided to improve myself, because I never want to go through a thing like this again. One of the Laws of the Universe claims you attract everything that happens to you, in one way or another. It is because of unconscious beliefs and feelings that live inside you. I now choose to solve some of the problems that are inside me, because they will keep repeating themselves and I just don't want that anymore.

I can see that my pain is directly connected to the absence I felt coming from my childhood. I remember my childhood as being difficult. My father was American, he left my mother when she became pregnant with me. My mother was twenty years old at the time and she worked as an au-pair in Heidelberg. We are now in 1956. Nine months later I was born there in a children's home. At three months old my mother took me to Holland, where I was put in another children's home. I know my mother had no choice but to leave me there. She came to Holland as a single mother and she had to work to provide for herself. At first she came to visit every day. After a year things changed. The rules of the home changed and she could only visit me once a week. When I was two years old my mother married the man who would raise me from then on. He already had a daughter from a previous marriage, her name was Ans. I came to live with them and suddenly I had a sister. He and my mother went on to have four more children: my sisters Nathalie, Valerie and Natasja and my little brother Marc. We grew up in Utrecht in the hotel my parents started twenty-five years ago in the heart of the city. As I am writing this now, the whole family, except my stepfather, still lives in Utrecht and the hotel is run by my mother, Marc and Natasja, my brother and sister.

I started looking for my biological father, John from the United States, when I was thirty-two. I found him within nine months. I didn't just find my father, I gained a whole family in the process.

He had a son and a daughter from his first marriage, my brother Larry and my sister Lorraine. They were born in Germany too. Later-on my father had two more children from his second marriage to his wife Joan, my sister Mary and my brother Rory.

As a child I didn't feel seen and acknowledged. My stepfather brought me down on a regular basis, my mother didn't have the time and at school I was bullied. My grandparents were the only safe-haven and positivity I had. I am lucky my grandfather is still alive. My grandmother, whom we called gromi, passed away ten years ago.

As I wrote earlier, the pain I'm experiencing now, is directly connected to the absence I felt in my childhood. The absence of love and attention from my biological father, but also from my stepfather, whom I call dad. I've always wanted dad's love and approval. But I know I can't erase my past, that the feeling of the absence of love is still a part of me today. It helps me to connect to that feeling, because I know that's where my healing begins.

You will spend your whole life trying to get what you missed as a child. It happens by projection. We unknowingly project all day long. For example, you can project your father on your husband, neighbour or therapist. This happens unconsciously. You relate to that person in the way you would relate to your father or mother, with all the feelings that go with it. Your neighbour is innocent – it's not about him. He might have some things in which he resembles your father or mother. Still he is a completely different person than the father you unconsciously see him as.

More often you choose your partner subconsciously, because he or she resembles your father or mother. Subconsciously you hope to resolve old pain this way. However painful is the fact that you just seem to

repeat the drama's over and over again. Your partner can't fill the void or release the pain from your childhood – he or she often has the same problems that you are having. You will keep repeating the drama's until you realize what it is you're doing. Only then you can change it, then you can constructively heal the pain from your childhood.

In general we are not aware of our projections. Sometimes you can find out by comparing your partner to your parents. Attraction mostly comes from our energy. This energy is generally formed by the pain, beliefs and feelings we carry with us.

In my case, Ton, with his big heart and gentle side, also had a harsh side. He could be iccold. Because of that he resembled my two fathers and that is exactly where my pain was towards my fathers. The pain I've been wanting to solve for so long now.

The rejection I felt from my parents, came back with Ton. It had come to full circle. From my childhood pain, I attracted this man and by acting the way I did I attracted the situation I'm in, allowing the pain to strike again.

If you want to attract a different kind of man or woman, you will have to be at peace with yourself and your past. Then you can start with a true adult relationship, one that is not based on need, but on the abundance from within you.

Tom wants the boat that belongs to us both. This boat has been my grandfather's for forty years, we bought it from him four years ago in agreement that it would still be grandfather's space. Right now, I don't want Ton to have the boat. It feels like he's more upset of losing the boat than he is of losing me.

Thursday, January 27, 2000

I find myself fighting with my pain from time to time. As if I'm not allowed to cry anymore. Sometimes I run upstairs and cry out loud. Five minutes later the tears start to fade. Crying is allowed and it's okay! I'm allowed to feel my grief, I'm allowed to cry and I'm allowed to mourn. Those feelings are here and I'm allowed to respect them. At that moment, I take back control of my life. I clean up my house and I get my feet back on the ground.

I take my responsibility for the divorce. Eventhough Ton initiated it, I too had a share in him making the descision. After all, I was projecting my father on to him. That meant a constant feeling of not doing things good enough, or not being good enough. I tried so hard for him to notice me, but I kept missing the feeling of acknowlegdement, and as a result, I resented him for it. I didn't really appreciate myself and therefor I couldn't see his appreciation. At the same time I rejected him from the rejection I felt for myself. And ofcourse I wasn't aware of it at the time. That's what eventually created the power struggle between us. If Ton hadn't been so clear and decisive in his actions, I would have never discovered my fatherprojection.

Exercise

Go to a mirror and look at yourself. Realize, while you're looking at yourself that, in the end, everybody is a mirror to you. You project your images on to the world. Keep looking in the mirror and see what you see, feel what you feel. Now sit down and answer the questions below.

With whom are you having trouble or conflict regularly?

What similarities can you find between that person and one of your parents?

What pain this person brings you is the same as the pain from your childhood?

Take responsibility for that pain, embrace it. Then focus on the person who originally triggered that pain. Imagine making that person stand before you and tell him or her what you need to say. Speak out loud if you can. Get it off your chest! Then imagine looking at that person that is causing your pain right now and try to see his or her innocence. Now take full responsibility for all of your feelings, even if someone else created them. You can hold on to the pain, or let it go, and there is nobody else involved. See in your mind that the one that caused your pain is in fact a great teacher to you, who enables you to heal your childhood pain.

I hear my inner voice. My inner voice is the voice that is connected to my essence, my core. It is love and wisdom, it is my guide. Sometimes I make contact with it. Sometimes it comes naturally and sometimes I invoke it. I empty my head and let thoughts and feelings come as they do. Mostly words come up, words I wouldn't have come up with myself. My inner voice tells me:

Do not let yourself be blown away like that. Find your inner balance, go back to work, enjoy life and know that nothing lasts forever. Your inner living experience is what matters, stay balanced, find your inner peace and quiet and things will turn out right.

It does not matter what you feel or what you want. What does matter is what is going on right now and how to keep your balance and dignity in the process.

Turn inside yourself and trust consciousness, on You, especially You, then nothing can go wrong. Keep the faith, no matter what!

Let the relationship you have on the outside (whatever kind of relationship that is) go, and turn inside yourself. That is where you will find true inner wealth, the same that you are looking for in a relationship outside yourself at this moment. Just turn inside to find Yourself. That is what matters now.

So it's about my relationship with myself. Right now, it's important to organise my life in such a way that I can be okay with myself. That I don't need a man. I have always looked for appreciation and affirmation, and therefore happiness, outside myself. I needed for someone to bring me that. Now I understand that the trick is to find the happiness inside myself. That I learn how valuable I am and to let go of the rejection I feel for myself, conscious or not.

Sunday, January 30, 2000

At the hotel we are having a goodbye-party for Jaap. Jaap has worked in our family hotel for ten years. In those years he has shared a lot with our family. We eat and dance with twenty-four people in a nice place in the heart of Utrecht. I also dance with Pepijn, who has been working at the desk in the hotel for years now. We hold on to each other very tight. It feels like heaven to feel his strength. He is also divorced and has been deeply hurt in the process. He doesn't want or dare to commit again. I feel in love!

Wednesday, February 2, 2000

Two days later and I still feel his energy in me. Still, we only danced and held each other. Pepijn doesn't want a relationship. Looks like I ran into the perfect partner. First I have to completely rediscover myself and heal myself.

Thursday, February 3, 2000

I can feel a little more acceptance towards divorcing Ton. Step by step I rediscover more of myself and I can let go more of Ton. More peace! I ask the cosmos for support in my search for love, happiness and unity within myself. The real me has been hidden for so long. Now it's time to reveal me to myself, in order to become who I really am, with all my strength and love.

You can ask for support from God, or the cosmos, or the universe. God to me is awareness, Boeddha, love, the cosmos. It's all that is not personal and what we too are made from. It is your core, your essence.

Exercise

Lie down quietly somewhere. Imagine loving energies around you en ask for support from the universe in your own way. If that's easy to do, that's perfect. If not, answer the following questions:

What is keeping you from asking for help? Do you notice certain beliefs?

What happened to you to adopt those beliefs?

What did you feel at the time?

What did it cost you?

What could you get out of asking for support right now?

Decide for yourself whether or not you want or should go through this alone. If you take the first step on the road to trust, the universe will react.

Friday, February 4, 2000

Today I'm with Frits in the nursing-home. It's nice. It's always cosy and warm to see him, no matter how weak he is. We give each other warmth. It's what we both need. I push him around the park in his wheelchair. There is no one in the park. Therefore, Frits can freely scream in frustration and I join him.

Pepijn calls. He tells me he's just as impressed of what's between us as I am. But he's afraid to lose his independence. That's why he is afraid to make a commitment. I understood his *no* and yet I feel good. But underneath his *no*, I feel a *yes*. A yes for the woman that I am.

Tuesday, February 8, 2000

I am not letting go of Pepijn at all. I have a million fantasies about him, I can see him on his way here. I can see myself spending the summer with him. That's not letting go. Letting go is leaving things open for anything to happen. This is hard for me to do! What am I to do with the part of me that so much wants to be in a relationship? The part that wants to feel secure and loved. That part is the child in me, what am I to do with her?

Suddenly I get it. My inner child wants to be seen with all her needs. The feeling of absence from years ago wants to be acknowledged and felt. Rejection is futile, the needy child is here. I have to face her.

Wednesday, February 9, 2000

The child in me is afraid to lose Pepijn and she wants to keep sending him letters. She's anxious and is even prepared to stay just friends, so that she won't have to lose Pepijn. The following, I write to my inner child:

My love may flow,
I give it to the trees,
I give it to my cuddly toy
I give it to my house,
I give it to myself.

My love may flow,
I give it to anyone I meet,
I give it to anyone who doesn't want me anymore,
And who I'm letting go.
I give my love to myself.
I am love!

Friday, February 11, 2000

Dear Ton,
Does it hurt you this much too,
that everything we had together,
is gone?

Does it hurt you this much too,
to not feel the safety
and unity anymore?

Dear Ton,
I love you in past and in the present,
deep in my soul right to the bone.
I love you.

For the first time since September, I am with my friend Carolien, with whom Ton and I have been through so much. It's good to be with her, but evenso I'm crying a lot. I don't know why exactly. The crying is liberating. But suddenly a fear rushes into me, the fear of Carolien and Ton getting together. I couldn't handle that right now. She tells me she does love him, but that they can't be together for at least a year, because he's not ready for a new relationship yet. She doesn't know what will happen after that. Well, by then I know I can handle it.

Tuesday, Febraury 15, 2000

At a quarter past one in the morning I wake up because my phone is ringing. It's Tim, my neighbour from across the street. He asks me if I want to witness Irma delivering their baby. Of course I do! At ten minutes to five, Martijn is born. I feel my life is intens and right now I'm enjoying it as much as I can. It was a beautiful delivery, with a lot of peace. I feel grateful to witness this. I have seen more deliveries and every time I'm deeply touched and tears stream down my face. This is a direct contact with the miracle of life. It's indescribable. My mind can't understand it.

Tim and Irma already have two daughters, five-year-old Amber and three-year-old Sanne. These girls are like daughters to me. They spend a lot of time with me and we all enjoy that. I've often longed to be a parent, but it wasn't meant to be. That's why I'm so happy with these little ones.

Eversince my divorce, I feel alive from head to toe. My energy amazes me. I don't sleep well at night, yesterday I slept just for a short while and now I can skip another night's sleep. I guess a lot of energy was released.

I feel some kind of emptiness, my own emptiness. I am allowed to feel and cherish this emptiness. This is what it's all about: embracing myself with my emptiness, to carry and cherish it.

The emptiness is the part in you that is not yet filled with your essence. You feel cut-off from parts of your essence. You feel an emptiness, a void inside you. Only too often this emptiness is filled with food, a nice car or a partner. Those external factors make you happy until the happiness wears off or a factor disappears. Then you need another impuls.

If you dare to feel and embrace the emptiness, without looking for an external solution, the emptiness will dissolve from within and you become whole, with all the qualities and all the possibilities to make you truly happy – you won't need the external factors. You are complete and happy with yourself, your true self.

Thursday, February 17, 2000

I am walking with my neighbour girls Amber and Sanne and I feel simply happy. I don't get life. How can I be happily married one moment and the next I'm in deep misery? How can it be that I feel so good being alone so shortly after the divorce? My head spins thinking about it, but it does make life interesting. Later on I do feel the emptiness again. Welcome, emptiness, you are allowed to be here. The more I let go of Ton, the more I feel the emptiness. It's

a heavy emptiness and I pray for help. I don't want to escape into another relationship again.

If you feel something inside you that doesn't make you happy, you have three choices. You can oppress the feeling, or push it aside, but the feeling will always find a way to pop up again. Often it does, even if you don't want it to. That can be exhausting, because oppression takes a lot of energy.

You can also feel the feeling, and not react to it, but it will live your life for you.

But you can also embrace the feeling. That is the way to acceptance and completion. Now you can carry the feeling. It doesn't matter if the feeling is pain, desire or an absence. By embracing it, you heal the feeling inside you and that will give you energy, instead of taking it.

Exercise

Look around you and observe where you are. What do you see? Imagine going to your house. What does your house look like? Is it full or empty? Is it tidy or messy? Your house represents you... Answer the following question:

In what way do you fill the emptiness? Don't disapprove of it, just be aware of it.

The next time you want to fill the emptiness the way you are used to, look at your behaviour and make the firm decision to do it like

this. Because of the awareness of your choice now, you might later be able to choose as firmly for a different way to fill the emptiness. You can simplify choosing by for example thinking of you wanting a cookie, but you also want a beautiful body. Remember the body you want when you want the cookie and surprise yourself by the clarity of the choice you make. By being aware and with acceptance anything can change from within. If everything still stays the same, say *yes* to that too and approve of yourself!

2

Grandfather

Thursday, February 17, 2000

My grandfather died! My mother called me this morning. She told me that grandfather had fallen last night. He had been brought to the hospital and his condition is stable. That's why they didn't call me. This morning, he turned over and died. In shock I go to Utrecht.

Friday, February 18, 2000

It's hard to understand that grandfather is gone. Still I realize that he's in a better place now than he was here on earth. He's with gromi again, my grandmother, and he's left his physical limitations behind. His leg isn't hurting anymore and he is within love. It feels calm. I wish grovi, that's what we called him, all the best, and that's what he got.

Dear Grovi,
I love you with all my heart.

Dear Grovi,
Where are you now?
No longer tangible,
no longer to be held.

Dear Grovi,
Where are you now?
I can feel your presence.

I can feel you in my heart.
Everything I shared with you,
is a part of me.

Not tangible,
not to be held,
still perceptible,
perceptible in my heart.

Right now, I dread the cremation. I'm wary of my grief. It is so big, I wonder if I can handle this. Today we wrote mourning cards in grovi's house. It felt like he could step into the room at any time. Tomorrow, I'm leaving Utrecht to go to the province Zeeland. I've been in a group of seven women for two years now. I call it the national women's group, because we come from all over the country. My friend Carolien is in this group too. We get together often and spend beautiful days in which we share many things. Months ago we rented this house in Zeeland to spend a weekend there. All the women are there now and I'll be joining them tomorrow. First I have to order flowers for grovi with my mom and then I'll be off to Zeeland.

Sunday, February 20, 2000

With my friends in Zeeland, I can let my grief out. I feel the warmth and support from the women around me and it's good for me. Tomorrow, I'll return to Utrecht. There's so much recognition in the stories of the women, I find it very special. It seems like we're all going through the same thing in our own ways: how do I set myself free to be who I really am, with all my aspects. Things are back to normal between Carolien and me. Eversince the divorce we almost had no contact and now we're on the same level again..

I connect to women, because I am a woman. If you've lost your inner strength as a woman or a man, it's good to connect to your own gender. From that contact you can reconnect to the other gender. You'll be doing it from your own nature and fullness, in stead of emptiness. That's why there are male and female groups. They allow you to rediscover yourself in the woman or man you are.

I realize that saying goodbye to grovi tomorrow and the cremation the day after that, will be huge obsables for me to take. Just like New Year's Eve: it's like dying a little, knowing that I'll survive.

Monday, February 21, 2000

We're having dinner with three women from the women's group. I talk to Carolien about the distance I've felt between us since the divorce. She feels powerless when I express my anger towards Ton. She loves us both. It's good to talk to her about this.

Every night my stomach contracts from the pain of saying goodbye to grovi. Tears stream down my face. Last monday was the last time I saw him. I had brought him Valentine's chocolates that said "I luv you". The chocolates will be placed in his coffin. It's as if my heart is being ripped apart. I also feel guilty for not spending much time with him lately – I had many things of my own to deal with. I think he knows how much I loved him, and still do. Conscious, unconscious and at a much deeper level, he knew, and still knows. I hold on to that feeling. I feel my grief and tears over grovi's leaving. It feels like I can drown in it. But I have a choice! I don't have to hold on to the grief, I can feel it, let it flow and let it go. I can be happy for him, and that he passed away in such a beautiful way. I walk along the Zeeland beach for an hour and a half. Here is where I find my strength again. Now I can feel that grovi is allright. He is

with gromi. Now I can also feel the peace and joy of living coming back to me. I know now that I can carry this grief by myself.

Back in Utrecht. Tonight we say goodbye to grovi. It's good to see him like this, lying in the coffin. He looks peaceful. It's grovi, but you can see that his spirit, his energy has left his body. His pipe and the chocolates I gave him are beside him in the coffin. I cry when I see poeple from the harbour. They remind me of the days we spent together on the boat, and of how much he loved that place and the boat.

Tuesday, February 22, 2000

Eventhough I took a sleeping pill, I'm still awake. I feel emptiness and anger. Anger towards Ton, towards Pepijn. I feel the abandoned child inside. I feel the need for support, the desire for a shoulder to put my head on. But there's no-one next to me in bed. The loneliness keeps knocking me off my feet. I keep expecting to find happiness and safety in a man who will be there for me. Loneliness oozes through my body, until every pore of my being is filled. I guess this is what's supposed to happen, but it feels very hard. I am alone!

Wednesday, February 23, 2000

Grandfather is being cremated. I flip out for a minute before going into the church. I find myself in such panic, such pain. Carolien is with me and when I regain full consciousness, I find Ton holding me. That's good. I feel his love and support.

When you flip out, you leave your body with all of your energy. It happens when something is too much to handle. The things you do when you're out of your body, seem to be happening to someone else. It seems like your a spectator. You are totally free from your body and you can't feel anything.

The mass in church was beautiful. Ton and Carolien are sitting behind me. I feel their support. During the cremation, I read the following aloud:

For grandfather,

I am the eldest daughter of Elsje. My name was Antoinette, these days I go by the name of Toine.

As a child, my grandparents, especially my grandmother whom we called gromi, were very important to me. The love and attention I received from her were priceless. When gromi's mental abilities started to fade at the end of her life, the strong connection I had with her, started to shift to my grandfather. It seemed like gromi shifted the connection, like she did it unconsciously. It was as if she said: "Take good care of him, stay with him, love him." And I did. With all my heart I loved, and still love my grandfather. We went on holiday together, twice to Spain, and more than once with his boat 'de Noorderzon', the Northern Sun. That boat was a very big part of his life. With his pipe and his young gin at four thirty in the afternoon he was very present and completely happy. Two and a half years ago, in the Zeeland waters, we were on the boat that was filled with people. Grandfather enjoyed it, especially the beautiful women around him, because his granddaughters and their female friends would often join him on a boattrip. He was very bright, until the day he died, and he could really appreciate all that.

Grandfather knew how to hold on to people. He regularly adopted another granddaughter.

Whenever I had the time, I would go from Enschede to Utrecht to visit grandfather. I'd often stay over. His warmth, his love and his content about his life inspired me, and I think many others too.

Grovi was one of the dearest men in my life and I am deeply grateful for everything I experienced with him.

Grovi, I love you with all my heart. I'm glad you are with gromi now and I know you're allright together, because the love between you two is still very strong. Truly bonded for life and as I see it, a bond that goes beyond death.

From the love I have for you, I'm letting you go, so you can go on with gromi. Go on to your destination, where it's good, where it's light. Dear gromi, dear grovi, with all my heart I wish you well on your journey. Thank you for everything. And how I will miss you!

I can read it aloud. I'm standing there and I feel calm. I honour myself and all that I had with grandfather.

We go out to dinner with the whole family and their partners. Ton and Carolien are there too. There are twenty-seven of us. It's been years since the family was almost complete. All children, grandchildren and great grandchildren are here. We feel like grandfather is there too. We celebrate his absence and his presence.

I'm sitting next to Ton. I feel a certain connection coming up, a connection that's more appropriate to what's left between us. I had to let go of the two dearest men in my life within three months time. I don't know why or what the meaning of all of this is, I only know that I felt I'll be allright. I hold on to that. I will be happy again and that's why I can live in emptiness for now.

Grovi, I love you with all my heart. I'm letting you go and will forever love you and gromi. Go towards the light. Don't be afraid, it's beautiful there!

Thursday, February 24, 2000

This diary is a book about struggle, surrender and about the feeling of dying that I experience everytime. I can feel that very strongly. Part of my ego dies and I'm becoming who I really am. My strength is surfacing.

Monday, February 28, 2000

I am at an awareness weekend. Ton is here too, because we planned this weekend together back in October. It's good for me to see him. He looks sad and lost. It hurts me aswell as it is good for me to see him like this.

Today is a difficult day for me. We perform some rituals and that gets my energy going. Tears stream down my face and I feel how I'm going deep inside myself. I'm in touch with my inner pain and this continues during lunch. During the break I briefly talk to the teacher. I tell him about Ton, my grandfather and my lack of sleep. He says the lack of sleep is caused by the lack of contact with my deeper self. That's the emptiness I've been trying to fill with Ton. He asks me in a penetrating way if I love Ton. To my 'yes' he says: "Cultivate that love, let it grow. It has nothing to do with anything physical, or with the other person. It's your love!" I understand him.

All of your feelings are yours. Your love is yours and depends on no-one else. If you close your heart, you cut off your own love. If I let my love flow, then it's basically just about me and it has nothing to do with the one I project my love on to.

After the conversation I feel wrecked. I can feel the warmth and love that has been there between me and Ton. As I'm holding him now,

it feels good. As if our flow is back. On the one hand it's confusing, but on the other hand I clearly feel it's over between us.

Thursday, March 9, 2000

My car is full of things from grovi's house. All the empty spaces that appeared when Ton packed his things, are being filled with grovi's things. I couldn't have wished for anything better.

Saturday, March 11, 2000

Today I cry a lot. I'm happy to be able to share this feeling on paper. I feel comfort knowing there are people who know how I feel. I'm not alone, I share my suffering, my pain and my being alone with anyone who feels or has ever felt the same way. I'm alone, but I'm not.

Sunday, March 12, 2000

It is silent within.
A little heavy and quiet.
That's how my emptiness feels.
I hear a scream inside me too.
The scream of the child that has been abandoned.
The scream of the woman that has been abandoned.

It is silent within.
The emptiness is filled.

My life is filled.

Filled with neighbours and friends.
With a family that loves me.

Mahatma

My house feels full and rich.
Ik have fullness surrounding me.

And it's silent within.
I miss the connection,
I miss the sharing and the trust,
the intimacy and the physical contact.
I feel the fullness of my feeling of absence.
It's allowed to be here,
I can carry it.

It's silent within,
and I hear the scream.
I feel the pain.
I can see it in my eyes.

Monday, March 13, 2000

I lie awake in bed and feel my grandfather very near to me.

Grovi, I love you
You are still so close.
Thank you for all
you have brought me all my life.
It's engraved in my heart.
I love you both so much,
So far away and yet so close.

The last few days I seem to have lost some of my love. I felt grey, dark and cold inside. Love can be found in anything. In how you feel, in the shower, at the bakery. You can just let your love flow, to anyone and for anyone.

Ton, I send you love,
Eventhough the distance still hurts me very much.
Ton, I send you love,
next to all the emotions I feel,
I still feel love.
My truth is love.

I'm in bed and out of the blue I notice a big feeling of selfesteem coming into me. I feel I'm a great woman and that a man should put in some effort for me. This is so new. Up until now, mostly I was the one putting in the effort for a man. I'm no longer an inviting doormat, saying: "Welcome, wipe your feet and walk all over me!" I'm worth the effort! I want to shout it from the rooftops. Everyone may hear it: "I'm worth it!" It seems like with every rejection, I lost a piece of dignity. Well, I found it back. I feel how I've struggled through a lot of pain the last few months. There were moments I thought I would snap, I just wanted to leave my life. But that's not my path. Something inside me knew, and still knows, that I'm supposed to live and that's why I keep going, fighting and struggling to stay on my feet. The feelings of self esteem that rise up from the depths of me, feel purifying. As if I have cut a diamond and only now I can see my own beauty. I understand that this is, among other things, possible because of the pain I went through the last few months. It's okay this way. Here lies a woman full of self esteem.

3

Back to my roots

Wednesday, March 22, 2000

I've been feeling pain in my eyes, lately. I feel it too at the training at the Marckhoeve, when I confront my old childhood pain through certain procedures. The pain in my eye at this moment, is connected to the pain from the divorce and I can feel that pain is the same as the one I feel at the Marckhoeve. Because of that, I know the pain is connected to the pain of the abandoned child. The girl who was left by her biological father before she was even born. The girl who was born in a children's home and who stayed there for two years. Consciously I don't remember what happened back then, but in my training and in daily life I encountered that intense feeling of being abandoned many times. It showed itself as a physical pain in my body. Nowadays I still encounter those feelings of abandonment. It shows itself by the pain in my eyes. Of course Ton abandoned me too, but the pain in my eyes is much older.

I'm sick and tired of that rejection! My whole childhood was filled with it and I will take no more. I'm going to solve this once and for all. And I'm starting by not ever again rejecting myself – at least, that's the intention.

I welcome my pain,
I welcome my desire,
I welcome the child that has been such a victim.

I welcome my father,
I welcome my mother,
I welcome me!

Thursday, March 23, 2000

Every time I'm in my bed alone, it feels better. I think people can get used to anything. It's time to let go. What's there is there and there's no use in hiding or oppressing feelings – I will have to accept my childhood. I feel, by writing this, I'm creating more room inside me. I feel rich and thankful for all the insights I'm receiving. Right now, I choose to identify myself with love instead of pain.

My path is love.
I am love.
Love.

Saturday, March 25, 2000

I'm with my therapist Willem Poppeliers and there is one of his remarks that stays with me. "You keep your partner by being faithful. Faithful to yourself!" The moment you start pleasing, it's over. I promise myself to always be faithful to myself, in every way.

It's important to completely accept your childhood, with all that it is, the traumas, the pain, the anger, the rejection. Only then you can be truly happy with yourself. Acknowledge and feel all the emotions step by step, in order to let them go. You don't have to repeat your childhood traumas. Bring back to your consciousness whatever it was you oppressed in order to let it go. You can't let go what you don't feel.

Exercise

Put the book down for a moment and close your eyes. Connect consciously to your body and become aware of the feelings that live inside you right now. Then open your eyes and answer the following questions:

Which emotions are you aware of, that you don't allow yourself to feel?

What are you afraid of?

Make a conscious choice to keep cherishing that fear or to let it go. Both is alright. Just being aware of having this choice is the biggest step. The rest will follow.

I'm at the Marckhoeve for a four day stay to assist at a training. I thought it would be easy, since I've been doing so well lately. Well, I am doing alright, but I still run into obstacles along the way. I didn't know I was still this vulnerable, that there is still so much pain inside me. We do a roll-play and I'm being asked as a stand-in. By playing the roll I am thrown back into my past. I feel the child in me getting numb and I become that child again, the child that's been pushed too much, too far. Such pain, such grief. It's shocking that it's still so intensely present. I thought I had dealt with it.

In a roll-play you can experience feelings as if the situation it caused is really there, and it's remarkable to see that it's really happening. Even with a stand-in, the energy is the same. It's happening right now, inside you, in your emotions, and that adds a new experience to the old memories. The newly made memory overwrites the old pain attached to the memory. Your subconscious doesn't know the difference between fiction and non-fiction, so the stand-in will do just as good as the real person it's meant for. It just overrides the information and gives you a new feeling towards the situation. You can't change what happened in the past, but you can change the feeling it has given you. The memories will still be the same, yet the emotions they bring will be completely different. You will no longer experience the pain or anger when you are being confronted with a similar situation. This will heal you.

