



flourish

TRUST YOUR GUT & LIVE LIFE
ON YOUR OWN TERMS

KATHRYN PRICE

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A NOTE ON THE AUTHOR

Kathryn Price is like you. She's a wife, sister, aunt, friend, and mum to her canine cutie. Kathryn has been on her own personal development journey for over thirty-five years. Her mission is: to help women find clarity, and the courage, to go after what they truly want. Kathryn is not a doctor, psychologist, or counsellor. She is simply someone who speaks her truth, sharing what's in her heart in the hope that it may inspire others.

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For you, and for me.

*This book is for anyone who struggles. We all do.
We just don't talk about it.*



INTRODUCTION

When we create a garden, we do so with such loving-kindness. We plan what we want to grow each season. We select our seeds. We start them in a warm, dark cocoon. When their tiny heads appear through the soil after what seems like forever, we are optimistic. We position the seedlings where they will get the right amount of sunlight. We water them. We watch them grow. We nurture them until they are big and strong enough to be planted in our garden.

Having prepared the soil by removing the weeds and then turning and feeding it nutrients, we wait until the heat of the day passes. We place our seedlings in a trench, giving them their new home. We are hopeful for a beautiful crop.

For the days, weeks, and months that follow, we take extra special care of them. We delight in their new growth, noticing every teeny tiny shoot

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that sprouts. We marvel at the process taking place before our very eyes. These little plants flourish because they have been placed in the best possible environment and were nurtured.

This book is about how I, too, managed to create an environment where I could learn to nurture myself and flourish.

My great love of writing, which I discovered as a fourteen-year-old, is where my literary journey began. When almost every other student was dreading the next English essay assignment, I couldn't wait. Later, as part of my healing journey, journaling and poetry became my solace.

From the time I began psychotherapy in the late '80s, I always had a notebook and a pen close by. Recording my thoughts and feelings became a therapy itself, a way to release, to better understand and see myself. But I still kept my passion for writing a secret for decades. For too long, I danced around it. I was afraid.

So, who am I to be writing this book? I am like you. I believe we are all the same but also different. I am not a counsellor or therapist; I am not a doctor. I do not even have a degree. I am a

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woman who decided more than three decades ago to heal herself. And I am a woman who loves to write.

Many people, myself included, have lived or do live their lives on autopilot. Going through the motions of daily life: getting up, going to work, coming home, cooking dinner, watching television, and then collapsing into bed before getting up to do it all again the next day. I don't know about you, but I was not brought up to go after what I wanted or even think about what I wanted, for that matter. I am not looking to blame anyone here; this is just the way it was. I accept that. I didn't have any ambition. I didn't even know who I was. This is how I lived my life until I was in my mid-twenties, and even then, it took me years to really understand myself, where I was in my life, and how I got there.

If you were brought up in the '60s, '70s, and '80s like I was, you likely didn't think much about what you wanted. You might have gotten a job when you left school, or maybe you studied further, but that wasn't so common in those days. A job or a profession, such as training to be a

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nurse, teacher, secretary, or getting an office job, was where it was at.

There are many of us who now want more for our lives than what we currently have. There are many of us who yearn to be more connected, more in tune and more content. You may have dreams you have never explored or deep secrets you wish you had the courage to bring forth. This was me. This is me.

For more than three decades, I had wanted to write a book. I have lost count of how many times I started. And then, seemingly out of nowhere, my journey of bringing you my story emerged, on a random day, just like those little seeds that decided today was the day.

Deeply connected with myself, going in and out of every emotion, I walked along the pavement. With each wave of sadness came a beginning, middle, and end. I held my breath. I resisted. Then I surrendered and let the torrent take over. I moved in, through, and out. Again. And again. And again.

Having lost my brother to brain cancer a few days earlier, I was experiencing deep, deep grief. I

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was feeling it all. Life had taught me that was the only way.

What happened next was both surprising and life-changing.

As my husband and I walked along, we talked and then continued in silence, as we always do. It's like a dance. We meet in conversation before withdrawing into our respective spaces with our personal thoughts and feelings. We then come back together to converse once again.

In my mind's eye now, more than two years later, I can still recall exactly where we were on that walk—the street and the specific place on that street. I can even remember what the heat of the summer sun felt like on my skin and how blue the sky was. In that exact location, at that exact moment, a strong and quiet voice spoke to me.

I'm going to write a book this year, I exclaimed silently to myself.

I was shocked.

It was like a bolt of lightning out of the blue. I had no idea where it came from.

Yes, I knew I wanted to become an author.

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Yes, I've been passionate about writing since high school.

And yes, I'd started writing more books over the years than I could count.

But, I had *never* had such a strong, deep inner knowledge as this of anything. This silent exclamation was a feeling underpinned with utmost certainty: there is no doubting this; it *will* happen.

