‘Live your Passion!’

For all people who want to discover and live their Passions. This handbook guides you in living from ‘Heart and Soul’.

Martijn Raaijmakers
Every person can fully experience Passion at each moment in his or her life
‘Live your Passion’

United by Passion Foundation
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Information
For more information about Speaking, Writing and Coaching by Martijn Raaijmakers, please visit the website www.unitedbypassion.com

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With all my Heart, Thank You, Tom Kokke!
This English publication of ‘Live your Passion’ would not have been possible without you.
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Preface

‘Who am I?’

This is a question that matters to all of us, including you as the reader of this book. It is an essential question. This book will direct you on your way to finding the answer. Two answers are possible. The first answer, which is also the best answer, is the same for all people: ‘I am’. Of course, I realize that this will strike you as a rather vague answer, if you’ve just begun reading this book. A second option is perhaps more recognizable. It is simply stating your name and telling ‘something concrete’ about yourself. I might say: ‘I am Martijn Raaijmakers, author of this book on Passion’. Actually, your answer to the question of ‘Who am I?’ can come from two different layers. These are different layers of awareness. Your Passions are connected to them.

As soon as you know what your passions are, you will know who you are as well. Once you know that, you can be yourself. Once you know that, you can truly become yourself. Sadly, however, so many people are unable to answer the question, ‘What are my Passions’. Despite believing that living their Passions is essential for a fulfilling life, they find themselves drifting further and further from them. And once Passion starts to fade into the background, you run the risk of letting life pass you by in a blur. Soulfulness will remain hidden, and your inner fire will be reduced to a tiny spark.
I have lived like this for a long time. I was unaware, and all I did was try to keep my head above water. I experienced moments of beauty, as well as very difficult and often lonely moments. I was lonely because I chose not to talk about it with other people. In a way, I was an Olympic Gold Medalist in repressing feelings of ‘sadness, anger and disappointment’. Sometimes, I would make myself bigger than I really was, hoping that I would be seen and heard. I was hoping to experience self-esteem, to feel stronger. I was so focused on the outside world that I tended to forget about my inner world. All because I was hoping to find my Passion in the outside world.

Only when I turned my gaze inward, did searching turn into finding. Intuitively, I then realized that through all my years of personal and professional experience, in providing leadership and working with hundreds of managers and directors, I could really make a difference. I could do this because I believe(d) in the following principles: Everyone wants to be happy. That is connected with our desire to live and work with ‘Heart and Soul’. We want to be strong, feel free, live consciously and aware, enjoy. We want to know our Passions from deep within and draw upon them in our communication, our relationships, our work and in leadership. I wanted to provide a professional answer to help and support people in fulfilling precisely these essential requirements. It felt (and still does) like a calling. Providing professional services aimed at motivation, leadership, HRM, communication, teamspirit, career advice and sustainability, where the starting point is Passion. The ultimate
This is how I started up my own business in 2001, which eventually gave rise to the United by Passion Foundation. Right after starting my own business, I suddenly and ‘intuitively’ envisioned a pyramid. I immediately knew it was a model for an outlook on life that was full of meaning. Soon, the pyramid received a name: ‘The Passion Pyramid’. Over the years that followed, this model for an outlook on life served as the foundation, on which the entire Passionary’s outlook on Passion unfolded. This was based on many experiences in my own life. Step by step, I was growing more aware, more ‘awake’.

From the very start, I shared my insights about Passion with all the people around me. Among them were people I was guiding in my work as a Passionary. By 2010, the year in which the Passionary’s outlook on Passion was completed by experience, I had been guiding many hundreds of individuals and a substantial number of teams. By doing so, I discovered the universal value of the Passionary’s outlook on Passion. It brings anyone who is truly willing to be open to it, anywhere in the world, to the experience of Passion. Nobody is an exception to this!

The process by which this outlook presented itself to me, reached a climax in April 2010. I was with my colleagues when I had a series of flashes of inspiration. I was intuitively being ‘called’ to travel to Nepal,
'inviting' me to let go of my life in the Netherlands for a few months. My professional life as well as my private life. I decided to act upon this call. I was fully supported by my family, my business associate, and my colleagues. A week and a half later, I was on a plane heading for Kathmandu, capital of Nepal. Leaving my family behind all of sudden was hard emotionally, but I knew intuitively that this was the right thing to do. I sensed that this voyage was linked to my life’s destiny.

Nepal brought a number of special experiences to me. The most important of these occurred in a cave at about 4,000-metre altitude, which had sheltered a Tibetan yogi known as Mirepa in the 11th century. The picture on the cover of this book was taken near that cave. In it, I experienced a profound deepening, or expansion as I prefer to call it, of my awareness. This experience of awareness caused a very real and lasting change in my life. Ever since that moment, I feel deeply rooted in Being.

In that cave, I also became aware that it was time to start writing this book about Passion. As soon as I returned from Nepal, I dedicated myself to this task entirely. After a ten-year period, the Passionary’s outlook on Passion was complete. It had been totally lived through in all of its facets. The time had come to collect all the insights about Passion in a book and share them with as many people as possible. You, the reader of this book, are one of them. From the bottom of my
Heart, I honestly hope that this book will help you experience as much Passion in your life as possible. That has been my intention from the start.

Since my Passionary’s outlook on Passion came about in Nepal, you will find photo’s taken on my journey through the Himalaya illustrating this book. The contents of what I wrote down in this book have ‘taken me home’. I have been allowed to experience this wealth of insights step by step over the past decade. For that, I am grateful. Now it is time to share it with you. The fact that you are holding this book right now, means that you are ready to receive and absorb these insights. This has nothing to do with your age. After all, ‘it is never too late or too early to live your Passions!’

Namasté, Martijn Raaijmakers

2011, Nijmegen, the Netherlands
Reader’s guidelines

Every person can fully experience Passion in his or her life. This applies to you too. Of course, it helps if you know how to do it. This book will support you in doing so. The words you read, will guide you. They are simply signposts along the road to personal experience. This is how you will discover your passions and make them more profound!

First, I want to invite you to clear some inner space. You can do this by letting go of your ‘existing’ notions for now. By doing so, you will open yourself up to the adventure you are about to embark on. This will allow new experiences to actually reach your awareness. As long as your inner door is closed, new experiences may come knocking, but you will be unable to experience them. They simply cannot enter.

For now, regard this book as an experiment. In it, you see for yourself what the ‘Passionary’s outlook on Passion’ means for you personally, and how it affects you. The best way of doing that is fully engaging in the adventure with an open mind. My use of the word experiment is intentional here. Once the experiment is finished, it is up to you to decide what to do with all of your experiences.

From now on, there is one specific idea that you can let go of. That idea is the ‘classical’ notion of Passion. There is a misunderstanding about
Passion in our society. Many people regard their Passion as a single thing or a single form. Based on this notion, they start to look for their Passion outside of themselves. They try to find that one form that fits. This approach is hardly successful. You will keep on searching, without finding anything.

This book, by contrast, guides you inward. This is the only place where searching makes way for finding. That is how Passion enters your awareness from within. You will discover that Passion is much more than just one form. As you continue reading, you will grow fully aware of the true meaning of Passion. This is a very real insight. It will enable you to fully live your Passions.

Living your Passions means ‘awakened’ living. Your own experiences will make this clear as you make your way through this book. The awareness exercises, included throughout the text, will help you at it. That is why I want to urge you to consider doing these exercises. They will support you in living life from ‘Heart and Soul’. Or, as I prefer to call it, from the Passion of the Heart and the Passion of the Soul.

‘Live your Passion!’ is a guidebook that guides you towards the experience of Passion. The book is meant to be used in an active way. By all means, please work with it as you prefer. Some will read the whole book with ease and put it into practice without too much effort. Others may run into bumps along the way, as could happen in the section on
the Passion of the Soul, for instance. Please don’t worry if this is the case for you. It is perfectly all right to encounter obstacles on your way. Simply leave that particular section for later. Work with the insights you have gained so far. Allow them to take root inside you, talk about them with other people, and fit these insights into your everyday life. When you feel an impulse to reread a specific section, then by all means do so. Practice the awareness exercises and repeat them. Notice how all of this affects you.

Then, after taking a break for a day, a week, a month, or even a year, when you feel you want to pick up reading from the point where you ran into that bump, follow your impulse. You may well notice that you can read on with ease, without any further bumps in the road. Somehow, you will recognize the insights you read about. You will feel the need to spend more time on them. Simply because you are ready to do so at that moment.

As you proceed, you will gradually expand your awareness further and further. You keep on ‘waking up’. Then, suddenly, you get to the point of total awakening and become fully aware. That is the point at which you have realized the highest state of awareness. This will feel like ‘coming home’ for you too. The Soul that you are has come home. You melt away into ‘Being-Aware’, experiencing the radiance and the infinitely profound inner peace that comes with it.
This experience of awareness is vitally important for you. You experience how you are connected with everything there is. In full awareness, you will discover who you really are. This ‘awakened’ state of awareness will flow out into your everyday life, too. Increasingly, you will be present ‘in the here and now’, witnessing what is there at each moment. ‘Awake’ and connected to Being, you will live every moment straight from the Heart to the best of your ability. You practice the art of living from ‘Heart and Soul’, which will make you a source of inspiration to others in turn.

Enjoy your experiences!
The contents of this book

What is the true meaning of Passion? What does Passion have to do with ‘awakened’ living? Which two types of Passion do you carry inside you? What drives you and how can you map this clearly? What is your true face; who are you really? How to live from ‘Heart and Soul’ in everyday life?

All of these questions are answered throughout this book. Practical examples are included throughout the text, clarifying the Passionary’s outlook on Passion described. The book has been compiled using a logical structure. This allows you to take in all of the insights, step by step. This is why I suggest reading this book from start to finish, when you read it for the first time. By the end of the book, you will come across a summary, restating the essence of this work on Passion. I have tried to make it as easy as possible for you, to discover your Passions, and start to live them.

The common thread

The theme of this book follows a common thread, which will help you improve the quality of your life.
Definition of Passion
Gives you an insight into what Passion is. The definition is phrased in a single sentence. Reading this sentence will help you to get a clear idea of the essence of Passion. This enables you to focus your awareness on it.

The Passion Pyramid
Gives you an insight into the picture of yourself as a passionate person. This model for an outlook on life shows you the meaning of your human existence in a single glance. It allows you to see all dimensions of yourself. Acknowledging these dimensions and maintaining them will make you feel a sense of harmony.

The awareness ladder
Gives you an insight into the fact that Passion is closely connected to awareness. You understand how Passion builds up as awareness grows. The model of ‘the awareness ladder’ shows you four different levels. They provide a pathway to expand your own awareness.

The Passion of the heart
Gives you an insight into the seven universal Passion drives. You discover how you can live from the Heart, as any other person can anywhere in the world. Using these Passion drives, you will map your own Passion of the Heart on a large sheet of paper. This will then serve as your personal compass. It shows you the specific inner conditions in
which the energy of your personality is able to flow freely. When you live these inner conditions, your personality will flourish. Regardless of your life circumstances, you will begin to commit yourself to this in everyday life. It makes you live more from the Heart, with every step you take.

The Passion of the Soul
Gives you an insight into your true identity and your true Self. Repeating the awareness exercises will lead you to your own essential discovery of these. Being connected with your true Self will result in the experience of radiant and infinitely profound inner peace, flowing into your awareness. An inner peace that is always and unconditionally present deep within you. It is there whether times are good or bad, in the life of your personality. This realization will make you live this Passion ever more intensely. This will make you live ever more ‘awakened’, causing you to spread a radiant glow. You will become a source of inspiration to other people.

21st century - it’s your turn
Gives you an insight into why it is crucial to make as many members of society as possible discover their Passions, and live their Passions, in the shortest possible time span. You will become aware of your own meaningful contribution to this process. By living with ‘Heart and Soul’ yourself, as much as you can. And in this, you are not alone. The leader of the 21st century - the new kind of leader - is following this inner
flow as well. Such a leader uses this flow as the basis for unconditional commitment, to guiding others towards an ‘awakened’ life. This calls for major change and reform in our society, of which the new leader is aware. This is the only way to break through the barrier of ‘living history’, which stands in the way of experiencing Passion. In this way, collective space will be created for a new experience - one that is linked to the very core of every human being; a core that is all about Passion!
‘Waking Up’
Passion is experiencing that which, deep down inside at your very core, you truly wish to experience.
Spiritual growth

Today, many people still feel uneasy about the word spirituality. This is caused by several factors. People are often fearful, for instance, about how their lives could change once they start developing spiritually. Without being aware of it, their ego can be a major influence here. This is because the ego knows that spiritual development will eventually lead to its unmasking. This happens when you discover by your own experience that your true nature is pure awareness. In other words, you experience that your personality is not your true identity. The ego fears this discovery, as it worries about its continued existence.

Many people automatically link the concept of spirituality with specific subjects and negative experiences; such as religious movements, clairvoyants, magazines or perhaps just people from their own environment. This is sad, because if you find spirituality a tough concept, you will generally be less open or completely closed to what makes life meaningful. You will easily become trapped in patterns that you are not aware of. These patterns bring pain and suffering, and make them last.

This is why people often say ‘spirituality is woolly’, or ‘I’m too down-to-earth for that’. These perceptions frequently block the experience of Passion. Because let’s face it: as long as these thoughts about spirituality occupy your mind, how willing are you really to engage in an experiment? Could you be completely open to new experiences?
Practical experience shows that your chances are very slim at best. You will be unaware of how new experiences are automatically being rejected. This is a pity because after all, spirituality simply means living life from ‘Heart and Soul’. In other words, living the Passion of the Heart and the Passion of the Soul.

Personally experiencing these Passions is crucial. This book comes from personal experience and its goal is to give you an opportunity to have your own experiences. The notion of awareness is the key concept here. You can make awareness grow. You can expand awareness, if you really open up to it. You need a real interest in your true nature and to be willing to commit yourself to it. The fact that you are holding and reading this book right now, shows that you are ready for it. Apparently, you are ready to let more Passion flow in your life!

The experience of Passion does not have to be limited to certain special moments in life that happen accidentally. You could choose to live like that, but it doesn’t have to be that way. Gaining insight into your Passions gives you a chance to start working with them, actively living your Passions anytime, anywhere. Random life situations, will no longer distract you from your Passions. On the contrary, you will use every situation to express your Passions. That is a spiritual life. Of course, this will not happen overnight. As you ‘do’ and ‘put into practice’ what is described in this book, there will be perfect moments as well as imperfect ones. Use these imperfect moments to feed your
growth. Accept it as it is and become more aware. Spiritual growth means expanding your awareness. You will climb the steps of the ‘awareness ladder’. You are ‘waking up’. Moments of imperfection are a part of this too. Becoming aware of them, gives you an opportunity for taking the next step in the process of living your Passions more strongly.

**Depth of your breathing**

Take a moment to investigate your breathing as it is right now. How deep does your breathing go? Notice how each inhalation and exhalation passes, without changing anything. Perhaps your breathing is located high up, with each breath ending in your upper chest. Your breathing may be fast-paced. Or it may be very calm, if you breathe all the way down to your lower abdomen. Be aware of your breathing as it is right now. Repeat this awareness exercise a few times every day.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
The Passion Pyramid

The Passion Pyramid shows how you look as a passionate person. It is a model of an outlook on life, telling you what your being-human consists of, in one single glance. It makes you see all the dimensions of yourself. By acknowledging and maintaining these dimensions, you will feel harmony and wholeness. The Passion Pyramid is the central
instrument, to help you know yourself and live your Passions. That is why the entire 'Passionary's outlook on Passion' is linked to it. You can use this model as your personal compass. Once you know everything this outlook on life entails, The Passion Pyramid will serve as a reminder of everything this outlook represents. As such, it will guide you on the path of your life. This is because it shows you who you are, and what you can do to let your Passions flow freely.