This 'reprogramming' is also used in family set-ups, but it goes deeper than roll-playing. It's much more realistic. The people that play a roll can physically feel the other person's energy. It's one of the most healing methods I know.

Wednesday, April 5, 2000

I'm in the weekly group with Willem Poppeliers and I'm working with the pain I have concerning my father. We do another roll-play. I choose a man from the group who has to act as my biological father. My 'father' has to pick two parents first. Then he goes to his father, to feel his strength. From a distance, he tells me he loves me and he's proud of me. I feel numb again and I can't go over to him, even though his words do touch my feelings. After that, my 'father' finds a wife and they connect in energy. It makes me feel left out and slowly I move towards them. I touch my 'father'. Tears start streaming down my face. He asks me for forgiveness and takes

full responsibility, being my dad. I cry out loud – it's like crying mixed with a primal scream. I have cried like this a few times the last months, it's very intense and liberating.

I've spent my life dreaming of my father loving me and being proud of me. This is because my Dutch father always bashed me as a child. I wasn't good for anything, I was stupid, he said I couldn't even boil an egg. He said it up to the point where I really couldn't boil an egg anymore, I was so insecure. He used to say: "You wouldn't recognize a cow if it sat on you!" That was my dad. He was proud of me for two whole days when I got my high school diploma. He seemed surprised to see I wasn't that stupid. Coming from this, I spent my whole life longing for a father who would love me.

My father loved his booze and he would get aggressive. I remember myself in my bed at night, praying for my parents not to fight. If they would, I'd put my fingers in my ears and cover my head with the pillow. From time to time I'd listen if they were still fighting. Mostly, I'd hear my dad yelling or speaking out loud. My mother learned a long time ago that every word from her was one too many. This could go on for hours and I've spent many nights awake when I was young. Sometimes, when the fighting got worse, me and my siblings ran from our rooms in search of safety. Fear was an every day part of my life as a child.

Back in time, September 1989. I was thirty-two and married to Arnold, my first husband. Out of the blue, I felt I had to find my biological father. I always said I never wanted to find him. I felt too good for him, because he had abandoned me. But suddenly I just had to find him. I knew his name, date and place of birth. I wrote letters to police stations and libraries in the U.S., and I eventually found him.

On May 3rd 1990 'John', my biological father, called my parents' hotel and asked for me. This was an emotional time for my family.

John started sending faxes to the hotel and my mother would receive them. My sisters Valerie and Nathalie were also there most of the times. They called me to say another fax had come in and I could hear my mother and sister still sobbing. The family was shocked, because I found my father. I kept all his letters, faxes and everything else from that time. It was a life changing experience. My identity was based on me not knowing my father and now everything has changed. It felt like everything I knew disappeared and something completely new was ahead of me, something I had longed for since I can remember.

I'm taking you back to that time by showing you some of the letters my father and I wrote to each other. This way, you can get to know him a little better. Back to 1990, an emotional time.

Savannah, Georgia, May 7, 1990

Dear Antoinette,

I wasn't surprised last Thursday when I found out I had another daughter. I think I've always known. What makes this difficult, is that my mother rejected me too when I was little. I've always hated her for what she did to me. If I take responsibility for your existence, should I hate myself too? This is hard for me to deal with, after living with a lie for thirty years.

Antoinette, it was good talking to you on the phone. I'll always remember it. It's not easy writing to you now. How can anyone justify something that can't be justified? I remember my childhood very well and it painfully reminds me of what I did to you.

Mahatma

A little history. In 1956 I volunteered at the American Army Headquarters in Europe. I remember leaving the base for the first time. I was on my way to Heidelberg when I met your mother. We spent the day and night together. I know your mother and I met on more occasions, but I can only remember one Saturday and Sunday. Some time later she told me she was pregnant. This was bad news for me and I convinced myself that another man could be the father. I don't remember exactly, but I think I considered marrying her. I was raised in the Midwest, where the men, at least this one, were very prude. I was living a double standard. It was okay to have sex before you got married, but you could never marry the girl you had it with.

I married a German woman and a year after you were born, my son Larry was born, also in Heidelberg.. Two years later, we had Lorraine. In 1960 I took my family to the U.S. My wife was very upset because she had to leave Europe and eventually our marriage ended. It was a very sad time in my life. My son was doing drugs and my wife had left me.

In the fall of 1977 I worked as a manager in a dry-cleaning business. One day, a woman named Joan, came looking for a job. I gave it to her and soon we became more than colleagues. We've been together ever since. We got married in 1979, Mary was born in 1980 and Rory John in 1983.

I'm ashamed to have denied you like this. But I'm not ashamed of you. I don't know how to say this right. It's painful to admit to myself what a jerk I've been. But I'm also fascinated by this wonderful person I spoke to on the phone yesterday. I'll try

to find some pictures to send to you. Can you send me some too?

Your father.

Savannah, Georgia, May 10, 1990

Dear Antoinette,

First of all I hope you got the package I sent you. The concept 'you' touches me deeply. As deeply as all my children being born, my wedding days and all that can be related to happiness or ecstasy. But at the same time this concept is very sad. Just like when my foster parents died or when my first wife left me. I feel all these emotions when I think of you, and I do that a lot.

Know that I'm happy, so very happy! And sad, so very sad. Because of a choice I made a long time ago I wasn't able to pick you up when you fell, or hold you when you were hurting. Less than nothing, because I even denied your existence. Antoinette, I know now the tears your mother shed over me. I realize the shame, the despair and humiliation she had to go through. This is justice. You get what you give, and I got all of it back, all of it.

You called, I called and I'm wrecked with emotions. Your fax scared me a little, because maybe you won't come. I can't blame you, if I were you, and you did to me what I did to you, I would never want to see you. Until this day, I don't handle rejection very well. If I'd have the money, I'd be on a plane to Holland right now. But I have to stay here to

Mahatma

take care of every day life. Although I must say I haven't the last few days.

I don't deserve the right and I don't deserve the chance, but I love you.

John

Savannah, Georgia, May 13, 1990

Dear Antoinette,

I think about you all the time. You coming here is good for me, because now I have to face myself, with all of my negative aspects. It seems like God has to wake me up every fifteen years to get my attention, so that maybe, just maybe I can start over in the right direction.

You've made me think of others, people I love and hurt at the same time. My tongue is sharp and my eyes can cut through steel. I'm trying to change those habits. Believe me, at my age it isn't easy.

After meeting me, you might return to Holland and never want to see me again. So be it, I will and cannot reject you again. So try to find some peace of mind and heart, and have faith that all that will come to us soon, will be alright.

It's 2AM and everything is alright. It's time to sleep now. You and I should write a book together. Would you want to do that? It would be fun. Ha, I'm a real dreamer and I'm very happy too. I'll write more in the morning.

Savannah, Georgia, May 14, 1990

Antoinette, I got your photo's. It's incredible. You look so much like Larry, your eldest half-brother. No, he looks so much like you. The same eyes, the same smile, the same face, it's surreal. It's as if you're a prototype for all the children that were born after you. The most stunning resemblance is the one between you and Larry. Another shocking resemblance I see on the picture of you on Ibiza in 1979, I see myself.

Love, John, your father.

Savannah, Georgia, May 15, 1990

Hello,

I'm worried because you don't sleep well. Pills won't work. Why don't you come here sooner? I'm no doctor, but I think you'll only feel better by expressing what's bothering you. I think it can only be done by confronting me. Letters and faxes can't do that for you. You'll have to confront me. I think you have to hit me with your (I hope) small fists. You have to curse me, let out the built up anger - pain - hate - fear - as well as love, and I think the only way to do that is by confronting me. Think of yourself as if you were a bottle of wine. For thirty two years all your pain, unfulfilled needs and things you missed have been locked up tightly in the bottle. You were more or less in control, but now something new is being added: ME, your father! This wouldn't be volatile if I'd been dead, or if you didn't care about me. But by amazing good fortune, you do care about me, we are so much

Mahatma

alike. We even look alike. This adds new dimensions to the mix in the bottle. I know you're a strong woman, but the sooner you get here, the sooner you can let go of all the tension.

Your father

Savannah, Georgia, May 19, 1990

Dear Antoinette,

If you think you're moving too fast by coming here earlier, then please don't come. Whatever you decide to do, know that you'll forever be in my thoughts and prayers. Just do what's best for you and Arnold. Whether you come, don't come or never come at all, I'll never again turn my back on you, I can assure you that. I'll never stop thinking of you for the rest of my life and I'll always be your father. John

Utrecht, May 20, 1990

Dear John and Joan,

When I woke up this morning, I spent an hour and a half just thinking. I thought about everything. I slowly realize what it was that bothered me last Friday and Saturday. Of course I was blown away by meeting you for the first time. I had good moments, and bad ones, but eventually I calmed down.

Dear John, I'm so sorry you're worrying about me. The things I'm going through are not about you. I feel at peace with you in my spirit and soul. Every

time I talk to you, you can calm me down and make me feel safe.

The problem lies with my father here in Europe. It's not an excuse, it's the truth. You denied me long ago and I've forgiven you for that. I understand now and I'm happy to have your acceptance and that you are a normal person with normal feelings. This is more than I ever experienced with my father. He didn't make me happy when I was young, but that has nothing to do with you. It helps me to get more and more aware of it all and it also helps to write about it. Don't worry, I'm feeling better! The last bit of tension I had, was not your fault, I'm sorry I scared you.

Love, Antoinette.

Utrecht, May 29, 1990

Dear John,

When I was in bed last night, all kinds of thoughts went through my head. I'll try to write them down quickly, 'cause I don't have much time.

I'll be with you in two days. I'm getting really nervous now. Please be very gentle with my feelings and emotions when you pick me up from the airport. I don't know how I'll react when I see you standing in front of me. I don't know if I'll be extremely happy, or maybe very emotional, or maybe even very angry! Anything is possible and although I don't feel it now, I might get very angry when I see you.

Maybe I'll be very shy. That's what I mean by asking you to be careful with me. Let's start from scratch,

Mahatma

with no past and just an open mind, so things can only get better. I think and hope you understand what I'm saying.

Please give me some time and don't wash me away like a tidal wave (sounds friendly, doesn't it?)

Love, Antoinette

Savannah, Georgia, May 29, 1990

Dear Antoinette,

A short note from me. I got your fax this morning. Antoinette, please don't be afraid of the unknown. Much more important is what you do know, and that is that I'm your father and we will meet. I'm very aware of your fear and I'm willing to react to your emotions in whatever way you need, even if you're angry or shy. I'm happy to set anything straight that I did wrong. Or maybe I can't, time will tell.

Don't be afraid as how I'll react to you. I'll always be positive, careful, friendly and sweet. I'll always remember the hurt I caused you, not the other way around.

Antoinette, I don't expect anything from you, except that you get on that plane. For that reason, you can expect everything from me. Relax and enjoy this new experience, whatever it may bring us. I'll do the same!

Love, John.

Utrecht, May 30, 1990

Dear John,

I received your fax this morning. I'm alright! I won't call you anymore. Tomorrow I'll be on the plane.

Love, Antoinette.

On May 31 1990 I took a plane to see my father for the first time. I remember very well how afraid I was in the plane. I felt like I was three years old and I had a pillow pressed against my belly. I was going to meet my father. The first words he said to me were: "oh, you're petit."

At first I reacted reserved, but once we were in the car that changed quickly. The first week I spent every night sitting on my father's lap, talking about myself and my life and he told me about his. I felt my heart opening up to him. I was the little girl with the daddy who loved her. My dream came true. I followed him everywhere and I had a little crush on him, even though I wasn't aware of it. My father was like a God to me. I thought he was great! I wanted to be with him, I wanted to feel his presence and the little girl inside me wanted to marry her daddy. It was confusing, because I felt like a little girl in a grown woman's body, and there were so many different feelings popping up. The little girl in me wanted her daddy to think she was beautiful, so I kind of started to seduce him, the way little girls can do. My father instantly answered these actions, seeing me as a grown woman and that confused me, because it was not what I wanted. I wanted to be his little princess, his little queen. I needed boundaries, which he couldn't give me.

On the contrary. At one time he wanted so much more than I did and I felt that wasn't what I wanted. But he was so powerful in

persuading me that eventually I let him cross my boundaries. While that happened, I flipped out of my body. I felt my energy leaving my body through my head. For the first time in my life I opened my heart to a man, my father. I could have healed my childhood pain. But at that moment I couldn't.

I let my father cross my boundaries twice. I must recognize my share in this, because besides being his child, I was also a grown woman who had fallen in love with her father. It must have been very confusing for him too.

When I returned to Holland in June, I repressed everything. I went to hell and back for three months because I missed my father so much. I felt torn, but one thing I knew; I wanted to go back to the U.S., back to my daddy.

I went back in September and I almost let him cross my boundaries again. But this time I could stop him by saying: "Touch me again and you'll never see me again." He never touched me that way again.

When I went back home that month, I repressed everything again. It's amazing how people can repress situations, like it never happened. I know now how strong the human repressing mechanism works.

Repressing occurs if your consciousness can't bare the pain. It starts in your childhood. Something hurts you deeply and it's natural to repress that pain. Even in adult life this mechanism pops up every now and then. To avoid those old feelings that still pop up in present time, people start using alcohol or drugs, or they become a workaholic. They aren't aware that the only way to solve these feelings is to really live them for one last time. If they are repressed, the original energy that causes the pain will always be there and that can lead to physical illnesses.

My repression lasted for almost a year and then I started to get black outs at work. I was working as a social worker at an emergency centre and I made decisions that I couldn't remember making later on. I made big mistakes. My repression mechanism started to ask its toll. I had to stop working, because I just couldn't go on like this. I went to psycho therapy. After the second session everything about the abuse surfaced. I broke down and I had a very difficult time. I was too ashamed to tell anyone about it, I just couldn't. My therapist convinced me to tell my husband at the time, Arnold, because she was afraid I would go psychotic. I had to tell someone or I would have gone crazy. Arnold reacted very understanding and loving. What a relief! Still there was so much pain, so much grief. I had placed my father higher than the sky and he had fallen all the way down. When I finally realised what had happened, it broke my heart.

After talking about it for about a year, I more and more understood what had happened. My head understood, but my feelings didn't. I was still filled with grief, anger, guilt and shame. Through special therapies I confronted these emotions and I could let them out so they could dissolve, in stead of keeping them locked up inside. The therapies also made me realize that I had lost myself completely in my marriage. I realized I wasn't completely happy with Arnold. As much as I loved him, he wasn't the man I wanted to grow old with. After a year, we divorced. The divorce was like a knife, cutting both ways. Arnold was hurt, but so was I. But sometimes there is no choice and I needed to do this. Just like Ton had to leave me.

All these hard times were the first steps on my way to awareness. I used everything I went through, from my childhood to my father's abuse, to become the person I am today. By doing this, I found my true self and that's something I'm still happy about. Just like the last crisis led me a few more steps towards my true self. As much as it hurts me, I will learn to know myself, my boundaries and my most inner core.

I was ashamed of the fact that my father had abused me, more so because at the time I was a grown thirty-two year-old woman. But now I can let go of the shame. I'm only human and apparently this was needed for me to open up to myself.

My father John blamed me for all of it and for the rest of his life he wasn't able to take responsibility for what happened. Later on in his life he fell ill and because he was delirious, his wife Joan found out what had happened. Even then he blamed me for it. Because of that and by Joan's saying so, we barely had any contact the last year of his life. She wouldn't let him call me anymore. When he passed away in 1998, things were not okay between us.

Back to April 5, 2000. In my session with Willem Poppeliers, my stand-in biological father takes responsibility and asks for my forgiveness. This is healing for me. I can feel it in every fibre of my body and it heals me on a very deep level.

Even though my father passed away, the energy I'm feeling now is like it's really coming from him. It's like the energy I needed back then is being given to me by the man who acts as my father in this role play. My real father couldn't give me that energy because he hadn't gotten it when he was a child. He was left in a children's home when he was three years old. He was never able to forgive his mother.

Exercise

Find a safe place to relax and close your eyes. Imagine yourself standing in front of your parents. Experience what you feel. Let an angel go up to your parents to put a hand on their heads. See how your parents change. If you need to, you can let the angel put it's hand on your head too. Imagine taking a bow to your parents, or to their destiny.

You can also do this exercise with other people that have given you a hard time.

4

Betrayal

Wednesday, April 5, 2000

Even though I'm doing fine, I still feel the strong desire for a relationship. It means I need more time to experience myself. I want to be free so I can choose to be in a relationship. Or choose not to.

Monday, April 10, 2000

I want to connect within love. If a child never learns to connect within love, it will connect within pain. Like my mother was rejected by my father John, I connected with her by letting people reject me. Dad, my stepfather, was a very negative man and he would excel in bashing people. I connected to him by being very rude and insensitive to other people. Now I choose to let these old connections go and to connect to myself and life within love. I will connect to my true self.

Wednesday, April 12, 2000

I'm sending an e-mail to Carolien. I tell her I miss her, that I think she's doing okay and That I think she's in love.

Later on I'm seeing Ton. He looks happy and he wants to talk to me. I can guess what's going on right away. He's in love – not just in love, but in love with Carolien. He's surprised to see that I already

felt it. My heart hurts. I wish them both well with all my heart, but to see those two people together really hurts. I realize that I've actually always pictured them together. Carolien and I even talked about it last February.

We used to be a tight group: Peter, Carolien, Ton and I. We even had plans to live together. Unfortunately, Peter, Carolien's husband fell ill.

He passed away two years ago.

I feel left out and discarded. But still I know they belong together and I can see that this is an equal relationship for both of them. Even though I'm happy for them, I don't want to see Carolien for a while. They will move on together in the social circle that was mine for so many years. I want to keep the love I have for myself and I don't want to lose my dignity. Carolien calls. I feel mostly sad. She was, is, my best friend and we know each other like no one else. If I'm true to my feelings, I must admit feeling a lot of grief as well as love for Ton and Carolien. Just like before, I roam the house crying all day. Doing this helps me to stay sensitive and true. I feel chills going down my spine. The coldness I had inside me is coming out. If we can keep up the relationship between us three like it had been for the last two years, then I will have risen above myself. The easy way is to end all contact with both of them. But we have been through so much together; two months before Peter died, we went to Fuerteventura for three weeks. We had one tiny apartment for the four of us. We knew Peter was dying. He was very ill at the time. Facing death from so nearby is very hard. Just like the process of dying, which we saw from up close. His last two weeks, we took care of him night and day. We were there when he took his last breath and we laid him to rest.

I'm looking at a photo from three years ago. We were on holiday with grovi's boat. Grovi, Carolien, Peter, Ton and I. Peter died two years ago and grovi died in February this year and Ton and I have

split up. Carolien is his new partner. One minute, you're all together on a boat and all of a sudden the cards have changed and nothing is what it used to be.

After Peter died, on his birthday, I gave Carolien a card from Kahlil Gibran about friendship.

This card was meant for the four of us.

This card is meant for the four of us.

This card was bought for the four of us.

This card is for the four of us.

For everything that holds us together and separates us and for that what can never be separated.

We love each other, why must we hurt one another? I don't understand life anymore. It must have a meaning, but I don't understand anymore. I tell the cosmos that it's been enough. I've been in too much pain. Let the good times begin. I told Carolien that I understand why some people can't take the pain of living anymore. If my life were to continue like this, I'd have no problem stepping out. Sometimes life can hurt too much. But I know 'stepping out' is no solution, so I choose to heal myself from my childhood pain, the pain that made my life the way it was. I can see that healing is my way to go, so I can teach others to heal too.

Thursday, April 13, 2000

Sometimes I cry out loud and I think that's what breaks me away from Ton. I don't have any hopes for us, but I do feel my grief. It means I'm still not over him. Why else would I be so sad?

My inner voice speaks to me:

You cannot run from your destiny. It is all right. Keep trusting, keep loving and be patient. You are going through this to get to your heart. It seems contradictory. The heart opens by feeling the pain that's in it. Your pain is very old. It's surfacing now.

Peter is very close to you right now. He supports you and says: "Keep the faith, little one, everything will be all right."

Chills go down my spine.

I'm in my grief. I can feel that my boundaries have been crossed. My tolerance level, as far as friendship is concerned, has been crossed. I feel betrayed and disrespected, not in our relationship the way it was for the last two years. They have crossed my boundaries and I decide to stop all contact with them.

That means that Ton can't work from my house anymore, I'll have to quit the national women's group and I'll have to stop seeing Carolien. It means I'm letting go of most things from my regular world and it's a lot to deal with. But this is right for me, I feel dignified and at peace. It also breaks my heart.

The consequences are also financial. But I trust that a solution for that will also come to me. This is the only true way to go to keep my dignity and self respect. I wish them well from the bottom of my heart, but I also know that this is a test for me to discover my own strength and value. I do this by setting boundaries. I think I'll tell Ton to pack his things as soon as this coming weekend. I feel chilled to the bone. Time to take a hot bath.

I'm not taking these measures out of resentment or anger, but in defense of my self esteem and self respect. Sometimes you have to do things that make someone else unhappy, in order to stay true to yourself. This is protecting yourself too. Do you let your boundaries be crossed, which in the end is more painful, or do you dare to set boundaries?

Mother calls me. Marc is not doing well. Marc is my only brother who lives in Holland. He is thirty-seven and he has been happily married to Esther for ten years now. They have a son, Sven. Marc had had the HIV-virus for eight years now, but until now, it never had any effect on him. Now he's fallen seriously ill and he's in the hospital. I'm writing this with tears streaming down my face. This makes me forget all about Ton. I'm also hearing about Ans, she is my eldest sister and she's my stepfather's daughter. We don't really see her as a sister anymore because of her alcohol problems and the drama that came with it. She's suffering from cancer and it has spread throughout her body. She is in the final stages of the disease. What in heaven's name is going on here?

Mother calls again. She tells me she found a pile of letters in grovi's house. Letters that she had written to her parents between 1956 and 1958. She had sent the letters when she lived in Heidelberg and became pregnant with me. After my mother hangs up, my sister Valerie calls. She read pieces of the letters to me. It's shocking! Mother made copies of the letters and she'll send them to me next week. In comparison to this, the Ton story is so trivial.

Sunday, April 16, 2000

It's sinking in to me that I'm not a loser, but a winner! The things that are most important to me can never be lost. Those things are the self esteem and self respect I recently rediscovered. When I set

my boundaries, I can feel my strength, my own strength. Strength when I tell people what is and what isn't good for me. Strength when I don't comply to everything, but let people know what I want. I feel the pain and betrayal of Ton and Carolien, but I also feel my strength.

I just spoke to a friend of mine about my fears and worries about my financial future. Her reply touched something in me. It was about living today, instead of looking at tomorrow.

There is no real future, only the one in your head. The only time is now. The future is an illusion, because you can have high expectations for it, or maybe fears, but in the end you don't know what life has in store for you. Take me, for example. Back in November I could have never thought that Ton and I would split up a month later. So there is also no past, it's just in your head, existing from memories. Memories are energy. The only time is now.

Saturday, April 23, 2000

I'm in Utrecht to visit my brother Marc. He has started to take heavy medication, it's the only thing left to help him. At the hotel I run into Pepijn. It's a good thing, we're starting to connect again.

5

Origin

Wednesday, April 26, 2000

Today I decided to sell the boat to Ton and it hurts. It's the second boat I'll have to let go of. Together with Arnold, I had a thirty-seven foot, two mast motor sailing boat, in which we planned to sail around the world. With my grandfather and Ton, I owned the 'Northern Sun'. I'm forced to sell the boat because I need the money. For the first time I feel hate. I haven't felt it before in the last few months, but now I do. I hope he drowns in that boat. I feel strongly about the boat, damn it, it belonged to my grandfather and I practically grew up on it. And now I'm losing it. I feel like I've lost so much in such short time. My husband, my grandfather, my 'daddy', my best friend and now the boat too. When is it going to stop? This isn't funny anymore!

I just talked to my brother Marc on the phone, he's not doing well. He has a fever that won't go away, he's in pain and his lungs aren't functioning properly. I'll pray for him. He is calm in all of this, but what else can he do?

In general, I'm okay, every now and then I hurt. I guess I'll survive this too. Everything that happens to me feels like a shot in the heart. Losing the boat feels no different and it really hurts me.

Thursday, April 27, 2000

I'm awake in my bed thinking about Ton and how to find a way to keep on loving him as a person. The only way I can do that, is to take responsibility for my behavior, thoughts and feelings. If my marriage to Ton was that good, he wouldn't have left. It's that simple. But still I was happy with him and I loved him, in spite of the hard times we had. If I can take responsibility for my life, then I won't be a victim. I feel like a victim when things happen that I can't handle. I can only sit and watch everything crumble.

Last night, feeling hate towards Ton for losing the boat, I was a victim. That's okay, but it doesn't do anything for me. If I stay true to myself, I have to go deep into my heart and live in love. Then I can let go of the boat, and even though that hurts, I will not blame Ton for it. I choose to sell the boat. It was my responsibility to have enough money so I wouldn't have to sell the boat. It's my life and I take full responsibility for it.

You can react in two different ways to things that 'happen' to you. You can be a victim, feel powerless and don't take any responsibility for yourself for your situation. You can blame others for what happened to you.

You can also take full responsibility for everything that goes on in your life, even though sometimes it appears that it's not your fault and you're not able to change it. Even if you had difficult times as a child, you can choose not to be a victim today. If you do that, the negative associations to what happened back then will dissolve. If you choose to stay a victim, these negative feelings will keep on appearing in your life. There is freedom for you too, no matter what you went through.

Try to find a lesson in hard times, it'll make you much stronger. Not more rigid, but stronger. You'll be closer to your true feelings, your self esteem and self respect. You'll be closer to your true self.

Exercise

Take a pen or pencil. Write down the names of the people you feel victimized by. Don't give it too much thought, just write down the names. Describe in a few words what happened and what effect it has had on your life.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Conflict</i>	<i>Effect on my life</i>

How could I let this happen, how did I create the effects? Describe this in full:

Then look at the conclusions you have drawn about you or your life. What have I learned, or what can I learn from it?
Circumstances are not important, how do I cope?

Now write down for every situation that it is your own responsibility and write down what you have learned. Then take the conscious decision to let go of being a victim and let go of the pain.

This afternoon at four I will talk to Ton and I will tell him he can buy the Boat from me and that he will have to find another place to do his work. If I accept all as it is, then it doesn't look so bad.

But sometimes it is hard not to fight reality. As long as I realize that I am the creator of my life, past and present, I can hold myself responsible. That makes it all a little easier.

Everything you do, has consequences. Not just the things you do or don't do, but even your thoughts, convictions, your way of life, the way you look at things and the way you feel about yourself.

This is all energy. With this energy you create your life and it's circumstances. That's why there is no destiny. These are heavy words, but they are very empowering. Life is all about learning.

Ever since I understand that, I can take more responsibility and that has brightened up my life enormously. Even now, writing this book, feeling all this pain, it amazes me how resilient I am and how fast my strength returns.

A lot of times our thoughts are still based on our childhood experiences. If you think negative thoughts about yourself, it will be confirmed over and over again. Your thoughts will make themselves come true. Your mind always wants to win the struggle with your feelings, and it has the power of creation. Like a broken record, you hear the same thing over and over again.

Exercise

Close your eyes, take a deep breath and let your hands gently touch every part of your body. Raise the awareness of your body. Open your eyes and answer the questions:

What negative thoughts live inside you?

Are these realistic thoughts? Ask a good friend too.

Choose to stop believing these thoughts. Find new positive thoughts to the person you are now.

Know that you can choose your thoughts! Every time you encounter a negative thought about yourself, replace it by one of the positives thoughts you just wrote down. This way, you break an old pattern and you will be ready to discover a complete new world. If you have a lot of negative thoughts just let it be. Don't fight them, just know they are not true. If you accept the fact that these negative feelings are here, they will die on their own as fast as a snowflake on a hot stove. Look at your negative thoughts as clouds. They come and go.

By looking at my life and by studying myself, my life became a lot more interesting. I can see it by just looking around me. Sometimes I hurt a lot, but also feel the love that surrounds me. Love from my neighbors, the children, my friend Maaike and many others.

From Koos and Luus, who became my “foster parents” when I moved to Enschede. It’s hart warming. I also feel love from my family in Utrecht, we grew so much closer these last few months. It feels good. I know everything comes from me and the way I feel about myself. I created this situation of love by starting to love myself. I discovered a sense of self-esteem and I want you to have it too.

You can discover your self-esteem by really seeing how beautiful you are. Focus on the good things about you, not the bad things. Everyone makes mistakes, that is just part of being human. But be aware and be proud of the good things about you as well. It is the greatest gift you can give yourself and the people around you!