Something deep within me had stirred after Paul passed. My sense was: if not now, when?

What drove me to write this book was twofold. Firstly, anxiety about the possibility of time running out, and secondly, my frustration at myself for having not faced my fears around publishing my work.

Within a month, I had written a book. The words flowed from my heart and mind like crazy. I couldn't stop them.

I discovered during that process that my deep desire to become an author and speaker had lain dormant within me for decades. Yes, I had played with the idea once or twice, coaching a few clients and even running goal-setting and vision-board

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workshops at one point, but I had returned to *safety* each time. To a more suitable or acceptable career or business. Back to where I felt comfortable. Back to where everyone else felt comfortable with me being. In writing this book, I reawakened my soul. I connected with my heart's desire. And, even though pursuing this path frightens me more than anything else ever has, I'm doing it anyway.

Why?

Because when I'm writing, I feel alive.

Because when I'm speaking my truth, I feel alive. And that is what I came here for. I came to this life to be myself. To live fully. To express myself.

To. Be. Me.

This is not about becoming a better version of myself. I am not a fan of that particular stance; I am good enough exactly as I am. You are good enough exactly as you are. I have always been whole, perfect, and complete. You have always been whole, perfect, and complete. This is about becoming more of who I really want to be. It is about being who I truly am. It is about becoming

all of me. It is about having the courage to do that. It is about helping you find the courage to do that.

I have spent my entire life trying to be good enough. A good enough wife, aunt, sister, friend, colleague, writer, cook, housekeeper, saver, and business owner. I'm done with that. I'm done squeezing myself into a box labelled, 'She's Doing it Right' or 'She's Doing What Is Expected of Her.'

No. More.

I am now doing what I goddam like. What I like!

The process of living is about discovering who we are. Life does that. It teaches us things. It has taught me that the only way to feel truly alive is to feel it all. By feeling the intense pain and anguish at Paul's death, I was able to connect deeply with myself, which allowed my intuition to speak to me. From there, I was able to move into what was next.

Many decades earlier, by facing myself in psychotherapy and learning to feel my feelings and explore their origin, I was able to know, understand, and love myself. By feeling it all, I

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have been able to connect with the answers deep within my psyche and, over time, create a life I never imagined possible.

I want every human being to know we each have our own answers. I have my own answers. You have your own answers. And, if we can trust that process and create the space to get quiet and go within, we will find the gold. If we can learn and integrate these skills into our daily lives, we will be changed forever. We will be more connected to ourselves. We will know ourselves better. We will make different choices. We will build self-belief. We will be stronger, and we will shine more brightly than we ever have.

It took courage to look within. It was incredibly painful at times. It took courage to ask for help—doing so is not something people of my generation find easy. Personally, if I had to choose again, I would take the exact same route. I look at it this way: when I have an ailment in my body, I seek help to remedy it, and if I need my car repaired, I find an expert to do the job. I see my mind as simply being another part of myself that I need help figuring out.

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By examining where we are and being willing to face the thoughts and feelings we hold deep inside our sweet and precious minds, we can experience more joy than we've ever known.

This is not pie in the sky or hearsay. Our mind is composed of two parts: 10 per cent conscious and 90 per cent unconscious. The conscious part is where we analyse, think, and plan and is where our short-term memory is. The unconscious part is where our emotions and feelings are; this is where our creativity, spirituality, and intuition lie. This is where the juicy stuff is. The good stuff. This is what we need to access in order to move through our emotions.

When we do not identify and process our feelings and emotions, we can easily project them onto others. In doing so, we unknowingly recreate the very scenario we want to avoid.

After losing my mother to cancer (I was 12 and she was 47) and never addressing my grief, as a young woman, I was very insecure and had major issues around abandonment. In relationships with men, I would cling so goddamn tight they wanted to (and did) run in the opposite direction. I had no

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idea I was doing this myself; I thought *they* had issues with commitment. How did I come to understand this? I went within. I looked at myself and my own issues and healed my past.

Suppressing my emotions took me to a place of anxiety and depression. I experienced weight gain, brain fog, extremely low self-esteem, and had no belief in myself whatsoever. I underachieved, stayed in relationships that were not good for me, and had suicidal thoughts.

But, when we understand our feelings and express our emotions in safe and appropriate ways, we have an entirely different experience, both in terms of ourselves and the world.

The long and the short of it is this. We can absolutely, without a doubt, change our lives by examining our thoughts and processing our feelings, no matter how far back they go. Once we have released the past, we can experience a whole new way of being. We can access who we really are and find the courage to be who we truly want to be.