Everything about The Passion Pyramid has meaning and is associated with elements of this outlook on life. The tip has meaning, as do the corners, the base, and the top section. These are the visible parts that make up the pyramid. Together, they show you what your 'being-human' means. They make you aware of 'who you are'.

The base of The Passion Pyramid, symbol of your personality.
The Passion Pyramid stands firmly. This firmness comes from the four lower corners, making up its base area. This base surface represents your personality. Each of the four corners, indicates a specific dimension of your personality.

Corner 1: physical body
The first randomly selected corner of The Passion Pyramid, symbolizes the dimension of your physical body. This is the most tangible element of your personality. After all, your body is something you can grab hold of and touch. It is a tangible 'thing'. You could regard your body as a
‘vehicle’, because you can use it to move around from one place to the next. You could also regard your body as an ‘instrument’, used to perform specific actions. Whatever you feel or think in your head, can be expressed by using your body. For example, you could tell about ‘something’, or write something down, or make something. Your body makes all these things possible, provided that it is working correctly of course. We have partial control over the performance of our body. We can influence it in a positive way, by taking good care of it. If we care for it, our body’s physical condition will benefit.

Corner 2: non-physical body
If you rotate the pyramid by 180 degrees, you will see another corner directly across from the corner of the physical body. This corner symbolizes the opposite of your physical body. The opposite of physical is non-physical. Therefore, the opposite of your physical body is your non-physical body. Synonyms are used for it, including aura, subtle field and body of energy. So what is this exactly?

Every person’s body radiates energy. You can detect it, if you direct your senses at it in full awareness. Then you can feel it as well as see it. This energy field has an oval shape and is present around the body of every person. You can compare it to the magnetic field surrounding a magnet. Magnets also consist of a tangible part and an intangible part. This intangible part is the magnetic field that surrounds the magnet. You can feel it when you separate two connected magnets. Turn
one magnet around and then slowly move them back towards each other. At some point, you will feel how ‘something’ seems to be present between the magnets. It happens before they actually make contact. Between them is energy, a magnetic field.

Something remarkable is going on in our society today. Everyone readily accepts the existence of magnetic fields around magnets, no questions asked. At the same time, however, many people still dismiss the presence of a non-physical body as nonsense. This is in spite of the striking resemblance, between the non-physical field surrounding the human body and the magnetic field surrounding a magnet. In fact, it is very easy to experience.

The rejection of the non-physical body is unfortunate, and it has consequences too. Anyone who dismisses it as nonsense is depriving him- or herself. If you do this, it applies to you too. Then you are denying a part of yourself. This will disturb your balance by definition. You are unbalanced because part of your personality cannot enter your awareness. This in turn may result in symptoms and problems for other elements of your personality. Your personality is a system in which all the individual elements continuously affect each other.

Of course, such potential unbalances can be restored. This happens when you, as a ‘denier’, start to experiment with the presence of the non-physical body. At a certain point, your non-physical body will
reveal itself to you. This will change many things. The non-physical body will no longer be someone else’s story. You have personally experienced its presence. This experience will allow you to definitively accept this part of your personality.

Corner 3: thinking
One of the two remaining corners symbolizes the dimension of your thoughts. This is your power of reasoning. It is an ability that enables you to think, reason, analyze, remember, plan ahead, consider and decide. Thinking is ‘something’ that probably occupies a major part of your everyday life, as well as the lives of most other people. In fact, it occupies so much of our time that from the perspective of adequately caring for this dimension, it is probably better to think less often. I will give this more attention later on in this book, in the chapter on the Passion of the Soul.

Corner 4: feeling
One corner remains, directly opposite the corner symbolizing the dimension of thinking. This corner represents the dimension of feeling. This ability is also part of your personality. In a way, many people experience this ability as entirely different from thinking. They are each other’s extreme counterparts, so to speak. This is reflected in the opposite positions of ‘thinking’ and ‘feeling’ at the base of The Passion Pyramid. Feeling is something that you can do as well. Just like anyone else, you are able to perceive not just thoughts, but feelings as well.
Feelings like happiness, anger, sadness, and love, for instance. It is important for each person, to let his or her feelings run freely. Without running into obstacles. On the other hand, it is also important not to get carried away by your feelings. You should not let your feelings take possession of you. I will explain more about this too in the chapters on the Passion of the Heart and the Passion of the Soul.

An image of your personality
All in all, the base surface of the Passion Pyramid is a symbol of your entire personality. The corners indicate the four dimensions that make up your personality: your physical body, your non-physical body, your ability to think, and your ability to feel. These last two elements, thought and feeling, combine to form a psychological totality. This is your psyche or ego.

Each person’s personality, with all four of its dimensions, will flourish under specific inner conditions. Deep down inside, you have a primal longing to live these conditions. By personally creating them and making them into your everyday reality. This is the realization of the Passion of the Heart. Once you discover and express it, the energy of your personality will be able to flow most easily. At that point you are living life from the Heart.

The tip: symbol of your true identity
We still have one dimension left, and that is the tip of The Passion
Pyramid. This tip symbolizes the true identity of all people. This is why it is also called the true Self. Synonyms used for the notion of true Self are Soul, higher-awareness, spirit, pure-awareness, witness-awareness, perceiving-awareness and silent witness. These are different words, that cover the same meaning.

The Passion of the Soul is linked to your true identity. It is the primal longing, present in you too, to discover and experience your true identity. To permanently hold this discovery in your awareness and to make it more profound. You can only experience the presence of your true Self in the ‘here and now’. It is an identity level that goes beyond your personality. The Passion Pyramid makes this clear. The base surface is at a level below the tip. I use the word level, to point out a different level of awareness. In other words: when you expand your awareness to a higher level, you get in touch with your true Self, seemingly without effort. We will now look into how you can do this.
**Feeling energy between your hands**

Firstly, take a few moments to observe your own breathing as it is right now. Follow a few breathing cycles with all the awareness you have in you. Then, spread your hands apart at shoulder height, as if you were holding a box about three feet wide between them. Make sure your hands are directly opposite each other and press the fingers of each hand together. Now, cup your hands into the shape of a little bowl. Direct your awareness at the sensations you feel in and around your hand. Now move your hands towards each other very slowly. Make good use of your feelings to sense whether you experience a sensation between your hands. It may feel as if a balloon or a large inflatable beach ball is present between your hands. You could also feel a kind of ‘pressing force’ in the palms of your hands. Whatever sensation you may have, this is how you experience the presence of your non-physical body.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
Expanding awareness

The essence of living from ‘Heart and Soul’, the Passion of the Heart and the Passion of the Soul, is all about living in awareness. A life of awareness, a life spent living your Passions, is also a spiritual life. Spiritual growth comes down to expanding your awareness. Resisting this growth of awareness, means resisting the experience of Passion. You are slowing down the experience of Passion in your life, or even
blocking it completely. Sadly, this type of resistance is still very common today. And it has been since the beginning of human history. This slowdown or blockade causes us, the people of today, to face huge social challenges.

These social challenges are so enormous, that it is absolutely crucial for large numbers of people in our societies to take a leap. A leap from what I call ego-awareness towards now-awareness. This is a collective leap, which requires a critical mass of people to awaken in now-awareness. This leap is predetermined by evolution. Still, actual success is by no means certain. It is up to us - humanity - to go ahead and take that leap. If we don’t, humanity will suffer tremendous blows, at some point between now and the next few generations. We may not even survive at all. We could perish, for instance, due to climate change or deployment of weapons of mass destruction.

Once large numbers of people start living their Passions, a meaningful change will come about. This change will be so powerful, that we will naturally turn away from the path we have followed until the present day, and start to rearrange our society. These rearrangements will revolve around the central hub of our soulfulness. We will do whatever it takes to live with as much soul as we can, supporting each other as we go. This may sound like a vision of some distant future, but you can start to contribute right now. How? By starting to live your Passions to the fullest, taking the leap from ego-awareness to now-awareness.
Taking this leap, means becoming (more) ‘awake’. You become aware of more. Compare it to wearing a set of ‘blinkers’ that you have worn all along without being aware of them. It is precisely because they enter your awareness, that you can start to widen these ‘blinkers’, and eventually cast them off altogether. In practice, this means expansion of your awareness. You grow aware of more. Both in your inner world and in the outside world of your personality. You start to perceive more, within yourself as well as in your surrounding environment.

Later on, we will have a close look at the model of ‘the awareness ladder’. It will reveal a distinction between four levels of awareness. Your own awareness may be on any one of these levels. The essence of these four levels can be reduced to two main levels. These are ego-awareness and now-awareness.

**What does ego-awareness mean?**

When your awareness is at the level of ego-awareness, you are tangled up with your personality. You are not aware of your true Self, your true identity. In this state of awareness, you associate the essential emotional notion of ‘I am’ with your personality. You make the mistake of thinking that you are your personality. In terms of The Passion Pyramid, you are not aware of its tip. Only the dimensions of the base of the pyramid are in your awareness. This state, in which your true Self has become tangled up with your personality, is also called identifying with your personality.
A typical feature of ego-awareness is that in this state, you are unaware of being ‘trapped’ in your own personality. This means losing yourself in the activity of your psyche, which consists of thoughts and feelings. You are stuck in it. Thoughts and feelings come and go all the time. The psyche of your personality is constantly in motion. Each activity keeps triggering new activities. This just keeps going on all day long. All these thoughts and feelings are like clouds in the sky, hiding the presence of your true Self.

Ego-awareness is a state of limited awareness. In this sense, you are less ‘awake’. The awareness that is you, is stuck in the activity of your psyche. This is mainly because of the ‘thinker’ in you. This ‘thinker’ plays the starring role at the level of ego-awareness. Although you are usually unaware of it, the thinker in you sits on his throne and rules with an iron grip. Thinking uses up all of your awareness. The thinker labels, interprets, and analyzes just about anything it sees, hears, feels, tastes and smells in the world around it.

Because of this, you experience many things in a superficial way. You will not be able to really see ‘something’, because as soon as you see it, the ‘thinker’ in you will explain what it is. It labels things. An instant and automatic mental filter stands between you and your perception. This filter blurs the image that you see. You can’t really see it, and so you remain stuck in brief and superficial perception. In fact, all that you will ‘see’ is the thought of what you ‘see’. In other words, seeing
without thinking, or pure sight, is impossible. This process doesn’t just affect the experience of sight. The same happens to the experiences of hearing, feeling, tasting, and smelling. All of this happens automatically inside of you.

Without being aware of it, you end up in an imaginary world. You are completely under the control of your personality’s thoughts and feelings. They hold you in their grasp. Automatically and unconsciously, you just follow all thoughts or feelings that come and go. This is how the thinker in you controls your existence. In a way, living in ego-awareness is like being ‘asleep’. Even though you get out of bed as soon as you wake up, you will still spend most of the day in a world of your imagination.

You could also call this imaginary world a psychological world. That is a world in which ‘time’ exists. Thinking works by arranging experiences into past, present, and future. This means that you will rarely be present in the ‘here and now’. In ego-awareness, time is a major factor. You spend most of your time thinking about what happened in the past, what is happening in the present, and what could possibly happen in the future. These thoughts give rise to feelings in turn. And the awareness that is you, gets lost in all these thoughts and feelings.

You could look at it like this. The ‘here and now’, in which your personality exists at some point, is not really where you are. This is because you are lost in thoughts and feelings about ‘something’ you experienced
in the past, or ‘something’ you experience in the present, or ‘something’ you could experience in the future. You don’t notice what is present in the ‘here and now’. In ego-awareness, you will also feel separated from your environment. You experience an ‘inner world’ and an ‘outer world’. Everything that falls within the limits of your personality’s body, is part of your ‘me’. Everything that falls outside of these limits, you experience as ‘not-me’. In your experience, that is the outside world.

In ego-awareness, you completely overlook the fact of experience, that ‘time’ and ‘separation’ are just creations of your own psyche - your own brain. Getting tangled up with them, means missing the most valuable experience there is. You miss what is present in the ‘here and now’. This will keep you unaware of your true Self. You will also miss the radiant and infinitely profound inner peace that unconditionally accompanies it. What you deal with in ego-awareness is suffering. Mental, emotional, and physical suffering. This is the direct result of being tangled up with your personality. I will explain more about this at the section on the Passion of the Soul.

Of course, you can experience a certain degree of relaxation in the state of ego-awareness. Still, the experience cannot be compared to the unconditional experience in now-awareness. In ego-awareness, relaxation is always conditional. There can only be relaxation, as long as your personality is enjoying its situation. As soon as the situation changes, the sense of relaxation will usually vanish. The inner peace that results
from ego-awareness, is also very limited in nature. The experience of the radiant inner peace associated with now-awareness, is infinitely more profound.

The state of ego-awareness lasts, until you free yourself from the shackles of your psyche. At that point, there is more space in your awareness. You need this space to enter into the experience of now-awareness.

What does now-awareness mean?
As your awareness expands and merges with the ‘here and now’, you enter into the experience of now-awareness. You, pure awareness, will no longer be trapped by thoughts and feelings. You free yourself from them, by transcending them. Transcending your thoughts and feelings means rising out above them. This is symbolized by the tip of the pyramid. Even though thoughts and feelings still come and go, they no longer hold you in their grasp. You observe them ‘awake’ and in awareness, from a kind of helicopter perspective. Without being dragged away by them. From this perspective, you can ‘watch’ your thoughts and feelings come and go. You are ‘present’ as thoughts and feelings drift by, without being them. You can now ‘watch’ how many thoughts you often have, and the dazzling speed at which they come and go. You become aware of the similarity between your psyche and a fast-flowing river current. It often rages furiously, and sometimes, it turns into a calm and gentle stream.
In now-awareness, you become aware of a new reality. One that is very real, and one that rises far above your personality. This reality can only be experienced in the ‘here and now’. That is why it is called now-awareness. As your awareness expands and rises above your personality, you break free from the constant buzzing of your psyche. This clears the way for a radiant and infinitely profound inner peace to present itself. It is the experience of unconditional bliss, which starts to flow into your awareness.

As you proceed, you will notice how this state of awareness is always present deep down in your personality. You can always experience it. Regardless of whether your personality’s living conditions are pleasant or unpleasant. All you need to do for this experience, is to ‘wake up’ and connect to this level of awareness. This connection is also the connection to your true Self. You experience that pure awareness is your true identity. As the mask of your personality slips, your true Self will suddenly emerge from behind it.