Exercise

Look at yourself in the mirror. Are you looking at things you do or don’t like about yourself? Be aware of that. Focus on the good things and say them out loud. Then look at yourself in the eyes and promise yourself to appreciate you the way you would appreciate a good friend. Appreciate yourself regularly, do it out loud. You are worth it!

I told Ton he has to look for another place to work and that he can keep the boat. He is doing well, he looks happy. I feel sadness.

Saturday, April 29, 2000

I arrive at the hotel in Utrecht. The whole city is a madness, since it is the evening before Koninginnedag. I couldn’t find a parking place, so I put the car in front of the hotel. Pepijn is there and I am happy to see him again.

I ask him to take his bike and help me find a parking place. If I find one, we can cycle home together. It is okay with him. It is hard to find a parking place and we have to go all the way outside the centre of the city to find one.

Pepijn had to ride a long way back to the hotel with me. I must say I enjoyed every minute of it. He has some legs! I love this man and that is what I tell him that night. He has such pureness and warmth, I can't help but falling for him.

In the hotel we are with friends. Ria, one of our friends, starts talking about Marc and she starts crying. I can't stand it. I throw myself into Pepijn's arms and all I can say is: "I can't bare this right now". Pepijn's arms are safe for me.

Sunday, April 30, 2000

I Finally went to bed at six this morning. I slept for 3 hours and I am awake now. The city of Utrecht is celebrating and I can't rest anymore. Together with Esther I visit Marc. He is skinny and pale and his face lights up when he sees us. He is not doing well. He has lost ten pounds. Right now I can't allow myself to feel the pain about his illness. I feel it from time to time, but it hurts too much. Because I can't bare the pain, I shut it out. I still feel the love and involvement for Marc. It feels good to see him.

Monday, May 1, 2000

I have been lying in my bed awake for over an hour. I so much want to connect to a partner. I can only feel what is there: my desire, my truth. It feels sad inside.

Sad and silent. Reality hits me again: I am alone. With only myself to rely on. I feel I am starting to connect with myself. Spiritually and physically. I am admiring my big toe as if it were my lover. I look at myself in a totally new way, even my face is like I'd never seen it before like this, and I caress myself. I feel like I am screaming on the inside and the same time it is extremely quiet.

I ask for support from all loving energies around me, from Peter, Gromi, Grovi and from my dad. I feel tears coming up and I long for my father's love. The feeling of missing him makes me feel more complete. I feel the need to be with myself, inside myself. The last few days have been emotional and my head is filled with thoughts. It is a good thing to connect to myself. So this is what it's all about.

Just allowing myself to connect and ask for spiritual help makes me feel better. I don't have to do it all by myself. Suddenly I get the urge to write without thinking, it is my inner voice talking.

It is okay what you are doing. Don't think about it too much. YOU ARE BEING HELPED, NOT JUST YOU, EVERYONE. Only one person can feel it and let it in more than another.

Right now, you are learning to let go and you are being helped in many ways. Know that when you let go, you get what you need and more. Give the good things a chance to come and form. There are things man can't do on his own, divine intervention is needed. At moments like these, let go of control and surrender yourself. Letting go is essential for the energies to flow. If you don't, the energies will be blocked and all remains the same. Give it up, girl, and have faith, so everything can go the way it is supposed to.

What you are doing is good and I am happy to see you writing, it is your calling and what is supposed to be. You are right on track, even more than that. You are moving fast through the layers of life.

Be patient with yourself, be loving to yourself and have faith. From time to time, think back to the moment you felt cosmic love. When you remember that, you will know there is a lot of love around you, which carries you. You were meant to feel the love then, so you can remember and cherish it in difficult times. After all these years you get the answer to your question. The love is here for you and for everyone who opens up to it. But stay grounded, because your job is here on earth. We are here with you, we love you and guide you. Ask for help if you need it. Go to sleep, be patient, all will be well.

Love, sleep well.

What is so special is that I wrote one sentence completely in capitals, without realizing it. It feels like it is meant that way, so I'll leave it as it is. It is also remarkable that the voice reminded me of the cosmic love. I felt it one time. That was in August 1994, years ago. Ton and I lived in Rijssen. I remember one night, lying next to Ton, I heard footsteps coming up the stairs. I was not asleep, but not awake either. I heard the footsteps and I felt someone coming up the stairs. He was wearing a black hood. I was terrified and I wanted to wake up Ton, but I couldn't. It felt like that moment lasted forever. The figure approached me and literally pulled me out of my body. I fought him as hard as I could, but he was stronger than I was. I was terrified. The next moment was incredible. It was pure love, unlike any kind of love here on earth. I have never felt love like this in my life, it was so pure, words are not enough to describe it. My fear was gone. I was in the cosmos and it is the most beautiful thing I have ever experienced. I was stunned for two days. Later on in my life I had similar experiences. The thing that happened that day, is still scary sometimes, but I know now about the love of the cosmos. It is such a beautiful place, there is so much love, it is indescribable. But I know that love can be on earth too. Just open yourself up to receive

it. Ask for help and protection if you are in a difficult situation. You will receive it.

These experiences have given me a lot, because my faith in the love of the cosmos is great. As I look at my writings from that period, I find something written on August 22, 1994.

“Last night in bed I felt how full of love I surrendered in Ton’s arms. I felt his love and warmth, and I slept. I was slowly waking up when I realized what was happening. But it didn’t add up, because my back was turned at Ton. It couldn’t have been him. What a love! It was marvellous and out of this world. What a beautiful place the cosmos must be!”

Back then, I was sensitive, but I wasn’t grounded. Since a few years I have been able to connect better to the earth and myself and I haven’t had these intense experiences anymore. They are not so intense anymore. Now, I know things, I see an aura or I hear my inner voice. But I’ll never forget the love I felt that time.

If you are sensitive to energies, it is crucial to be connected to the ground. If you don’t, you “float” out of reality. You can ground yourself by connecting to your body. You can play sports, eat, go for a walk or enjoy nature. Yoga and Tai Chi are also ways to ground yourself. It is important to realize the feelings inside you.

People easily “float” if reality gets too tough. So connect to your body and experience you feelings.

I find it remarkable that this cosmic experience pops up like this and at this time. Now, years after it happened, I understand why.

I can even describe it. This is more than I ever dreamed of. By reliving this, I feel more loved. Thank you, my guides, my inner voice, you have been such good helpers.

Saturday May 6, 2000

Last night I read the letters my mother wrote to her parents, gromi and grandfather from Heidelberg. It really moved me! She must have had a very difficult life in those years. I will let you read some of it. We are going back to 1956.

Heidelberg, October 18, 1956

Dear mom and dad,

Here is another letter from me. I have a nice job here and after I visit you at Christmas, I will probably go back. I have a really cute American boyfriend. He is 21 years old and his name is John. His great grandfather is French and his grandmother is Indian. Sundays we spend walking and after that we go out to eat. He pays for it, and I don't mind because he earns five times as much as I do. (I always have blisters on my feet on Monday)

I have gained 5 pounds. That is because they make so many cake and cookies, but I am on a diet now.

Write me back soon, okay? Dear folks, lots of kisses,

Elsje

Mahatma

Heidelberg, May 15, 1957
(7 months into my mom's pregnancy with me)

Dear mom and dad,

I have been here for several days now, and I like it. I have been to confession but they have a curtain here instead of a door, so you can't see the priest. I was shocked and didn't understand the curtain was nailed and not to be moved. I almost removed it, when I realized that I shouldn't touch it.

I spoke to John. He wants to give me one hundred Deutsch Marks every month, starting tomorrow. Tomorrow is payday. He asked me if I have enough baby clothing and diapers. And when I have the baby, I could stay there. He also said he wants to see me and the baby often. He still doesn't know what to do.

On one day he wants to marry me and the next day he doesn't know anymore. I was happy yesterday, because it was a beautiful day. We sat by the river.

I told him the baby would be baptised and he said that it was the best thing to do.

He wants a girl with blue eyes, I want a boy with brown eyes.

I do hope dad will send me the money he was going to. It will pay for my hospital bill.

I will use John's money for food, but I want to save as much money as I can, because you never know what can happen.

Well, you are up to date again. I hope everything is okay with you too.

Lots of kisses,

Elsje

Heidelberg, August 6, 1957

Dear mom and dad,

I wanted to send you a letter yesterday but I had a terrible case of the flu.

Antoinette is exactly one month old, she can smile and since a few days she knows how to smile on her own. I took her out of her bed, she looked at me and started to smile. Every time she had her milk and burped, I talk to her and she talks back and even though you can't hear it, she laughs. I am so excited about you all coming here. do you know on what day you will arrive and at what time?

I am very much looking forward to seeing you. I hope you will bring a solution to my problem with you, because my place is too expensive for me. It costs 10,80 DM a week for the two of us.

Of course I am trying to get John to pay but I will have to go to court for that so I have no choice but to wait.

It doesn't matter if I am in Holland or not, the court is informed. I told you that feeding a baby takes a heavier toll on me than just being pregnant. But maybe it is because of the food, I have only one

Mahatma

cup of milk a day. No cream butter, little meat and if so then only sausage. Because I couldn't spend too much money, I didn't buy any oranges. So now I took a chance and I bought me some fruit and half a pack of butter.

When Antoinette gets baptised I want to get some pictures of her.

Even though I am here, there are many Dutch people here. You can spot them from miles away because they all look like farmers (sad but true). Please write me the moment you know when you will come. I will be outside waiting for you. I tell Antoinette that you will be here and she likes it because she smiles.

Yesterday and today she looked at me suspiciously, because I was wearing a diaper on my face to protect her from my cold.

She's getting a bit of a tan because all the beds are on the terrace outside. Dear folks, write me back soon. I long to see you.

Lots of kisses,

Elsje and Antoinette

Sunday morning, May 7, 2000

Typing these letters, tears stream down my face. My mom has been through so much. She loved and still loves me so much I have felt so rejected and unloved. But now I know the truth. My father eventually left us. My mom says he saw me once when I was a baby in the children's home.

When I was three months old we returned to Holland. We never heard from my dad again. I was born on July 3 and I was named Antoinette Maria van Oyen, my mothers maiden name and my eyes are brown. In 1998 I decide to accept my father's name and from April 13, 1999 my official name is Toine. I claimed my father's name, my birth right.

I did this after my relationship with Ton. I didn't want to have his last name or my stepfather's last name. It just wasn't right. I also wanted to forgive my father for everything that had happened. After all, I am his child. I changed my first name from Antionette to Toine (Twanne). My family was very much against it, because they felt I didn't want to be their sister anymore. Luckily, now they know just how much I am connected to them.

Sunday night, May 7, 2000

Ton took the sails and other things from the boat. My pain about this had turned from bitter to sweet. My sadness disappears quickly. Little Sanne from next door saw me and is running to me. A few moments later, little Martijn is in my arms.

At night my stepfather calls me from his home in Spain. I am totally surprised. He wants to know how I am doing and when

I will be going to Utrecht again. He'll be back in Holland next week and he wants to see me. After this call, I am dazed for as long as 15 minutes. He had never called me before, let alone from Spain! I also talk to Marc on the phone. He is doing a little bit better. The fever has gone and so has most of the pain. What a relief!

6

Explosion and boundaries

Saturday, May 13, 2000

I walk across the street from my house when I hear a big explosion. I see a big white cloud forming in the sky above Enschede. I don't know what happened, but I know it's bad. I can feel my heart racing. I go inside my house because I don't know if the cloud may be harmful. I call my mother and I tell her that something bad has happened, but that i am okay. I keep hearing explosions and the sound of sirens is everywhere. I go to my neighbours and hear from them that a fireworks storage facility had exploded in the midst of the city. We all watch TV to keep informed.

The situation is so tense that even the children don't move or talk. I feel like there's a knot in my stomach. It is like a bomb went off. The Grolsch Beer factory is close to the fireworks storage and it looks like it is going to blow up too. The beer factory has barrels with highly explosive chemicals. If they blow up, it will be an even bigger disaster. Fortunately the factory is saved, and so are we. We can breathe a little easier now. Right now 20 people died, 200 are missing, 500 are wounded and 300 people lost their homes. This is a national disaster and the government has officially declared Enschede a disaster area. Reporters from all over the world are coming to Enschede. It is impressive and so close to home! I still don't realize what has happened. Houses have been destroyed. It is hard to Imagine. It moves me and I feel sad an introvert.

Tuesday, May 16, 2000

I wake up in the middle of the night and I can't get back to sleep. I think it is because of the explosion, the situation is still very tense. Two hundred people are still missing. People start calling me to see if I'm okay. A friend of Ton's, and therefore a friend of mine, calls me. He tells me that Ton went to a party together with Carolien. A party that I'd been invited to also. He tells me they didn't understand why Ton did this and that they thought it was an act of disrespect towards me.

It feels good hearing that. I totally agree with him. He also tells me they looked very happy together. That is not what I want to hear right now. They can go to hell, for all I care!

Ton is taking Carolien into my world. It feels like a stab in the back when I realized he's living with her in what used to be my world. I have always regarded them with love, but now I can't do that anymore. Love is about respect, but right now I don't respect either one of them. I feel like I never want to see them again. Goodbye!

But that can't be, because Ton will be here to work on Wednesday. In a month he will have moved out completely and I will redecorate the room before my birthday. It feels good to be angry at them. I do hear a little voice telling me to regard them with love. But I don't listen to it. Not now. I am feeling angry and I need the time to live these feelings and the emotions that go with it.

I feel so hurt, by Carolien and Ton. In spite of everything we have been through, my friendship with Carolien is totally worthless. I've had enough. I have been writing more than enough about Ton, every word about him is one too much. I want to get him out of my life forever. Just a few months ago, I wouldn't have dreamed this could happen. Still, it is reality now.

Anger is energy, it is power. If you keep your anger inside, you also keep your strength inside. Anger is often powered by the pain of not getting something you need, or the pain of being hurt. I know this pain, I have been there and it is a good thing to feel the anger again. The grief it brings can leave you completely powerless. But in my anger I also feel my strength, self-worth and self-respect. Anger is a healing emotion, as long as you can feel it and express it without violence.

Some people can feel anger, but not the grief it comes from. It is important to get to your grief, it is empowering. By experiencing your grief, it will start to heal itself. You need both emotions to be able to get to your core power. This is the way to complete yourself.

Exercise

Put the book down and jump up and down for a minute. Then stretch your body to all sides. You need this exercise to get in touch with your body and to let answers to problems come from deep within. Now find a quiet place, close your eyes and feel the kind of emotion you struggle with. Do you struggle with anger? can you handle grief or pain?

Why can't you handle that emotion? What emotion or belief makes this emotion a problem?

Is this realistic, or does it belong in the past?

Tell yourself that you are an adult now, and that you are safe. You are allowed to feel what you feel. Accept the things you can or can't do to get rid of your emotional problem. Just let it be, approve yourself with all your positive and negative things!

This afternoon I joined three women who live in my street to sign the condolence book for the victims of the fireworks explosion. There are still 200 people missing. I felt tears coming up as I signed the book. So many people lost their houses, they lost everything in just seconds. I can feel my own pain. I also feel like I have lost a lot the last months. I feel the pain, but it is not as bad as it was before. My anger towards Ton is gone now. But I am glad I felt it. It gave me a lot of energy, even though the deepest anger had nothing to do with Ton. What he did to me triggered the feeling of abandonment I felt with my parents. I am not angry at Ton anymore, but I feel very strongly about him leaving. It is for my own good. I need my self respect and self worth.

Tonight I went to see the choir I sing in. It is in the destroyed area of town. There is police, ambulances, firemen, the army is here and I see a men in white suits everywhere. Windows barricaded, there is glass all over the streets. What seemed unreal on TV is unavoidably real now. It is four days since the explosion. There are still 110 people missing.

Half of the choir members were there. None of us live in the disaster area but we all have family or friends that do. I live the energy through the stories everyone has to tell.

Thursday, May 18, 2000

I ask Ton if he still loves me. He says: "I will always love you." It is good to hear that. But still, if you love someone, how can you hurt them so much? That is exactly what I did to my first husband Arnold by leaving him. So it is true. You can love someone and still be true to yourself. It is hard for me to stay true to myself. It feels unnatural to go my own way, and not consider anyone else. I have never learned how to do that, but I understand now how important staying true to myself is. If I don't take care of myself who will? Nobody, and secretly I blame the other person not taking care of me. This is not sincere.

My anger towards Ton and Carolien was mostly because I blamed them for disregarding me in their choice for each other. I get angry because I want to be more true to myself than I am now. If I respect my boundaries, I will find my strength. It may seem disrespectful towards others but by staying true to myself, I can be honest and respectful towards others too. But I have never learned to live like this and now it is hard to learn. Writing all this, my feelings towards Ton and Carolien get softer. It doesn't change the situation but I feel something inside. It is understanding and I am happy to feel it.

Understanding a situation makes it easier to accept it. By understanding, accepting and/or forgiving you can completely let go of the situation.

If you feel anger or ain with someone, even if the feelings are repressed, those feelings will bind you to that person.

Forgiving sets you free. Forgiving is not just something you can do for someone, it also sets you free and heals you.

Exercise

Close your eyes and take a deep breath. Connect to yourself by feeling your body, realizing where you are, how your body sits, how it breathes and lives. Now think about your life. Who needs your forgiveness?

Open your eyes and write the names down here.

Why couldn't you forgive them?

How long do you want to hold on to this discomfort?

What is the price you pay for this?

Mahatma

Make a new choice now. Decide to change the situation.
What will that bring you?

Saturday, May 20, 2000

Last night I joined a silent walk together with 100,000 people to remember those who died in the explosion. It was beautiful and impressive. Right now, 17 have died and 10 are still missing. That is 10 too many. What happened last week is dreadful.

Tuesday, May 23, 2000

I am in my bed and I can't sleep. I feel alone and frustrated about it. Frustration keeps me awake. Maybe my inner voice can calm me down. I clear my head by taking a few deep breaths. Then I hear it:

This lesson is crucial for you. It teaches you to surrender. You learn about letting go of control and to trust in love and energy.

Let it flow. Surrender to everything the way it is. Think about whatever comes to mind, don't block your thoughts. Surrender.

Don't go into the thoughts, just acknowledge them. Your thoughts are like clouds floating by. Feel your Surrender and have faith. Love will come when you are ready for it. Don't be afraid, my child, what will be, will be. Your destiny is set. Your energy will send you there, just have faith and let it go. Keep living in love and don't judge yourself, there is no need for that. Don't judge your adult self or your child self. You are a beautiful being and

your light may shine. Make mistakes, live them, feel them. Don't worry all will be alright. this is the road to connection to yourself that is where you should be. All of the frustration, fear, insecurity are bricks on the road to connection to you true self. The emotions you feel in situations are meant to be felt, meant to heal from and move on. You are so loved and you are being assisted in many ways. Love yourself, my child. You are doing so well. make it a little lighter, then everything will fall into place. Enjoy life. Now take some warm milk and go back to bed. Don't be afraid, we are here with you. We love you. Goodbye sweet one, until next time.

This calms me down. I can make the process lighter. Outside it's getting brighter too, so I take the warm milk and return to my bed. Thank you inner voice. Thank you energy of love. See you later. Adieu to those returning to bed. (I chuckle and feel better)

Tuesday, June 6, 2000

I am often in my bed, unable to sleep and I feel alone. By connecting to my inner child, I calm down. My inner child has always reached out for food from all kinds of people. It feels like she is reaching out to me now. I ask her what is wrong, what is missing, but I get no answer. This is a blessing. I have lived my life through the eyes of my inner child, reaching out to people. But as my inner child reaches out for me and I accept and acknowledge her, both our feelings of missing something disappear. I don't need to reach out anymore. But I have been reaching out for so long, I still feel the urge to do it. But instead of fighting the urge, I acknowledge it and it automatically subsides. I do fear the emptiness the disappearing urge will leave behind. I don't know what to expect and it scares me. My mind tries to talk me into trusting what I already know, even though it is

harmful to me. That is how the human mind works. But knowing this, I can make the choice to try the unknown.

If you had bad experiences as a child, you get used to the feelings that go along with them and you start to make a deep connection with these feelings. Live with negativity year after year, and you will not know how to live without it. You can't imagine that there are other feelings and what we can't imagine scares us. We like to stick to what we know, even if it's harmful. Take that step into the unknown, it will always be better, even though it scares you now. Let go of the urge to stick with what you know. Try to make yourself curious, that makes it easier and more insightful. Know that the unknown will give you so much more than the misery you are in now.

Exercise

Sit down and take a pen. Close your eyes, take a deep breath and feel your body. Open your eyes and answer these questions:

What are you still attached to?

Which negative beliefs or feelings do you hang on to?

How does that make you feel?

What do you really desire?

Which would you rather have: the pain from your past or the freedom of the present?

Monday, June 12, 2000

I am having a lovely dinner at my foster mother Luus' house. She tells me Ton had dinner with them last week. He cried for me from the depths of his soul. I hear this with tears in my eyes. I feel some acknowledgement from him for all we shared together.

Luus also tells me that Ton misses me. It feels good to hear that, since all I have seen from him lately is happiness. I feel myself opening up to him a bit more. This is the last week he will be working from my home; he will move out on Thursday. It feels good and it will take some time to get used to the new situation. Luus says I look calm and beautiful. That is exactly how I feel. I feel good inside.

7

Last hurdle

Tuesday, June 13, 2000

My sister Natasja calls me, Marc is back in the hospital. He is getting a drip, because his body can't contain food anymore. He's had a double pneumonia for several months now, but the doctors can't find the bacteria that is causing it. Marc had high fevers. I don't know what to say and I am scared. Life is back to it's confronting self. It is unpredictable. Marc's illness touches me deeply. He is my little brother, I grew up with him and I love him. I feel alone all over again. I miss Ton, Pepijn, my grandfather and my father. My heart feels torn. This feeling slowly spreads through my body. At the moment my deepest emotion comes up, I feel the longing for a partner. But since I am alone, the feeling ends in emptiness. I embrace the emptiness. I learn to bear this feeling. The pain that I feel towards Marc leads me to the longing I have for Pepijn. I thought I'd left it behind me. Well, I didn't.

I cycled for 15 kilometres. The weather is good and I am feeling better. Suddenly I realize that what attracts me to Pepijn, is a mirror image of myself. The beauty I see in him, is inside myself too and by recognizing that, I can complete myself instead of needing someone to complete me. I find a lot of strength in this.

Everyone around you reflects you. The things that attract or repel you are things that are inside of you. These are mostly things you don't know about yourself. That is why you are attracted or repelled by them when you see them in someone. Both good and bad things are reflected.

If you realize that everything you see around you is a reflection of you inner self, you will know that if you change your inner self, things around you will soon change too.

Exercise

Who annoys you?

What is annoying about that person?

In what ways does this reflect you?

How does that feel?

Thursday, June 15, 2000

I'm glad Ton is leaving today. Pack your things and go! If I hold on to my ego, then I feel hurt like the little girl that is abandoned. If I am in touch with my adult self, the energy changes. In this energy I can accept and let go. It is about love and freedom. I asked Ton to take good care of the boat. I still care for it.

I'm having a food old cry and write day. I call Carolien and we cry on the phone. It hurts her to see that her happiness hurts me. I want to change the feelings I have about Ton and Carolien. I want to look at them with love and respect and I am asking for the universe to help me. I am happy and glad I called Carolien. We agreed to meet next month. We'll talk more then.

Ton is downstairs, packing. It is over. Our grief will separate from here and we will be on our own. There is still love between us and I am happy about that. This is the real goodbye. This is rock bottom. I feel sad, so sad. I thought I worked through this. The grief I am feeling surprises me. All I can do is let it be.

Friday, June 16, 2000

Here we go again. I can't sleep, again. I have been turning for 2 hours now. Drops, pills, nothing works. I just took a shower and I cried. I felt so alone, so terribly alone! I took a pillow and held it like it was my father. Amazingly I cried one last time and then calmed down.

Saturday, June 17, 2000

I'm in Utrecht with my mother as I am writing this. Marc is not doing well. The doctors have found the bacteria that's causing the

pneumonia, but Marc keeps on having high fevers. Last night I couldn't take it anymore. I cried my eyes out. Pepijn was at work at the reception and he held me, that was nice. I just couldn't take it anymore. Life is very hard again right now.

Esther, Marc's wife and Marc's son Sven are here too. I will stay at their house tonight. I want to try to spend more time in Utrecht with Marc. I feel that my family needs me here. I need to be here for myself too.

I spoke to my other sister, Ans, on the phone tonight. She was drunk and crying. I told her that me and mum would look her up the next time she is in the hospital. That calmed her down. She is home now, and she is drinking like she always has, in spite of the spreading cancer in her body. I don't know how much time she has left. I guess time will tell.

Wednesday, June 21, 2000

Marc is not doing well. He has severe fever attacks that destroy his resistance to diseases. His lungs are getting worse and today he had a demanding lung exam that can cause bleedings. I pray like never before and I don't know what to think about all of this. The whole family is afraid he won't make it. The last few nights I spent at Esther's house. That was nice. Now Esther's mother is with her, so I'm back with my mother.

Friday, June 23, 2000

Marc is doing better. He was given new blood to get rid of the pneumonia bacteria. The fever has come down and I think he'll make it through. I will visit him with my mother this afternoon.

Saturday, July 1, 2000

Marc got through the roughest time. The fever is down. We are safe for now and the whole family is relieved. We have been so stressed about this.

My birthday is on July 3rd and I have decided to celebrate it. I am sending everyone an invitation. I want to party all weekend.

Monday, July 3, 2000

It's my birthday. Last night at midnight Esther sang me a birthday song. We were already in bed and my mother sang along on the phone. I'm the birthday girl!

Wednesday, July 5, 2000

I cleaned, and cleaned some more. I cleaned so much I think even the house itself was shocked. It hadn't been cleaned like this for a long time. I'm having my party on Saturday. My house will be filled with 30-40 people. My family will stay in a hotel nearby and the rest of the guests will be staying at my house. It's going to be lots of fun.

Saturday, July 8, 2000

Together with Maaïke and Luus, I clean Ton's old room by burning sage. It is a ritual. I'm able to feel genuine love for Ton. Love and gratitude for everything he gave and taught me. Tears stream down my face as I experience these feelings. I feel I am letting go of the pain and anger that was still inside me. I feel clean now and I am ready for the day ahead.

Guests will arrive from 2 o'clock, and my father, who is in Holland for a while, will also be here. That is a miracle all by itself.

Sunday, July 9, 2000

We are celebrating today. It is amazing how many people showed up. I will always remember this day. My whole family is here, as well as far away and nearby friends. It is crowded and sociable. People who have never met before are chatting like old friends.

My father, who seldom visits birthdays and who has killed many party's in the past, is having the time of his life. Even Marc and Esther are here. I am really happy to have Marc here, because he is still recovering.

Almost everyone is outside and everything feels good. We dance in Ton's old room to get rid of his energy. This room is ready for redecoration. I feel like this birthday is a new mile stone in my life. I don't need a relationship anymore, my life is okay the way it is.

Monday, July 10, 2000

Today I am going to redecorate the empty room by putting my desk in there so I can write.

Wednesday, July 12, 2000

I am writing in my "new" room. Every now and then I look outside at cows walking by. It is inspiring. I love this room and by moving some cupboards and my desk, the whole house seems to have changed. I love myself, my life and my house.



Found my balance

Sunday, July 16, 2000

I'm home after a weekend in Utrecht. I am happy, confused and silent. It's about Pepijn. I saw him at the hotel last Friday. He reached out to me. He asked me to join him to a trance party in Amsterdam. It would be my first trance party.

I met him yesterday in Amsterdam. It was nice and relaxed. We talked and connected better than before. We cleared up misunderstandings and we shared stories. It was nice. Around 5 o'clock we went to the Amsterdamse Bos. There were big tents with music everywhere. It had been raining so we were walking in the mud. My sisters Nathalie and Valerie were there too, with their friends.

We were in a group of 15 people. I liked being there with my sisters, our bond is stronger than ever. Pepijn and I came here together but we went our separate ways during the evening. We had a few drinks together and he started opening up to me. We were in a tent without music when he asked me to come sit next to him. I did and we didn't let go of each other for three hours. It was a miracle.

He called it caressing and that is exactly what we did. The group left us and when they returned three hours later we were still holding each other tight. Wow, I feel so much love for this man. After walking for a while, we ended up in Valerie's caravan. We spent 24 hours together, and now I am back in my house.

He is still not in love with me and he doesn't want to commit. This weekend I couldn't and wouldn't resist him. It was so good. I don't know where he'll go from here. We agreed to go to another party called Dance Valley on August 5th in Spaarnwoude. The whole group will be going. But first I get three weeks of rest.