There are many different healing and transformational modalities (for the body, mind,

and soul) to choose from. Doing your own research to find a practitioner you feel comfortable with is vital. Over the years, I have used psychotherapists, counsellors (face-to-face and online), intuitive healers, and sand- play therapy, as well as reiki, massage, acupuncture, TCM (traditional Chinese medicine), yoga, meditation, mindfulness, reflexology, naturopathy, massage, osteopathy, breathwork, and aromatherapy. Doing our personal work is not easy. Going slowly and being kind and loving with ourselves is an integral part of the process. Knowing when to push forward to go deeper and when to back off to feel what has come up and what you have learnt during a particular piece of work is crucial. We need the time and space to process and integrate our learning. Throughout your journey, listen to yourself, and take a break when you need to. This journey could take days, weeks, months, years, or a lifetime—it's your choice. The latter is what I have committed to. Not all at once and not continually, as and when I feel the need to process another round of unhelpful old, current, or future stories playing on my mind or stopping me from

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moving forward, I go in again. There will always be work to do, but ultimately you decide when and how.

You have all of the answers you will ever need deep within your soul. Get in touch with those, and you will be free. You will be free from the constraints of societal pressures and of years of conditioning telling you you need to be a certain way. You will be free from judgement and criticism from yourself and others. You will be free to take your own path and go your own way.

Within these pages is a collection of stories and lessons I have learnt from my intentional personal development journey over the last thirty-five years. Some of the themes may trigger you. Please take personal responsibility for this and seek out an experienced counsellor, therapist, healer, coach, or mentor if you feel stuck in a place you do not want to be. The book is designed to be read in its entirety or by selecting random chapters at any time. If you'd like to do more work, you can find my events, online courses and more at www.kathrynprice.co. You can sign up for my weekly email too.

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Like those tiny seeds we plant, with the right amount of warmth, light, and nurturing, we, too, can produce the most beautiful and abundant crop each season.

We, too, can flourish.

And that is what I want for you.

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PART ONE
WAKING UP

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1

LISTEN

*There is a voice
that doesn't use words.*

Listen.

RUMI

It was April 1989. I was standing in the back galley of a Boeing 767 aircraft on my way back from five nights in Singapore, my very first tour of duty as a flight attendant. Having cleared the cabin for landing and secured the galley, we, the crew, were gathered together chatting when it struck me. While everyone else was talking about how excited they were to be home and how they couldn't wait to land, all I wanted to do was turn around and go. Anywhere.

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That was the moment I realised something was terribly wrong.

That realisation was my wake-up call.

That was the first time I'd realised, oh no, there is something really wrong here. I thought to myself, *I shouldn't feel like this. I should feel excited to be going home too. I don't. I really, really don't. I feel miserable. I do not want to go home.*

Everything isn't always as it seems

On the surface, I had everything. At barely twenty-four, I was married, we had our own home, I drove a nice car, and I had a job that paid me to travel the world, yet I felt miserable. That feeling had become my normal. I'd noticed it more and more since I started working. I had several jobs during the first few years of my working life, none of which I enjoyed. Quite quickly, I became the one in the family who couldn't stick to anything. I beat myself up because I couldn't fit the mould of a job. I always made myself wrong. My mind was in a never-ending loop of self-destructive thinking.

I thought, *Why couldn't I stick to things? What was wrong with me? Why was I so miserable? Why could I not feel grateful for what I had?*

Later—much later, in fact—I would discover I needed more mental stimulation than my jobs were giving me. At the time, I didn't realise this because I was so adamant I was the problem. I couldn't stand outside of myself and look at what was really going on. Sitting in a cubicle sorting files or typing the same letter over and over almost sent me batty with boredom. Whilst I certainly acknowledge we all have to start somewhere, and I'm incredibly grateful for *all* of the grounding my corporate career gave me, I was to eventually discover that a job probably wasn't ever going to cut it for me. What I now know is this: I'm an entrepreneur at heart. Working on a big project and having others in the pipeline is what makes my heart sing. Right now, as I'm finishing up this book, I have the next one started and five more titles for a series after that. In addition, I have another two business ideas I plan to explore at the end of 2022 during my downtime.

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I remember driving home from the office one day (this was before my flying days), stopping off to get my major chocolate fix (as I did every day), and thinking, *I guess this is just how life is. I guess I'm a miserable person.* I recognised I felt miserable but thought it was my lot; I thought it was who I was.

A year earlier, a colleague had loaned me the book, *You Can Heal Your Life* by Louise Hay. Looking back, I see it planted a seed. From reading that book, and others during the following couple of years, I'd been able to see other ways of thinking. I started to see the way I was feeling was directly related to the deep grief I'd buried since my mother had died twelve years earlier.

Recognising something was dreadfully wrong was the catalyst for change. The voice that spoke to me in the galley didn't say a word. But, it spoke louder than any other I'd heard up until that point in my life. Without realising it, by listening, I started a process I knew nothing about, one that would end up being my guiding light for decades to come.