As you continue to delve deeper into now-awareness and fully ‘wake up’, your experience of separation is replaced by the experience of oneness. This state of awareness is free from all limitations. You will experience that pure awareness is the source of all life. Deep within, you are at one with that source. The awareness state of total awakening, is also known as the oneness-experience.
Recognizing ‘thinking out loud’

The state of ego-awareness is closely related to thinking. This is why it is so crucial for you to start recognizing the ‘thinker’ in you. Sometimes your ‘thinker’ openly reveals itself. It happens at moments when you are talking to yourself out loud. Become aware of these moments. Pay attention to moments when you ‘think out loud’. At such moments, the ‘thinker’ in you manifests itself even more clearly. Become aware of the sense of being tangled up that accompanies these moments. It is the ‘thinker’ in you, trying to make itself heard by thinking out loud. As long as you keep taking this seriously, you will remain unaware.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
The awareness ladder

You have just seen how your awareness can be categorized into two main levels: ego-awareness and now-awareness. By now, you have come to understand the basic difference between these two levels. This allows us to take matters one step further. I will show you how both ego-awareness and now-awareness can each be divided into two sub-levels. This subdivision gives rise to a total of four different levels.
of awareness. Together they form the model of ‘the awareness ladder’.

‘The awareness ladder’ organizes the expansion of your awareness into four distinct steps. Ordered by increasing degrees of awareness, these levels are diffuse-awareness, core-awareness, higher-awareness and All-awareness. Together, these four distinct levels of awareness form a kind of inner stairway. You can climb that stairway and use it to expand your awareness in a practical way. Each individual level brings new experiences. With each step you climb, you will expand your awareness further. You keep becoming more ‘awake’.

This process of ‘awakening’ means that you are growing aware of more things. What you were already aware of will remain, and new things are added. Compare it to wearing a set of blinkers, which keep opening up to a wider view. Just cup both your hands to the sides of your face, imagining that they symbolize a pair of tight-fitting blinkers. This is the most limited state of awareness, which I call diffuse-awareness. Now, gradually move your hands further apart. At some point, you will reach a stage where all limits fall away. This point represents the highest and most ‘awakened’ state of awareness. This state is called All-awareness in the model of ‘the awareness ladder’. At that point, there is only space. The motion of your two hands, widening your view from limited awareness to unlimited awareness, is reflected in the model of the ‘awareness ladder’. In the model, the white color indicates how far your awareness has expanded.
Many words can be used for this process of ‘awakening’. Other words I will use in this book include expanding your awareness and spiritual growth. If you look closely at this last phrase, you will notice that it includes the word ‘spirit’. This word is synonymous to all the words that can be used to name the top of The Passion Pyramid. That is why expanding your awareness equals spiritual growth. It means growing towards the experience of ‘Spirit’.

It is important to realize that, once you raise your awareness to a higher level, it will not stay there forever. Staying alert and ‘awake’ requires your continuous effort. If you fail to make that effort, your awareness may suddenly ‘fall back’ to a previous level. This makes sense for the following reason. You have become used to the condition of ego-awareness since childhood. This is because most of the people around you, live their lives in that very same layer of awareness. More specifically, this is the condition I call diffuse-awareness. In other words, you have grown up in a world full of ego-awareness. Once you start looking around in an ‘awakened’ state, you will notice that the world is still full of ego-awareness today. It keeps bombarding you with temptations every day. By temptations I mean impulses, that keep you unaware or invite you to return to a state of lower awareness. All of these impulses require the activity of your psyche. As such, they trigger all sorts of feelings and thoughts. When you respond to these invitations, giving in to the temptations, you will drop down ‘the awareness ladder’ and end up at a lower level. You will be stuck at that level, until
you get back on your feet and start moving up the steps again.

I will now explain about the specific characteristics of the four different levels of awareness.

**Diffuse-awareness**

In this state of awareness, you are tangled up with your personality. You are not aware of your true Self. Living from the Heart is not going as well as it could. Without really knowing it, this condition causes you to live on autopilot. At this level of awareness, you are unaware of how your thoughts and your feelings automatically control your actions. You are unaware of how your behavior is full of automatisms, patterns and conditioned responses.

Defense mechanisms will emerge as well, in response to what happens around your personality. They cause you to repress certain feelings in this state of awareness. These feelings will keep piling up inside, bursting to the surface in uncontrollable and completely random ways, in all sorts of situations. But even when they do, you will only be slightly aware of them, or not aware at all.

In this state of awareness, the environment surrounding your personality - the outside world - becomes the measure of all things. In a way, this causes you to live your life from the outside to the inside’, which has serious consequences for your personality’s energy level. Conflicts
come and go, both in your inner world and in the outside world of your personality. They drain much of your strength and energy. Such limiting factors can easily take root in your personality, which will cause permanent energy leaks. As a result, many people carry along multiple energy leaks. Examples of such leaks are restrictive ideas about oneself, deep fears, or unprocessed events from the past. And unfortunately, it doesn’t always stop there. As long as you remain unaware, your existing energy leaks will grow larger, and you will often gain more leaks along the way.

At the level of diffuse-awareness, you will experience a sense of being separated from the outside world. You also start to judge what happens in this outside world. In addition, you will have judgments about your own personality. When you live in this state of awareness, you can easily overlook one of the four dimensions making up your personality: physical body, non-physical body, thoughts or feelings. You could even label them as ‘woolly’ and dismiss them as fairytales. This will disturb the balance in your personality. As a result, the healthy condition of each of the four dimensions comes under pressure.

Diffuse-awareness is the least ‘wakeful’ state of awareness. In other words: only a small portion of your awareness is ‘awake’ in this state. As such, you live largely unaware. You are wearing a set of enormous ‘blinkers’, as it were. This state of awareness still holds the great majority of all people in its grasp, every day, and all over the world.
Core-awareness

At the level of core-awareness, you live less of your life on autopilot. You become more aware of the automatisms, patterns, conditioned responses and defense mechanisms, which you carry along with you. You are working on letting go of these things. You also acknowledge the four dimensions of your personality - physical body, non-physical body, thoughts and feelings - and you do your best to take care of them.

In this state of awareness, you aim to live entirely from your Heart. You are aware of your seven Passion Drives, which together form the Passion of the Heart. You try to express this Passion as well as you can in everyday life. This becomes apparent from the things you do, as well as from how you go about doing these things. You try to express the voice of your Heart in the things that you do. That is what you long for!

Once you have started to live from core-awareness, you make a conscious choice to live ‘from the inside to the outside’. Following your intuition is part of how you do that. You also pay attention to so-called energy leaks. Whenever you find a leak, you use the chance to close it. This will increase your strength. All in all, at the level of core-awareness, you live your Passion of the Heart to maximum effect. By doing so, you let the energy of your personality flow smoothly.

But even at the level of core-awareness, you will still regard your personality as the only reality that exists. This is because, just as in the
state of diffuse-awareness, you are unaware of your true Self. It is still hidden behind all the thoughts and feelings, running around in your personality’s psyche, demanding all of your awareness for themselves. Because your true Self is missing from your awareness, you will still feel separated from your environment. You will only experience the limited and conditional sense of inner peace, which accompanies relaxation.

Higher-awareness
This level of awareness is different from the levels mentioned earlier in an important way. There, you experience your personality as the only reality that exists. Once your awareness starts to expand, towards the level of higher-awareness, you break free from being tangled up with your personality. You move from ego-awareness to now-awareness. You are rising above your personality. You become ‘more awake’, and in the ‘here and now’ you discover that your personality is not your true face. Behind the mask of your personality, you suddenly see your true identity appear. It is pure awareness, which you experience as your true Self.

This makes the experience, of a radiant and infinitely profound inner peace, flow into your awareness. This will occur regardless of your personal circumstances at that moment. It doesn’t make a difference whether your personality’s living conditions are pleasant or unpleasant. This experience is always there, unconditionally present, deep down in your personality. So you can connect with it at any moment. As soon as
you make that connection in full consciousness, the experience of this higher state of ‘awakening’ will flow into your awareness.

In this state of awareness you experience the world ‘in the here and now’ very consciously and intensely. This happens in your inner world as well as in the outside world of your personality. Your body, thoughts and feelings are all part of this inner world. Your personality’s environment is the outside world that you experience. In higher-awareness you approach it all in a state of being ‘awake’. This is an open state without judgment. You can do this by being detached and full of acceptance, as you observe what is present in the ‘here and now’, from a position of higher-awareness. That position is the tip of The Passion Pyramid.

Higher-awareness is linked to realizing the Passion of the Soul. This means discovering, experiencing, and digging deeper into pure awareness as your true identity. It means breaking the link between your awareness and your personality. This is also called deidentification. The more confident you become in living at this level of awareness, the more intense your experience of a radiant and infinitely profound inner peace will become. You become aware that this experience is linked to your true Self. The space in which this experience occurs, is the awareness that you are. You could also put it like this: the awareness, which is you, starts to become aware of itself as awareness.
All-awareness
The highest state of awareness is All-awareness. In this state of awareness, your awareness is unlimited. It is the state of being completely ‘awake’. Here, you experience that deep down inside, at the very core of our own being, we are essentially at one with everything. At one with the source, with All, with the manifest as well as with the non-manifest. Various words can be used for the experience of All-awareness. All sorts of synonyms are used for this ‘enlightened’ state of awareness. Examples include mystical experiences, experiences of oneness, unlimited emptiness, cosmic awareness, absolute awareness and first reality.

All-awareness reaches well beyond the limits of human imagination. It is almost impossible to put the contents of this experience to words. By definition, no attempt at doing so will do justice to the experience. In spite of this limitation, I will hand you a metaphor, to give you some sense of direction. Visually, you can regard All-awareness as a ‘boundless ocean of awareness’. It is a space that lives. Everything is included and at one. That which has form as well as that which is formless. In fact, form cannot even exist without this awareness, without this space. It justifies the existence of all forms.

The Soul of every person is essentially linked, to this ‘boundless ocean of awareness’. In this metaphor, you could view the Soul as a single ‘drop’ out of this ‘boundless ocean’. Yet at the same time, this ‘drop’
has ‘temporarily’ made your personality its home. This is often called incarnation. In other words, this ‘drop of awareness’ - your true Self - has ‘temporarily’ incarnated in the form of a human being. When you experience the level of All-awareness, that ‘drop’ has briefly returned to its source, ‘the ocean’. It has dissolved into its source, returning to oneness. The experience of this ‘boundless ocean’, is the experience of All-awareness.

In the state of All-awareness, the experience of separation is replaced by the experience of absolute oneness. This experience is accompanied by an unprecedented sense of bliss. You experience All-awareness as infinite, formless, loving, impersonal and alive. This level of awareness is the full realization of the Passion of the Soul.
An aware cup of tea

Have a cup of tea, which may be unlike any cup of tea you had before. You can do this, by quietly spending about fifteen minutes on the act of having tea. In this exercise, you experience the cup of tea with great awareness. Do this by perceiving the cup of tea through each of your individual senses, one sense at a time. Try to direct all of your attention at each sense. Focus your full awareness on the particular sense that you use at that moment. Be mild on yourself if you drift off and get distracted. Simply return your awareness, to experiencing the cup of tea, and start again at the sense where you left off. Take about four minutes for each of your senses. Start out by looking at your tea. After looking, you can close your eyes. Now, focus on feeling the warmth of the tea. Then move on to smell the aroma of your tea, with all the awareness you have in you. Conclude by tasting its flavor in full awareness. Take your time to let the tea and its flavor linger in your mouth. As soon as you swallow the tea, you can follow its course, by using your inner sensations.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
The path to an enlightened society

Reaching the level of now-awareness does not mean that you are ‘done’. Staying at this higher level of awareness, requires constant alertness and ongoing effort, all day long. If you forget about living from your ‘Heart and Soul’ for just one moment, a (substantial) part of living in awareness just ‘slips away’ instantly. At these moments, you become less aware, sliding back down to a lower level, or the lowest
level on the awareness ladder.

You can be in a state of now-awareness for a moment, only to return to the state of ego-awareness the very next instant. When this happens, limited reality returns immediately. This reality is the experience of core-awareness or diffuse-awareness. You become tangled up with your personality again. This is caused in part by all the temptations that surround you in everyday life, inviting you to think of feel without awareness. However, by taking one step, your constant efforts will help you stay at the level of higher-awareness ever more often and ever longer. That makes a very real difference.

As your awareness keeps on expanding, you become more ‘awake’ and more aware. In other words: more and more will appear in your awareness. Because you create more space, the experience of the Passion of the Soul can flow freely. This causes the light of your awareness to shine stronger. Your inner strength will grow as well. What used to be dark, is now lit up. What used to grow in the darkness, now suddenly burns away in the light of your awareness!

The drop is the ocean and the ocean is the drop. You are the society and the society is in you. This is precisely why you can contribute to an enlightened society. As you make the light of your awareness shine brighter, your light will kindle sparks of light in others around you. In this way, more and more lights are lit up in the world around you, as
we start to move towards an enlightened society together.

Living at the level of higher-awareness has universal value. Moving up the awareness ladder towards this level of awareness, matters to all people around the world. This is the only level of awareness that does true justice to Being Human. A society where people collectively live at the level of higher-awareness, is a society full of passionate people. That truly is an enlightened society!

People have the power to create. That which we create from diffuse-awareness, is essentially different from what we establish from higher-awareness. If we create from this higher level of awareness, a new reality will come about. This new reality, is a path set out for us by evolution. It is up to you to make this reality manifest. First in your inner world, and then in your outside world. The Passion Pyramid will help you do this.
Seeing energy around people

Everyone has a non-physical body. You can become aware of this. This exercise will help you perceive it. Start out by arriving in the ‘here and now’, by following your breathing with awareness. If possible, shut your eyes for a moment, and be as aware as you can of each individual breathing cycle. Focus all of your awareness on following your breathing. Keep on breathing in awareness as you reopen your eyes. Now, direct your awareness at the people around you. Use your peripheral sight. This is the opposite of a narrow and highly focused gaze. Broaden your field of vision. Perceive the totality of the space surrounding a person. Ask yourself if you detect a ‘subtle radiance’, at a hair’s breadth from the contours of that person’s body. At first, this exercise works best, if you look at people standing in front of a plain and light-colored surface, such as a wall.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
Harmony

The Passion Pyramid is a model of harmony. In it, all four dimensions of your personality are equally balanced. Your higher-awareness has a central position above them. This balance in your personality is important. As soon as you start to deny or forget one or several of these dimension, the balance is disturbed. A lack of balance directly prevents
you from experiencing the Passion of the Heart. This is because this Passion is linked to your personality. A lack of balance in your personality prevents an optimal flow of the Passion of the Heart.

The Passion of the Soul is linked to the tip of The Passion Pyramid. As long as people do not know or experience that this level of awareness is present within themselves, they live in a state of spiritual unawareness. It means not (yet) experiencing your true Self. Although some people must have reached this level of awareness over the past millennia, we have not yet seen a major breakthrough on a collective scale. Today, the great majority of people still don’t experience a connection of awareness with the Passion of the Soul. By definition, this means that these people remain ‘trapped’ in ego-awareness. In spiritual terms, they remain unaware.

We can see the results of this ‘imprisonment’ in ego-awareness all around us. Just pick a random page in any newspaper or Internet news feed. Most articles that you see and read - if not all - are a direct result of this ‘imprisonment’. In fact, the reporters who put the articles together, are likely to be ‘trapped’ in ego-awareness as well. All things considered, a society where the Passion of the Soul can flow freely, is still a long way off. This is the root cause of the disharmony in our present society. The result is the long sequence of painful experiences, which marks our society.
In the state of higher-awareness, you experience a radiant and infinitely profound inner peace. This is the experience of total harmony, which is also called the experience of Being. As your awareness exercises take you to a firmer position in higher-awareness, this profound and meaningful inner harmony, flows out into your outside world more strongly. It affects the surroundings of your personality. This is how, from an inner harmony, you contribute to outer harmony. This is why, probably as early as in the sixth century B.C., the ancient Chinese philosopher Laozi (also known as Lao-Tzu or Lao-Tse) noted that: “Leaders should do less and Be more.” Words of wisdom that still apply to our modern times, although our leaders rarely express them.