Tuesday July 18, 2000

I was awake for three hours last night. Pepijn really touches my heart. It feels like I have known him forever. I can't describe or explain it. I have felt this from January and it was confusing.

This feeling made me fall in love with him and I believed we were meant for each other. I'm happy that the situation now acknowledges my feeling. I don't know what will happen next. I don't expect anything, I have no hopes. The only thing left is love. I feel silent, a few tears, the pain is gone. I am letting go. Learning to let go.

It's okay, things are the way they are.

It's okay the way it is.

There is peace.

There is acceptance.

The coming out of Me.

I surrender.

My will, my will,

is quiet and still.

Friday July 21, 2000

I am thinking about staying away from Pepijn, because he breaks my balance so easily. For now I will take the challenge. Why do things the easy way, when I can do them the hard way?! Maybe I'm fooling myself, but it is okay. I will take the challenge. This way I can keep

in touch with Pepijn and I can learn to stay balanced. I am learning step by step, just like a child.

I stand, I fall,
I get up an fall,
I take some steps and I fall
and I know, I will learn it all.

Saturday July 22, 2000

The lesson I am learning is to stay true to myself and to find happiness inside myself. Because I have always felt empty and I was looking for completion outside myself, I was always turning to men to do that for me. The moment I commit myself to someone I immediately start to disconnect from myself. I have been looking for love in the wrong place. It is inside of me! So as long as I get fooled by a handsome face, I am bound to lose myself.

In the first months of your life you engage in a symbiotic relationship with your mother. You feel what she's feeling, it's like the two of you are one. If there is love coming from your mother you will be in paradise. In the womb you didn't have to do anything but just be and receive the food that automatically comes to you.

The urge for unity that you have with your mother, comes from the universe of unity and love. The place you originally come from.

The urge for love and unity is imprinted in your cells. You may not always realize that, but it is always there. But what is also inside you, is the fulfilment in your absolute core. On the way there you will encounter all your unresolved feelings. Acknowledge them, learn from them and get closer to you core. That is where the love and unity are that can give you peace.

Exercise

Put the book down and focus on your belly. Breathe and feel your belly move. Answer these questions.

What kind of emotion or feeling do you have?

Make contact with it by breathing and send the air there. What colour and shape does it have?

Who do you connect to this feeling? Just let your thoughts flow.

Now visualize an angel spreading light and carrying the weight of your burden. What changes now?

I have been searching for this paradise of love and unity my whole life. I gave myself away, hoping to find true happiness. Instead of

Mahatma

reaching out to men, I am going to reach in to me. Instead of giving my all, I will have to restrict myself.

Saturday July 29, 2000

I am in Belgium now, at the Marckhoeve, to assist at a training. During the break I feel I'm connecting to myself and my feelings. The feeling that stays, is desire.

My lips want to be kissed,
my body wants to be touched,
my heart wants to be cherished.
I feel my desire.

My desire for a man.
I feel my femininity,
with all that I am.
I feel my desire,
my desire for connection,
the desire of my heart.

The days here in Belgium are good for me. Today is the last day. I have felt strong the whole time, but now I am weak.

I walk around with my heart that's been hurt. Every now and then something or someone touches it, and I feel the pain. That is a good thing, because the pain needs to be felt before it can heal and I can let it go.

Wednesday August 2, 2000

I am at home taking a bath, when something special happens to me. I feel like I am being carried by the energy, the cosmos or God. I

feel I am not alone, never have been and never will be. I am being carried by the cosmos, which is also inside myself. It feels liberating. I can merge with my divine core.

Thursday August 3, 2000

I am having dinner with Luus and Koos and we talk about Pepijn. Luus, the loving mother she is, opened my eyes. No matter how much I desire a relationship, I shouldn't settle for anything less than I want or need. that is what I have been doing. I realize how I am selling myself short. I am still focused on an illusion. I have a date with Pepijn this weekend, but in spite of my new way of thinking, this weekend will be all about my desire. I have decided that this will be our last weekend together. Continuing to see him decreases my self value. Besides, I want a man that wants me too. If I don't do this, I will get stuck in my pain and it will keep on repeating itself. No more of that. I deserve more. Maybe I will feel bad for a few days, but that is the price to pay. I know I will feel better in the long run. Setting myself first will always pay off. I am going to Utrecht tomorrow and it is going to be a lovely weekend.

Friday August 4, 2000

I'm at Pepijn's house and I give him my goodbye letter. His eyes are filled with tears. I won't back down. He is sad that I am breaking up with him, but he says it's okay. I have heard this before. I don't think he believes me. But I have never been more serious.

Saturday August 5, 2000

We are at Dance Valley together with 60,000 people. It is a specatacular sight, seeing all of them dancing as one. We manage to

get our group together. We start with 5 people, but soon there are 15. Sometimes someone leaves or joins the group. I stay with Pepijn. We are back together. I feel his energy reaching out to me and it makes me feel calm. I submerge in this feeling. I love being with him this way.

Sunday August 6, 2000

I am back in Enschede. It is over with Pepijn and me. I can't go on spending nights with him when I know we can't be really together.

It is not enough. Even though it hurts and I feel empty inside, I know I made the right choice. I chose myself. I didn't break contact with Pepijn, but I broke the illusion I had about us. My illusion of intimacy with Pepijn is gone. In a while I expect us to be close friends.

Wednesday August 9, 2000

I feel the longing, I have been dreaming of Pepijn for 3 nights, and last night I also dreamed of Ton and Carolien, and of John, my father.

There is a lot going on in my subconscious. Right now, I feel like a woman with silent grief and a big desire.

Grief and other emotions come in layers. Every time you feel an emotion, you think it's dealt with. But in another situation you will find another layer of the same emotion. Several times I thought I had dealt with Ton and Pepijn, but the emotions came back, some of which I didn't know I had. There is no telling how this process goes. It can surprise you every time.

Friday August 11, 2000

I am feeling better. At 9, my neighbours kids, Amber, Sanne and little Martijn will come to my house, so I am starting my day well. Pepijn is fading from me.

I am glad about that because it is been hard getting him out of my system. I am going to Marc and Esther today, they have rented an old farm by the water in Drenthe.

Wednesday August 16, 2000

Marc is doing well. Since he's been in the hospital, he has gained 20 pounds. Pepijn was on my mind a lot. Esther was trying to drive me crazy by saying his name all day long. I think it helped a little. She said his name so many times, that I got tired of thinking of him, so I calmed down. We, Esther, Marc, Sven and I play games. We win and lose. We read and swim. This has become an unexpected holiday.

Tuesday August, 29, 2000

I'm in my bed and I am having an experience. I am not sleeping, but I am not awake either. Suddenly I feel Ton's mother is with me. She passed on 3 years ago. She asks me to forgive Ton. I used to get scared form these energies, now I am just surprised. Shortly after, I fall asleep.

I am at home and Sanne comes skipping in. She is on my lap as I'm typing this. I love my neighbour kids. Next to my computer there is a bed I made for Sanne, she is exhausted. She falls asleep. It is calming to watch a child sleep.

Wednesday August 30, 2000

I got up early today and I am jogging through the woods. It feels good. When I am jogging, I like to make noises. Today it is some sort of yelling. A deep raw sound feels like it comes straight from my heart. It sounds like anger mixed with grief. I feel my inner child is crying out. Tears run down my face. I let it be, without actually starting to cry. The noise and the pain are here and they need to come out. I thought I was alone in the woods, but judging by the looks on the faces of the two men I encounter, I was wrong. But it's okay, I feel I am healing and that is what matters.

Friday September 1, 2000

I have been in bed for hours and I still can't sleep. There is a song called "Zeg me dat het niet zo is" (Tell me it isn't so) that keeps playing in my mind. I feel the fear of my inner child. Then I hear my inner voice, speaking clearly to me.

*Someone is watching over me,
someone is leading me,
someone is carrying me.
I can hear his voice,
I can feel his love.
Someone is watching over me.*

Sunday September 3, 2000

I am jogging again and I let sounds leave my body. After 10 minutes I roar: "Mama, mama, mama, where were you!" The whole time I was jogging, my mother was on my mind. I know now that this is old pain. Pain from me as a baby and a child, the child that was forced to cross her boundaries by her biological father. Back then

I felt the same way: “Mother, where are you? please help me!” Of course my mother wasn’t there at the time and she couldn’t help me. I can’t change the past, but I can reassure my inner child and tell her that I will never leave her. This makes her more and more relaxed. I feel rich, knowing all this. I know what I know and I am sure of it, because I have been learning very consciously. It gives me peace.

Today I am with Ton’s father. I hadn’t seen him for a long time and he is happy to see me. I will always call him “pa” because we get along so well and I am like a daughter to him. I tell him about the nightly visit from his late wife asking me for forgiveness. Pa is having a hard time because Ton left me. The message of forgiveness wasn’t just for me, it was for him too. He should forgive Ton too. I see a tear coming down his face as I tell him this. Pa is living out his life, he is ready to pass on. I told him his wife would be waiting for him. My inner voice then starts speaking of love and forgiveness.

Tuesday September 5, 2000

I am driving from the east of Holland to the west. For the first time in a long time I am feeling my own personal freedom-peace, happiness and freedom. The pain of losing my illusion is behind me. I think about my mother and me. I am happy to be here on earth.

Dear mom,

Thank you for my life,
thank you for all you have given me.
I embrace life,
completely.

It is healing for me to reconnect with my mother. This connects me to my femininity and adulthood. A woman can find her strength through her mother. Just like a man connects himself to his father. If you can make a stable connection with one of your parents, then you will be able to stand strong and independent next to a partner.

I used to let my world revolve around someone else. I lived my life according to him. This had changed now. My world revolves around me now. My feelings come from inside myself, instead of reading them from someone. I am happy with my life the way it is now. My life feels colourful and fulfilled.

Exercise

Close your eyes and focus on your breathing. Send these breaths to all parts of your body. Take your time. Then, answer the following questions. If you are a woman: what is the connection with your mother like? If you are a man: what is the connection with your father like?

Can you honour him/her as your father/mother?

What can you do to fully accept your father/mother as a parent?

What are the issues you can let go now?

What will bring you?

9

Goodbye

Sunday September 17, 2000

It feels like my professional life has evolved. I have matured and I can put my qualities to work again. I thought of the name Spirit Coaching for my practise. The name came up strong from deep inside. I can feel it throbbing. I am finding my balance, I can feel myself maturing.

Thursday September 21, 2000

I am meeting Carolien soon, but I am not sure if I'm going. All the anger and pain is directed at her. I am jealous. She has my husband, my things are in her house. She moves around in my world, I call her and tell her how I fee. She says she wants to see me anyway. I talk to Ton for a moment and I tell him I miss him sometimes. His reaction is so cold. He tells me it has nothing to do with him. This hurts! He still moves me and I walk through the house crying. Fortunately I have friends, so I cal Maaike. We decide to make road kill of Ton. I like that thought and it makes me laugh. The good thing is, that the anger I had for Carolien is back where it belongs, with Ton.

If you are angry with someone, you can really lash out to them. But it is possible that part of the anger is because of someone else. You are so angry with someone because they triggered pain from your past. In my case, I still felt dependent on Ton and I was afraid of getting angry with him.

This anger had to come out. With some people it causes physical problems, some people redirect the anger to where it doesn't belong. I got angry with Carolien, when in fact I was angry with Ton.

Ton touched my old feelings of rejection. It is okay to be angry at him for hurting me, but I do have to heal the pain by myself. If the pain is accepted, lived and let go, You will see that there are a lot less triggers to set it off.

Exercise

With whom are you angry?

What person from your past made you just angry?

Talk to that person as if he/she was sitting in front of you. Tell him/her how you feel. Let your mind go and listen to the answers he/she is giving you. Try to forgive this person and remember; forgiving heals you!

Now imagine the person who made you angry in the recent past. Talk to him/her like you just did with the person your past.

Tuesday September 26, 2000

I'm in Cuyk, where I see Carolien. We went to a motel next to the freeway. It is intense. I cry all through the first half hour. It is okay. I am also angry, even though there is more grief. This time I feel like we are equals, but I haven't felt that before now. We connect. We love each other. But there also is still a lot of pain. One thing that has never gone is our humour. We can laugh at the pain together and we laugh at my mother and father projections that brought her and Ton together.

We talk about Ton. We talk about the way he can still touch my heart and how I protect myself by keeping more distance. She tells me he still loves me and she hopes we can all be friends again one day. I hope so too. but in a while. I had decided to leave the national women's group, but I think I will reconsider. I might as well join the ride, I can only get stronger. Joan, my father's widow, called me from the US yesterday. She met a Syrian man online who lives in Holland. She's been in daily contact with him for 6 months now. He wants to marry her and she is coming to Holland in a week. She will be with me for a week. I am thrilled!

Tuesday October 3, 2000

There is a little terrorist inside me. It is my inner child and sometimes she controls my thoughts and she harms me. She is very persistent and stubborn, all based on fear, fear of loss. She used to be my survival mechanism, her intentions are good. She wants to protect me, but she doesn't know yet that I am an adult and I am able to protect myself. I have a stuffed animal from when I was little. It represents my inner child, my little terrorist. I grabbed her, hugged her and told her I would always take care of her.

I love my little terrorist, but I don't want to do what she tells me anymore. She wants to hold on and be secure. She was in control in the Pepijn situation. She made me hold on to old feelings of fear and pain. She crosses boundaries and she lets others cross her. Dear little terrorist, hold on to the adult woman, she knows what is good for you. The last few weeks I have felt a deep longing for a child. Hormones rage through my body. When I was on holiday with Marc and Esther, I thought I was pregnant. I felt my longing for a baby, with Pepijn as it's dad. Esther got angry when I told her I'd have the baby. Unfortunately I wasn't pregnant. Apparently every woman who is about to go into menopause, has these feelings. My body aches for a child as time runs out.

Wednesday October 4, 2000

I am on the phone with Joan. Her flight was okay, but she is tired and has a jetlag. I know how that feels. i will meet her soon. She is really enthusiastic about Simon, her boyfriend. I think she is on cloud nine. I know how that feels too.

Friday October 6, 2000

My body wants to carry.
My body wants to give birth.
I am a woman.

Since a few days I have been in contact with the fear of starting a new relationship. I am not ready yet. There is still too much pain. At the same time I feel the longing in my womb.

My womb is empty.
I am a woman.
I feel my longing

to receive.

And my womb is empty.

I feel I can let go of the need for children. I know that behind every loss, there is a treasure to be found. That thought softens my pain.

Saturday October 7, 2000

Working through grief is a long road to travel. It seems like all I have been doing is suffer the past year. I know that is not true, but that is what it feels like right now. I will try to write automatically, to ease my pain.

Clear your mind and body, Toine, and don't worry, all will be well. You have to go through this before there will be room and light, that is the way it is.

We are with you, we guide you and we love you. We love you, and everyone who is going through hard times. It will be brighter, it has to, but just go through it now. Enjoy life a little more, do things you like to do. Don't worry about money, it is all taken care of. You have to hit rock bottom and you have to do that. Your life is meant to be intensely lived, and hitting rock bottom is part of it. This way, you will create a base that will carry you and others. Even though you might not have children of your own, you will be a mother, a mother to many people. You need this grief to grow. Engage this journey, it is okay and it has a purpose. In this grief you will find your biggest treasure and wealth. If you live this to your core, you will be born again out of pain, into love. Your fear of commitment will disappear. The pain and the fear will subside, give this process the time it needs. Time heals all wounds. Don't worry about your relationship with Ton. Everything will be okay with you two, because you are connected by the cosmos.

Give it time and later, much later you will be connected to him again, this time out of love instead of pain. At this moment you are transforming from pain to love. This will have an effect on all your relationships and connections. The road you must take will be long and short. There are treasures all along the way if you want to see them. Don't live in desperation, little one, life will get brighter.

This was a long writing session. It is healing to me. I feel the emptiness and longing inside. I am allowed to grieve. My body is allowed to grieve. I still feel silent inside. Maybe I should sit down for a moment, and just feel what I am feeling. Soon I start to cry a little, just enough to get my energy flowing. I cry for the child that will never be born out of me. I cry because I am alone.

I am watching myself from a distance, it is a special moment. I see myself crying and taking deep breaths. This is meditation. I am not the one who is crying, I am the one on the outside, looking at my person and seeing her cry. The observer is my true being and I make the connection with it.

Exercise

Take a look at yourself, who is reading this book now? Close your eyes and take a deep breath. Exhale. Open your eyes and answer these questions:

Who's eyes just opened?

Who decided for you to read this book?

Who is “me”?

Looking at yourself this way is a form of meditation. This gets you in contact with your true self, your core, the emptiness or the cosmos. There are many words to describe the indescribable you.

I am able to feel the love around me more than I did a few days ago. It feels good. I am aware of my “egg-timer” which has not much time left, but the emotional pain that came with it, is gone. I feel more peace and acceptance.

Tuesday October 10, 2000

I think I am having a breakthrough. It feels like I am just now ready and able to live my life by myself. I have been in battle with myself for the last ten months and I think I am done. I feel peace and content. Last night, I connected to myself and it was good for me. I was almost cheerful, so the crying was healing.

I am meeting Joan. I haven't seen her in five years. It is good to see her again. We talk about my father and everything that happened. It creates breathing room and talking to Joan helps me to leave the struggles of the past year behind me. I can also leave behind all stress

and pain concerning my father. Now I can peacefully place him in my heart, which will also give me more balance. Joan is very much in love, but her relationship with her Dutch boyfriend is bound to fail. She knows it, but she wants to enjoy the time they have. In three days she will be back on a plane to the U.S.

Thursday November 16, 2000

Life has got more surprises in store for me. This morning I was called by the Tantra institute, they asked me to join a year training tonight. It feels like I am being held at gun point. I feel my energy flow. I talked about it with Luus and after half an hour I said yes. I will be leaving for Mook tonight. This training is the same as the one Ton and I had.

Sunday December 3, 2000

I have never been more sorry about anything, but coming here. What have I done? All of the ain of my divorce is coming back to me with a vengeance.

Ton and I went through so much here. Fortunately I know the trainers and they know what it means to me to be here by myself. It calms me down. The first few days, all men frighten me. It seems like they all want something from me.

As the days went by they didn't seem so frightening anymore. I found a buddy, Daniël. He has the most beautiful blue eyes and a body like a young god. He is 32. During the session we more or less stuck together. I am in a homework group with him, together with 3 couples and 1 couple that is very focused on each other. And then there is me, with the handsome man on the compound by my side. He lives in Eindhoven and I live in Enschede, that is a considerable

distance. We meet once a month in the homework group and because the other couples are very focused on each other, we have no choice but to work together. But you won't hear me complaining!!

Tantra is all about the way you regard life, and how to let your core energy flow. Starting there, your true self will start manifesting itself inside you. It is an intense training that takes you very close to your core, your intimacy and sexuality. Sexuality is part of the core. It connects to basic things in life: do you feel lifted, can you open your heart when you are having relations? That sexual energy can be used to transport anything coming from your core.

In your most intimate relationships you will find more reflection of yourself. Everything you see in your partner reflects you. Sometimes it is not easy to see, but your reflection is always there. Your thoughts and beliefs create the outside world you live in. Tantra can help you regard life with love and to live your life from your core.

Saturday January 13, 2001

My sister Valerie had her birthday party in Utrecht last night. It was a big party. I hadn't seen Pepijn for over two months. Of course he was there too. Having been so long apart, it is good to see him again. He was talking to other women and from time to time, we spoke. Later that evening, at Valerie's house, I felt the pain. Pepijn was so far away and I was scared to go closer. It surprised me that he still touches my heart. I thought I'd left him behind me and I didn't want anything from him anymore. Esther was with him all night. At 6:30 AM I went to Valerie's house. I felt so sad, so abandoned. I felt cold and when I went to bed I shivered from the icy cold I feel inside.

10

Repetition

Sunday January 21, 2001

I figured out my Pepijn neurosis. It is a hard thing to realize it and even more to feel it. At first I thought I connected to Pepijn because of my subconscious search for pain. I know different now. Pepijn *has* to make right what Ton and my father did to me. My subconscious thought I could heal this pain by making Pepijn pay for it. Now I understand that there is no outside cure for my pain. I will have to learn to deal and live with it myself. I am not going to try to find a solution anymore. Everything really happened, my childhood and my father's abuse, it really happened. And no one can make it undone. I am letting go of the illusion that someone can save me from what happened to me. Ton left me, no one can save me!

It is true. I thought I'd left this behind me too. But it was just another layer of pain. Now, a year after Ton left me, I start to rally understand it. I gave him all my love, my safe-keeping and he let me down. Tears stream down my face. I needed Pepijn to avoid the pain of Ton leaving me. I couldn't take that pain, so I created an illusion. There is no salvation, this is the raw truth.

Wednesday January 24, 2001

I have been crying a lot the last few days. I am sitting in my car and I feel my body. It feels like the pain of my desperate inner child settled

in my body. I can breathe through this. I have the choice to dive into the emotion, or to just acknowledge them and breath through them. I take a deep breath and connect the pain to my heart. I connect my inner child to my true self. This is what it needed. The love, the love in my heart. It calms me down.

Saturday January 27, 2001

I couldn't sleep last night and I wrote:

We use relationships to find our true Self.
We use them as a mirror, to solve our pain.
The shortest way to Myself, is through Myself!
The goal is to reach Yourself and that is what
I am doing now!

The child in me screams: "I don't want it! I don't want the pain from my childhood, the abuse, the divorce or Pepijn's rejection, *I don't want it!*" This is my issue. The child in me wants someone to make the pain go away. But I am not just that child anymore. I am an adult and I acknowledge that pain. This is the way it is and I am not keeping it a secret anymore. The truth about the child and the adult woman.

This pain inside me feels dark. But no light can exist without darkness. By living the dark pain, it will melt an light will shine through. By accepting, I can heal. The child in me calms down.

Sunday, January 28, 2001

I went dancing with Maaïke in Hengelo. I met some people who are members of Centrum Leela, a spiritual group. I went to Hengelo to go dancing, but the end of the night I had made appointments to give trainings in Centrum Leela. Strange how things can turn out.

Tuesday, February 20, 2001

Today I met Tosho and Arka. They work at Centrum Leela and we get along well. I feel at home there. It feels like a homecoming!

Friday March 23, 2001

I am in Mook for the second Tantra session in the year training. I am looking forward to go there and see Daniël again. I saw him in Groningen last week and I feel there is a lot of energy between us. Even though the session has already started, Daniël isn't here. He didn't call to say he wasn't coming, I am confused. I feel rejected. I thought I felt a connection with him and now he doesn't show up. I know he is terrified of Tantra, but sill. If he quits the group now, I will go to Eindhoven myself. I will kill him! I feel the anger and frustration because he is not here. I feel abandoned.

The trainers want to talk to me. I think Daniël is here. He's not. The trainers received a call. Apparently, Daniël was packing to leave for the training when he had a brain haemorrhage. He is in a coma.

This hits me like a brick. This can't be true, it just can't be. Pain rages in my body. The loss from Ton, Peter, who was Carolien's partner, and my best friend, he died, all overwhelms me again. The only thing I can do is cry out. Daniël is only 32 years old, this can't be true. The doctors say he probably won't make it. I light up a candle for him on our Tantra altar. I cry. Strange, how I only allow my true feelings about someone when that person is gone.

Monday March, 26, 2001

Back in Enschede. I am having trouble sleeping. I think Daniël is with me sometimes, because I wake up and hear myself talking to him.

Friday March 30, 2001

I talk to Gerard, Daniël's best friend. At first Daniël was doing better and he was able to communicate squeezing hands. But he is worse now. He has pneumonia. I can't do anything. I can't even go and see him. I've known Daniël for such a short time, but I feel very connected to him. I pray and wait.

Saturday March 31, 2001

Marc just called, Esther wants a divorce. I am shocked. All bad things seem to happen at once again. Daniël in the hospital, and now this. I feel Marc's pain and my own powerlessness. They seemed so happy together. How can this be? I feel betrayed by Esther. I thought we were good enough friends for her to talk to me about this. Marc also says something about Esther and Pepijn, and that hurts. I have to take some time to think about this.

Sunday April 1, 2001

Life is hard on me again. I talked to Esther yesterday. She is in a relationship with Pepijn and she understands how much it hurts me. She thought I'd have nothing to do with her anymore. That is not true. We have been through too much together. I love her and I want to keep doing that. How can history repeat itself like this?! This is so much to handle at once, but that is the way it is. I do feel calm and strong even with all the pain for Daniël and Pepijn. I lost two men that I loved, again. This is hard. How can this be? Now I start to understand the pain I had last January. My body showed me. All the pain about Ton and Carolien is surfacing again. And Pepijn was also more on my mind than I realized. I could let him go. I was still holding on to a fantasy, an illusion. It feels like the Gods are playing with me. As if I have to do it all over again. I am screaming inside:"

Nooooo, this just can't be true!" Yes, it is true. Then the voice stops and all is silent, very silent.

In spite of everything that is happening, I feel I am not the same person I was a year ago. I can feel my strength. I am an adult woman and my inner child is crying. I feel my strength a lot, lately, also because of the fact that I started counselling groups for self-development and awareness. I stand tall doing that. I feel my strength and I am aware of who I am. I met new people in the past months and life is good to me. I am living my happiness for now. Even though I am going through hard times, there are also a lot of good things. I am enjoying life.

Saturday April 7, 2001

I am in Utrecht, talking to Marc. He is having a difficult time. Yesterday he had a fever of 40 degrees. I am worried. I hope he doesn't get so sick again. I feel angry towards Esther and Pepijn. It touches me deeply.

Sunday April 8, 2001

I talked to my sister Valerie and it helped. Esther stays with her often and Valerie tells me that Esther is having a hard time too. It takes two to make a relationship. She's right. I calm down.

Tuesday April 10, 2001

I talk to Gerard. Marc is not doing well. He has meningitis and is not expected to live much longer. I have nothing to say. I feel my heart, it is shocked. Why do all bad things always come together? I can deal with it. I feel strength. I surrender, that is the least I can do.

Mahatma

Daniël, whether you are going to die or not, I love you. Your friends and family love you enough to let you go. I can't help but to see you the way you were, the healthy man with the beautiful eyes. Life is so hard, that is how it feels right now.

Dear Daniël,

I have known you for such a short time.
Yet I know you so well.

Dear Daniël,

I don't know what to do anymore,
how to live my life.
Because if death is so close,
then living is dying too.
Dear Daniël, I don't know what to do anymore.

Dear Daniël,

I have felt your love,
saw the warmth in your eyes,
enjoyed your spirit.
Dear Daniël, I don't know what to do anymore.

Dear Daniël,

I miss you,
I love you.
I will see you again.
Dear Daniël, bon voyage.

I am in the bath and feel the well known emptiness. When I realize the emptiness is the same as last year, it calms down. It is okay now. I surrender, surrender to life.

I feel I am saying goodbye to Daniël. I feel like he is so far away. I feel pain and peace, with finally, acceptance.

Saturday April 14, 2001

I get a call and they tell me Daniël has been taken off the respirator. He is dying. It touches me deeply.

Sunday April 15, 2001

I walk in the woods and I have a beautiful experience. I feel that Daniël is still with me. He is a part of me. I carry his love and warmth inside me. I feel that Ton, grandfather and even Pepijn are still with me. They are a part of me too, they are a part of my love. They have made me who I am today.

I am forming myself.
They are a part of me.
I am coming home to myself.
This is true fulfilment,
fulfilment within myself.

I can stand tall.
Stand complete,
in my love,
in my strength.
I feel the acceptance and am able to say,
thank you for all I have encountered.

Mahatma

Thank you for all the support and love.

It is okay.

This is surrender.

Tuesday April 17, 2001

I had a rough night. I woke up at 1:30, at 2:00 I got up and went downstairs to get a candle. I lit it up and put it next to my bed. I fell asleep, but I woke up again at 4. I think Daniël was with me. It is okay. I have accepted his passing on and I am at peace with it. Gerard calls me. Daniël died at 1:30. He will be cremated next Friday. I have nothing to say. I feel alone.

Wednesday April 18, 2001

I am having a hard time again. It is not just the pain of losing Daniël, I feel Peter, Ton and Pepijn too. They also left me. It is a lot to bear. It is a lot and I can handle it. I feel my loneliness deeply. My emptiness. I need a shoulder to rest my head on. But I also feel I am carrying myself. I feel my strength, I feel my pain doesn't knock me over. I still stand tall

Thursday April 19, 2001

Mother calls me. Pepijn quit his job at the hotel last week.. I am glad to hear that. It was hard to see him every time, now I can keep a distance. I can get some rest now. I don't want to see him again anytime soon. That goes for Esther as well. I need time to heal my wounds. And again I choose love. I will talk to her again, but I need time.