In the weeks and months following my wake-up call, I explored my feelings more and concluded that I needed to take responsibility for my life and feelings. I needed—and wanted—to fix myself. I had no clue how I'd do it, but I knew I had to. And I knew I had to do it on my own. This was the day I made the decision to save myself.

And so, my journey begins

Finding a therapist or counsellor was a foreign concept for me—I knew nothing of the process. Thankfully I found someone quickly and got things underway. My psychotherapeutic journey began in May 1989.

This was the start of what would later become a love affair with all things personal development, the point at which I made a commitment to myself, to my own growth, and to always do my personal work. And, that I have done.

For me, it was a lengthy process. I didn't trust anyone, and progress was slow. I understand why now. I had to learn to trust all over again. I was in constant fear of those close to me leaving like my

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mother had because of her illness. I resisted getting close to anyone. It took me years to learn to listen to my inner voice—years and years and years. After all, I'd only had the experience in the galley, and whilst I knew it was right, I certainly didn't label it as a gut feeling. It was a shock more than anything, and so strong; I knew I needed to act on it. Until I started working through my grief in therapy and understanding myself a little, I couldn't even begin to listen to my intuition.

With heightened awareness comes the ability to hear our inner voice

As I started to heal, the whispers came. Slowly, one by one, I started to hear them. I listened to them. And in time, I was able to allow myself to explore the idea of having things I wanted—learning photography, running my own business, being creative (painting, writing poetry, decoupage), of being a writer. Tiptoeing into every corner of my own being during psychoanalysis, I began getting to know myself. I began to trust myself. I started trusting others. I was becoming

more and more consciously aware of my own thoughts and feelings, which, in turn, enabled me to understand why I felt and behaved in the ways I did.

Our intuition, inner voice, gut feeling, or whatever you'd like to call it, is like a muscle. When it's not used, it has no strength and is almost invisible. But, with regular use, it becomes a force to be reckoned with.

As a young woman who had become disconnected from herself when her mother died, I had no idea who I was or what I wanted. This also meant I had no connection to my intuition at all. Looking back, however, there were times when it was obviously shouting at me—I just couldn't hear it. But that is life, and that is learning.

These days things are very different

These days, it's very different. Following my psychotherapy and sessions with numerous other counsellors, therapists, coaches, and intuitive healers I've worked with over the years, I have learnt much more about myself. Coming to realise

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and accept myself as a highly sensitive person, I now understand why I have always felt things so very deeply. I have also gained greater self-compassion, and I am connected to myself more now. I hear my quiet voice now; I listen for it. I listen to it. I follow it.

So often, my intuition is the quietest whisper. Yet, it is always spot on. Never has my gut feeling been wrong.

Life has a wonderful way of teaching us what we need to know and bringing us what we need each moment. If only we could learn to listen. To tune in to ourselves. To heed the quiet whisper saying, ‘turn right instead of taking the regular route, go to this store, sleep in a little later, or take the day off today.’ Our quiet voice has so much wisdom for us.

The universe has your back

I firmly believe the universe has my back. I also believe I have to play my part by taking the time to connect with myself. To listen. I know this is easier said than done in this crazy-busy world,

but even brief periods of doing the things you know you love can keep you connected with yourself. In everyday life, it's important. In challenging times, it's vital.

If we do not listen to the whispers of our soul or become aware of our thoughts, we are living an unconscious existence. We can not feel fully. We do not intuit. Without these things, we cannot fully and wholly live our lives. We miss out on the depth of living a rich life.

Listen for the messages that speak to you. Listen for your thoughts and feelings in response to events, political statements, family, friends, colleagues, and children. By acknowledging your own views on a topic, you have an opportunity to tune in even more deeply to your inner world and your own truth.

The quiet whisper is my guide. Always.

It tells me what to do. It tells me what not to do. It is how I listen to my soul.

It is how I change my life.

CONNECTING WITH YOURSELF

We can learn to tune in to our inner voice. Remembering what we love and including those things in our day is a great start. When you drive, put your favourite music on and sing your heart out. Practise mindfulness for five to ten minutes, once or twice a day (this has changed my life enormously). Listen to podcasts that inspire you, read books you love, or watch spiritual movies. Go for a walk. Practise yoga for a few minutes a day or take classes. There are so many ways we can connect with ourselves. All we have to do is pick a place to start.



WANT TO KEEP READING?

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(1) *Share on social media!* As a reader your opinion and ability to share my work by word of mouth enormous. So, if you want to help this book make waves, go ahead and share [this link](#) with to your social media account and let people know they can download chapters for free.

(2) *Add it to your [GoodReads TBR list](#)!* This let's your friends on GoodReads know it's on your wish list, so they'll know to check it out too.

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Thank you for reading this excerpt, I'd love to hear what you think of it so please [message me here](#).