The Passion of the Soul resides deep within, at the core of every human being, just waiting for us to connect with it. The moment you make that connection, the first experiences will flow into your awareness, even though these moments will be brief at first. In a spiritual sense, you are starting to awaken. These experiences will make you discover, that ‘separation’ is in fact an illusion. You will find out, that the deepest essence of being human, is oneness and All-awareness.

All in all, The Passion Pyramid is a model for a way of life, which helps you discover and live your Passions. The harmony of the model comes from your awareness of the four elements that make up your personality. These are represented by the base surface of The Passion Pyramid. You know that the energy of your personality flows best, under specific inner circumstances. This is the Passion of the Heart. You try to express
it in the best possible way. You live from the Heart as much as you can.

You are also aware of your true Self. The tip of The Passion Pyramid is its symbol. You experience that your true identity is pure awareness, and that at this level of awareness, you are at one with everything. You express this higher state of awareness in everyday life as well. You are ‘awake’ and present in what happens in the ‘here and now’, both in your inner world and in the outside world of your personality. The ‘things’ that you think, do and feel occur in full awareness. You live with Passion. That is how you contribute to an enlightened society!

**Speed of speaking**

*Speaking quickly often means doing a lot of thinking. These two usually go hand in hand. If you speak quickly, you may well be seriously tangled up in the state of ego-awareness. Pay attention to how fast you talk. Slow down the pace of your words to a very calm manner of speech. Hang on to this slow pace for a while. Then speed up again, returning to your previous pace. Experience the difference between your various paces of speech.*

*Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.*
The Passion of the Heart
The seven Passion Drives

Your personality defines itself by a set of character traits and a specific structure. Like any other person, you flourish under certain inner circumstances. Those are the situations where you experience strength. It is when you feel like a fish in the water, completely in your element. At times like these, there is flow in your personality.
On the other hand, there are situations in which strength drains away and you experience inner conflict, uncertainty, worry and doubt. At those moments you are unbalanced, experiencing how the stability of your personality is undermined. As long as you live a life of routine, without being fully aware of the circumstances in which your personality can flourish, such moments will be far more common than they need to be. This is because your personality creates these moments of instability. These ‘unsteady moments’ will keep repeating themselves, until you manage to make a change. And change them you can!

Making a change does not mean that you can just change any situation. Sometimes you can, and sometimes you just can’t. Suppose you receive a phone call right now, and you hear that someone dear to you has passed away. Of course, there is nothing you can do about that. You have to deal with this situation, even though you never asked for it. What you can always affect, however, is how you deal with each situation you face.

You can choose to live every situation from ‘Heart and Soul’. To express your Passion of the Heart and your Passion of the Soul in it. If you actually do this in a specific situation, you experience the situation from now-awareness. You are ‘present’ in it. That is living the Passion of the Soul. In addition, you behave in line with your seven personal Passion Drives. At such times, the doors of your Heart are wide open. You can see it in the way you deal with that situation. In it, you live the Passion
Once you start living the Passion of the Heart as a person, anything you do comes from the Heart. This Passion comes about in a universal way. It is the same for all people around the globe. Regardless of age, sex, culture, intellectual ability or health. Everyone’s Passion of the Heart stems from the exact same seven Passion Drives!

Although these Passion Drives are the same for anyone, their content is strictly personal. You could also say that the energy of every individual flows best under specific inner conditions. And the contents of these conditions vary between people. You could regard the seven Passion Drives as a coat rack. On it, you can use the pegs of the seven Passion Drives to hang up and arrange your personal characteristics. If you use this coat rack, you will have a very clear picture of your Passion of the Heart. You will grow fully aware of it. From this awareness, you can live your life in full accordance with this Passion. You are taking the step from diffuse-awareness to core-awareness. You start to live as - deep within - you truly want to live. You start living from your Heart, from the core of your personality.

I often use the colors of the rainbow as a metaphor to illustrate the seven Passion Drives. I will explain this choice of imagery. A society that is aware, can also be called an enlightened society. When I mention light, you might think of sunlight. If you catch a ray of sunlight in
a crystal, a prism, or a Passion Pyramid made of glass, the seven colors of the rainbow will appear. This is caused by the prism, which refracts the sunlight into its individual parts. In science, each color is called a frequency of light. So in fact, (white) sunlight is what you get, when you add the seven colors of the rainbow together.

In the model of the Passion of the Heart, each of the seven colors represents a specific Passion Drive. These are all equally important. Each Passion Drive is meaningful and sparks the experience of Passion, when you express it. If you live life in a way that fully expresses and reflects all your Passion Drives, you will experience the Passion of the Heart in the broadest sense!

Anyone can use the seven Passion Drives to map his or her Passion of the Heart, and start living accordingly. Obviously, greater understanding of your own Passion, makes you more likely to express this Passion in all sorts of real-life situations. No situation is an exception to this rule. You could use the insights of this Passion to choose the education that ‘fits you best’, as well as the profession you would like to work in, and the way to raise your children. You can also express this Passion in your private relationships with other people, including your partner, your child(ren), relatives and friends, as well as in your contacts with everyone else.

You can engage in and maintain professional relationships based on
your Passion of the Heart. These could be relationships with your colleagues, management, customers, and suppliers. You can provide leadership to others that stems from this Passion. A clear view of your Passion of the Heart will allow you to point out where it hurts, whenever you feel dissatisfied. This works in any situation. Just look at the map of your Passion of the Heart, and point out the parts that are under pressure at that moment. You can also use the Passion of the Heart during job interviews, both as an applicant and as an interviewer. The opportunities and forms for bringing this Passion into your own life are simply countless!

Just as the Passion of the Soul is closely linked to ‘Being’, so the Passion of the Heart is linked to ‘Doing’. As soon as you let your actions come from what your Heart tells you, the experience of the Passion of the Heart will make itself felt. It really is that simple!
‘Shaking awake’ your body-awareness

Get out of your head, out of your thoughts, by directing all of your awareness at your body. Increase your body-awareness by ‘shaking it awake’, as it were. Tap your fingertips on any part of your body you come across. Be sure not to miss any spots as you make your way from the top of your head all the way down to your toes. Take the time to do this calmly. Be present at this with as much awareness as possible. Observe all the body-sensations that present themselves, as intensely as you can.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
Core-Gifts

The Core-Gifts Passion Drive provides an answer to the following question:

‘What am I really good at?’

Every person has a set of highly developed personal characteristics.
To many people, these characteristics are so self-evident, that they are not even aware of them. This makes it hard for them to point out where their strength lies, if asked to do so. You could call these characteristics your Core-Gifts. They are also called core-qualities, talents, competences and strong positive traits. All of these words are useful. Feel free to pick the one that suits you best. After all, what matters is what a word stands for, rather than the word itself.

It is important to be keenly aware of the strong characteristics, which you naturally carry with you. That is because you have them for a reason. When you realize where your strength lies, this insight will make it much easier to say ‘yes’ in situations where you can let that strength flow. You will also start to look for and create new situations, in which you can express all of your Core-Gifts. Through these initiatives, you will create even more Passion in your own life. You do not have to depend on anyone else for it. It is up to you!

Imagine you and me sitting in a single room. At some point, people start to enter the room one by one. They aren’t just any people; they all know you, and you know all of them. Some of them you know from your current life phase, and others you know from the past. These may be ex-boyfriends or girlfriends, old acquaintances, fellow students, relatives or former colleagues. They could just as well be your current colleagues though, or the family you are living with right now. As these people walk into the room one at a time, we ask them what they value
in you as a person, and where your strength lies.

Sure enough, these people will mention many of your characteristics. Their stories about you will differ from each other too. Nonetheless, certain aspects will soon start to stand out. As we get to the second, third or fourth person, you will start to see a unifying thread, which connects what they tell about you. These characteristics keep surfacing again and again. Everyone seems to find them typical of who you are. There may even be traits that you were unaware of. That is because they are so familiar to you. These are often characteristics you don’t have to make much effort for. You simply carry them along with you, and they just seem to come naturally. You can call these characteristics your Core-Gifts. Do something with them, in a form that fits you. Allow the power of these abilities to flow. You’ll enjoy doing it, and you are good at it too.

In terms of strength, every individual person is unique in his or her own way. Even Core-Gifts that have the same name, will differ in the way individual people use them. Compare it to personal fingerprints. People also have the potential to complement each other. Where one person is very strong in a specific area, the next person will be weaker. Of course, this works both ways. When these strengths come together, they can be combined from the Heart to serve the same goal. This results in a powerful palette of different strengths. When this happens, everyone gets invited to contribute their personal strengths to the
whole. When people do this, straight from the Heart, serving a meaningful goal, they can rise out above themselves. It follows that as a person, we can achieve amazing results, which are meaningful and make a real difference. That is something we all long for.

Even though this may sound obvious, it turns out that things often work differently in real life. Many people, for instance, (still) find it difficult to list all of their Core-Gifts when asked to do so. They are usually better at listing their ‘shortcomings’, meaning anything they still ‘need’ to develop further. It is also common for people in organizations, to focus on activities that fall outside their area of strength, without being aware of it. This has a negative impact on the flow of the Passion of the Heart. These people are blocking their strength, preventing it from flowing freely.

You too may be blocking part of the flow of your strength at this moment. You can change this if you want to. The first step is becoming fully aware of your Core-Gifts. Make a map of your Core-Gifts. Then ask yourself: ‘how freely do these Core-Gifts flow in my life at this moment?’ If you discover that you are not using all of your strength, think about how you can change that.
**Live your Core-Gifts**

*Let your strength flow!*

You carry all sorts of characteristics along with you. Some characteristics are more developed than others. You could picture these characteristics as a circle of light bulbs surrounding you as a person. Every bulb represents an ability. All the bulbs are shining. And some of the bulbs shine brighter than most. These bright bulbs represent your Core-Gifts. Be aware of them and let their strengths flow, as long and as often as possible.
**Sketch a map of your Core-Gifts**

Grab a large sheet of paper. Work out for yourself where your strengths lie; your strength in general, your strength in social settings and your strength in creative activities. Now, describe each Core-Gift using one to a maximum of three key terms. For each Core-Gift, write down a single powerful sentence to describe what it stands for. This will result in descriptions of the meaning of each individual Core-Gift’s content.

### General

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Core-Values

The Core-Values Passion Drive provides an answer to the following question:

‘What is important to me?’

Everyone has values. The Passion Drive of Core values invites you
to envision these values, to stand up for them and to express them, by living in awareness.

Your Core-Values indicate what you value in life. If you clearly picture this Passion Drive for yourself, you will have a broad overview of what is important to you. You will have a clear idea of your ideals in life, and what you value in specific contexts. This includes what you find important in dealing with other people, in the relationship with your life partner, in raising your child(ren), with regard to your living environment and your educational preferences. You will also have a good impression of what you find important about your working environment, the content of your job and your dealings with colleagues and executives. Your Core-Values will show how you prefer to receive guidance. You will also see how you prefer to guide others. Your own authentic style of leadership, will become apparent from your Core-Values.

You can make a personal inventory of all the context-specific values and ideals in life described above. You can do so by directing your awareness at all of these different facets. Ask yourself the simple question: what is important to me in these facets? Feel which circumstances allow you to bring out the best in you. Become aware of them and write them down. Picture all your Core-Values in this way, one at a time.

Another way of understanding your Core-Values, is not only focusing on what you find most important, but by paying attention to the
opposites of your Core-Values as well. You can do this by asking yourself: ‘what do I really detest?’, ‘what do I find truly annoying?’ and ‘what can really get on my nerves?’. You can then use the answers to these questions, and find their ‘positive counterparts’. Suppose you thoroughly dislike dishonesty, then a positive counterpart could be ‘honesty’ or ‘sincerity’. Apparently, this is something you value deeply.

Once you complete your inventory of Core-Values, you can start to live accordingly in awareness. You can do this anywhere and anytime. When you do that, you are truly being yourself. This will not only feel good for yourself, because it makes you experience strength. It will also make other people feel good. That is because they will experience you as an ‘authentic’ person. You stand for what you believe to be important and you act accordingly. This provides clarity. Other people will know what to expect. In addition, people will be inspired when they see others remaining true to themselves. And yes, it can mean standing out from the crowd, as your actions differ from what you see that other people are doing. It takes courage to be yourself sometimes. Nonetheless, it is very rewarding. Similar to the other Passion Drives, expressing your Core-Values in awareness, causes the experience of Passion. Being true to your Core-Values, is being true to yourself, and that always feels good.

Naturally, the opposite is true as well. Being untrue to your Core-Values, automatically means being untrue to yourself. This always
comes at the cost of losing strength. That is because it destabilizes your personality. Not living according to your Core-Values gives rise to inner conflicts. With all the thoughts and feelings that accompany it. These can be feelings of fear, disappointment or anger, for example. If your personality has a tendency of repressing such sensations, rather than using awareness to face them, then this doesn’t mean that they are not there. Compare it with the metaphor of an ostrich, hiding its head in the sand. This way of dealing with inner conflicts will only force them to rage on, beyond the reach of the ‘awakened’ part of your awareness.

So your Core-Values indicate how you prefer to be in any situation. This corresponds to how you experience it, from your core, deep down inside. Living a life that is completely in line with these Core-Values, is a source of great strength. And that strength will shine out into the world around you. On the other hand, if you don’t act on them, the exact opposite will shine out from you.

An important part of mapping this Passion Drive, is asking yourself whether your Core-Values are really your own. If you look closely, you could stumble upon Core-Values that are less important to you than others. Perhaps you picked these up at some point in life and adopted them. Maybe you have heard other people talk about them. Such people could be your parents, teachers, friends, relatives or colleagues, for example. If you decide that a specific Core-Value no longer fits you,
then let go of it. Symbolically speaking, it is time to put those Core-Values in your personal museum.

Live your Core-Values!

*Stand up for what you find important in life!*

Be aware of what you believe to be important in life. In your private life and at work, but in a more general sense as well. Picture all your Core-Values. Once you know what they are, you can bring them to life. You can do this by always standing up for your Core-Values, wherever you are, expressing them in any situation you encounter on the path of your life.
**Picture your Core-Values**

Grab a large sheet of paper. Consider what you find generally important in life. These are the values and ideals that matter to you, anywhere and anytime. Add to these, by listing the values that you find important in your private life. Consider your living environment as well as the relationship with your life partner (if applicable) and the way you raise and treat your child(ren). Express all of your Core-Values by using three key terms at most. Use one brief and striking sentence for each Core-Value to describe what it represents. These sentences describe what the content of each Core-Value means to you.

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The Core-Activities Passion Drive provides an answer to the following question:

‘What activities do I like the most?’ 

The experience of Passion also makes its way into your awareness.
once you start doing what you like to do the most, as often as you can. These are the activities you never grow tired of. Time and again, you commit yourself to these activities and enjoy them. Do note, however, that there is a difference between what you like to do and what you are good at. Many people have several activities that they may be good at, even though these activities give them little enjoyment, when they actually engage in them. The same may be true for you.