Friday April 20, 2001

Daniël is being cremated. It is hard. There are pictures of him everywhere, he was so handsome. Candles everywhere. Daniël is honoured. The body in the coffin is not Daniël anymore, anyone can see that. Daniël has left a long time ago.

Saturday April 21, 2001

I am on the Tantra day with the homework group, and Daniël isn't here. I feel mentally and physically ill. The others help me through it. We take time to say goodbye to Daniël and that is nice. We have his picture on the altar. He is with us. The day turns out to be okay. Daniël, you were my buddy, you are my buddy, but still I am letting you go. My life goes on. It is supposed to be like this. As the day goes by, I start to feel better. I never expected this, because I thought I had a stomach flu.

Everything you go through emotionally, leaves a physical imprint. Everything you don't heal with, settles itself somewhere in your body.

The unprocessed energy finds a way out, mostly through the organs. This can make you physically ill. Pain is a cry for attention, a cry to see the mental pain that causes it. Be gentle to your mind and be gentle to your body when it is in pain. Your body needs you to live the emotions, and the physical pain will mostly disappear.

Monday April 23, 2001

Pepijn is fading in my heart. I sent him this e-mail, to get closure for myself.

Mahatma

Dear Pepijn,

Sometimes you don't know why things go the way they do.
And suddenly,
after a long time of hardship, you know.
Sometimes the hardship hurts so much
and it is the only way,
it just has to be that way.

I am writing this to you to get closure for myself.
I feel like we have travelled a long road together,
and now this road has come to an end.
With love, I want you to have a good life,
with Esther or anyone.

I want you to live in love.
I want that, and I am giving myself that too.

If we never meet again,
know that I love you from my heart,
and that I am at peace with the way things are now.

It feels good, this is a door I can close now. I believe that time heals all wounds. If I think of Pepijn now, I remember the good things we had and it puts a smile on my face. I am glad to remember the good things. Even though it has been a tough month, I feel I am doing well. I am enjoying life more. It is as if I am opening up. It feels good to get back in my strength so quickly. My strength and independence are growing.

My story started with Ton and I am ending this part of the book with him. Ton, the man who left me 18 months ago, he broke my heart. Ton, who I've been married to for 6 years and who is living

with my friend Carolien. Ton, the man I loved so much, and still do. Ton, who I don't speak to anymore. I still feel the pain of losing him, and maybe I will for some time. I give it time, because time heals all wounds.

His leaving me brought me a lot of good things too, because I have been given the chance to transform old feelings of pain and emptiness into strength and beauty. I never thought I'd be ending the first part of my book by telling you anyway. "I thank you, Ton, for all of the beautiful years we had together. And thank you for leaving. I thank myself for turning it into a good thing." I feel like a long road in my life has come to an end. I travelled the road searching for connection. I found it, the connection, the satisfaction was inside myself. I went through the process step by step. Falling down and getting up again. I have come to a new road.

Part Two

Fulfilment

Life is a merry-go-round

At this moment, I am happy. Happy with myself and my life. I think this summer will be great. I am looking forward to it. I am leaving all of the pain and misery behind me, it is time to enjoy. That is what I will do.

Thursday, April 26, 2001

My sister Valerie calls me. Ans, our eldest sister, is not doing well. She's been in the hospital for some time now. I saw her there last week. She is skin and bones. I don't know how much time she has left, but it isn't much. I feel powerless. There is so little I can do for her.

Koninginnedag, Monday, April 30, 2001

I am in Utrecht at the hotel because it's Koninginnedag. Esther and Marc having breakfast. I join them, but I have nothing to say to her. I just can't say anything. I admire Marc for keeping his cool. I remember myself being just as cool shortly after my divorce. I wanted so much to be his friend that I kept my cool every time. I saw him. I know now that you have to let go first, to heal, and maybe later reconnect in true friendship. Marc is convinced that Esther will come back to him, I know that feeling too. It takes time to realize it is over. Marc's pain, his inability to understand, I recognise it and it touches me deeply. It connects me to another layer of pain I still had about this subject. The layers peel off like an onion. Every time

you think you are done with certain feelings, another layer surfaces. Allowing the pain is like peeling off another layer. It is the only way to get to the core. Esther is back at the hotel and I decide to talk to her. Ignoring her drives me crazy, so I will talk to her. I tell her how much the situation bothers me. I tell her I wish her well, but I need time.

She is doing well. She seems very happy, while the rest of the family is still getting over the shock of what happened. She tells me how much in love with Pepijn she is, and that they have chosen to be together. It cuts me like a knife. But this is the way it is. I acknowledge her politely and I am glad that I can acknowledge my own feelings too.

I am at the hospital with mama, visiting Ans. It is not certain how long she'll live, but I think she is in the final stage. It is shocking to see her. She is emaciated, but her legs and feet are swollen with fluid.

Wednesday May 2, 2001

I came home at 2 last night. It is good to be on quiet ground and to get back to everyday life. Everything takes time to settle down. Being alone is only hard for me when difficult things happen, like last month. But generally I am happily skipping through life. I am doing well.

Friday May 4, 2001

Just some random thoughts:

I am my body

and I am not.

I am my emotions

and I am not.
I am my feelings
and my thoughts
and I am not.
I am infinite energy,
infinite love.
That is what I am.

Saturday May 5, 2001

Yesterday I guided another group at Centrum Leela. It is fulfilling. I see how much people want to change. After years of therapy, I know that you don't need to change. I teach these people to find themselves. I feel blessed working with people this way.

If you want to change yourself, it means you disapprove of the person you are now. By mind and body control you teach yourself new tricks. Don't change, but accept yourself. Accepting yourself is relaxing and healing.

You are who you are for a reason. Everything you do has a reason, maybe it was to protect you once. Become aware of the reasons why you do the things you do, so you can choose different. Awareness and acceptance are the keys to happiness.

Exercise

Put the book down and close your eyes. Relax your body, be aware of it, and let your body move the way it wants to. Make some noises too. Grinding, growling, it is okay. Then open your eyes and answer these questions:

Mahatma

What issue inside your body or soul is hard for you to handle?

In what way did you resist or punish yourself for having this issue?

What has that brought you?

Find positive ways to look at, or handle the issue.

Describe them here.

Fill in the blanks:

I do _____ and that is fantastic.

I look _____ and that is fantastic.

I think _____ and that is fantastic.

How does it feel saying these sentences out loud?

Friday May 11, 2001

Today I am with the national women's group, Carolien is also a member. We are at my house at this time. It is hard for me to see Carolien again. She tells me that she and Ton are moving to a house in the woods. This was also his dream when we were together. I have mixed feelings. It touches me, but I accept it as well. She tells me about the boat and that grandfather has his own place there. That is nice to hear. She also tells me about the pictures of Peter, grandfather and me she has hanging next to each other on the bulletin board. I am surprised. I tell Carolien about the pain I had this past year, because Ton acted so cool towards me. She sees it quite differently. She says he wanted to take some distance, so he wouldn't hurt me anymore. That is not what it felt like, but this is a new positive thought about old pain and I will keep it in mind. It is clear to me again how differently people react to the same situation.

I realize that her interpretation of the past year with Ton is very different, yet just as valuable as my own. I feel a healing connection with Carolien. The weather is beautiful, it is 25 degrees and we go to a lake nearby. Our group has 6 women, we are loud and we are enjoying ourselves. It still feels special to share all this and being together. At 7, the girls start going home and I feeling pain in my eyes. Carolien will be going home to Ton and his family, that used to be my family. I feel a deep pain coming up.

If you ever had difficulties that you dealt with, the pain can still surface now and then. The difference will be that every time the pain occurs, it will be easier to accept it and you will bounce back easier. So I trust and know that this pain will end soon and everything will be all right.

Tuesday May 15, 2001

Tomorrow I will have lunch with Ton. He wants to give me the horn of the boat. The horn that was blown so many time by gromi and grovi My feelings for Ton have softened, especially after I talked to Carolien. Tonight I had dinner with Toshō. Toshō and Arka, the men from Centrum Leela are living very much in the present, the here and now. Both are into the transpersonal and I find it very appealing. There is no “me”, just consciousness, energy and eventually nothing. I feel my mind protesting, my ego is too proud to let go.

Your ego is like your personality, the way the world sees you, your body, thoughts and feelings. Of course we are much more than that, leaving all this out, only energy remains. This energy is your Source. It is what leads you through life on a deep level. Everyone regards the Source in a different way. Call it love, light, God, Nothing or All. We all refer to the same thing. It is beyond comprehension it cannot be understood.

Your mind thinks it can control everything. If it could, we would all be happy. Life can't be controlled. You can never start the healing process if you start from your ego, your personality. If you do this, you will get stuck in old convictions and survival mechanisms. The more you connect to your true Self, the Source, the more your head will relax. You will start living, in stead of surviving.

Exercise

Look at your house, or the place you are now. Connect to an animal or a plant, or go outside. Be aware of the miracle that is called nature. Everything grows. If you have focused on a child, animal or plant, be aware of it's love, and the miracle of it's being. Be aware of the miracle that is you. You were born into this world. You are alive, breathing and able to feel. You are a miracle!

I keep meeting people that are nice to be around. It makes my life filled and rich. I am living in the here and now more than I ever did. Thank you Ton, Pepijn, you were my most important teachers this past year. I have never been more eager to learn in love. This is important for me now. I learn a lot, all in love. I am grateful.

Wednesday May 16, 2001

For this first time, I am at Ton's new practise in Hengelo. We will have lunch in a moment. He is happy and I can take that. I am even happy for him, and also from the love I have for myself. We walk to the restaurant and during lunch, he cries. In a strange way, his pain is satisfying for me. I can feel my own energy flow too. I can relive the pain I had last year as if it happened yesterday. I felt abandoned. I realize now that I always had a place in his heart. It is soothing to know this. Then I get really tired. Healing can take so much energy. I write a speech about saying goodbye, to tell to the Leela group on their last meeting, and I realize I am saying goodbye to a lot of things myself.

Saying goodbye to the pain, the sore divorce.
Saying goodbye to my struggles, my anger,
my grief of losing Ton.
Saying goodbye to the child with it's drama's,
my life with it's drama's.

Mahatma

My heart is getting softer.
My life feels so full, so rich.
All this just from my own strength.

I am out with Arka and I become aware of the fact that I am pleasing him, in stead of feeling what I feel and doing what I want. I feel his feelings and I tune in to them. Slowly I start to understand what my problem with men is. To adjust to a man, means disapproving of myself. I will become some one I am not and I will degrade myself. But I won't disapprove myself anymore. I tell myself that I am doing okay the way I am. I don't disregard the urge to please. Suddenly I start to cry. Tears of emotion. I am allowed to be who I am. I am still not perfect. It is okay, it is who I am. I will probably never perfect. But what is perfection? I am okay the way I am. I am approving myself. I am who I am and that is perfect!

Thursday May 17, 2001

It's been a long time, but today I am with Pa Timmermans, Ton's father. This week is all bout Ton again. I am mourning his loss, but it doesn't feel like mourning. It's soothing and healing. The pain is gone. Everything settles down and I find acceptance and peace inside. This is my last night with the women's group. It is beautiful and touching. I feel very good. As I work with the group I feel my love energy flow and how I can share this with everyone else.

Life is a merry-go-round
it has its ups and sometimes
its downs, but still
life is a merry-go-round.
Enjoy the ride,
before you know it, it will be over.

Enjoy everything that will come and go.
Life is a merry-go-round.

Sunday, May 20, 2001

I am going to Utrecht in a minute. I am going to visit Ans in the hospital. The doctors have told her she won't get better anymore. We already knew. Nobody knows how long she has to live, but I think it won't be long. I want to see her one more time.

Monday, May 21, 2001

It is nice to be in Utrecht, but it isn't easy. I talk to Marc and his pain touches me deeply again. When I go to his house to pick up some of my things, I feel grief all through the house. Marc is having a hard time. He is very angry with Pepijn, he would like to kill him. I don't want to see Esther, maybe that will change, but for now it is the way it is. There is a lot going on in my family. My mother decided to stop working at the hotel. After living in the garden house behind the hotel, she will be moving. My sister Natasja will stop working at the hotel too. She will move to Antwerp. My mother managed the hotel together with Marc and Natasja. This new situation shocks the whole family. It is okay, sometimes things have to change. New energy. Esther triggered the new energy flow. I saw Ans at the hospital this afternoon. She won't accept that she won't get better. It is hard to see her pain and fear. She doesn't want to talk about it. I feel powerless in helping Ans or Marc. I wish I could do something, anything. I am in the bath and I am aware of how vulnerable and sensitive I feel.

My belly is very sensitive,
my heart aches.
And.....I am not this person.

Mahatma

I am watching, feeling and observing.

I am the one watching myself.

I am the one observing.

I realize that I only have to observe.

If it touches me, it belongs to me.

I just need to be aware.

I don't have to live the drama anymore.

Friday, June 1, 2001

I coached another group last night and for the first time there were more men than women. They surprised me, because they want to continue as a group. So I decided to go along and to keep coaching them.

Friday, June 8, 2001

I am in Mook for a tantric session. For the first time in all the sessions I have had, I didn't go into my drama. The drama of the child inside me, with all of her pain and all that she misses. Daniël is here with his energy, but the pain of losing him is solved. I put his picture on the altar. We paid our respect to him by singing AUM three times. It is okay now. This morning when we were meditating to start the day, I could feel Daniël's presence. It was peaceful and loving. I felt complete acceptance. He is within love, the light.

Sunday June 10, 2001

I slept in my own bed again. It is good to be home. My mother calls me. My sister Ans is getting worse. She doesn't eat anymore. I am speechless. Dad is coming over from Spain. Ans will probably die

one of these days. I have considered going to Utrecht, but I won't. I am tired, emotionally and physically. Ans doesn't want to see anyone and she is been aggressive this last week. Everybody dies in their own way. This is her choice. The only thing I can do is send her energetic love and ask for help and guidance for her. I can also feel acceptance. Her hard and painful life is almost over. The suffering will end. She will get a small and sober funeral, with just the family. I don't feel sad that she is going to die, I just feel speechless. I light a candle for her. Every time someone dies, it strikes me. It makes me realize how fleeting life is. Last week, Ans had a fighting spirit and she was even aggressive. Now she is dying. I just don't understand death. Death is like birth, it effects you deeply. You are being effected by the miracle of life. Death lifts me on to a higher consciousness, far away form everyday futilities. Death makes me see the restriction of life and so many other things we fail to see because of our narrow-minded every day life.

Tuesday, June 12, 2001

I haven't heard from mom yet. It is special to see that when someone dies you automatically start thinking of other people who died. This morning, I thought of Romeo, my sister Valeries' son, who died on March 3, 1996. He was 5 years old and he had leukaemia. After years of illness he finally got a clean bill of health. The next moment he was dying, I can remember him being just as angry as Ans was, a week before he died. As small as he was, I could feel his anger. I think back to the moment of grief I had because he died. I think about Valerie's and my family's suffering. At that moment I was taking a bath and I started breathing my grief. I focused on the pain in my heart. I was so mad at the whole world. How can it be that such a beautiful young boy must die after so much suffering? It couldn't be true, but it was. When I was breathing in my despair, I felt a door in my heart open. I suddenly felt a lot of love and I realized

that the source of the worst pain is love. I had reached my Source. From that time on, I could accept his death. I also remember being at Valerie's house when Romeo was lying in state there. It had been so good for me to be there. It was so sad, but he was also so beautiful. Just like Peter when he died. No matter how sad it is, death has also a certain beauty. I'm glad to have experienced this beauty.

If you start breathing more deeply, without pausing, you take in more oxygen. You can come in contact with feelings that you have repressed at one time. You will come in deep contact with yourself. First you feel the pain, or grief, but after that, there is always love. This way of breathing can help you to let go of your ego and start living from you Source.

If you have never done this before, it is better to do it with someone who can guide you, Breathing this way is known as Rebirthing.

I just called the hotel and spoke with my sister Natasja, Ans is still alive. I light a candle for her. She might live for a few more days, because her heart is strong. Dying can be cruel. We all want her to be relieved of her agony. The only relief is death. No one in the family is really sad about Ans dying. It is the only way we can feel. She lived such a destructive life. which destroyed all respect and love between her and the rest of the family. I do love her, from my love within and because of the pain she is in. I love her because she is a human being, not because she is my sister. That is painful, but it was meant to be. She was always full of ideas and plans, but they never worked out. She has had help more than once, but it wasn't enough. She made her choices and lived her life. It was meant to be.

Wednesday June 13, 2001

Tomorrow I will go to Utrecht with my friend Maaïke. First we will visit Ans, if she is still alive and later on we will go to the hotel, to my sister Natasja's birthday party. After the party i will go to the Marckhoeve in Belgium, to assist my last group.

Thursday June 14, 2001

I am walking out the hospital, feeling torn. How can I leave Ans behind to go party with my family? It is horrible. She is in her bed, emaciated. I expect her to die soon. She was surprised that I left. That hurt me. I don't know what to do. I am caught in the middle between Ans and my family. They want me with them too. But how can I leave a dying person? This is no time to party. I am in pain and guilt for leaving Ans. Maaïke is with me and she supports me. We will go to the hotel for now. I might decide to go back later. I ask the universe for guidance. Please let me do the right thing.

I decide to stay at the party. The family knows how I feel and they help me to get over my torn feelings. I had to make a choice, and I chose life. We sail on a boat through the canals and I enjoy the moment, right next to the pain.

Friday, June 15, 2001

I was going to go to the Marckhoeve, but I am still at the hotel. I am going to the hospital and later I will decide what I am going to do. It is horrible to see Ans struggle. Today is a good day, though, and she recognizes me. She keeps asking me to take her with me. She want to get out of the hospital, she is so afraid. It hurts me so much because I can't help her, I can't save her. I can only be here with her. I really don't want anyone to go through the same thing as Ans, but

this is her choice, her life, and I respect that. I can only choose my own life. Natalie is here for about fifteen minutes, then she leaves.

It is six o'clock in the evening when my mother arrives at the hospital. Ans is just getting a sedative to calm her down. I see her slipping away and I feel death is slowly approaching her and taking over. I am glad because she deserves to be at peace. Her face changes, she relaxes and her breathing slows down significantly. It is a relief, she is finally able to surrender. Surrender to death, it is coming for her. I can see life fade from her body. It is time for her to be in total peace and rest. I expect her to die tonight and that is a good thing. She is peaceful now, and it is time for me to go. I am happy I was with her all day, because if I hadn't been there, she would have been all alone. No one should be alone at a time like this.

I am back at the hotel and I am very tired. I am staying here another night. If Ans is still alive tomorrow, I will visit her again. For now, I need my rest and I feel that Ans is resting too.

Saturday June 16, 2001

Ans passed away peacefully at 5:30 this morning. I feel the relief. For her, for me and for the rest of the family. I am so happy to have been with her yesterday. I feel like I have made a huge difference and everything has fallen into place. Now I can go to Belgium. I am not torn anymore.

12

Closure

Sunday, June 17, 2001

I am at the Marckhoeve again, assisting. I am having a hard day. Yesterday I felt so powerful. Right now, I am in deep contact with my grief. I feel the pain in my eyes. They saw death, and the struggle to defeat it. At the time, I felt strong and I didn't realize the impact it had on me. Now I feel my tears. It touches me deeply and I feel many things going on in my head. It's as if all the information it contains, is being rearranged. It is good to be here in Belgium. I need warmth and there is plenty of that here. The only thing I have to do, is be here. I feel that just being where I am and surrendering is part of my strength. If I open up, it gives others the chance to do the same. I don't dwell in the drama anymore. If tears come, then so be it. No more, no less. I would never thought the death of Ans would touch me so deeply. It is confronting and makes you reconsider your own life as well. I can embrace life. I breathe life. I feel strength in my weakness. I am.

Tuesday, June 19, 2001

On my way home, I stopped at Centrum Leela today, to see Tosho and Arka. I needed warmth and they have plenty of that. It's lovely to have such caring people in my life. It is good to be home again. I am tired, so tired.

Wednesday June 20, 2001

I am feeling somewhat lonely. The emptiness is back. I am not surprised, because this last week was so intense and I saw many people. I calm down and embrace the emptiness. I know the emptiness, it is a part of me. I love it too. It feels like a soap bubble that I can pop at any time. I just decided to write a funeral oration for Ans' cremation. I feel like I need to close this chapter properly. I expect the words to flow from my pen, and I will read it to everyone at the cremation. Doing this, I can express my feelings and create room in my heart.

Saying goodbye is honouring the significance someone has had in your life. If you properly say goodbye, you will be at peace with the one who is gone. Without closure, it is possible that that person, or any other situation or emotion you had to say goodbye to, will keep popping up in your life. It subconsciously drains your energy. There are several ways to say goodbye. It is possible to say goodbye to someone who died a long time ago. you can do that with a ritual. You will soon feel that there is more room in your heart.

Exercise

Close your eyes and feel your body. Become aware of your feelings. Breathe towards them a few times. Stay in contact with your feelings, open your eyes and answer these questions.

Who is no longer a part of your life, but still manifests him/her self in your everyday life?

What needs to be said, or forgiven?

What do you need to completely let go of him/her?

You can write that person a letter, and burn it after you have written it.

Ans,

A life filled with pain.
A life filled with struggles.
So many struggles,
so many missed opportunities.
That is how it looks from outside.

Ans,

She died the way she lived.
She died in pain,
struggling.
I am glad I was with her
on her last day.
I was able to support her,
I was there with her.
To share my love,
when I am in so much pain.
Just to be human.

Mahatma

I hope that somewhere, beyond our consciousness,
out of the ruins of her life,
something beautiful will emerge,
in which she can move on.
That she learned the lessons,
that life had taught her on earth.
So she can move on in love and awareness,
move into the light.

Friday June 22, 2001

I am in Utrecht, Ans' cremation is over. It was a beautiful ceremony. Marc and I spoke and Valerie picked out the music. It touched everybody. There was one of her friends to pay his respects and it felt good. He had also been there for her when she had her hard times. He knew her in a different way than the way we knew her. It is good to close this situation with Ans like this. I am leaving in a minute together with Marc and Sven, to go to the campsite in Spaarnwoude.

Saturday, June 23, 2001

It is strange, being back at the campsite. I was here with Pepijn a year ago. Marc bought his own caravan and it is right next to Valerie's and Nathalie's. Tonight I will sleep on the exact spot that Pepijn and I sat on last year. If I'd only known.....It feels like I am processing certain things by being here. I think back a lot to last year.

Monday, June 25, 2001

Back in Enschede. I did a breathing meditation. I could feel that death was still inside me. Because of Ans' death, I came to my own "dead" place inside. I could feel myself resisting, when I heard my inner voice say:

Let love guide you.

That was beautiful, because it made me realize that I'd lived my entire life based on pain. Pain from my childhood. Life was hurting. Now this pain is fading. More and more, I can choose life. Living from love.

I realize more and more that everybody is looking for love. For the rest of your life, consciously or not, you will be dealing with the things that went wrong in your childhood. I believe strongly that love is the source of all that we do. Sometimes it is distorted, because of childhood pain that we have connected to it. If your parents, whom you love, abuse you, you will connect the love to the pain. They almost become one.

Exercise

Close your eyes and breathe. Feel your belly move and become aware of the feelings it holds. Do this for a few minutes, then open your eyes and answer these questions:

Who do you love the most and in what way did this person hurt you?

How has this effected you?

What feeling did you connect to love?

Find out which of your arguments touch base in your everyday life, no matter how superficial the touch is. Look for proof and focus on that.

Tuesday, July 3, 2001

It is my birthday and I am having a party in Utrecht with my family. We are having a good time. My sisters and my brother bought me a ticket to Mallorca, to visit my father. I have wanted to do this for a long time, and their gift leaves me speechless and moved. I called my dad immediately and I am definitely going there. I have always associated my dad with negativity. I am scarred by the way he treated me, and maybe because of this, I treated him with negativity too. He is of old age now, and I want to get to know him as an adult. It can make me see what is really true and what has become truth to me.

Thursday, July 5, 2001

I am having another birthday party, this time in Enschede. There are about twenty people here and I am enjoying it. The weather is splendid, so we are outside. Tosho gave me the biggest and most beautiful bouquet of red roses I have ever seen. I feel loved.

Saturday, July 7, 2001

I am with Ton's father today. He is getting skinny. I feel like he is come to the last phase of his life. We talk about dying and it

comforts me to hear that he is ready and willing to go. Material things do not matter to him anymore.

The things he's always worked for so hard, have lost their value. It is easier for him to let go. I remember the terrible struggle Ans had when she was dying.

It is good to see that Ton's father has accepted his fate. This is a totally different way of dying.

Natasja calls me. She booked a flight and a camping spot for me. On August 9, I am flying to Mallorca.

13

Duality

Thursday, July 12, 2001

In a few moments, I am going to Satsang with Arka and Tosho, for the time in my life. Satsang is an Indian word that means: gathering in truth. The man who organises this meeting has discovered his true nature, he manifested himself. I am happy to go there with Arka and Tosho. I absorb their warmth and love.

Friday, July 13, 2001

The satsang has only a few people. Philip Renoir is living from his Source very consciously. He sits in front of the group. Anyone who has a question, can ask him. Through his energy and his answers, even through the questions he asks you, you are led to your own truth or Source. It is a special experience. Suddenly, my head feels very heavy and I feel pressure on my third eye, the place between my eyes on my forehead.

I ask Philip how to break the patterns that keep coming back to me in my life. He tells me to break them by connecting to myself and my true nature. If I am in my true nature, I can look at these patterns. He asks me: "who are you?" Who am I? I can't answer that question, I feel confused. Then Philip asks: "Who is the person who is feeling confused?" Suddenly I speak out: "That's me." I feel my energy, my truth. It goes far beyond the boundaries of my mind and body. I feel the endless space. That is who I am. That is my truth. I am so

happy to feel so strongly and I realize I have done this before. When I am working I experience my true nature. I react in a primitive way, without thinking and I am pure and present.

I am becoming more and more of the work I have done the last decade to heal myself of all the pain, the need to heal completely. To be honest, I wanted to be perfect. I have come along way in healing my inner child. I have more peace and balance already of my personality completely. Even people who have manifested themselves, still have their personality.

It is not about getting rid of your personality, it is about accepting it the way it is, but at the same time being aware that you are so much more than that.

From your true nature you can look at your personality and laugh about it. Laugh at all the stupid things you do, because your personality tries to find happiness in its narrow-minded way.

You can't find happiness in your personality, happiness is in your true nature. The more you learn to live from your true self, the more happiness it brings, no matter what the circumstances are.

Everyone has a personality, and by recognizing that, you can get inner peace. There is no need to change your personality anymore to make a change in your life. If you accept your personality, you won't have to place people above or beneath you. Even if you are enlightened, you are still not perfect because you have a personality.

By realizing this, you will discover your self worth and you will see that you are a human being, just like everybody else. Thank your personality for everything it comes up with, everything it feels and does. By protecting you, your personality has made it possible for you

to live in this three dimensional life. Laugh at your personality, but also honour it for what it has done and still does to get you through this life. The power lies in the cooperation between soul and ego. The ego is the spokesperson for the soul. The space it creates is space of the Soul. The soul alone can't speak out. A body alone is not enough. You need your personality.

Exercise

Put the book down and move around the room like you have never done before. Go crazy and allow yourself to do that! Make enthusiastic noises and enjoy it. This is something you don't do every day so you will be breaking your normal way of living. This way you create space in yourself, that gives you inner freedom. Just do it, go crazy. You can laugh if you want to. Pick up the book and answer these questions:

Who do you place above you? Pick someone close to you who you know well.

Give five reasons why that person is better than you.

Give five reasons why you are at least as good as him/her.
(this may be in other things than the person)

Close your eyes and see this person and put him/her at the same level as yourself. You are worth it

Thursday, July 19, 2001

Grief has its hold on me again. Tosho is with me and I share my grief with him. I feel that a part of me feels completely lost here on earth and doesn't want to live anymore. Tosho asks me who doesn't want to live anymore. I feel my inner child as well as the adult woman inside of me. The child that is so lost, and the woman who is tired of living life all by herself. Tosho asks: "Who is the child that feels the way it does, and who is the woman who feels the way she does?" A small miracle happens. I can feel it, and I say: "That is me". At that moment I feel like I am sinking through these feelings, a layer is peeled off and I feel calm. I have reached pure energy.

I am endless,
I am peaceful,
I am the cosmos,
I am all and I am nothing.
I am the one carrying the woman and the child.
I am the one without future or past,
I live in the present.
I am one with all,
and one with nothing.
I am.