Bring (even more) Passion into your life, by doing the specific activities, that you like to do and that make you feel happy. As with the other Passion Drives, clearly mapping all of your Core-Activities is valuable. When you do that, focus your awareness on private activities as well as on the activities you like to engage in at work. Sit down and take the time to delve into your personal history. See through the lens of this Passion Drive and search your life to find all those activities that still give you warm feelings. Some of your current activities may be among the list. You could also recall activities that gave you much joy in the past, until you stopped doing them at some point. They have faded into the background since then. But while you are mapping this Passion Drive, you discover that you would love to pick these activities up again, as they return into your awareness.

Use a beachcomber’s approach to collect all those activities, that you still love to engage in. Look back on your early youth and rediscover what you liked to do as a child. You may find something that is still
valuable today. Ask yourself questions, such as ‘what did I enjoy doing back then?’ ‘what were my hobbies?’ and ‘what was I interested in?’ After that, you can check your answers to see if they still apply at this moment. Have you found any activities that you would like to pick up again?

As you sift through your life’s history, looking for ‘fun activities’, you could also look into your experiences of side jobs, work placements, and other jobs you have had. Zoom in on the tasks and activities your work used to consist of. Then pick out those activities that you still like to do. Of course, you can also include your current job in this. Distill the most enjoyable activities and then bring all of your Core-Activities together in a single overview. You can then add the activities that you have never done before, although you would really like to do them. This will show you your favorite ‘office hours’ activities. You have pictured the activities of your ideal job!

Mapping your Core-Activities makes you aware of what you like to do the most. Once you know this, choose to live your Core-Activities in full awareness. Engage in the activities you really like as often as you can and stick to them. Live these activities, because they are linked to your core. Doing them allows your Passion of the Heart to flow. Do this at work as well as in your private life. Ask yourself if your current job offers you enough of what you like to do the most. If it doesn’t, consider talking to your current employer and work together to inves-
tigate your opportunities for finding a better match between your job and your Core-Activities.

Of course, you could also decide to move on to a new job, which offers you what you really like to do. Or you could create your own job. Sometimes, you can’t find a form that provides you with a perfect fit. In that case, you have the option of creating a form for yourself. You could, for example, work together with your current or new employer, to create a job that does fit you. Or you could start your own business and be an entrepreneur.

**Live your Core-Activities!**

*Do the things you like to do, as long and as often as you can, in your private life as well as at work!*

Create even more Passion in your life, by focusing on doing your favorite activities. Make a personal inventory, and you will see what these activities are. Look closely at your (distant) past, the present and the future. Work towards a total overview of all your Core-Activities. Your overview will make you realize ways to bring them to life and engage in them (even more often).
Picture your Core-Activities

Grab a large sheet of paper. Find out what your Core-Activities are. Create a map of your favorite activities in private and at work. Don’t just look at the present. Delve into your recent and distant past as well. Look ahead into the future too. What activities, which you have never done before, would you like to do?

Private activities

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Work activities

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Core-Beliefs

The Core-Beliefs Passion Drive provides an answer to the following question:

‘What are my guiding principles?’

Your beliefs are often deeply rooted in your psyche. They have a huge
influence on your life. Whether you like it or not. As a consequence, many of your life experiences originate from the beliefs you carry inside. This applies not just to your past, but to your present life and your future as well, because there is something special to tell about how beliefs work psychologically. All beliefs have a special quality to them. It is the quality of the ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’. It means that: ‘what you believe to be true, also has a tendency to come true’.

The quality of a ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’ works both ways. It works in a positive sense, but also in a negative sense. If a believe is ‘positively charged’, it will confirm itself in positive ways. If, for example, you carry the belief ‘I matter as a human being’, then life will confirm you in this belief. The same holds true for beliefs such as ‘people can be themselves around me’ or ‘living my Passions will be a huge boost to the quality of my life’.

However, if beliefs are ‘negatively charged’, you will experience how these are confirmed in your life too. Examples include ‘it’s impossible for me to work my way up the social ladder’, ‘people can’t be trusted’ and ‘I am a terrible control freak’. Of course, if you have beliefs like these, you have them for a reason. At the same time, though, they have a limiting effect on your experience of Passion. That is why I call them limiting beliefs. In practice, it turns out that the great majority of people hold such beliefs. Therefore, they suffer the consequences. The thing about limiting beliefs, is that they lead to a negative world of
experiences. This is one of the factors that keep you ‘trapped’, at the level of diffuse-awareness.

That is why you should be very aware of what you choose to believe. Test all the beliefs you have in you. Observe in full awareness, as you take each of your beliefs, one at a time, and wear them like you would wear a coat. Check whether the coats of your beliefs feel as if they fit you. Ask yourself these questions: ‘what kind of experiences do I get, if I hold on to this belief?’ and ‘how much stronger does this belief make me in experiencing Passion in my life?’. After checking all your beliefs, you can start to decide which ones you wish to keep. Embrace only those beliefs that are sure to bring you many positive experiences and those that will give you strength. Let go of any beliefs, which have a limiting effect on your life. Take them to your personal museum!

One way of doing this is by checking whether the belief is correct, and by playing with it. You could turn the belief around, for example. Simply state the belief as its exact opposite. When you do that, the limiting belief of ‘inner peace, that’s not my kind of thing’ turns into the belief of ‘inner peace, that’s just my kind of thing’. Now find the arguments, which prove this latter belief to be true. Please do take your time to do this. You could, for instance, write a list with your positively charged belief written on it. Whenever a new argument occurs to you, simply add it to your list. Use this method to find at least ten reasons for the truth of this ‘new’ belief. Look at all these reasons and feel what
effect they have on you. You will notice the difference it makes. In the example used above, the positive difference is caused by changing only a single word.

Another way to work on your belief, is taking a close look at what it means, and then ‘polishing’ your belief. Describing your belief with more subtle shades, will make the negative charge disappear. This could change the belief of ‘I am a slow reader’ into the belief of ‘I like to read calmly and with full awareness, to really take in what I read and experience it’. Or into the following variant. ‘I prefer to read calmly, because I like to let all the feelings I get while reading, sink in’. Adjustments like these often make the negative charge disappear.

Working on realizing the Passion of the Soul, is a different kind of approach. The experiences you get from it will put all your thoughts, and therefore all your beliefs, in a completely different light. That is the light of your awareness. I will return to the subject later on in this book, in the section on the Passion of the Soul.

So your beliefs are a major influence in your life. They are part of how you decide where to spend your time, money and energy on. That is how your beliefs ‘help’ you make all sorts of decisions in everyday life. As a consequence, your beliefs are always connected to ‘something’. All of your beliefs are about ‘something’, they are connected to specific topics. This is true for your Core-Beliefs as well. These are the beliefs
that strengthen your experiences of Passion in life. They can be connected to a range of topics. Some Core-Beliefs can be connected to life in general. These beliefs apply to everyone, really. One of these beliefs is ‘seize the day’. Other Core-Beliefs apply only to your own personality. An example is ‘I like to enjoy life’. Then there are Core-Beliefs, which apply to a professional context. An example is the belief ‘Passion can be experienced within an entire organization’.

The beliefs that people hold, don’t just appear out of thin air. They spring from personal experience and the experiences of other people. This is true for you too. ‘Sooner or later’, you will draw conclusions from all of these experiences. Of course, all kinds of aspects play a part in this process of acquiring beliefs for yourself. Examples include the culture you grew up in, the way you were raised and the education you have received. But even though these beliefs obviously have their origins, that does not mean they are set in stone for the rest of your life. You have seen how you can change them if you want to. Incidentally, these changes do not just affect beliefs held by only a single person.

There are also beliefs that are held by large groups of people in society. History is full of examples, showing that these beliefs can change as well. After all, until a few centuries ago, we all thought that the world was flat. If at that time you had announced the belief that the earth was round, you would have ended up being burned at the stake.
Nonetheless, today everyone believes that the world is round.

The fact that your beliefs are so decisive for many of your life experiences, is precisely why I invite you to stay alert to the beliefs you hold. Test ‘the charge’ of each belief. Think about the consequences for yourself if you start to or continue to believe it. This will make you discover whether the belief strengthens or limits your experience of Passion. Furthermore, don’t just copy the beliefs of other people. Keep in mind how easy it is for beliefs to take hold of people. On average, beliefs are based on just one to seven experiences. This means that people tend to draw conclusions, from a limited number of experiences, which will then become leading beliefs in their lives. For many people, this results in carrying those beliefs along for the rest of their lives.

**Live your Core-Beliefs**

*Choose the beliefs that strengthen you in living from your Heart!*

Mapping your Core-Beliefs is important. These are the beliefs that are meaningful to you. They give you strength and support you on the path of your life. Choose them with full awareness and let their power work to your advantage. Do so because of the quality of the many wonderful experiences and opportunities they bring. They strengthen you in the experience of your Passion of the Heart!
**Picture your Core-Beliefs**

Grab a large sheet of paper. Use it to describe your Core-Beliefs. Divide them into three categories. The category of ‘general beliefs’ is where you write down the beliefs that actually apply to all people. The category of ‘personal beliefs’ is for beliefs that only apply to you personally. The final category of ‘professional beliefs’ is intended for all your work-related beliefs.

**General beliefs**

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**Personal beliefs**

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**Professional beliefs**

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Core-Growth

The Core-Growth Passion Drive provides an answer to the following question:

‘What areas in myself do I want to develop?’

Everyone has the intrinsic need for self-development and growth. This
applies to you too. Pursue this type of growth, and please do so at your own pace and in your own form. Because you have your own style of development. This is your own preferred way to develop yourself. You can see this as a kind of blueprint you carry inside. This blueprint indicates how you prefer to take steps, as you grow in the process of acquiring knowledge and skills.

You should also follow your inner longing while developing yourself. Because in practice, it often happens that people ‘forget about’ themselves in choosing their points of development. They will obediently develop according to themes, which their environment views as the themes they should be developing in. Without checking whether those themes actually fit their inner longing. They are missing a great opportunity. Because this often causes people to head in a direction, which doesn’t take them where they want to go. If you would look into their Heart, you would find that they would rather use the time for other purposes. Don’t do this to yourself. As with the other Passion Drives, follow the flow within. Notice the longing for growth that lives deep down inside of you. This longing points in your own preferred direction of development. You can then proceed to realize this, in the way that fits you.

Distinction between two types of points of development
When mapping all your various points of development, it is helpful to work with two different categories to distinguish between all of these
points. This will help you see matters clearly. Because there are different points of development. The first category I call Core-Challenges. This category covers all topics related to knowledge and skills. There are also topics that help you increase your inner strength. These topics belong to the second category, which I call Core-Freedom. The word ‘freedom’ is related to the experience of psychological freedom. By this I mean, the inner experience of the freedom and strength to live your Passion of the Heart, anywhere and anytime. It means being authentic as a person. Without any limitations or blockades.

**Core-Challenges**

As mentioned above, Core-Challenges cover all topics related to knowledge and skills. These are the challenges your personality wants to engage in. You may well be hard at work on these, at this moment of your life, or maybe you plan to take these up soon. Another option is waiting just a little longer, until the time is right for it. Your Core-Challenges are connected to all the contexts of your life. They may include topics that you want to tackle in private life, or topics that are most closely related to your job. Still other topics are connected to your private life as well as to your work.

Sometimes, potential areas of development are accentuated by people around you. They could, for instance, advise you to attend a certain education program, or encourage you to attend a specific training course. Another example is people telling you that learning to
play a certain musical instrument is fun. Or it is said that acquiring a certain skill is important for your job. You may be asked to put one of your less well-developed characteristics in the spotlight, by focusing all of your energy on it and getting to grips with it. The ultimate goal will then be to develop that characteristic into one of your strengths.

These kinds of advice are often given with the best of intentions. Sometimes, however, they are related to the personal interests of the advisor. That is why it is important to check what you want, whenever you get advice. You can do so by turning your gaze inside and ‘feeling your way’, to find the areas you want to develop yourself in. You can use your intuition for this. The way to do this, is described in the section on the Passion Drive Core-Contact. If you conclude that you really do want to work on that specific point of development, then you should seriously consider doing so. Apparently, you have a longing to start working on it at that moment. If you conclude that you don’t really feel like doing it, or if you feel resistance, then let it go. Follow your Heart in deciding on your points of development. Preferably, you should only develop yourself on those points, which fit your inner longing.

While working on and realizing your Core-Challenges, you can turn to the American professor Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi for inspiration. He has spent much effort on an in-depth study of the experience of ‘flow’. He spent 25 years conducting extensive research into this phenomenon, prior to publishing his book on the subject. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi
states that ‘flow’ represents the optimal experience. In his book, he describes it as follows:

It is what the sailor feels as he darts across the water flying before the wind, the wind blowing his hair into his face while the boat cuts a thunderous path though the waves - sails, hull, wind and sea humming to a melody that reverberates in the veins of the sailor. It is what the painter feels when a certain tension rises between all the colors on the canvas, bringing forth a new thing, a new shape right before his eyes. It is what the father feels at his child’s first response to his smile. These events do not occur only in favorable conditions: survivors of concentration camps or people who lived through life-threatening situations often recall moments of great beauty occurring during these great tribulations, such as hearing a bird’s song in the woods, completing a difficult task, or sharing a crust of bread with a friend. Contrary to our usual beliefs, moments like these are the best moments of our lives, instead of the passive, receptive, relaxing moments - although these can be pleasant too, especially if we worked hard for them. The best moments usually come when people attempt to reach a difficult and worthwhile goal, setting themselves a task that demands the utmost of their body and mind. Therefore, the optimal experience is something that we make happen.¹)

Mihaly Csikszentmihelyi explains that for the experience of ‘flow’, it is
important that the challenge that a person sets for himself, must be more or less balanced with his skills in that area. A lack of balance can result in either boredom or fear. In that case, the experience of ‘flow’ will be absent. I will use the two examples below to explain this:

**Example: mountaineering in the hills**

Imagine being an expert mountaineer. You have conquered a number of mountaintops, including some in the Himalaya. You have been scaling sheer slopes for years. You may even have done this without climbing tools or safety lines. Then, someone invites you on a trip to the hills, to go climbing. If you decide to come along, it may be a sociable trip, but with your mountaineering background, there will be no real challenge in it. You will probably experience boredom. Because there is a lack of balance. The challenge is much too small compared to your skill.

**Example: climbing Mount Everest**

Now, imagine having no experience at all in climbing mountains or scaling steep rock faces. Then suddenly, someone invites you to go along and climb Mount Everest, the highest summit in the world. You say ‘yes’, and soon after, you find yourself dangling from a cliff six hundred feet above solid ground. You look down below and experience fear. Here too, there is a lack of balance. In this case it is because the challenge is far too great compared to your skill.

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When you feel that you want to develop yourself in some area, take a moment to think first. Have a look at the ratio, between the scale of the Core-Challenge you want to accept and your level of skill in the matter. Always make sure, that these aspects are balanced. That is how you can realize ‘flow’ in your development.

Core-Freedom
Eventually, what nearly everyone wants the most, is to fully live their Passion of the Heart. To react spontaneously and freely, to go about their life course without limitations, to live a radiant life. Doing that is rarely easy. Many people run into inner obstacles throughout their lives. These obstacles block the flow from within. To some degree, the same is probably true for you. Right up to the moment when you become aware of it. Then you start to work from your awareness, taking these obstacles to your ‘personal museum’, one at a time. As you do so, each obstacle you let go of, will benefit your experience of Passion. Of course, all the problems we face, have their origins. Nothing that you ‘think, feel and do’ just appears from thin air. The question is, what is the best way to rid yourself of such obstacles. You can use a number of ways. All of these ways aim at bringing the burden you bear, to your ‘personal museum’. Many of the roads you can follow, work at the level of your personality. I will describe two of these, one that uses a biographical approach, and one that uses a so-called systemic approach. Both forms, as well as many others I will not list here, work at the level of your personality. They all act on the layer of ego-awareness. Another
road to follow, is letting go of a burden from now-awareness. I will describe this road further on.

Biographical approach
A common approach at the level of ego-awareness, is directing your psyche at your life history. This can happen in many forms. The approach invites you to look at what lies behind you. That is often connected to your present life. Sometimes, looking back means going beyond your present life. In that case, attention is paid to what is known as past lives.

The approach in which your life history is the focus of attention, is aimed at looking into the situations you have come across in life. You may find situations that are the cause of the burden, which you are carrying along with you ‘to the present day’. Becoming aware of these situations, and maybe even experiencing them again in your psyche, can result in being liberated from that burden. I will give you an example from practice.

Example of a biographical cause: ‘clamming up’
A man told me he was suffering from ‘clamming up’ in case of unexpected criticism and threats. He had read books on the subject and attended courses. Sadly though, he had not yet succeeded in solving his problem. And he wanted to get rid of it badly. As we soon found out, he had been about five years old, when he experienced it for
the first time. It was the first time that he had been unexpectedly confronted by criticism. He was in school, and his mother came to pick him up. He had asked her if it was okay for him to go ahead and walk home alone. Since his home was less than half a mile away, his mother agreed and gave him the key to the house. Just as he arrived at the front door and slid the key into the lock, he heard noises behind him and turned around. He saw several older boys, who were looking at him and uttering threatening words. At that moment, the boy instinctively chose a specific type of defense. He clenched his right fist around the key, hunched into a crouching position and anxiously waited for his mother to appear. His hunched and tense body posture said it all. It was a clear-cut case of ‘clamming up’. Over the course of his life, he had experienced many more episodes of ‘clamming up’. This went on until he was forty years old. He then came to me because he wanted to get rid of it. It turned out that his ‘clamming up’ had a clear cause. And this insight proved vital in his attempt to let go of ‘clamming up’.

Systemic approach
The biographical approach shows, that you are sometimes obstructed by ‘situations’, which happened earlier in your life. In that case, these situations are the cause of the burden you bear. However, the system that you are a part of can also be the cause. A system can be understood in terms of the family where you were born, your current family situation or the organization you work in. The systemic approach
zooms in on systems like these. It looks at the systems of which your personality is, or was, a part. The reason for this, is the possibility of finding causes, which can explain the burden you experience. The burden that you want to get rid of.

Burdens like these come from being connected. Because all the people in a system are connected to each other. Also, in a system, there are always interactions and influences that work both ways. It happens not just by verbal and nonverbal communication. Interaction also happens by means of energy. It is also called energetic transfer. This is a more subtle and ‘invisible’ way of interacting. I will illustrate how it works with the following example.

**Example: plastic cup**

*Imagine standing in the center of a square room of about 30 by 30 foot. In the middle of the room is a table with a plastic cup on it. The cup is filled to the brim with water. The room also contains a huge set of audio equipment. Imagine this to be the same kind of equipment used at rock concerts, like the stadium type of events. You are wearing the best earplugs in the world. Suddenly, the music is turned on at full volume. When we look at the cup, what do we see? We will see how the cup starts to vibrate, along with the water in it. As a result, the water spills over the brim.*

In this example, the cup resonates to ‘invisible’ sound waves. Like other
forms of energy, these sound waves have a certain vibration frequency. This is what causes the cup to vibrate. Even though this may be new to you, systems work in the same way. The energetic forces in a system resonate in every individual, who is part of that system. In a way, you can view the body of your personality, as a kind of 'resonance body'. This is because your body resonates to other people, who are also part of the system.

It could happen, for instance, that you can feel what someone else feels, without being aware of it. Regardless of whether you know that person or not. You simply 'resonate' along with the other person. This could cause you to pick up someone else's mood, for instance. Since your psyche is a system, this mood may call forth certain thoughts in turn. This can make you experience the same dynamic as the other person. Eventually, it could even result in a connection of fate, a common destiny. All of this is possible, in spite of the fact that the cause of all this, essentially, comes from outside your personality.

Transfer of energy between people is a common occurrence. It's just that people are usually not aware of it. This is caused in part, by the fact that people simply don’t know about the existence of these transfers. And those who do know it exists, will not be likely to talk about it to other people. This is often due to their fear of being called 'crazy'. Nonetheless, you should try it for yourself. Experiment with energetic transfer if you can. Suppose, you walk into a room with one other
person, and suddenly, you get a headache. For the sake of this experiment, get the other person involved by asking a question: ‘do you have a headache at this moment?’ Notice what happens.

So, energy fields exist in systems. You could also call them force fields or dynamics. Some of these strengthen you as a person, while others weaken you. These weakening influences have a way of taking root inside you. If that happens, you become tangled up with ‘something’ or ‘someone’ from the system. This kind of entanglement presents itself in the form of a ‘burden’. That burden is the ‘complaint’ you carry along, and it is also what you want to get rid of. The systemic approach will help you with that. I will explain this by using an example from practice as well.

**Example of a systemic cause: claustrophobia**

A man told me he suffered from fear of small spaces and dark rooms. He badly wanted to be rid of it. As we talked, he discovered what his ‘burden’ was linked to. It turned out that his grandmother’s brother had been taken prisoner on a warship, during the Second World War. The ship was hit by a torpedo and sank. His great-uncle died in the attack. The fear that the great-uncle must have experienced, trapped in his dark and tiny cell, ended up inside the man sitting across from me. This insight alone was hugely liberating for him.
Combination of causes, both systemic and autobiographical

Up to this point, I have told you about two different possible causes, which can result in a burden you bear as a person. Burdens can come from one or several situations that occurred in your life history. Burdens can also result from the system, of which you are or were a part. There is another possibility, however. This is when your burden has roots that are both systemic and autobiographical in nature. Here too, I will provide an example from practice.

Example of a biographical and systemic cause: migraine

A woman told me she suffered severely from migraine. So severely, in fact, that she sometimes had to spend several days at home, lying in bed in total darkness. At such times, she couldn't bear any external influence at all. She was amazed to discover that, through her migraine, she was connected to the death of a colleague she had been very close with, many years ago. Her colleague had died of a brain tumor. As we talked about this, she felt the migraine coming up. As soon as she made her discovery, however, it vanished instantly. It turned out to be a healing insight for her.

Healing power of now-awareness

Although the above examples show how different approaches were healing for the persons involved, I want to add a critical remark here too.
Your psyche loves problems and challenges. It can really sink its teeth into them, and it keeps doing so all the time. Your psyche is filled with thoughts and feelings each day. Later on in this book, in the section on the Passion of the Soul, you will discover that this is precisely how your psyche works to keep you trapped in ego-awareness. It is in fact precisely this activity of your psyche that gets in the way, when you take the step from ego-awareness to now-awareness. Your psyche often delays the state of ‘now-awareness’ for a bit, if it is aware of that state at all. The reason is that first, it wants to solve the problems of your personality and tackle its challenges. There can only be space for ‘now-awareness’, after that process is finished. If you let this happen, you will stay tangled up in ego-awareness, no matter what you do.

All forms of suffering essentially result from being tangled up with your personality. As long as your personality is your only reality, you will keep running into it. Good moments and not-so-good moments will keep alternating. If you fight your burden, your suffering, only by analyzing your psyche and investigating the systems you are part of, then you are fighting an uphill battle. The reason is that the activity of your psyche, keeps overruling your true Self. As long as that happens, you will have to keep dealing with suffering. That is why you should take the time to let the following sentence sink in:

‘That which festers in the dark, dissolves in the light of your awareness.’
Moving up the awareness ladder, and lifting your awareness up to the level of now-awareness, is precisely what makes the light of your awareness shine brighter. In this ‘awakened state’, you immediately detect specific ‘complaints’, as soon as they enter your awareness. Regardless of whether their nature is physical, non-physical, emotional or mental, and regardless of their cause. By permanently staying deep in the state of now-awareness, these complaints will simply dissolve sooner or later, seemingly ‘without effort’. This is why I want you to consider the following. Choose a straight path to the state of now-awareness, as much as you can. Don’t let yourself be ‘caught up’ in the idea of having to do a few other things first, before being able to head in that direction. This idea is what keeps you tangled up in ego-awareness. And after all, what is the point in all of this really? Is it a matter of mentally unraveling and analyzing the causes of problems, in order to ‘hopefully’ be able to let go of them in time? Or do you want to get straight to the point, experiencing the radiant and infinitely profound inner peace, which is connected to now-awareness? You want to let go of the obstacle, don’t you? Do it in the ‘here and now’!

As long as you keep approaching your personal obstacles from the biographical, systemic and intuitive viewpoints, you remain stuck. Even though you may take steps mentally, you will still be ‘trapped’ at the level of ego-awareness. In addition, practical experience teaches that: ‘The more you know, the more you realize how little you know’. There are always new things to discover and to know. More to think about.
This is why the road of the psyche never ends. If all you ever follow is this road, then the dimension of your true Self will remain hidden, like the sun behind the clouds. It will never be able to do its healing work. Now-awareness can be realized in the ‘here and now’. You can already access this experience right now. Don’t delay it, do it now. Be ‘awake’, see what is there, without connecting to it or identifying with it. What is there, comes and goes. Be aware of that. Observe your limiting beliefs, your emotional suffering, your physical suffering and your unhealthy habits and tendencies. Aim the light of your awareness at it, be present with it. As you do this, dive as deep as you can into the state of now-awareness. Be as ‘awake’ as you can. The section on the Passion of the Soul, will guide you on your way.

**Live your Core-Growth!**

*Develop yourself only on those topics, in which you feel deep down inside, that you really want to develop yourself!*

Map your Core-Growth. Be aware of the things you really want to develop yourself in. Not because your environment tells you to, but because deep down inside, you feel the longing to get to grips with them. Then get to work, and do it at the moment of your choice. Master it in your own way, and at your own pace. Follow your personal style of development, as you work on each point of development. Be aware of the necessity of balance, between the Core-Challenge you
accept and the level of skill that you have. Realize that as you work on the subjects of Core-Freedom, ‘true’ freedom can only be experienced in ‘now-awareness’. Here, you are free from all suffering.

**Map your Core-Growth**

Grab a large sheet of paper. Use it to describe all the topics in which you feel you want to develop yourself. Distinguish between different areas. List all the topics that are associated with gaining knowledge and skills, and label these areas as Core-Challenges. Use the label of Core-Freedom, to list all the topics, associated with increasing your inner strength and your inner freedom.

**Core-Challenges (increasing knowledge and skills)**

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**Core-Freedom (increasing inner strength and freedom)**

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Core- Contribution

The Core- Contribution Passion Drive provides an answer to the following question:

‘What do I want to contribute to society?’

Like everyone else, you have an intrinsic longing to put your life to use,
to contribute ‘something meaningful’ to the world around you. By your contribution, you add to the well-being of ‘something’ or ‘someone’ in society. It could be that you choose to commit yourself, from the Heart, either to the environment, to animals, or to people. Thereby, your contribution is valuable by definition.

Naturally, the scope of contributions varies. Your contribution could concern only one person, for instance. Or it can be a contribution to many people all over the world. In both cases, it is a contribution to society that matters. They are both equally important. The exact same quality flows in both forms, as well as in any form in between. These forms need each other, and in fact, they complement each other!

The term Core- Contribution is synonymous with the concepts of personal mission, life’s work and calling. Some people discover theirs early on in life. They follow their personal mission in life from childhood. For most people, however, Core- Contributions come from various fundamental experiences they encounter on the path of their life. These experiences may come in rapid succession, but they may just as well be spread out over longer periods. Sometimes it takes decades. Until a moment comes, when the energy of all these experiences combines and transforms into a form. That form is the Core- Contribution you want to make. All of a sudden, it just pops up in your awareness. You then have the chance to start working with it, and to fully bring this Passion Drive to life.
The moment at which you become aware of your Core-Contribuition may come at age twenty, forty, sixty or seventy. Every person comes to a point in life, when he or she hears this inner call. That call presents itself in the form of a longing to ‘make a difference’ in ‘something’. This comes forth from your own experiences. That is what makes you so connected to it. And that is why you want to commit yourself to it, from the Heart.

I will now give you a number of practical examples of this Passion Drive. They are all examples of people who, after having specific experiences, decided to commit themselves to that particular theme.

A man who, after losing both parents to a certain form of cancer, decides to commit himself to establishing a new type of clinic, which produces major breakthroughs in the treatment of that form of cancer.

A woman who is part of the work process, until she decides to go against all the social conventions, quitting her job to be a full-time mother to her children. She does this after a long period of going against her true feelings, giving priority to her job.

An executive manager who, after having experienced an unhealthy hunt for profit for a long time, commits himself to a new outlook on leadership and its application.
A farmer who commits himself to bringing people back in touch with nature, after often experiencing how far removed from nature many people are.

A woman who commits herself to children in difficult life conditions, helping them to give their experiences a place in their lives. She recognizes their conditions from her own childhood experiences.

**Live your Core- Contribution!**

*Open yourself up to your Core- Contribution, become aware of it, and make a difference in our society!*

Open yourself up to this Passion Drive. Keep a part of your awareness focused on your inner world. Feel how situations in the outside world affect you. Be aware of the longing that glows inside of you. A deep longing that wants to be ‘lived’ and with which you can make a difference in the world around you. That is a difference that matters. Do not make it smaller than it is. Don’t trivialize it. Acknowledge your inner wish and act upon it. That deed is a true contribution. It will bring you the experience of the Passion of the Heart.
**Picture your Core-Contribution**

Grab a large sheet of paper. Use it to write down or draw what occupies your mind. Picture the events that deeply affected you. Visualize this by using photos or symbols. Look at what you wrote down at the other Passion Drives. Feel how all these things are mutually connected. As you do this, become aware of the difference that you can make. Dare to dream and to realize your dreams.

**Core-Contribution**

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Core-Contact

The Core-Contact Passion Drive provides an answer to the following question:

‘What do I experience by intuition?’

The Core-Contact Passion Drive represents the use of your human
intuition. But what exactly is intuition? I use the following definition: ‘Intuition is the ability of any person, to perceive information within, without thinking and by immediate inspiration.’ In a flash of sudden inspiration, you just ‘know’ something. You do this without any kind of elaborate process, of thinking and information processing, occurring in advance. The insights granted by these flashes often turn out to be very meaningful, as long as you make room for them and listen to them.

How can you do this? By approaching people, situations and questions of life intuitively. By becoming aware of the information these things bring, and by acting on that information. Any person is capable of listening to their intuition and acting upon it. In fact, it is one of the most common things in the world. Today, there is much to read, hear and see about intuition. In practice, the way in which intuition is portrayed, causes many people to close themselves to their own intuitive abilities. They lose interest or dismiss intuition as a fairytale. This automatically causes them to shut the door that leads to their own intuition.