Like magic, my pain subsides and my tears stop flowing. I understand what just happened. I engaged my drama again. The drama of being

separated, I know it so well. I can feel it whenever I want, and I can make it so real that I start to believe that it is real. I have lived with dramas like this for 40 years. They used to be my truth. My need for togetherness can be touched at any time. As long as I am by myself, I can live the pain if I choose to.

I have a choice now. I can identify myself by the way I feel and think, and by my past. But that is not reality, because my past is only in my head. I can also identify myself by looking at the truth and seeing what is real now.

That is a different place to find my happiness. There is no pain, or past in the truth, it just *is*. I know now which way to choose, even though I might get lost from time to time.

The more you can identify yourself through your Source, the place that is you, the better you will feel. It is better to live in the present, than to dwell in the past. If you live in the present, part of your ego and your old thoughts will disappear, because you have stopped feeding it with your energy. Mostly the present is a completely different reality than the past.

If you have pain today that belongs to the past, let it be, but don't let it become reality. Realize that your pain belongs to the past and that the present is very different. Live in the present and let your senses confirm this. Recognise the present and let your old feelings be what they are. This will heal you.

Therapy can help you. It made me who I am today. But it didn't give me the connection to myself that I have always longed for. I understand now that that's impossible. You can never connect to yourself by thinking, because thinking is based on duality. Based on light and darkness, joy and pain, day and night, etc. I realize that if

I want a relationship that is equal and independent, I will have to make it happen from my Source.

It will fail if I start it from my personality.

By connecting to your true self, you can heal yourself on a cellular level from anything you ever went through. Every cell in your body renews itself. Every organ renews itself in its own pace. The information in your old cells is transmitted to the new ones. If you overwrite the information in an old cell, this new information will be transmitted to the new cell. This way your body completely renews itself in about a year. You will literally be a new person. There are different techniques to get to your Source and to renew the information in your cells, like the healing Journey and the Sedona method. Satsangs can take you to your Source too, and start the transformation.

I am in bed and I wake up. I feel a screaming *no!* coming up from deep within. It feels so far away, almost like it isn't mine. But it is also very clear. I think it's my inner child screaming.

Wednesday, July 25, 2001

Tosho is with me. We went to a lake nearby earlier. It feels good being with Tosho. Not as a partner, I am not in love with him. But there is a lot of love and respect and it feels good. We enjoy each other's company and time flies by. It feels like time doesn't exist when we are together. It is special for both of us.

Thursday, July 26, 2001

I am trying to go milder on Pepijn and Esther, and I realize that there is still anger blocking the path of love. It's because I am judging

Esther for the way she betrayed me. I have felt betrayed by people before. I judged their judgement on me. And now I am doing the same. I must admit, if I were Esther, I would also do what she did. I left Arnold, so who am I to judge anyone? Am I better than her?

Friday, July 27, 2001

My night was short. I don't know why I don't sleep well. It's been like this for ten years now and I have had enough. Since two weeks, I stopped taking things to sleep. It wasn't much, but still. Now I am tired. I was up at six, back in bed by eight and I slept for half an hour. Mostly I don't mind, but sometimes I'd really like to get a good night sleep. My face is so tired, it twitches, my bones are stiff and it feels like my blood is made of thick oozing syrup. But that's me.

Suddenly I realize that my attitude is the real problem here. So what, I am tired, my bones hurt and my face twitches, so what? What is going on here? Nothing, I start to laugh. I will survive.

My day is a good one. I'm making new pamphlets and time flies by. I feel good. This is the proof that all my misery was in my head and apparently my mind still controls my feelings. If I change the way I think, I will change the way I feel. When I look at myself thoroughly, everything becomes clear and issues dissolve. There are no problems.

Saturday, July 28, 2001

I just had lunch with Ton. It is good to see him again. I regard him with more love than a while ago. More love and less raw pain. We both cry from time to time. It feels like my heart is melting and flowing out of my eyes. I felt love and admiration for him like I

never have. I still know the feeling that I wanted to grow old with him. But it isn't meant to be.

Friday, August 3, 2001

Today I am going to the campsite with Marc and Sven. I will stay with them for a week before I will go to Mallorca, to see dad. It is vacation!

Saturday August 4, 2001

I am Dance Valley again. It is an enormous dance party and I was here with Pepijn last year. I walk around and dance with Valerie and friends. I am silent inside. At midnight the party is over. As we walk towards the exit, it starts raining heavily. Almost everyone of the group I'm in is lost in the crowd. Now it's only me and three friends of Valerie's. We managed to find a sailcloth to stay dry.

It is a complete chaos at the exit. There isn't enough transportation for everyone. Suddenly, after walking for half an hour, I see Natalie standing next to her car. I am so lucky. We drive to the nearby campsite. It was a short walk from the car to the tent, but we are still soaked. But that is okay, inside the tent it is warm and cosy. Marc waited for us. Later on I found out that thousands of people had to walk back to Amsterdam in the rain. People were transported to the hospital because of hypothermia. It was a big chaos. I was lucky.

Wednesday, August 8, 2001

I am in the tent and it is pouring outside. It sounds like it will never stop. Sometimes life is unfair. Marc is here without Esther, I am without Ton or Pepijn, we are both alone, in a tent in the rain.

Friday, August 10, 2001

The one moment I am being washed off a campsite by rain, the next moment I am in Mallorca and it is 30 degrees outside. I am with dad and his partner for 20 years, Suzanne. It is hot and I am at the pool.

I am reading a book by the Dalai Lama about happiness. My father shares his opinion on foreigners. Could there be any bigger difference between us? My dad speaks about Holland, how terrible it is and I let him speak. I think he is an interesting person. He dislikes all countries and he dislikes everyone in them. He trashes Dutch people as well as foreigners.

I come home from the beach and he is on the sofa. The weather is too hot for him. I feel for him. It is hard for him, because his body is rigid.

Saturday, August 11, 2001

I am reading one of Tosho's books on Tantra. It says that my thoughts are coming from outside of me. My thoughts have been floating in the universe, waiting for me to pick them up. I decide not to identify myself with thoughts, positive or negative. I will go passed my thoughts, I am.

Being here in Mallorca, I realize that my father loves me. It is quite the discovery. He may complain a lot, but he also tries to be a good person. He smiles at me often, but I can't remember his smile when I was little. My love for him is growing. More and more I see him for who he really is. I read in Tosho's book about darkness. Hatred isn't real. It is just the absence of love, light. Anger isn't real, it is the absence of compassion. I feel like my dad sometimes tries to bring me down, even though he doesn't know it. I am not touched by it. I

even engage in his way of thinking and I exaggerate it, what makes it ridiculous. It makes me laugh and sometimes he laughs with me. Acting this way prevents a battle of power between us. I keep my self worth. I have felt put down by him so many times. But now I see him the way he is and his words don't effect me anymore. I can respect him just as much as I respect myself. Everyone has the right to be who they are.

It is difficult to have a real conversation with dad. I can listen to him, but there is no room to express myself to him. He can't handle that, but he has surprised me before, so I am slightly optimistic.

Thinking about my biological father John, I realize how much I loved him. I am a child of my Dutch father who raised me and built my character. And I am a child of John. I truly belong to John. If he were still alive, I'd have gone to the U.S. to visit him. We would have made things right. If I am able to see my dad for who he is, I could have done the same with John. But he is not here anymore and I feel my need to talk to him. Suddenly, I hear my inner voice.

*You can talk to John. It doesn't matter that he is not alive anymore.
Just talk and tell him whatever you want.*

That's true. It makes me happy. I thank the words for popping into my head. If I sink into the need, it only brings me more pain of all I have missed. If I look at what I do have, because I got to meet him and I had the chance to see our resemblances, and feel the love between us, I feel rich. Daddy, thank you for giving me life and thank you for letting me get to know you.

Exercise

Close your eyes and breathe towards your belly. Become aware of your body, from head to toe. Open your eyes and answer these questions:

What is missing in your life right now?

Who is involved?

Focus on this person and write down the positive things you two had, no matter how small.

Be conscious of your feelings. Try to be thankful for the good things you shared.

I am reading Tosho's book. Hindus say that this world is a dream. The only thing that is real is you. Now I understand why I named the first part of this book "Illusion". I was living in a dream world. This part "Fulfilment" is more about reality and true happiness.

I read more of the book, and it touched me: all experiences are imaginary. The only truth is the one living the experiences. Well, it seems like all my suffering was imaginary too. And that is true, because when Tosho asked me a month ago who the one was with all the pain, my pain disappeared. This can only happen if the pain wasn't real.

Monday, August 13, 2001

I feel a little bit drunk, but I am happy. My father, Suzanne and I are out to dinner and I've had a little too much to drink. I can hardly write straight and I hope I can read it tomorrow. I am starting to see a human being in my father. He has a strong sense of justice. He told me about his past and I am happy because I understand him better. He really tried to open up to me. I am going to sleep, I am falling over, I can hardly write at all now.

Who am I? I am the one who is not drunk. I am the one who is laughing at the drunk woman. I observe and "I am" even when my personality feels drunk. I must have had five glasses of water but the world is still spinning around. Maybe this is the truth. Maybe the world is spinning around and I am observing it. The world revolves around me. Or better yet, the world revolves inside me. My head is spinning too.

I wake up and my head feels heavy, but I am okay. I can hardly read the words I wrote last night. I think about dad. I can feel his pain and compassion and that touches me. I can see that. in his own way, he looks for the good in people. I never knew he was like that. It must be the changes in me that make me see him this way. If I change, the world around me will change too. I notice things now, that I wasn't able to before.

Thursday, August 16, 2001

I am on the beach, enjoying the sun, sea and the wind. I took Tantra books with me to read. Tantra accepts everything the way it is. It is a big challenge to live Tantra with my dad. I must accept him as my father, the man who wrote my emotional slate. I am a part of him. If I can accept him completely, I can accept myself as well. I feel I accept my father's energy as his own, but it is not the kind of energy I feel comfortable with.

If you don't accept your parents you don't accept yourself. If I don't accept my father for who he is and what he's done, then I am rejecting myself too. Everybody is a mirror to someone, especially parents to children. Think about the ways in which you resemble them. Take them as they are. Everyone does what they can, even if it's just a little bit. But still.....Accepting the outside world is accepting yourself.

Exercise

Put the book down and find some pictures of your parents. Study them and look in the mirror. See the resemblance. Feel what you feel. Can you accept these feelings? Answer these questions:

In what emotional and physical way do you resemble your mother?

In what emotional or physical way do you resemble your father?

In what way do you reject your parents?

In what way do you reject yourself?

What do you feel when you realize this?

Can you let go of the rejection and accept yourself the way you are? You are a human being, with good and bad things. Just like your parents, just like anybody else.

Friday, August 17, 2001

We had dinner in a fancy restaurant tonight. This is my last evening here and it is good. My father and I found a similarity between us. We agree that we are two totally different people. By saying that out loud, we are able to accept the differences between us. It connects us. My father and I are the two different sides on the same coin. I look at love, he looks at fear. I see the good in people, he sees the bad. This duality is also inside every person, however, this is also an illusion.

People aren't good or bad. Placing the label "good" or "bad" on someone, narrows your perspective. A person is. No more, no less.

The biggest change I feel towards my dad is that I am not scared of him anymore. I have always been scared of his negativity and aggression. He can kill with his words. When he was running the hotel in Utrecht, all of the staff were afraid of him. He almost terrorised them. If someone didn't agree with him, he'd kill them with his words. There was no room for discussion. He had no respect for another opinion. I worked at the reception for a few months and it almost destroyed me. I couldn't work for him. I am past the fear now. My purpose of being here is served. It served me well.

Parting and a new beginning

Saturday, August 18, 2001

I came home today and life is greeting me again. Ton is on my answering machine, his father is in the hospital and he doesn't have much time left. I rush over there. He is still alive and has a room of his own. His body is totally constipated and he refuses an operation. He will probably go home tomorrow, to die in peace. This process can take weeks, according to his nurse. He is bright and he looks strong. He is given morphine for the pain and his daughter will take care of him. He is at peace about dying. This is so different from Ans's struggle.

After my visit with Ton's dad, I go to the hospital in Enschede. My neighbour Irma is there because of her pregnancy. This is her fourth child. She asked me to be there when the baby is being born. This situation is so much like last year's. Then, grovi died and Martijn was born that same week. Now Ton's dad is dying and another person will be born. What is the message in all of this? I really don't know. I do feel that the situation is less intense than it was last year.

It is good to be home. I am being consumed by my life here as if I never left. My neighbour's children Amber and Sanne come rushing out to me and ask me if I have seen Santa Clause. Well, I did, and also saw a lot of his helpers.

Sunday, August 19, 2001

Ton calls me, his dad died. How can this be? He was so bright yesterday. I know he was ready to go, but it's still unexpected. I'm so happy I saw him yesterday. Ton got a call this morning that his father was getting worse, and from there things went very fast. I don't know what to say and I'm confused. It's nice of Ton to tell me so soon, but it's still hard to grasp. Life is like a waterfall again. But I'm getting used to my newly found peace. Things are going on around me, but I can still feel my inner peace. This is my strength and I'm happy to have it.

Monday, August 20, 2001

It's impossible for me to sleep these days. I'm twisting and turning in my bed, so I start writing. I said goodbye to Ton's dad by saying: "Have a good journey, dad." I didn't understand why I said that, because I was going to visit him again; I thought he would be alive until then. Now I understand. I must have known it was our last goodbye. I was the last person he consciously saw. Death is strange. It always comes when you least expect it. It can take a long time to wait for death, and just when you turn your back for a minute, it is suddenly there.

Dad is in the other world now. The world that doesn't exist to so many people, the world that sometimes is as real as my life here on earth. I'm getting to know more and more people in the other world. It makes me think about my own death, my mortality. In time, I too will go home. But I know that for now, my job is on earth. All has a purpose. But the other world can be found here too. We all are one.

I can't oversee the general cosmic plan, or its meaning, but it seems like there is a pattern. The events that repeated themselves in the last

eighteen months are too obvious to be coincidence. There is a reason, a pattern, but I'm letting go of the search for the answers why and how. My limited human abilities make it impossible to comprehend. I'm sure there is a reason for that.

Dear dad,

It is strange,
so expected, yet so unexpected.
You were ready to go.
You reunited with mom
and you were ready to leave earth.

You stood tall during your life,
you stood just as tall when you surrendered at the end.
And it was a beautiful sight.

Rest and peace.
Words that have never suited you,
you have mastered so well in your last moments.
That makes your leaving enriching.

I said goodbye saying:
"Have a good journey, dad"
That is what I want you to have,
a good journey, dad.

Wednesday, August 22, 2001

At 3:00 PM Laura is born. Labour went very well. It is a miracle to see new life being born every time. It is one of life's mysteries revealing itself. It touches me to my core and I feel the cosmos. I am

Mahatma

touched and happy to be here. Life and death are so close together.
The circle of life is complete again.

Laura,
new life,
a new beginning.

Touching to see new life
being born.
Tears in my eyes.

How is this possible.
Such a miracle,
life is utter mystery
revealing itself.

Thank you Irma and Tim,
for having me with you again.
It takes me to the mystery of life.
It takes me to myself.

Thursday, August 23, 2001

I'm saying goodbye to dad. He looks good. He never looked more relaxed. The sun is shining and life goes on. Death goes on too, that miraculous thing. It is noisy and crowded around me, but I stay calm. I strongly feel that everything will pass. Even death is an illusion. We humans can't see what is happening on the other side. I experienced the other side, I felt it through my body and I trust that it is good. Dad is in a good place. He was done living here on earth.

Friday, August 24, 2001

I feel different emotions running through me right now. Seeing Ton's family touches me. The cremation is beautiful. I'm sitting right behind Ton and Carolien, and it is okay. More and more I realize that the chapter "Ton" is closed, and that is a good thing. I'm taking another step in the process of letting go. It hurts me when the family is leaving for dad's house. I won't go. I don't belong there anymore. It still is nice to see them again. I feel warmth and love for them, and I still feel a connection, but they don't concern me anymore. I go to Toshio and cry with him. Then Arka takes me to lake nearby. I gained two new family members. That is the way it goes.

Sunday August 26, 2001

Today is open house at Centrum Leela where I coach my groups. Today is meant for people to get to know us. As many as thirty people showed up for my workshop. I hadn't even thought of what the workshop would be about. It formed itself right there, right then.

Monday, August 27, 2001

Ton just called me. I am getting a statue that he and I gave to his dad once. It makes me happy. Ton sounded relaxed and he said he want to see me again soon. Just when I'm definitely letting him go, he reaches out to me. As a friend, but still. It is special to notice how things that you let go out of love, can return to you in freedom. I've been struggling with my divorce and with new relationships. I feel like a new era is starting and it is exactly what I need on my way to enlightenment. I am no longer on the road to fulfil my ego, which I think is impossible. I am on a new road, to travel far beyond my ego with all its short comings. This way, I will be complete. My journey continues, I am going to France today. My inner journey will continue too.

Part Three

Truth

To Toshio

Because right here, right now
I love you so much.

Beyond all ideas
beyond all thoughts,
beyond the future
and the past,
is the here and now.

Through the gates of here and now
my love for you flows.
It grows and grows.

Love is growing inside of me.
I am letting go of the past,
there is no future.
Right here, right now, I love you.
Bye my love!

15

Beyond the tyranny of thoughts

Friday, August 31, 2001

I'm on vacation in France with Tosho and Arka. We're in Bussang, visiting Arka's brother Coen, who runs the Tao Centre. The landscape in Bussang is rough. There are two houses in a rough surrounding. There are many hills and trees. On one side you can see the valley. The people who live here keep to themselves. From a woman's point of view, living here must be hard. I'm glad I'm not here by myself. In these surroundings I feel the need for warmth and connection.

Arka is secluding himself and I too feel the need to be silent, shut out the world and disconnect myself from feelings and contact. I'm glad Tosho is here. It's like we are together in an air bubble. After a day of bright sunshine, the weather turns. There are heavy rainstorms. The weather fits the energy here.

I lean towards Tosho more and more. Being together releases all kinds of emotions. Old pain surfaces, surrounded by love. Our contact is equal and healing. Over the next day, I learn to appreciate this landscape for letting us go to our cores and to connect to each other. Connection in total freedom, because we don't engage as partners. We are intimate and there is a lot of love and respect,

but we are not in love. Tosho is truthful, he is very empathic and accepting. That's nice, everything is allowed to be the way it is.

I'm together with Tosho and it's like I am living in an old movie. I know the script, from Ton. My head takes over and I start to think about it. This is a bad movie. I know the story so well and I hate it. I feel powerless and unable to put my mind to rest. I had controlled it for quite a while, but now it is back. I look at myself from a distance and I see my ego struggling under the oppression of my thoughts. It feels like total terror. It totally controls my feelings and my body. I look from a distance and I become the observer.

This is my truth, this is who I am. My true self has no pain. In truth, I have never been hurt or violated.

Sometimes, a certain glance or energy can put you back in your child pain. You probably won't even notice what triggered it. You just realize you are angry or upset.

Then you know something old inside is being touched. By accepting these feelings and looking at them, you can create room.

I feel tears burning when I realize that my old drama, my life filled with pain, is not true. It simply isn't. My personality suffered, but me, my true self, is unharmed. There is no suffering in my true self. It costs me a lot of energy to make my drama true, and to feed it. I realize that this can become my life struggle, and I will never be happy. The only other way is to identify with my true self. My tears flow and I'm in Tosho's arms. I feel so safe and secure. My tears are okay. These tears represent my attachment to a pain that doesn't exist.

So there is a solution to set yourself free from the tyranny of dramas. The key is not to attach myself to the drama. I can just look at it.

I am seeing more clearly. I see how I was connected to my source when I was a baby, and how I lost touch with it throughout my life. Now I can reach my source again. It feels very natural.

Saturday, September 1, 2001

We have left Bussang and are on our way south, to visit Jan van Delden. He's a man who has manifested himself from his core, he is connected too his deepest being. He's giving a course named the Chairdance. That means we will be attending two satsangs a day. I'm curious to see what it will bring me.

I'm writing in the car. It feels good to be on the road again. I had a very good time with Tosho this week and sometimes it felt like my love for him was overflowing.

The love remains, but we are taking a bit more distance, we are keeping more to ourselves and we are open for what is ahead. It is okay for both of us. We don't choose to be in a relationship. But we do have a strong connection. We laugh and cry together and there is a lot of harmony. It feels really good. Arka has kept to himself these last days, but now he is opening up. It's the three of us again. We leave the rough landscape behind.

We arrived at Jan van Delden's in La Roussellie. How different it is from Bussang! We go from one extreme to another. In Bussang there was a lot of male energy.

Here I feel female energy. I feel completely welcome at this beautiful old place that is also in the hills.

Special things happen. I hear my inner voice, like I have heard it before:

Mahatma

Don't be afraid, your desire for truth is so big. You are being guided.

It calms me down. I realize that my ego is making it seem so big. In my true self, there is no big or small. There is no duality. It feels like a door in my head has opened, and wisdom is filling my brain. I can't stop it.

At one time, the voice says:

Have a glass of water and go to sleep.

That's a good advice.

Monday, September 3, 2001

Jan is giving his second satsang. A while into the session, my head is getting heavy and I can't seem to keep my eyes open. My head wants to understand everything but it can't keep up. I decide to let it go, it is the only thing I can do. I let myself slip away. I stop trying to understand. This is the best thing to do right now, because my mind just can't cope. I feel that by slipping away I return to my true self. The information that is relevant to me will be absorbed by my true self. My mind can't cope, but my core is taking over. I feel blown away by Jan's words. This is just the first day, I wonder how I will get through the rest of the satsang!

Tuesday, September 4, 2001

After a few hours of sleep last night, I realize that my mind was grumbling because it was tired of all the information. I know now that it's a good thing. My mind is supposed to give up the struggle of coping. I'm a step closer to my truth again. I had let Tosho go, but we are starting to see each other more often, with no strings attached.

I am happy about life the way it is going now. I shaved his head this afternoon, and he looks good. His loving eyes stand out even more. He looks like a wise monk.

If you want something, you don't actually have to do anything. Letting go is the answer, so it can come to you. It doesn't matter what happens along the way. You are who you are, no matter what your personality does.

Exercise

Put the book down, breathe deeply for a short while and take a look at your life the way it is now. Focus on the things you want to change. Open your eyes and answer these questions:

What are your goals or desires?

Imagine them as if they were already here. How does that feel?

Try to hold on to this feeling, make it a part of you. Now, let the images of your goals and desires go. You have to make the decision to let go with your feelings, not just your mind. You can also say it out loud. This way, it can come back to you, not by the force of your mind, but from the freedom of the universe. Do this exercise regularly and see the changes in your life.

Wednesday, September 5, 2001

It's getting clearer all the time. My True Self is carrying me. I'm having thoughts, emotions and physical experiences. I am the one who's observing, the one who's watching the movie that is my life.

I have a body, I am not my body.

I have thoughts and feelings that come from them,

I am not my thoughts.

I'm neither my thoughts, nor my body.

I'm universal.

I am All.

I project myself through my body and character.

I AM.

Days fly by with readings, dinners, togetherness and lying in the sun. Life is flowing and sparkling and I'm absorbing every minute of it. I live life, I am life. Sometimes I feel like I'm in a perfect triangle with these two men, whom I've grown to love so much. With Tosho I stay in the here and now. Because we don't expect anything, our connection is free to develop. No strings, just love and freedom. I don't know what tomorrow will bring us, but that's not important. The only thing that matters is the present, over and over again. I feel rich for having this freedom.

The fourth day of the satsang with Jan. I notice that again I'm trying to cope, when all I have to do to understand, is stop trying. But it's a habit, resulting from thoughts. I stop trying. I'm saving the energy. Everything I need is already here and it's good.

Friday, September 7, 2001

I'm awake every night and I focus on the silence inside me. This is who I am, this is my True Self.

There are different ways to connect to your True Self. Focus your attention on the silence inside you. It's there, somewhere. This silence is the core. Everything starts here.

You can also ask yourself: "Who am I?. Who is the one who sees me writing?" or in your case "Who is the one who sees me reading this book?". This question lets you disconnect from your ego and you will find your True Self.

Another way to reach your True Self is to focus on the here and now. Who are you right now, what's your life like right now? This can really set you straight. Often, you notice that your mind is in control. Your mind tends to focus on the past or the future, when you need to be in the present.

The more you are aware of your True Self, the better you can let go of your illusions and pain of the mind controlled past or future. If you realize that life is just a game, the drama will lose its grip.. You're letting go of your ego, to get to your core.

In the beginning you'll find your ego and its dramas protesting. This will stop eventually.

It's like pulling the plug form a fan out of the socket. It'll spin slower and slower, until it stops.

Exercise

Take a few deep breaths and become aware of the sounds around you. Focus on the inside of your body, listen to it. Maybe you'll hear your ears ringing or your heart beating. Become more aware of your surroundings. Try to imagine the universal space your inner sounds are coming from.

I don't want to do this anymore! I can't! My head is so tired. It feels like it was smashed by a hammer. I really give up now. I let my mind take over and go into my drama. Toshio is lying next to me. I put my head on his belly. The only language I can receive and understand right now is "belly language". Toshio asks me who I am and I instantly disconnect from my thoughts. I'm in my core and it's good. My head feels relieved. It can relax now. Peace at last!

Saturday, September 8, 2001

I'm lying quietly next to Toshio. What a blessing, what a joy. It's like a warm bath of acceptance right now.

Half asleep I feel something and I write it down on a piece of paper.

I am love,
I focus my love on you.
You, Toshio, are my lover.

After writing this, I fall asleep.

Sunday, September 9, 2001

It's our last evening with Jan van Delden. Tosho is lying next to me, kissing me while I'm writing this. We're going to let each other go, again. The past few weeks have been an intense joy for me. Some of this energy will stay when we're back in Holland, some of it will probably change. We'll see.

16

The madness of life

Tuesday, September 11, 2001

America was attacked today. The World Trade Center is no more. It's a nightmare coming true. The world has gone mad. I can't understand it. If everything is an illusion, then this must be one too.

It's late at night and it's difficult to understand everything. It feels like I'm in rehab from my intense time with Tosho. It felt so good, feeling our connection, love and harmony. These feelings are still here, but I let Tosho go. I can't put him in a box.

Not in a relationship box, not in a holiday love box, not anywhere. Whatever will be will be, but not now. I feel the silence inside me and connect to it. It's a rich feeling to be able to connect to myself.

Wednesday, September 12, 2001

After sleeping for two hours, I'm awake. I feel alone. I think of what happened in America and I still can't understand it. Words can't express this drama. In situations like this, I always feel lonely. I think of Joan and the rest of my family in the US.

I feel the need for connection and I miss Tosho. I miss his body next to mine. I hold myself and tears start to well. Now I definitely can't

sleep. I keep thinking. I'm trying to reach my core, but it's impossible right now. I'm disappointed, I'm getting nowhere.

Suddenly I see it, I realize something and everything falls back into place. This ego, this personality will always long for a partner, when it's alone. This is part of the ego.

But who am I? I am not this ego. Again I realize that it's about identification. If I keep identifying myself with my ego, I'll always have this struggle. I calm down. This is the answer. I can accept my longing ego, but I don't have to go into its drama. Tosho, Toine misses you, but I'm alright.

Wednesday, September 19, 2001

Tosho came here Sunday night and he stayed until Monday. It's a special thing to feel myself connecting to love when he's around. I think it's because we live in the present. It's also good to be by myself again.

I'm in my car and I look at some flowers next to me. At that time my car hits the one in front of me. It stopped to take a turn. It scared me and I feel bad about my beautiful little car. Most of the front is wrecked. At times like this, I feel the love and support from the people around me. I'm thankful for that. Later that day I went to visit Tosho and Arka at Centrum Leela. Tosho is loving as ever, but he keeps his distance. He's terrified that I might fall in love with him. Maybe I will. It hurts to see him take a distance, and I feel I have to do the same. I feel like I'm not meant to be happy in a relationship. Every time I connect to someone, the connection gets broken and the person involved leaves. What's the deal here? I'm fed up with it. I don't want this anymore. I ask my inner voice to give me an answer:

Toine be patient, girl. You're not alone, even if you think you are. We are with you and there are many people around you who love you. Your life has its ups and downs and that makes you strong. You'll experience yourself more and more. You'll discover your strength and self-worth. That's what it's about. Know that your conscious takes care of everything. That's a good thing, even when you think it isn't. Look at Tosho with eyes of love, you both deserve it. It doesn't matter in what form love manifests itself. Things between you two were good, and as long as you keep on enjoying life, it will stay good, no matter what happens. Let go of the old for something new to start. Know that things can only get better and more beautiful. Living in freedom and being able to go with the flow is a privilege that only a few have.

You fight your battles your way and you get stuck your way. But this is what you want to experience, deep in your heart.