This happens for a number of reasons. One of these is the view of intuition as a special ability, to which only certain people have access. Another reason is that the few people who display their intuition in public, are portrayed as being in some way mysterious. Television shows us images of candles suddenly lighting up, and soft music rising to a climax, when contact is made with someone who has passed away.
Intuition is relevant to everyone. After all, it is one of the seven Passion Drives. And yet, at the same time, I have a critical remark about intuition. I do this because intuitive powers do not make you any more or less spiritual than other people. The Awareness Ladder has demonstrated that spirituality is more than ‘clairvoyance’. Please keep both feet firmly on the ground. When all is said and done, ‘clairvoyance’ is just a synonym for ‘clear sight’. Seeing things clearly, still means seeing. And seeing is connected to your personality, regardless of whether you are ‘seeing normally’ or ‘seeing something more’. ‘Seeing something more’ in the sense of ‘clairvoyance’.

So even if you have strong intuitive abilities, you can still be badly tangled up with your personality. Or, to put it differently, trapped in the state of ego-awareness. This explains why so-called ‘mediums’ can be unfamiliar with the experience of ‘now-awareness’. It is because they are tangled up in ego-awareness. To them, their personality is the only reality. That is why they base their identity on their ‘intuitive abilities’, without ever having had a single conscious experience of now-awareness. In this context, I would like to quote a few words by Williges Jäger, Benedictine monk and Zen Buddhist. as he describes it in his book ‘The wave is the sea’.

*At any rate, I will point out certain dangers. And the greatest danger is to end precisely halfway down the road. And by the way, this is not my own discovery; the great mystic traditions of the main religions*
have repeatedly warned against attributing too much weight to spiritual side-effects, such as telekinesis, prophecy, visions, ecstasies, levitation and so-called reincarnation experiences. Of course, such experiences can be meaningful to a specific person, and perhaps even to an entire group, but they are not an end as such. And above all else, they must not be interpreted as signs of being chosen in some special way. For after all, these paranormal gifts have little to do with spirituality. They are about potentialities possessed by all people in rudimentary form, which some can develop while others cannot - just like there are people who are musically gifted and other in whom this disposition is less developed.  

Intuition is a natural ability that you, just like everyone else, have at your disposal. Don’t associate your ability of intuition with ‘something’ you saw on TV, or with a ‘clairvoyant person’ you may know. These are very different things altogether. Allow yourself to open the door of your intuitive abilities. Listen to it often, and develop yourself in it. Do it in your regular everyday life, without making it ‘mysterious’. Let yourself be amazed and bewildered, by what crosses your path every now and then. Without making it the ultimate truth. It happens at the level of the personality, and it is relevant for you as a person. Just like the other Passion Drives. Nothing more and nothing less.

Every day, you can approach people, situations and questions of life intuitively. By questions of life, I mean questions about matters that keep

2) Free translation of: Jäger, Willigis. Elke golf is de zee, Rotterdam: Asoka, 2005
you occupied in life, questions you would really like to answer. These can be essential questions of life, but they can also be questions about everyday situations. Present these questions to your ‘gut feelings’ from a state of ‘inner peace’. Then wait until you notice how an answer suddenly appears in your awareness.

Pick a quiet moment for this approach if you can. A moment when you are alone and able to focus your awareness on the theme, the question or the situation you want to work with. Phrase what is on your mind in a brief and open question. Then let this question cross your mind a few times. When you have done this, let go of the question, close your eyes, slightly dip your chin down to your chest and rest your hands on your underbelly. The best inner attitude to do this, is an alert and inquisitive attitude of waiting for what will come. Right up to the moment when ‘something’ suddenly appears in your awareness.

The ‘answer’ that appears in your awareness can be an inner image, similar to a photo or film. It could also be a word, a phrase, a symbol, or a sound, a smell or a feeling. Sometimes it is a complete answer to your question, and at other times it may be part of an answer. In any case, the answer is always relevant. You may even notice how something emerges, which first makes you think ‘well, this can’t be it, let’s keep searching’. Don’t do that. Be aware of the very first thing that comes to your awareness, after opening up to the question you have asked. Register the initial ‘answer’ as a valuable piece of the puzzle.
Experience has shown this to be true every single time.

Sometimes, the meaning of the ‘answer’ is clear right away. In other cases, this will not happen immediately. Cases like these simply need some time to ripen, as it were. Their full meaning will usually become apparent at a later time. I will give you a few examples of ‘intuitive moments’.

**Example from practice: sudden stomach-ache when mother passed away**

A man told me about an experience in his life that only his wife knew of. At some point in his life, he was at a meeting. During this meeting, he was suddenly struck by a fierce bout of stomach-ache. The pain was too intense for him to ‘brush aside’. He was literally doubling up in pain. This baffled the people around him, who knew him. After he had caught his breath and was able to stand upright again, he heard his mobile phone ring. When he answered the call, he heard a relative asking him to come home right away. On arrival he learned that his beloved mother had passed away at the exact moment of his intense stomach-ache.

**Example from practice: desire to have children or not?**

A woman with a university degree and a high-responsibility job told me that for a very long time, she had been trying to find an answer to her question of whether or not she wanted to have a third
child. I told her I was convinced that she already knew the answer. The answer was already within her. She gave me an incredulous look. She replied by telling me how she had been pondering this very question every single day for the last two years now. Then she asked me to help her find the answer within herself. I explained about the exercise I described earlier. She did the exercise. A few seconds after closing her eyes and putting her hands on her underbelly, she reopened her eyes. Tears flowed. She told me she knew the answer. In this instance, the answer was ‘yes’. A little over a year later, she, her husband, and her two other children celebrated the birth of their third child.

Example from practice: seeing the children after the divorce
A man had run into a completely unexpected divorce from his wife. His wife had left him, and took their children along with her. He found out that she had been having an affair with another man all along. He was badly hurt by what happened. Overcome by emotion, he told me he had been talking to lawyers and that he was searching for the most positive way to deal with the divorce for the children’s sake. The next day he called me. He had engaged in the ‘intuitive experiment’. The answer was the exact opposite of his original intention of finding a lawyer, and fighting a fierce legal battle. He told me how, deep inside, he felt that the best thing to do was give his children space. To let them go. And even to encourage them to bond with his ex-wife’s new partner. He encouraged his youngest daughter
to draw a nice picture for this man. No matter how hard this was for him. This was part of how he managed to maintain a good relationship with his children, his ex-wife and even his ex-wife’s new partner.

We all have sudden intuitive inspirations, and each of us can approach questions of life intuitively. This applies to you too. Perhaps you were not aware of this until now. If so, then all you really have to do is open up your awareness to it. Once you do that, moments of intuitive awareness will arise spontaneously. Another thing you should be aware of in life is the possibility of moments of synchronicity. This is also known as ‘meaningful coincidence’. The concept of synchronicity was founded by Carl Gustav Jung. Joseph Jaworski, author of the book ‘Synchronicity’, quotes Jung on the subject as follows:

‘A meaningful concurrence of two or more events, in which something more than the probability of random choice seems to be at work.’ 3)

From the many moments of synchronicity, in my own life as well as in those of others, I have been able to determine the existence of a kind of undercurrent. This undercurrent affects the life course of all people. Occasionally, the current breaks through the surface in the form of ‘meaningful coincidence’. I will provide an example from practice of this current as well.

Example from practice: meeting a former colleague

After a late-night conversation, a man made wished me good night as he was preparing to leave. On his way home, he thought about contacting a former colleague he hadn’t seen in five years. The next morning, he got up early to beat the traffic, because he was heading for a different part of the country. He arrived before the office opened its doors, so he stopped at a hotel to have a coffee. That morning, to his amazement, he entered the hotel and met his former colleague, after being out of touch for five years.

Coincidences occur in your life, too. They could be moments of synchronicity. In the sense of serving as a kind of signpost, pointing to ‘something’ that is relevant. Always approach such moments, of possible synchronicity, intuitively. That way, you can find out whether the situation really has value for you, or whether you can let go of it. I give you this suggestion on intuition, to open you up to its presence, without seeing everything as a sign. Use your intuition to investigate, whenever you suspect that an event could be ‘meaningful coincidence’. When you feel intuitively that the situation is important for you, then see what you can do with it, and act upon it. Be aware how this will shift your life into ‘top gear meaningfulness’.
Live your Core-Contact!

*Let your mind give shape, to what your gut feelings tell you!*

Be aware of your ‘intuitive abilities’, and use them in your everyday life. This is another Passion Drive that strengthens you in experiencing your Passion of the Heart. Approach people, situations and (open) questions of life from within as much as you can. Examine the way you feel about it, and then act upon it. Keep part of your awareness focused on potential moments of synchronicity too. Whenever synchronicity appears to happen in a situation, you can approach that situation intuitively. If it turns out that the situation is meaningful to you, then act upon it. Use this to shift your life into top gear. It will help you to walk a path of life filled with Passion.

**Core-Contact**

The Core-Contact Passion Drive is every bit as important as the other Passion Drives. Still, this Passion Drive occupies a special position among the other Passion Drives. This is because it is impossible to map your ‘intuition’. It is an ability you carry along with you, which you can use day in and day out. That is why I encourage you to do just that. You can do it several times, every day of your life.
Putting the Passion of the Heart to practice

The Passion of the Heart invites you, to let the energy of your personality flow freely. To really live from your Heart. You can do this, by being aware of the seven Passion Drives. Use them as a basis for a detailed map of your Passion of the Heart. If possible, use a single large sheet of paper to do this. You could use the technique called mind mapping.
for it. This is a practical tool to support you in mapping your Passion of the Heart. Turn this meaningful sheet of paper into a kind of picture. Illustrate it with colors and images as much as you like. Put it in a nice frame and look at it whenever you can. This is how you will grow fully aware of your Passion of the Heart.

Every time you look at it, you can see how the energy of your personality can flow most freely. These are the inner conditions that you want to experience as often as you can. This makes you aware, of the best way to express your personality. This awareness allows you to live accordingly. And that is what you should do. Actively commit yourself to the realization of this Passion. Use every situation to express your Passion of the Heart. As you do this, you are in fact creating your own ‘Heartprint’, to mark every situation you come across. Because, just as with the Passion of the Soul, the Passion of the Heart is all about ‘the path is the goal’. There is no need to wait. Don’t confuse this Passion with something you hope to realize in the future. Make a start in the ‘here and now’. Every situation is suited for living your Passions. No situation in the world is an exception to this!

Everyone has the power to create. Everyone creates. Of course, that which you create from a state of diffuse-awareness, will look very different from what you create from a state of core-awareness. And you are creating anyway. You do it every single day. This is because in fact, everything that you do can be viewed as a creation. In order to create
from core-awareness as much as you can, it is important to have a complete picture of your Passion of the Heart. Because that will allow you to let your Passion of the Heart flow more freely in everyday situations. Do yourself a favor, and pin the map of your Passion of the Heart to a wall in plain view. Put it somewhere you look at often. This greatly increases your chances of living life in full accordance with these insights. It makes you create your own Passion, and therefore, it makes you experience it fully in your life.

Moments of reflection
Every time you look at the map of your Passion of the Heart, take the time to let each Passion Drive sink into your mind. Look at what you wrote down. Reflect on how strongly each Passion Drive flows in your life. You may be pleased with it, or you may not. If you are displeased with the strength of the flow, then ask yourself how you can change it. Reflect on ways to express this Passion Drive more strongly in your life.

Create moments of reflection, to work on your Passion of the Heart. As you do this, feel what fits you best. Maybe you should reserve some space in your daily schedule, or maybe you like the idea of making your personal action plan for this Passion. Maybe you don’t like the idea of a structural approach. If so, you may want to realize the Passion of the Heart by expressing it more spontaneously. In that case, it could be helpful to use a reminder. You can put a reminder down somewhere, or pin it to the wall, or put it in your pocket. Every time you see, hear
or feel this reminder, you can check how your Passion of the Heart is doing at that moment. Use your creativity for this, because you are definitely creative!

Relationships
You could think of your Passion of the Heart in terms of a blueprint for your ideal life. After all, it is a wonderful illustration of the conditions, in which you live fully from the Heart. Take the challenge of talking to other people about it. You can have these conversations with your parents, partner, child(ren), friends, colleagues and managers. They will get to know you better. And at the same time, you will be a source of inspiration to them. You may well cause them to see for themselves, what their own Passion of the Heart really looks like. You will find out how this changes the way you talk to other people. Your conversations will become more intense and more substantial.

This intense and substantial contact often makes relationships more profound. It clears a path that works both ways, allowing you both to experience even more Passion. You could, for instance, use your Core-Values to give other people ‘your recipe’ for a flourishing relationship. In return, also ask for the person’s ‘recipe’ in return. Talk to each other about what your relationship will look like, once you can both fully express yourself in it. Create a clear image of how you will treat each other in practice, once your relationship becomes optimal. If you continue together by taking that into account, and by acting accor-
ingly, in full awareness, you will see how the relationship automatically moves to a more profound level. The bond that exists between you will only grow stronger.

You could talk to your manager, for example, to discuss the best way of working together. Explain that the more he or she takes this into account, the more you will feel like a ‘fish in water’. This will stimulate a natural improvement in the relationship. Not just for yourself, but also for the organization you work in, as well as for your contact with your manager. The best thing about this, is the fact that every time you talk about your Passion with someone, you are dealing with it in awareness. It penetrates ever deeper into your being. This also shows in your actions. Doing this will take you into an upward spiral. From there, you create ever more Passion in your own life. That Passion will affect other people. By doing this, you invite them to fully live their Passion too.

If you feel dissatisfied
If you feel dissatisfied about certain forms in your life, then the map of your Passion of the Heart will point in the direction of the solution. Suppose, for example, that you feel dissatisfied about the relationship with your partner, about how you raise your child(ren), or about your job. In cases like these, have a ‘time-out’, and give yourself some time to reflect. When you do, by looking at your Passion of the Heart, you can precisely pinpoint what is wrong. That will make it a lot easier to do something about it. Because once you know what is wrong, you can
start to look for a matching solution. Find out what you need to stop feeling dissatisfied. Try to adjust the form, so that it fits you again. Maybe the solution lies inside of yourself, or maybe you need to talk about it. It could be both, or it could be more than that. And if a form really no longer fits you, then consider letting go of it.

New job
If you should conclude that switching jobs is better for your Passion of the Heart, then go ahead and do it. Find a job that fits you better. Here too, let your Passion of the Heart guide you. Have a good look at it, and be clearly aware of the contours of your ideal job. Allow your Core-Values to be one of your guiding lights in this. They point at what you find important in life. Both in general and in the organization you work in, as well as the part you play in it and your relationship with your manager.

In addition, your Core-Activities indicate what you would like to do most, in terms of the content of your job. These are the activities you love to get involved in as often as possible. The job that fits you best, is also the job that enables you to let your Core-Gifts flow freely, and to make optimal use of them. Preferably in service of your Core-Contribution. Your ideal job will come full circle if your organization also supports you in your Core-Beliefs, and if it gives you the development, the Core-Growth, that you want to experience.
All things considered, the seven Passion Drives help you find your ideal job. If you look at the full picture of your Passion of the Heart, you get an overall impression of what essentially drives you. Your ideal job is a good match for this. Using the clear contours of your Passion of the Heart, you can make an active start in finding that job. As you do this, be on the lookout for potential moments of synchronicity that may occur. Practical experience shows that a ‘new’ job, one that better matches your Passion, can pop up from the most unexpected places.