Love can only exist in freedom. Everything else isn't love. So look at the things you cling to, and let them go. Keep up your spirit and your trust. We're here with you and we support you.

In love.

I call a friend in the US and share my feelings with him. Talking to him, I realize I was in my old drama again and by doing that, I'm back in reality at once. My sadness by instantly turns to strength. My abandonment issue is a trap that's hard to avoid sometimes. It can pop up at any time. Right now, I choose not to go into the drama. This is not who I am. I see the trap. It's here, it's okay, but I won't let myself fall in.

Every time I give in to my grief, I feed it. I'm attached to feeding it, but I'm consciously letting it go. This is what my time with Tosho has given me.

I'm happy with it now. I feel my strength and I'm grateful to Toshio for his fear of commitment. I feel rich. I send him an e-mail and go back to sleep.

Sweetheart,

You can be afraid.

You can back out.

You can react to me any way you want.

I know that I'll react to you too,
and that's also not important.

What's important to me, is the love between us.
That love can take any shape.
The shape isn't important.

What matters to me, is love.
Love can only exist in freedom.
I want you to live in freedom, but...

I can't give you your freedom.
Your freedom is yours to take.

We agreed to see each other on Sunday,
I suggest we evaluate our relationship in all freedom.
I feel calm now, strong and thankful
that you've given me an experience that made me
feel my strength.

With love, Toine

This is transcending my child pain. What happened can't be erased. The old pain wants to be recognised and left behind, I need to see that it's old. This way, I can let go. This is what I do when I go to my truth. I let go of the restrictions and I get something much bigger in return.

You can also do this by using the Sedona method. It's one of the fastest ways to change your life. The Sedona method doesn't look at your stories, or why you feel the way you do. It just focuses on what you feel and to let go of that.

We are used to hold on to feelings or beliefs. Some people do this a life time. We can also choose to let them go. Just feel your decision and execute it.

When you hold on to something, it usually gives you something. You'll see what it has been giving you, when you start to let go. Once you understand what your old feelings are giving you, you'll see that there are more positive ways to get what you want. You don't have to suffer anymore, just let it go.

If I accept my old pain as truth today, I'll keep feeding it with energy and all remains the same.

Exercise

Put the book down and embrace yourself with both arms. Pinch your arms and your legs and feel that. Breathe in deeply and let go of yourself. Answer these questions:

What feelings or thoughts do you hold on to?

How does that feel?

What would it give you if you were to let go of them?

Make a decision that comes from within. Hold on to the feelings- everything will remain the same- or let them go. It's just a decision. Don't ask your mind, it won't want to change. Ask your heart. Become aware of what you really want and make your decision.

Experience your feelings. If you can't quite reach your feelings, ask yourself: Who is the person who's feeling this? Who is that?

Thursday, September 20, 2001

I'm back for another Tantric session in Mook. I'm glad to be in a totally different kind of energy. I become aware of how fast I get stuck in my relationship with Tosho.

He's scared by my feelings for him. I react to that by feeling that my love isn't good enough. That makes me restrict myself and I keep to myself. All the traps are here again. I meddle in his things and he meddles in mine, and soon enough I lose myself.

It goes so fast, as soon as you get intimate with someone, all your old patterns will surface. I don't like the way I feel. I don't want to restrict myself anymore. I want to be myself, with all my love,

whether Tosho can deal with it or not. I call him and leave a message on his machine, saying he's allowed to be scared, but I won't hold back anymore. That's a relief.

Friday, September 21, 2001

Today we looked at old beliefs that are holding us back from enjoying our lives. I rediscovered an old belief that has had a hold of me for over ten years: "I'm not allowed to show myself." It keeps haunting me. Later that night, we have a fire ritual. I throw my old belief in the fire. I've had enough of it. How can it be that just a thought rules your entire life? It's interesting to see how it works.

Saturday, September 22, 2001

The morning session has started and I'm dancing. I dance with all of my energy and I feel good. I feel my belly and my legs. I feel Complete. Without a partner, a man, with all of my past, I'm Complete. It makes me happy. The next thought pops up: I am here. I baffle myself. *I am here!* I feel liberated and happy. It's amazing how my world can change in a second.

When I get home, I realize that it's probably a good thing that all of this is only happening in my head. It probably has nothing to do with Tosho. I don't know what he thinks or feels. It's all inside of me. Maybe I'm experiencing twitches in my brain, maybe I'm afraid. Maybe I just let my ego take over again.

I call him. He sounds calm and familiar. He's had a hard time coping with my call, because he couldn't call me back. He asks me what I want. I want to see him. He'll be here at 2PM tomorrow we'll see how it goes then.

17

Life is a miracle

Monday, September 24, 2001

I feel quiet and bewildered by my feelings. How is this possible? It's so good being with Tosho again. We talked things through. We took our first hurdle together. I was right, my mind was playing tricks on me.

The whole world is inside you. You create your own world with its pain and its happiness. You can experience all that within yourself. Knowing this, you can change the world. Circumstances are not important. Whether your roof is leaking, your car is wrecked, it doesn't matter. You can feel true happiness at any given time. You can choose to let the circumstances change your mood.

Exercise

Close your eyes and think about the things in your life that are not working for you. Make a soft moaning noise when you exhale. Take a deep breath, change your attitude and consciously decide to feel good, no matter what's going on in your life right now. Make a different noise. Feel the change in you and see that your everyday life is still the same.

If you're in pain, include it in your new attitude. Welcome the pain, no matter how strange it sounds. Only when you accept it, the pain can calm down and subside.

Things we fight against, grow bigger. Things we accept, become smaller.

Sunday, September 30, 2001

I'm with Tosho since yesterday. It's good to be with him. I experience a level of intimacy that I've never experienced before. The intimacy works for Tosho as well. It brings out a deep pain that can be healed. His connection to his pain, triggers a lot of feelings for me. I want to help him, but I can't and I feel powerless. I see that my need to help people comes from my childhood. As a baby and as a small child I felt my mother's pain and I made it my own, even though I was too young to handle it. I can give her pain back to her now, but I don't want to hurt her. So I'm giving her pain, that's not my own, back to the cosmos. I'm being healed at a deep level. A door opens and light shines in.

As a child, we want to help our parents, especially if they aren't strong and they need help. Trying to help them, makes us the parents and them the children. We lift ourselves up to a level that's a lot higher than where we should be. We can only have true strength if we recognise that we'll always be a child of our parents. This is who you are.

If you helped your parent(s) when you were younger, you are likely to have a need to help people later on in life. You want to help people, even though you may not be able to. But the biggest gift to someone with pain, is to accept that person and their pain, without wanting to take it away. This way, you both will stay on the same emotional level and you let this person get their own strength.

Tuesday, October 9, 2001

I'm with Tosho and he feels the pain in his body, that has always seemed to have been there. He connects to the emotions that cause his pain, and that touches me. I let it touch me. I feel that I don't want anyone I know to be hurt. I feel how I made my mother's pain my own. In my mind, I picture my grandparents standing behind my mother. They support her, and suddenly I can feel my mother's strength. Looking at myself, I see vulnerability. I feel like a vulnerable and sensitive little baby. I'm totally open. I notice invisible, thin, fine lines of energy. They look like the threads of a spider's web. Through these lines everything is being experienced.

This vulnerability and sensitivity are allowed to be here. I give the pain that doesn't belong to me back to my mother this time. My mother is strong enough now to take her own pain. Finally, I get to be small and vulnerable, finally I get to be a baby. At this time, I feel the strength of these three people, who carry me. My mother is being supported by her parents. This way I can be who I truly am, a vulnerable and sensitive person.

The energy lines I just wrote about, are part of the morphogenetic field that, among others, Rupert Sheldrake and Lynn McTaggart write about.

We all have a morphogenetic field around us, which allows us to absorb everything unconsciously. We are all connected this way, especially within family. Family settings are about this energy and how to use it. In a setting you can truly feel someone else's energy. This can make you see repeating patterns and causes of certain problems.

Sunday, October 21, 2001

I'm at Centrum Leela for a weekend with Noël. He gives a satsang to bring people closer to their true nature. Noël was born in Australia and he works in Europe. I sense a very strong heart energy, it touches me deeply. I sit across from him and I ask him questions. He leads me to my consciousness, to my true self. I experience my infinity and a deep inner peace. My body reacts strongly to these new impulses. It feels like I'm being hit on the head with a sledgehammer. My mind goes blank. Thinking is impossible, it's like my head is filled with cotton wool. My body feels like it's made of lead. I have to lie down. It's okay. Tears stream down my face. I'm melting on the inside, it feels so good. Whatever happens, I now know for sure that I'm neither my body nor my thoughts. Just this realization effects my body. I let it happen.

It's okay. My body can react the way it wants to, it's not who I am. My mind can protest, it's not who I am.

Suddenly I realize that I've spent so much time searching for happiness, that I forgot it's already here. Happiness is now. I can literally see it. I've been looking in all the wrong places. It's here, now. No matter what situation I'm in, my true happiness is not dependant of my ego. In this moment I experience happiness. It's not a big thing, but it feels like a gentle blessing, an inner peace. Everything I shine my light of consciousness on, has the chance to dissolve. This is true liberation and it brings a deep sense of happiness. I start laughing uncontrollably. Life's just one big show, an illusion. I've spent so much time thinking that my dramas were real. They're not, this is my truth.

It's now, the present, no more and no less. My past is in the past, there is no future. I'm grateful and I can feel I'm coming home. I'm coming home to my spiritual self as well as my physical self. My spirit has chosen this body to manifest itself and I can inhabit it completely, consciously.

Thursday, November 8, 2001

Today is my grandfather's birthday. During his life, he's always made a big celebration of his birthday. Now he's been gone for over a year and a half. Time flies. I haven't forgotten him, and I won't, because he is in my heart.

I have a small cabinet with some special things on it, it's an altar. There's a Tantric card that has been on the altar for 2 years. Tonight I light a candle and I notice the card. I open it and read it. I'm speechless. Carolien sent it on September 9, 1999. It says:

Dear friends of mine,

It's good to see you happy like this!

Big hug,

Carolien

She wrote this 3 months before our divorce, after the wedding of Ton's daughter Marleen. The fact that I placed this card on the altar touches me. I had forgotten about it. But I'm happy to read it now. It matches the feelings I had back then. We were happy, but he still left. Sometimes it's difficult to think about, but it's okay. I know I'm healing old pain.

Friday, November 9, 2001

I'm in bed with Tosho. Even with a partner beside me, I still struggles with being alone. How is this possible? I feel grief. My deepest grief of being abandoned, being separated. Tears stream down my face. Feeling this, I turn silent. Even my ego is silent. The pain dissolves again. Suddenly I realize that I know this intense silence. Eight years

ago, during a workshop, I experienced so much grief that I thought I couldn't bear it. I was alone on my bed, crying. Like a miracle, I turned silent. My grief had gone and there was only silence. I felt like the whole universe was focused on me, listening to me. I didn't understand it, but it felt soothing. At that moment, my ego dissolved, there was no *me*. I realize now that this was what I felt when I was a baby. My mother once told me that, as a baby, I used to cry much and loud, and then, all of a sudden I was quiet. I know this silence. Recognizing this, I return to the present. Now I understand why I can go quiet so easily. I know it. It feels rich to become aware of this. My grief from being separated is gone.

We mostly look for solutions to the pain of being separated, the pain of emptiness. We usually try to find it in a partner. But a partner can't give you your happiness. If they do, you'll be dependant of them for the rest of your life. You have to rise above the separation. Our deepest pain lies in the loss of connection to ourselves. This connection can be found in silence. This is rising above separation. This is who we truly are.

Tuesday, November 27, 2001

Last night I got it. Some people love apples, others love pears. Why one person likes apples more than pears isn't clear. The only thing I know is that a pear is no less valuable than an apple. Why Ton chose to be with Carolien, isn't clear to me, but I can see they are a good match.

When I see Carolien, I think: she's an apple, I'm a pear. No less than an apple, just different. Why Ton likes apples, I don't know, I just know that it's alright. It's okay. He just doesn't like pears anymore and I'm so happy that Tosho thinks I'm the juiciest pear on the tree!

Tuesday, December 11, 2001

Ton and Carolien had dinner with me at my house. Ton explained why he left. He has never felt seen or acknowledged by me. He felt like I was bringing him down all the time. I'm glad he told me this. I'm beginning to understand why he left. But it also hurts. He's blaming it all on me. He says I was wrong doing what I did. It's funny, I've been blaming him of bringing me down too. So this is just a projection.

Projection is seeing something in someone, that's actually your own issue. This happens unconsciously. If you have a positive projection, you see something beautiful in a person, but not the beauty inside yourself. With negative projections, you blame the other person while you're doing the same thing. This too happens unconsciously.

Wednesday, December 12, 2001

I'm awake in my bed, feeling angry and not seen by Ton. He blames me for everything. He says I never appreciated him and I only saw his faults. He says this, he thinks that. I notice I'm doing the same thing. As long as I focus on him, I don't have to focus on myself. This keeps me dependant of him. I feel the need for acknowledgement. After being divorced for two years, I still want to be acknowledged by him and I let him hurt me when he can't see me.

I start to realize what I have to do to stop this. First, I have to focus on myself instead of him. Second, I have to see that the pain is deep inside of me. Third, I have to accept the fact that Ton will never acknowledge me. Fourth, I need to realize that I'm an adult and I don't need him anymore. This need comes from the child within me. It's all about letting go. Ton still reflects my own issues, and I

feel rich to be able to heal myself this way. I'm starting to come out of the dependency. I go to sleep.

You can never change anyone. We try all the time, but you'll see it doesn't work. We blame each other for all sorts of things, but we forget to look at ourselves. When you realize that the other person is like a mirror to you, you'll find peace and acceptance within you.

Exercise

Close your eyes and breathe consciously for five minutes. Then answer these questions:

Who makes you feel invisible or not acknowledged?

Do you really need this acknowledgement, being the adult that you are now?

Don't ask your feelings for an answer to this question. Ask the wise man or woman within.

How is your attitude towards this person? Do you acknowledge him or her for who he/she is?

What similarities can you find?

How can you change your attitude towards this person? Don't do it for them, but look at the benefits it'll bring you.

What changes inside you now?

How does that feel on a deep level?

How can you address this person differently?

Sunday, December, 2001

I think about love and suddenly I know that love isn't controlled by the ego, even though we think it is. I love Tosho, even though he's nothing like my ideal partner.

Love goes beyond ego. You love somebody who is twenty years older, or may be married, or whatever. Love works in mysterious ways and the only thing you can do is surrender whatever partner you're with, that's the right person for you at this time. Tomorrow it can be different, it's impossible to tell. The present is the only time that matters. Love goes beyond ego.

Love connects us to people who've died. I still think of my grandfather a lot, out of love. At these moments I feel his presence. I get warm inside when I think of him I know he's with me at those times.

In truth, there is no duality. There is no me and my grandfather. There is no good or bad. There's only unity and in unity I am my grandfather and I am Ton and Tosho. We are all one. In unity I'm you and you're me.

If there is no ME to control things, the personality shatters and all that's left is Nothing, or Emptiness. This is what it's all about. In the Emptiness lies Everything. It's about going beyond duality. This is what coming home to Yourself is about. Your true Source will be where it belongs.

In the womb you are pure consciousness, you're one with your mother, your Source, your true nature. As a toddler you develop your individuality and your ego. You start to connect your experiences to your ego and you start to forget who you really are. Because your source is so far away, you'll develop pain of separation. But the separation is an illusion.

I know the pain of separation. I've written about it a lot. Now I place it where it belongs and I understand it. It was my intense desire for connection, for unity, for transcending duality. I see it and I experience it. Finally I know who I am.

It's nice how everything is falling into place. It brings a sense of peace like I've never known and this makes it easy to accept my life the way it is now. I also feel that I'm still a normal human being, with all the strange things that belong to my crazy Self!

18

Goodbye shame

Sunday, December 30, 2001

More and more I'm aware that I don't have to change anything. I just have to live consciously.

The only thing I have to do is feel my feelings and acknowledge them without going into the drama. When I believe my pain is real, I'm lost because I'm feeding it.

Your ego doesn't have to die, your mind doesn't have to dissolve. Your mind can take it's rightful place. You can let go of control. Control is an illusion anyway, because you can't control life.

Your mind can support your being. It'll serve your being instead of controlling it. Your mind can relax and you'll find more inner peace.

Exercise

Put the book down and walk around the room. Then answer these questions.

In what ways do you think you're in control?

Is that working out for you?

Are you in control of your thoughts and feelings?

How much in control are you really?

Wednesday, January 2, 2002

I'm with Tosho for a week's vacation in Djerba, Tunisia. The weather is bad and I fall ill. Our room is in a nice hotel in a busy street. I want peace and quiet and I feel myself being annoyed by the traffic. Tomorrow I'll try to change rooms. My mind tries to meddle by making me think of different ways to get another room. As soon as I notice this, I tell my mind to relax and that my consciousness will take care of it.

I don't have to make a plan. I just have to know what I want and surrender to my consciousness. If things work out, then that was meant to be.

Thursday, January 3, 2002

“No, another room with a *grand lit*, no, that’s not possible. There are only two rooms with a large bed and they’re both noisy rooms”.

I look disappointed, I have no luck. That’s the way it is. I hesitate to leave and the desk lady says: “Wait, there may be another possibility.” I’m waiting and hoping for the best.

“Ah, there’s a mini suite with a view of the garden and the swimming pool.” It’s beautiful and quiet. This was not something the nervous, anxious ego that calls itself Toine could have arranged!

I wonder if everything works like this. I’m going to try to find that out from now on. Ha, my mind tries to grab hold of this situation to see if it can use my consciousness. My mind desperately wants to stay in control.

I’m trying to write, but my fingers are having a hard time finding the keyboard of my laptop. In spite of tablets for my throat and cough medicine, my throat is still soar and tonight I indulged in a glass of fig liqueur. This of course for my health. The bacteria in my throat were zapped and I think I destroyed them all.

I’m a bit drowsy as I lie in my bed, recovering form the medicinal alcohol and I understand that my ego can’t control life. The only thing I can do is try to be the observer. I need to see and be the observer. I can see that everything that happens is okay and that my ego is the star actor in this movie. I can live life to the fullest without having to indentify with it. At these observing moment there is no me, no ego, no personality. That makes it easier. I’m not the one turning in my bed, I’m observing the one that is turning in her bed!

Tosho reacts by saying that these feelings don't belong with me in present time. He says that on a deeper level, we both are innocent, because we are who we are because of our childhood with all its trauma's. I listen to him and I'm amazed and happy. What happened with my father was very traumatising to me. I've been struggling with it for over ten years, really struggling. And now I hear that no one is guilty and my trauma doesn't have a place in the here and now.

Hmmm, that touches me. It's been very hard for me and now it's time to put it in perspective. It's time to make it lighter and to let my original innocence return. I recognise people's stories about abuse, but I know that these stories aren't my own. That was then, this is now. I can rise above my past. It has been rewarding for me to be a victim. Being a victim was always better than being nobody, it has fed my ego. It's time to return to innocence, and to stop being a victim. My ego wants attention and it's holding on to being a victim, even though the victim belongs to the past. Ego is interesting. I think it doesn't like inner peace, happiness and innocence. If these things are there, the ego dissolves, taking narrow mindedness with it.

Okay Tos, I accept the things you say. I was, and am innocent and I've been suffering in vain. I feel the pain in my ego when I realize this. My ego is defeated. It has no ground to stand on. This makes me a free and innocent person. This is unfamiliar to my ego. The ego always wants to go the opposite way to itself. If there's peace, it wants war, if there's war, it wants peace. Which ever way, the ego is never satisfied.

The ego, the mind is fed by problems. The last ten years, I've had enough food for my ego. I was caught up in my mind and its tricks. It's time to let that go. A new era is dawning. Even if there's a storm outside, I'll let my own sun shine.

Friday, January 4, 2002

The bacteria have declared war to my body and my night was uncomfortable but interesting. I wake up at 3 AM from a soar throat. Together with Toshio I look at the message behind the pain. First I let go of my ego by asking myself: Who am I. Am I my soar throat? Then I can look at the pain from my consciousness. I see images of some sort of castle, with several doors. In front of an iron door there's shattered glass on the ground. In between the glass I see pearls. There's a lamp shining over it. The lamp lights up the glass and I understand that it's a metaphor for the enlightenment I've been dealing with lately.

I look at the meaning of the shattered glass. I suddenly see the connection with the last vacation Ton and I had with Peter and Carolien. It was two months before Peter died. I tell Toshio about this vacation, about Peter and his process of dying, which he completely surrendered to. Slowly I start to cry. I still miss him. He was my buddy. I see that my ego is healing. I won't be able to go back to sleep anytime soon. Hours later I fall asleep, but it's disturbed and I'm turning in my bed again. I decide to call for a doctor for my aching body. Penicillin will do the trick. We'll see.

Monday, January 7, 2002

Unfortunately it takes a long time for me to recover. The penicillin is fighting. All plans and fun things will have to wait, because I'm not feeling strong enough. The weather and the flu make me feel I'm out of luck. But is this really so? My consciousness wants me to look inside myself, and apparently I need the flu to do that. My ego is resisting at times. It want to rent a car, sit on a camel. go to the market and go on adventure. Meanwhile, it's still in bed. Too bad, so sad.

At this moment it's warm outside and I allow my ego to sit in the sun and write. Okay, we accept the situation the way it is and that's a good thing. Good things also happen in bed. I'm in bed next to Tosho and I feel fear all through my body. I can see it and invite it to surface. To see where this fear is coming from, Tosho asks me questions about me and my father. Just by shining a light on it, the fear gets space.

I can see how the adult me turned in to a little girl when I met my father at the age of 32. I see how he crossed the boundaries of my childlike being. It was the only thing he could do. If there was another way, he'd have found it. I feel my guilt about the abuse, and how I still disapprove on a deep level.

Tuesday, January 8, 2002

In an hour we'll be going back to Holland. I'm torn. I *want* to go into the village to spend my last money, but I don't feel physically up to it. It's a struggle. The sun is shining, but I can't enjoy it, because my mind wants to do other things. My mind is strong. This is the way it goes. the mind is never satisfied. Eventually, after having reviewed my possibilities I decide to stay and enjoy the sun, and rest. We have a long journey ahead and we're both not very strong. Tosho has been ill too. Looking at my thoughts, I see their terror. But I won't give in to them and that feels good. I feel a tear rolling down my face. I'm not sad, but apparently I'm letting go of something. I'm letting go of the terror of my mind. I'm enjoying the sun.

Friday, January 11, 2002

Back in Holland. I've been home for only a day and I'm already on my way to the Tantra training. I'm still ill and I need some rest, but I'm going anyway. Three days of intense training. I'm being teamed

up with someone who resembles my father. He's a nice man, I had a session with him before and I felt his energy that resembles my dad's. It's perfect for projection! This weekend I'll no longer be a victim. *It ends now.* It's over and done with. Whether my training partner is hard to handle or not, I will exist in the present time. During a physical exercise with my training partner, I just can't relax. Projection is fighting with me and my body reacts to it. I can't go on and ask for help from the counsellors.

I fight with myself for half an hour and then I can relax. After the exercise I lie down on my bed. Suddenly I feel my blood is starting to boil and I get really angry. I jump up and go to a counsellor. With tears streaming down face I say: "This is not good for me! I crossed my boundaries again. Thinking I can handle anything because it's healing me, I ask too much of myself and I get hurt. This ends right now. I'll stop disrespecting myself right now!"

I feel every cell in my body vibrating and I feel that this is my truth. I need boundaries, and I can make them myself. Suddenly I realize that it was my lack of self respect that let my father cross my boundaries. I grew up without boundaries, I've never learned to say no when I needed to. I always thought that everyone had the right to do whatever they wanted with me. Now that's changing. Now I understand. Sharing this revelation, my anger dissolves and I calm down. I'm ready to join the group again. I have discovered my truth. If I can recognize and state my boundaries, I'm completely relaxed. There is no more drama. Being this relaxed, I can open up. Not to everyone, but that's okay. I don't have to open up to everybody. I can be mild on myself. By respecting my boundaries, I feel a solid ground inside of me. This is a rich weekend.

Exercise

Put the book down and make a circle around you with your arms. Feel the boundary of that circle. Be aware of what lies inside and outside the circle.

Then answer these questions.

Who do you allow to cross your boundaries?

How do you let them cross your boundaries?

What would your life be like if you would state your boundaries?

Do you want to keep on giving away bits and pieces of yourself by not stating your boundaries, or is it possible to live as an adult, with the rejections that come with it, without falling apart. Even more so, the rejection is not about you, but about the person who rejects you. It's their feeling, it's not the absolute truth. Can you make the decision to let go of the pattern now?

Make that change.

We're closing the three day training with meditation. I remember doing this meditation four years ago with Ton. I feel the pain in my heart of losing Ton.

How I loved this man. I still do, I can look at it and accept the fact that we were not meant to go on together, I can accept and bear my destiny. I take a bow for my destiny. This is what it is.

Monday, January 21, 2002

I still work with groups. The participants of my group for women told and shared their stories and their biggest grief. I noticed I couldn't do it myself. I used eloquent words to divert the attention and by doing so, I placed myself above the women.

Last night I was awake in my bed. How can I ever teach anyone something I don't dare to do myself? Where is my honesty? I couldn't sleep and I was afraid the group would reject me. I'm making the decision now. I'll confront the group and myself tomorrow! I'm terrified and my mind goes crazy. But I realize that I don't have to give into it. The very thing I've been teaching people, applies to myself now. I only have to notice my mind going crazy, I don't have to give into it. I instantly calm down. I will tell the group tomorrow, to overcome the shame. To let go of judging myself. I'm going for the confrontation.

Tuesday, January 22, 2002

I'm doing it! I tell the group my true story and my biggest pain, the pain of my father's abuse. I was so afraid I'd be rejected. I was still so ashamed. From the reactions I get, I understand that the only person who rejected me, was me. I judged myself too harshly and I was caught in shame. I know that if anyone would reject me, it

would be about them but I still had to pick up the courage to tell them. I'm exhausted. I know now how it feels to be a participant in my own group.

By being one of the participants, I feel what I'm giving to these women. I feel so much lighter. I slept for a while and cried a few tears, without feeling the true emotion. I just needed to get rid of a few tears.

Right now, I feel light and calm. This is who I am. I can feel how the shame made me feel small. It was a big burden. I talk about the morning with Koos and Luus, my foster parents. Koos asks me if I'm taking responsibility for what happened.

I like his question. It makes me see that it's not about quilt or taking responsibility for what happened. The only thing that matters is the fact that it happened. I wasn't able to change the events as they happened and neither was my father. In fact, I believe this had to happen to trigger my personal process. Just like Ton had to leave. The most painful moments in my life brought me so much, that it was worth the pain. It's not about guilt and I don't have to forgive anyone. It's not even about shame anymore, I can feel it dissolve. Shame is ignoring yourself. It kept me down and stuck in drama. I can let go of the drama now. I can let go of my past. Enough is enough. It has served its purpose. Enough of this. Let's enjoy life.

A child is innocent of abuse or incest. The perpetrator is responsible, even though that responsibility may not be taken. It's up to the child to get through it, or stay a victim. In my case, the difference is that I was an adult woman when it happened, so I should have taken my own responsibility. Still, my father should have not crossed my boundaries.

Normally, a father teaches his child about boundaries and the child learns from it. Giving your children the ability to set their boundaries, gives them ground to stand on, and the safety they need so much.

I'm getting the chance to tell my story again in another group. In the men's and women's group I can overcome my shame again. I think it will not be as hard as it was this morning.

Wednesday, January 23, 2002

I dreamed vividly last night. I dreamed I lost my mother. My Dutch dad is there, but my mother suddenly disappeared. I feel desperate. I can feel a threat coming from my father. He doesn't want her to be found. I think he killed her. I really had this fear when I was a child. Eventually I find my mother in the hotel. She had seen me, but I couldn't see her. What a relief. Slowly I wake up.

Friday, January 25, 2002

I told my story in the mixed group. It was so different from last Tuesday. I was able to tell my story quietly, with only little emotion. There was no more shame. I feel calm and strong.

Tosho and I don't get along very well at the moment. I don't like it and I wonder if I should stop seeing him. I feel like I don't have a choice. I have to keep seeing him. It's okay. He tells me he feels like I'm trying to change him in many ways. I'm shocked. This is exactly what Ton told me. "Is it really that bad?", I ask Tosho. "Yes", he says kindly, and he gives me some examples. When he's feeling down, I try to make him feel better. Sometimes I make remarks about his appearance, especially about his tummy. He's right, and painfully I become aware of my conduct.

Suddenly I realize that I've always lived out of rejection. I can also see where it's coming from. As a child, I always felt I was good for nothing. I was always trying to do better or be perfect. I was never good enough. That's how I lost Ton. He was right. My feelings towards him are getting milder. I can keep on looking for imperfections, or I can look for things that are already okay. This is new to me.

Exercise

Close your eyes. Turn your head in circles four times, to the left. Then four times to the right. Breathe deeply towards your belly. Then answer these questions:

With whom are you focussing on the negative, rather than the positive?

What does that say about that person?

What does it say about you?

Mahatma

What's your gain?

How does that feel?

Are you able to let go of expectations and judgements towards yourself and the other person? Can you see that the both of you are already perfect, just the way you are?

Let the expectations and judgements go, now.

Saturday, January 26, 2002

I understand that I've learned to see the world through the eyes of my stepfather. Nothing and nobody is good enough. The world is an evil place and nobody can be trusted. Just like him, I focus on the negative, in stead of the positive. I'm not as extreme as he is, but I constantly try to improve others and myself. The only thing I have to do, is be aware of it. That's all. I don't have to change it, it's part of who I am, my personality. Consciousness is the key. Just by looking at it and seeing that it's an old issue of my personality, it will dissolve. I'm going to focus on the perfection of imperfection. In myself and in my partner.

Monday, January 28, 2002

I'm in the bath with Tosho and we talk about my relationships with Ton and my stepfather. They seem to be connected in away. I can feel that my relationship with Tosho is different form the one I had with Ton. In my mind, Ton was above me. I was small. I was living the illusion that he'd save me. He'd take care of me. He was seen and respected and that gave me the opportunity to be seen too. It gave me the right to exist, his social status lifted me up too. Talking to Tosho, I see that this comes from my childhood. Status was very important to my stepfather. Without status, you were a nobody. I feel I'm letting go of an illusion: Ton couldn't save me and neither will Tosho. The only thing to do is to save myself. I can only do that out of self worth. To let go of status and to see who I really am, in all my worth. Not for what I have (like I used to) but for who I am. This is still hard for me. But I know I don't have to try to fix it. Being aware is enough. It gives so much peace. I'm alright just the way I am. I'm taking my tired body to bed.

Tuesday, February 5, 2002

My body has been aching for weeks now. I feel like I have the flu and I don't have much energy. It feels like I'm on fire. Letting go of an old truth also triggers something on an physical level. It's spring cleaning inside my body. The old information in the cells are being reprogrammed. I don't mind being ill for so long. It's for a good cause. My biggest desire is freedom and I'm willing to do what it takes to get it. Even though my body is objecting to it, it's not who I am.

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Beyond the illusion

Thursday, February 7, 2002

Tosho and I are in bed, talking. I feel disconnected and I feel my inner child. She's terrified of loving with all of her heart and body. Her father caused her to break down with it. The child sees complete love as life threatening. My adult self is here too, and even she believes it's dangerous. That makes sense, because the abuse happened to my adult self as well as the child in me. Tosho keeps on talking. My head feels tired, like it's being brain washed. I'm asking for it, I'm suffering from the tyranny of my mind. I fall asleep, tired.

Sunday, February 10, 2002

I talk to Tosho about the abuse by my father. He asks me what the worst thing was that happened then. I see and feel the darkness that's creeping up on me. A big black hole, with just a spark of light at the end. I feel my despair, the tearing pain in my heart. I *never* want to feel this way again. My heart is broken. My mind is broken. I'd rather die than go through this again. I can see how I've stopped living from my body. I'm only my mind right now, because I'm protecting myself. Being in my mind can't hurt me. Tosho asks me if I see anything in my mind. I see myself standing with a brick wall built around me. This wall protects me. When I take a close look at the wall, I see that some of the bricks are missing. I look out and I see a great view. It looks appealing. That's where I want to

go. Behind me there's another brick missing. When I look outside, it's pitch black. I want to get out, I feel trapped. In my mind I start to tear down the wall and suddenly I see that the wall was poorly built. I take out a few bricks at the bottom and the whole wall comes tumbling down. I step over the bricks, and into the world. It's very bright, but there's also darkness, I can't run from it, it follows me where ever I go, it's a part of me. I put on the darkness, like a coat. It's heavy and pulling me down. The darkness is my past, my guilt and shame, that I've been carrying for so long. I look at the child inside me and I feel it's innocent. The coat gets lighter immediately. I let go of the shame, and the coat of darkness turns to a transparent purple shade. The fabric isn't as heavy anymore and I dance in the field that's filled with sunshine and light. I understand that my heart can't be broken. Surviving this, I realize that I have a lot of strength. Even my divorce from Ton didn't break my heart. It's really sinking in now. I'm going beyond the fear and the pain.

When you've experienced pain, you normally tend to turn away from it. Because you turn away from it, it will haunt you the rest of your life, whether you are aware of it or not. You have to acknowledge your pain, face it, notice it. If your pain is very traumatic, you should seek help to do this. By facing your deepest pain, you can heal it. In the darkness of pain lies the light of joy. It's waiting for you to discover it. The light is always there.

Sunday, February 24, 2002

Tosho would be here in the early afternoon. He just called me to say he would come at 8 PM, instead of 2 PM. I feel numb and all I can do is hang up the phone. I call him back and there seems to be a misunderstanding. That's okay, but I'm still angry. I feel like calling him again to tell him to come tomorrow. Instead I call Maaike and I

tell her what's bothering me. She listens to me and it feels good. She says that it's painful to feel like you're being rejected. Wow, that's it. An old pain was touched. The moment I realize this, the pain and anger subside. So this is how it works. As adults we are triggered to our old pain. If I hadn't known better, I would have dumped all my anger on that poor Tosho. But my pain isn't his fault. Tosho calls to see if he can come early, so we can have dinner together. This is remarkable, something inside me gets solved and the outside world reacts instantly. This is cosmic energy at work. I'm going to make a wonderful meal for my love.

I call my brother Marc. He's started seeing a woman named Ria. We've known her for years and she's almost part of our family. When I worked at the hotel, she was there too. She's been with us ever since. Marc has always been in touch with her, but he was afraid to connect to her. He isn't anymore. They're already living together. Things can go so fast. I'm happy for them.

Wednesday, June 19, 2002

By mistake, I erase all the files on my computer. How can this be? I still have a backup from March 18.

A lot has happened from March 18 until now, but it's been erased. Tosho is here. We try everything to get my story back, but it's useless. Strangely enough, I'm still calm. Maybe it was just meant to be. I can't get upset about it. That's new to me. I'm busy, but I feel calm. I review the past months. My foster parents Koos and Luus sold their house in Enschede and moved to Spain. I was sad to see them go, but it's okay. I can let them go. I don't feel abandoned, because I have my strength. Tosho and I will visit them this summer.

I've also gone through a process with Ton. Toshio and I went to the birthday party of a woman of the national women's group. Partners were also invited and Carolien was there with Ton. I feel I had a good day with Ton. From time to time we still verbally pinched each other without anyone noticing, but I remained calm. I was stunned when I got a card from Ton, saying that I was probably the only, but certainly the last person to have treated him so negatively and sarcastically. He dropped me in deep water and when I'd come up, he would like to see my heart purified and my mouth washed. It left me speechless. I must have touched him more than I realized. I didn't mean to do that.

I wrote him a long letter in which I opened up to him. I explained that my attitude came from pain and that I still love him. I also described every time he touched my heart the past years. I was open, but I didn't feel anger or pain.

Since his card and my letter I haven't heard from him anymore. After two weeks I realized that I was waiting for him to react. I wanted to make it right and stay in touch as friends. I decided to sort out a pile of photograph. We were going to do that together, but now I'm taking the initiative. I send him his pictures. I'm letting go and there's nothing left between us, except for love and pain. I don't expect to see him for a long time and that's okay.

Marc is ill again. He's in the hospital with a tonsil inflammation. His bodily condition is much better than it was two years ago, but sometimes I get caught up in the fear and pain that were there at that time. Every time this happens, I return to the here and now. I don't know what will happen and I pray for the best. I don't panic, but I acknowledge my feelings. Toshio and I are doing okay, we have our ups and downs. Life is good. I call Marc to see how he's doing. The inflammation has gone, thank God. This whole situation was exactly the same as it was two years ago, only now I was different.

Marc is doing alright now. There's a new development. Even though Marc and Ria didn't plan on having children, Ria is pregnant. This means that she and/or her baby can be HIV positive. I'm speechless. The test results will be back in five days. I don't panic, but I am scared. Again, I don't know what will happen, and that's the way it is.

Wednesday, July 3, 2002

We are with Koos and Luus in Spain. It's my 45th birthday. A new beginning. Toshō sends me a text message as he's lying next to me.

My dearest dear,
What a miracle it is that you were born,
And even more miraculous is your transformation
Into a beautiful garden
That's a very nice place to be.

Things are good between us. Luus gives me a festive breakfast, with ice cake and Champaign. My father calls to congratulate me. I'm glad he called. I'm still amazed that he called me without me having to ask for it. It feels so good. Marc calls. He congratulates me and he tells me that Ria and the baby are healthy. It brings tears to my eyes. This is the best gift he could have given me. Now it's really my birthday. Let's celebrate. Ria is pregnant and everything is alright. This pregnancy is truly a gift from God.

Wednesday, July 10, 2002

Last night we arrived in Holland. We had a beautiful journey via Andorra. I have a few days of rest now, before I'll be starting my first three day *intensive* called "Heal Yourself". I've blocked it from my mind during the holiday. Now it's time. I take care of the last

arrangements, talk to my assistant and I make the setting. I'm calm, but exited. Applications pour in, it's going to be a big group.

Tuesday, July 16, 2002

It's done. I survived the intensive! I'm so thankful for the way this turned out. There was a group of beautiful people, I had two amazing assistant, one of them was Tosho, and everything was perfectly taken care of. It all came together. One of the participants told me I had past this test gloriously. On the one hand, that is how I feel, but on the other hand, I feel I can only be grateful for the way things went. I have no input on the course of things. As I say goodbye to everyone, tears stream down my face. I feel carried. The pearls that were covered in misery, are now shining like new. Everything happened for a reason. Now I can help people overcome their deepest pain, just by having experienced it myself.

Tuesday, July 23, 2002

Last night was like so many others. I couldn't sleep. I got up at 3AM, and when I went back to bed at 6, I still couldn't sleep. Eventually I woke Tosho and we talked about what was bothering me. The word 'goodbye' came up. I felt that it was about Ton. Since I wrote him that letter, I haven't heard from him. He's been on my mind a lot these past few days. The distance between us hurts me and I've wanted to call him. But I didn't.

I find grief inside me. Two and a half years after the divorce there's still grief. I realize that I want to call him to get rid of the grief. I'm lying next to Tosho. Silent tears flow, like I'm used to. From my ego, I look at my consciousness and I see that a beautiful ball is given to me. It's my grief. Looking at my grief as being a ball, it's easier to accept. I accept the ball and tell myself: "This is *my* grief." Then

I see the beauty of my grief. It takes me deep inside myself. I feel completion and inner strength. This is who I truly am. I'm a woman with grief and that's okay. I don't have to get rid of it anymore. I go beyond my inner duality. It disconnects me from Ton, and even from the old pain I had of not being seen with my love. I embrace the pain and I now it's a healing pain. At the same time, I hear Noël's words in my ear: "Don't ever believe that your pain is the truth." I know that my true self goes beyond pain.

If you turn your feeling or thought into a visual image, like the ball represents my grief, you can accept it easier and you can look at it in any way you want, the positive and negative. With a metaphor you can accept your pain, grief or any other feeling much easier."

Exercise

Put the book down and stand up. Put your arms up and stretch yourself as much as you can. Imagine yourself as the connection between earth and cosmos. Breathe through your body.

Now, imagine yourself being filled with light. Let the light flow through your body. See how the light dissolves the darkness inside you.

My grief is okay. Being complete doesn't mean there's no grief. Being complete is about accepting yourself and everything about you. I'm complete with my pain. My pain is okay. It makes me who I am.

Accepting completes you. The more you live from your true self, and let go of the pain, the more you'll see that the pain loses its grip on you. Being complete becomes a whole new thing. This is growing into adulthood. Your True Self is the base, instead of child pain.

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Ego or truth?

Wednesday, August 14, 2002

I feel an intense need to completely connect to someone, but I can't do this with Tosho. He and I are two independent partners, who meet often. There's him, there's me, but there is no us. I'd like to live together, but that's not what he wants. I only have his toothbrush in my house. I walk through my house and feel the need for a deeper connection than the one I have right now. Am I looking for connection in the wrong place again? Is this about connecting with myself? This is familiar, except for the fact that I now know that *me* is not my ego, but my true self. Time will tell.

Thursday, August 15, 2002

I'm awake. I think about my connection with Tosho again. He might come here tomorrow, he might not. I don't want to go on like this. I want more involvement. I know I have to welcome all feelings that this connection is giving me, without getting my ego involved. So that's what I do. I feel dissatisfaction growing inside me.

Friday, August 16, 2002

I'm jogging and it feels good to be physically active. While running I realize: I'm settling for less again. This is not right for me anymore.

I love Tosho, but at the same time I can let him go. The past year was good the way it was. We were both living in our own world. The time with Tosho gave me the opportunity to heal old wounds. Now it's time to move on. The need for connection is too big, I can't ignore it anymore. I know Tosho can't give me what I need, and I completely accept that. I'm having dinner with him. I want to act like there's no problem, but I know I have to talk to him about it. Before I get the chance to do so, he brings it up. Together we decide to end the relationship. I feel tears. I simply can't go on like this. We say goodbye and I go to Groningen, to the last homework session of the Tantra group. We say our goodbyes there too.

Saturday, August 17, 2002

We are saying goodbye at the group. As a last action, I let the group rock me softly. I'm being carried as I feel the pain of loneliness. My loves flows to everyone in the group.

Sunday, August 18, 2002

I'm not feeling alright. I'm walking around the house, cranky, and I feel like all my beautiful belongings are literally worthless. They can't give me the happiness I need. I visit my friend Maaikje. With her, I realize how important it is to share my feelings. I start to feel better quickly. I'm in my bed. I feel the silence within me, it's almost tangible. This is who I am.

Monday, August 19, 2002

I'm spending the day crying. That's the way it is. My tears are allowed to be here. I feel waves of grief coming and going. When a wave comes, I let it, and that calms me down again.

Tosho was here tonight. It was good. The love between us is back like it never left. There is peace and acceptance for the way it is now. We're no lovers anymore. After Tosho left, I quickly reached my silence again. I can feel it inside. But there's no pain anymore. It's just very calm. A calm presence inside me. I've come to appreciate this silence.

Friday, August 23, 2002

It's been a week since Tosho and I ended our love relationship. I've been feeling good the last few days. Last night I worked with a group and Tosho assisted me. It works well like this. In the group I feel my grief, and at the same time I'm in the emptiness. I see my grief crying for attention. It pulls me in. The grief is welcome, and it appears. But through my work, I find my strength. Tosho was fine when we ended the relationship, but since a few days, he's been experiencing his own pain. When we are together and grief surfaces, we cry together. This is healing, connecting in parting.

Saturday, August 24, 2002

My friend Maaike just called me. We were going to go out. I can't do it. Right now, my energy is turned inwards and I can't stand the thought of having to dance and socialize with a bunch of strange men. I feel the need for rest. Maaike is upset. She's also had a rough week and she had been looking forward to this. She feels like I'm letting her down. I feel that I'm staying true to myself. I can't cross my boundaries anymore. I don't feel like I'm letting her down. She's welcome to come here, but I'm not going out. "No, thank you. I don't feel like coming to your house!" she replies. I might lose Maaike as a friend, but so be it. I can't lose myself again and that's what matters most to me now. It's okay to do things for her, but not at my own

expense. Not anymore. I won't cross my boundaries again. Been there, done that.

Sunday, August 25, 2002

It's walk in day at Centrum Leela. I start my day by having a good cry. I'm so glad that I'm able to let my tears stream freely. It gives me so much room. I feel I need Maaïke, but we're not in touch at the moment.

Tosho is busy at Centrum Leela. I'm giving a reading and a workshop. In the workshop I feel my strength. At the end of the day, Tosho and I go to dinner. At times he's very sad. It hurts me. He tells me calmly to stay away from his grief. It's his grief. He's right, dear Tosho, I realize I should let him have his grief. He has his own pearls to dust off. I don't have to make it right, I don't have to take away his pain.

Friday, August 30, 2002

My computer is a mess, and so am I. I become aware of the fact that at a deeper level there are no problems. This is just life. You can't plan it or control it. Sometimes you can't even grasp it. I let it be. I call Tosho. He'll be here soon. Tears well up in my eyes. Tosho tries to fix my computer, but it's no use. It's broken.

These last days have been hard for me again. Everything goes wrong at the same time and that unleashes an enormous pain. A pain that I haven't felt in a long time. Sometimes I wonder what has gotten into me. We had a good thing together, so what more do I want? But I don't want to be with Tosho out of pain. If we ever get back together, I want to back it up from my complete self. So I have to go through this. There is no other way.

Wednesday, September 4, 2002

Lying awake has a good thing. I can write. My computer is broken and since last Monday the telephones don't work and my fax machine has broken down. I'm also in an argument with a neighbor and my friendship with Maaiké is not what it should be. More misery for me. It's remarkable to see how everything falls apart at the same time. But as everything passes, so will this. I haven't been in contact with Tosho. I have to take my distance to be able to let him go. It feels painful but without tears. I just can't sleep. I give myself time to mourn, to reach my True Self. My decision to end things with Tosho pushes me towards my truth. It doesn't matter what happens to me, if I'll ever find my Prince Charming. Maybe it'll be Tosho after all.....

It doesn't matter. The only thing I have to do is connect with myself. I'll give anything to do that. I feel my love flowing. I'm grateful of all the things I've shared with Tosho and I thank him for helping me heal. I'm even thankful for the pain I'm feeling now. This connects me with myself.

If you have just started to become aware of all the feelings in your life, try to focus on accepting them. Get to know your feelings, welcome them.

If you are more familiar with your deeper feelings, maybe you can take it a step further. Unconsciously you know exactly where you are in your process. The next step is to welcome your feelings, without actually going into them. Disconnect these feelings from the time they originated. Just know that they're here today. This may have a physical impact on your body. This is part of going beyond your ego. This way, you won't feel your dramas anymore.

Exercise

Put the book down and open your mouth like you're yawning. Maybe that makes you really yawn, that's okay. Then focus on your body. Breathe in and out for three minutes. What feelings live inside you right now? Where do you feel them? Focus on that spot and welcome the feelings that are there.

Keep on breathing and let things be the way they are. If you feel resistance to certain feelings, welcome the resistance. Look what's inside you and focus. You'll see that once you welcome everything, your feelings will dissolve on their own. Let yourself be surprised by what will happen next.

Maaike was here. We tried to solve our dilemma. Unfortunately, we couldn't. She feels I let her down and I couldn't make her see that her disappointment was one of her own projections. We can't reach each other anymore. I can't indulge in her story, she can't indulge in mine. Something old and familiar disappears. I don't know what's left. Probably pure Nothing and with that, Everything. I feel grief for having to let go, she's so dear to me. But I also feel it's right not to see each other again. I'm going my own way, and some people won't be able to keep up with me. I guess I'll be on my way without her.

Monday, September 9, 2002

I'm jogging, as I suddenly see things very clearly. I thought I had to let go of Toshio to find a more fulfilling relationship. Now I see I'm finding myself. I focus on who I really am. It makes me truly happy, even though I had to lose Toshio and Maaike. What I find in myself is something that no one can ever give me. By losing secure things in my life; Luus in Spain, Toshio and Maaike gone, I connect to my old pain. I look at that pain, focus on it, and I reach my true self. I

reach the pearl that was hidden underneath the pain. I experience the pain, but I don't become my pain. I send this to Toshio, because I want him to know where I stand.

I walk around the house, singing. I'm happy. Happy with Me. I now understand that again I was looking for connection outside myself. I thought I'd find it with a man. This idea is dissolving. I was actually looking for connection with myself. There lies the answer. I don't need a partner. It's true, because I'm doing fine. It's good to have all this time to myself, to be alone. There may be more bumps ahead, but this is how it feels for now. Toshio writes me back:

Hi dear,

Fantastic! Because if you'd find the man that makes you perfectly happy, you'd be dependant of him to give you happiness. Consequence: you'll always be afraid of losing him and you'll act accordingly. If we are our true self, we don't have relationships, but we relate to people. Ego's make or break relationships. Jogging is a good thing.

Toshio

With this I end my writing. My head thinks that I have a long road ahead of me, and I may never reach the end. At the same time I know that I'm already there. I always have been. This is true for everybody. We're not always aware of it, but that's okay too. It is the way it is.

In this book I took you with me on my search for connection. I expected to find connection and fulfilment in a partner. I know now that's not how it should be. I've found connection and fulfilment inside of me.

I see myself in all my light and truth. This is what I want for you too. All the need for fulfilment outside yourself will vanish. The

fulfilment is already inside you. Whatever happens in a relationship just adds some things. I let my inner voice speak one last time:

Dear Toine, we have been with you, on your journey and it is not over yet. You won't be writing everyday anymore, but you will continue on the path of awareness. We are and will stay with you and we deeply respect the path you are on to inspire many people. Dear Toine-child, know that you are infinitely loved, just like anybody else. We are so happy to be connecting to you, this is true connection. You are connecting to your higher Self.

The contact with the energy source we all come from. Let this energy source lead you, let the light that is you lead you. Everyone is made of this light. But in your dual world there can be no light without darkness. Say Yes to the darkness and find light within.

We are so happy and yes, proud of the road you are taking.

Continue, dear Toine-child, and have faith in us being here and guiding you.

I'm touched, writing this.

I choose truth.

My intension is set.

My intension is to be true to Myself.

To be true to my truth.

To be honest.

To want to see every strategy of the mind.

To walk through life naked, so to speak.

This book is a testimony of my intensions. I'm going beyond the strategies of the mind. If I don't, this book can never be published because of my shame. Shame is also a strategy of the mind, but it can't fool me anymore.

It's time to wake up. Time to grow up.

Epilogue

January, 2008

Even though my relationship with Tosho ended years ago, he's still a dear friend of mine whom I love very much. We see each other regularly.

I still live by myself and I like it. At this time my work comes first and I'm happy and blessed to be independent and strong. I'm building a company that's doing very well, I give workshops and *intensives* to large groups of people. I can look at myself with pride when I realize that all of this is a direct result of my strength. The strength that anyone has who dares to stand on their own two feet and to sort out their relationships and child pain.

The pain of separation, the intense need for connection has dissolved. I have found fulfilment inside myself. I am the unity, with all my feelings and emotions.

In 2003, Ton gave me back my grandfather's boat. He had bought a new one with Carolien and our boats were in the harbour together for four years. It feels like getting the boat made up for something. The pain and anger that were still there dissolved. Slowly my contact with Ton and Carolien grew. Not from the pain of the past, but from a new place that revealed itself slowly. I can feel the love again, the love that was lost, and we can laugh together. Still, everything is different, I am different. The inequality there used to be doesn't exist anymore. I don't want or expect anything from them and that

creates room for new things to exist. I'm in my strength now, I am an adult. What is special is that now I finally get the recognition from Ton, that I've wanted for so long. I recognize myself, so that's what's being reflected. I let go of the boat last year. I didn't have the time for it, and it's okay now. The wounds have healed.

Marc and Ria got married and they have a healthy son. They're doing well. It's good to see them happy. Esther and Pepijn also have a son, he's about the same age as Marc and Ria's son. I haven't seen them anymore, but I'm not angry anymore. I'm at peace with the way things are.

My friendship with Maaïke ended. I wish her all the best and I'm thankful for what we had. I discover new friendships and connections with more and more people.

My neighbors Tim and Irma and their four kids moved, but they are still a big part of my life. I sort of adopted the kids and I love them very much. Luus and Koos have moved back to Holland and I'm thankful to have them in my life. I've created my own family here in Twente. I feel rich.

I continued to improve myself and for many years I had trainings for family settings. I also took the complete training for Healing Journey with Brandon Bays. It has given me a lot. The dramas are gone. It feels like I left my past behind, the pain is no more. Everything around me has changed. Since December 2005 I regularly fly to the US for Sedona trainings. The Sedona method gives you inner freedom, and takes you to your Source, just like the Healing Journey. I also fly to the US to attend trainings about creating: how to shape your life the way you want and how to attract the things you want to have or be. Anything is possible. From these trainings, I have set up my money workshops and transformation intensives. Money is connected to your basic energy and the way you feel about yourself.

In these workshops we get to our core. I'm able to teach people this and that's my biggest happiness.

Everything expands. The room inside myself is enormous and my company Spirit Coaching is expanding too. I don't know where I'll go from here and I can't imagine what the future will look like. But I don't have to know. I know what the present is like and that's enough.

I hope I made a difference for you. Maybe by recognition, by the insights or in any other way. I want you to discover your personal wealth. I know now that everybody has it. It can be found in the darkest place within you. You'll find the light deep inside the darkness. Open up to the light and trust it to guide you to your true self.

Warm greetings,

Toine

Word of Thanks

I want to thank some people who are special to me, especially those who stood by me during my divorce and its aftermath.

First I want to thank my grandparents, they were my guiding light in my childhood. Especially my grandmother, Gromi, was extremely valuable to me. She gave me the warmth that I needed so badly. I dedicate this book to them, in loving memory and gratitude for all the love and warmth they gave me.

I also want to thank my mother and father from the bottom of my heart for putting me on this earth. For all the lessons I've learned, for all the pain I had to go through. It made me who I am and it gave me infinite strength. I love you both so much.

I thank everyone who helped and supported me along the way. I took this journey by myself, but I was never alone. I thank my family and friends for all the love and support they've given me. They helped me through difficult times and I don't know what I would have done without them.

A few people get my special thanks. My foster parents Koos and Luus. I thank Luus for her values; she taught them to me with so much love. My friends Maaïke and Anita and my neighbors Irma, Tim and José. I thank them for all the love and care in my most difficult moments. Later on, Toshō and Margreet helped me too. Thank you for sharing, playing and growing together. All these people made me feel at home in Enschede, so far away from my precious family.

On a professional level, I also got help to deal with my divorce. I want to thank my helpers for the wisdom and support. Thank you, Willem Poppeliers, Angela van Aubel, Siddharta van Langen and Sander Bloemendal.

These last years, I've become more and more aware of myself and the world around me. Thank you, Jan Jacob Stam for guiding me through the family settings. Thank you, Brandon Bays, for your Healing Journey training, and thank you Hale Dwoskin for guiding me into the Sedona method.

The people I just mentioned took me towards my true self, my truth, beyond the pain, old beliefs and restricting thoughts. Thanks to all these people I am the person and the therapist I am today.

I also thank Ramita and Angeli for all remarks and insights, I thank Edith Hagenaar for her guidance in writing this book. Thank you, Ottoline, for your everlasting effort. Without Ottoline this book would still be on a shelf somewhere.

Finally, I want to thank Ton for leaving, and staying true to his heart. I still love him and he's become a dear friend. No matter how painful it was for me; my heart was torn, I'm grateful for it now. If he hadn't left, I would have never found my strength. I'm now an independent woman who's in contact with her source. This is the biggest gift I could have given myself.

All these people have played or are playing a part in my life. I'm grateful for all warmth and support and I feel blessed.

About the Author

Mahatma (1957) is an Inner Child and Journey therapist, Sedona facilitator and life coach. She's had multiple trainings, among others, four years of neo-hypnotherapy, three years of Tantra, four years of family settings, the complete training Journey therapist by Brandon Bays and the Sedona '*seven day and nine day retreat and facilitator training*' in the US with Hale Dwoskin. Multiple seminars from Bert Hellinger, Hunter Beaumont, Eckhart Tolle and Isaac Shapiro, are some of the people that taught her about working with family settings.

Mahatma gives different workshops to large groups of people and *intensives* to smaller groups. They're about the Inner Child, money settings, transformations, the Sedona method and Life in Abundance (a.k.a. money workshop). In these workshops, Toine looks at a person's history and the old beliefs that originated there, as well as ways to go beyond the restrictions of a personality, just like the Sedona method. This way, transformation is quick and firm. The workshops and *intensives*:

- Workshop Life in Abundance (the money workshop)
- Three day Intensive Inner Child: Heal Yourself
- Five day Transformation Intensive
- Two day Workshop Self Worth and Self Esteem
- Two day workshop Discover your Passion and Life goal
- Introduction workshops Sedona Method
- Workshop En Route to Connection

Toine gives individual Sedona sessions, Healing Journeys and transformation sessions. Transformation sessions last an hour and Toine works with pieces of Healing Journey, Sedona Method and family settings. By putting these therapies together she can work insightful and at a deep level.

For more information about workshops, *intensives* or individual consults, please visit

www.spirit-coaching.nl

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