If you get invited to a job interview, then take the map of your Passion of the Heart with you. Spread it out on the table and address all of it, point by point. If the person you are talking to is not open to your Passion, then ask yourself ‘do I even want to work here?’ An example of this would be if your Passion is dismissed as being ‘idealistic’. Check whether you are at the same wavelength. Another thing you should test, is whether all Passion Drives match the job you are applying for. If you find mismatches, then think hard about whether you want to do this job at all. This is because such mismatches will probably get in the way of the flow of your Passion of the Heart.

**Trial and error**

Even when you commit all of your energy to working with your Passion of the Heart, there will still be moments of ‘trial and error’. You could, for example, slide down the awareness ladder every now and then, briefly returning to the level of diffuse-awareness. This could happen,
for example, after you discover that you did not stick to your Core-Values in some situation, even though you had promised yourself that you would. And of course, the same thing could happen with any other Passion Drive. You will experience errors in expressing your Passion. That is perfectly alright, you are a human being, not a robot. See it as an opportunity to grow, and to become even more aware. You should also know that this has nothing to do with your True Self at all. It is simply a missed opportunity at the level of your personality. That’s all it is.

**Mistakes do not exist**
As you develop, you start to do things differently. This may lead you to conclude, when you look back one year later, that you have ‘made a mistake’ with ‘something’ a year ago. Be careful about drawing conclusions like that. They can have a powerful and limiting effect on your psyche. That is in fact completely unnecessary. You are doing things differently now, precisely because you have grown in the past year. You have evolved. No matter how good your intentions were when you did certain things a year ago, new insights may cause you to see things differently one year later. In this sense, mistakes do not exist. What exists, is an evolution of yourself.

**Synchronicity**
By now you know that your life can shift to a higher gear, if you are open to potential moments of synchronicity. Therefore, in your everyday life, be on the lookout for situations that may be ‘meaningful
coincidences’. Find out whether these situations have ‘something’ to tell you. As you do this, experience that there are two different ways to do this, each with their own qualities. One way is thinking about the meaning of ‘something’. The other way is using your intuition to feel the meaning of ‘something’. Discover the difference, by experiencing both ways for yourself.

Keeping the elements of The Passion Pyramid in shape
In a single image, The Passion Pyramid makes you aware, of all the dimensions of your human existence. In this way, it shows you the various elements that make up your personality. It also shows you your true Self. Take good care of all these dimensions. If you do, you will experience meaningful harmony. Vary between moments of thinking and moments of not-thinking. Let your feelings flow. Do not stop your tears when they come. Allow them to be there, and do not identify with them. Observe how these tears come, observe how they are there, and observe how they go away again. This applies to all of your feelings. Allow them to be. Also, take good care of your body, and be aware of the energy around your own body and those of others. Live as a whole human being.

Realize your dream
Be brave enough to dream out loud about what you want to create, no matter how new or how different that may be. That dream is there for a reason. Feel what the subject means to you. Find a way to realize
your dream. It may take a long time to get there, or it may not. The timescale is not important, in essence. Start out on your path. Every step you take towards realizing your dream, no matter how small, is a real step in itself. As soon as you take steps like this, you are on your way to make your dream come true. Follow your Heart!

**Energetic transfer in encounters**

This exercise requires a fair amount of body-awareness. When you grow skilled at this through practice, you can start to experiment with energetic transfer in encounters with other people. For instance, when you know you are about to meet someone, you can focus your awareness on your body right before the encounter. First, focus on your breathing. Follow a few breathing cycles. Then, focus your awareness on your entire body. Do this as though you were scanning yourself from head to toe. Be alert, so that you detect which sensations present themselves. Then, get moving, and step into the encounter with the other person. In doing so, keep a part of your awareness focused on your body. Observe whether this encounter causes a change in your body. If it does, then voice that change out loud, by telling the other person about it, and by asking whether he or she recognizes the body sensation in himself or herself.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
The Passion of the Soul
Essence of the Passion of the Soul

Every person wants to feel good. Preferably as often as possible. The Passion of the Soul lets you experience that this is possible. At any moment of your life, and therefore, in any situation in life!

This is due to the presence of a radiant and infinitely profound inner peace, deep down within your personality. All you need to experience
this, is to connect yourself with it. When you do that, the experience will effortlessly flow into your awareness. You will discover and realize who you truly are. Suddenly, the mask of your personality slips, and your true face is revealed. You ‘wake up’ and experience your own soul. Who you are is pure awareness.

Pure awareness is not of this world. It is a higher dimension. A dimension that transcends the human form. The tip of The Passion Pyramid symbolizes this. Pure awareness is the source of all life. It is the deepest essence of every form that exists in this world. This includes the forms of humans, animals and nature. At this manifest level, all is one. Experience it for yourself. You can do this from a high degree of ‘being awake’.

Expand your awareness. Transcend your personality. This has nothing to do with free-floating vagueness. On the contrary, you become more ‘awake’. Experience the radiant and infinitely profound inner peace, and deepen this experience. In full awareness, allow your soul to find its way back home, and to dissolve into its source.
Basic exercise 1: following your breathing

Arrive in the ‘here and now’ by following your breathing in awareness. Close your eyes, and focus as much of your attention as you can on following each breathing cycle. Count every exhalation as you breathe out. Start at one and continue to ten. When you get to ten, start over again at one. Be mild with yourself if you lose count along the way. You were simply not present for a moment. What matters is that you are now present again. Just start over at one. Keep your awareness focused on following your breathing. Stay engaged, as ‘awake’ as you can be. Let any thoughts and feelings drift by, like clouds in the sky. Let them come and go. You remain undisturbed, as you keep following your breathing. Counting helps you steer clear of the pulling force of your psyche. Do this exercise for at least one minute. If you can keep it up longer, that is perfectly all right.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
Always realizable

The Passion of the Soul is a primal longing, which is present in every person. It provides the kick-off for spiritual growth, in which you discover that your true face is pure awareness.

When you realize the Passion of the Soul, the awareness - which is you - becomes aware of itself as awareness. This is a pure awareness.
It can be experienced as infinite, formless, vibrant, and loving. All that exists, originates from this source, and returns to it eventually.

Anyone can realize and experience the Passion of the Soul. So can you. Open yourself up to it. As soon as you do, you will recognize that primal longing deep within. The recognition that follows from this, makes you do awareness exercises. You will be more ‘awake’, and you will move one step up the awareness ladder. The step you take, is the step from the level of core-awareness to that of higher-awareness.

This will wake you from the illusion of your personality. You will find out, that your personality is merely a ‘vehicle’ and an ‘instrument’ for the higher awareness that you are. This higher awareness is your true Self. It has temporarily made your personality its home. Temporary because, sooner or later, your personality will cease to exist.

The Passion of the Soul can be realized anywhere and anytime. It doesn’t matter where you are, what you do or what time it is. It also doesn’t matter whether the circumstances in the life of your personality are favorable or not. It can be realized regardless of whether everything runs smoothly or not in the life of your personality. Because whether you are healthy or sick, possess a lot of money or just a little, live in the Netherlands or Australia, man or woman, young or old; the Passion of the Soul can essentially be realized in any conditions and by each and every one of us.
Basic exercise 2: following your breathing

This exercise is largely identical to basic exercise 1, described in the previous chapter. Only now, you don’t have to count every time you breathe out. Instead, you will use your hand as a tool for following every breathing cycle. Choose whether you prefer to use your left or your right hand for this exercise. Then, at the first moment when you breathe in, press your thumb and index finger together. As you breathe in again, press your thumb and your middle finger together. Then your thumb and your ring finger. Finish with your thumb and little finger. Then start over from the beginning. Remain undisturbed in this exercise too, as you keep following your breathing. Pressing your fingers together and linking that to each inhalation helps you to avoid the pull of your psyche, just like counting your breaths. Do this exercise for at least one minute as well.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
Many people find it difficult to truly connect with others. Contacts they have with other people are often superficial. They lack a more profound connection. This is a logical result of not being connected to their true Self. This is because:
You only experience an infinitely profound and unlimited connectedness, when you are connected to your true Self, in full awareness.

If this connection of awareness with the true Self is missing, then soulfulness fades into the background. Only a superficial existence remains. This is because the only reality that is ‘left’ in such an existence is your personality. When this happens, the thinker within will rule us. It wants to clarify, understand and control everything. Before you know it, you will be caught in a web of thoughts, in which every thought produces a new thought. And so it goes on all day long. This condition governs the majority of people, every day, all over the world. This keeps them ‘trapped’ in their thoughts. They cannot find the switch to turn it off.

When the thinker governs our existence, we spend all day hard at work on processing information. The thinker wants to understand everything, and for that reason, it splits existence up into information packages. All information gets its own particular place, and is stored into a specific compartment, as it were. Thinking is a continuous process of ‘this goes in here’ and ‘that goes in there’. In this process, the walls of each compartment act as limits. This causes everything inside a compartment to be separated from the rest. In this way, thinking gives everything a meaning and a label. This is how the thinker makes the world understandable, manageable and controllable. This is also the cause of all interpretations, expectations, and judgments. Because the thinker has an opinion about everything!
The thinker inside many people is often scared to death, afraid of not understanding or not keeping track of things. Because if that happens, the thinker has lost control. The thinker badly wants to avoid such loss of control. That is one of the reasons why the thinker is so prominent in everyday life. The world around us adds to this effect. The fact that we have been ‘trapped’ in our thoughts for as long as we can remember, without being aware of it, has led to the incredibly complicated world we live in today. A world that appeals to us to ‘keep thinking’.

As a consequence, all sorts of impulses are coming at us, so much of the time. These are all temptations that make us think, or keep us thinking. They keep our thoughts going, in never-ending circles. This happens day after day, month after month. Before you know it, years have passed. Because of this, many people cannot find the ‘off switch’ to turn off their thoughts. Thinking has become so natural for them, that they don’t even notice how they keep on thinking all the time. They are no longer able to stop doing it.

The fact that many of us keep on thinking, without being aware of it, has led to the many forms of madness we can see all around us, all over the world. Together, we have created a world that is focused on thinking. And even today, the number of impulses causing us to think is growing. So the madness will keep adding up, until people break through to now-awareness on a collective scale. Obviously, this will not happen before people become aware of thinking so much. Aware of
the fact that, like so many others, thinking will keep them ‘imprisoned’ in ego-awareness. True realization will enable them to break free from these chains. Simply by taking the step from thinking to not-thinking, in full awareness.

From now on, you too can choose to use your thoughts only for practical purposes, and no more than that. You can do this by creating space, in full awareness, between moments of thinking. These spaces are moments of not-thinking. As soon as you start to do that, you will notice that these moments of not-thinking have a positive effect on you. You will also discover that you can do this every day. While you are doing this, you become aware of how this makes your life more profound, in a very real way. It brings you the experience of a radiant and infinitely profound inner peace. An experience that comes from within, which is always and unconditionally present.

Do pay attention though! Because there is a catch. That is the thinker in you, who is scared of these moments of not-thinking. The thinker knows that these moments limit its control over your life. Like a balloon that gets pierced and suddenly deflates. The thinker is horrified by this idea. Because it means a total lack of control. Then fear, the loyal ally of thinking, will show its face. If you are not alert and ‘awake’ enough, this will cause you to start thinking again. Without even being aware of it. At that point, you have returned to thinking. Again, without awareness.
On closer inspection however, the Passion of the Soul is no threat to the thinker in you. On the contrary! It will in fact help the thinker present itself in a better way. By creating moments of not-thinking, you allow the thinker to catch its breath, as it were. This will boost its thinking power. Then, when you use this thinking power in full awareness, for the realization of your Passion of the Heart and Passion of the Soul, it can flow in a meaningful way. This will let you experience a great deal of ‘meaningfulness’.

Free your true Self, from the prison of unawareness built from your thoughts. Be ‘awake’ as you create space between moments of thinking. This space is free from all limits. It will take your soulfulness from the background and bring it out in the open. You will not just experience this yourself, it will shine out into the world around you as well. This connection of awareness with your true Self, also gets you connected without limits to others around you. It allows life to flow through you to full extent.
**Connected without limits**

*All limits are imaginary.*

*Letting go creates space.*

*In this space, more profound connectedness follows.*

*This is the connection with your true Self.*

*Your true Self is limitless.*

*You connect with others without limits.*

*Passion flows freely!*
Recognizing the ‘thinker’

‘The thinker in you has a voice. Recognize this voice, and be aware that you are not the thinker.’

Break free from the voice, which you hear in your head. This is why you should train yourself to recognize this voice. Close your eyes and do one of the two basic exercises in following your breathing, for at least one minute. Then, let go of counting your breaths, or of linking your breath to pressing you fingers together. Keep following your breathing, without ‘aides’, with as much awareness as you can. Now, activate the ‘thinker’ too. Let it talk about ‘something’ in your head. It doesn’t matter what it talks about. What matters is that you keep following your breath in full awareness, while at the same time witnessing the inner voice that you hear. This is the voice of the ‘thinker’ in you. Be very attentive as you observe this voice. Because if you lose yourself in listening to this voice, thereby ‘forgetting’ to listen to your breathing, then you become tangled up with the ‘thinker’ again. You have started to think without awareness again.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
Ending the primal entanglement

Most people in our society are not aware of their true Self. This fact is not surprising. For thousands of years humanity has lived in the belief that we are our personality. We, the present generation, have also adopted this illusion from the generations that came before us. It is this primal entanglement, between our true Self and our personality, that still holds humanity in its grasp. And right now, our present generations
is hard at work, to pass on this primal entanglement to the next genera-
tion. The generation of today's children.

This faulty identification with our personality, is the mother of all en-
tanglements. That is part of the reason why I call it primal entang-
lement. This primal entanglement causes suffering by definition,
regardless of its form. In essence, all the suffering in our society, both
personal and collective suffering, results from it. Not just the suffering
of today, but all the suffering that occurred over the course of history
as well. Suffering has existed since the dawn of mankind, and it lasts
to this very day. That is my second reason for calling it primal entang-
lement. It refers to its long and ancient history.

There are of course people in our society, who have broken through to
now-awareness. They have freed themselves from the chains of ego-
awareness. Such people have been around throughout history. In the
present day though, as in history, most of us are still under the spell
of ego-awareness. The society we created together and which we ex-
perience around us every day, is a society that was ‘built’ upon primal
entanglement. It is a society based on ego-awareness, dominated by
thinking. It is precisely this thinking which clouds the true Self of most
people, leaving them with no other reality than that of their personality.

This causes many people to hold on to the belief, that awareness is a
product of the brain. This makes perfect sense from the perspective of
ego-awareness. Because after all, people experience their personality as the only reality that exists. In that reality, thinking plays the starring role. As a matter of fact, the ‘thinker’ in every personality has given itself that starring role. If the ‘thinker’ would accept ‘higher-awareness’ as true Self, it would undermine its own position. The ‘thinker’ is afraid of losing its starring role. This explains why many people experience resistance from within, when they develop spiritually. The resistance comes from the ‘thinker’ inside them.

The idea of awareness as a product of the brain, can also be seen in medical science. You can see it, for instance, in how people regard the concept of clinical death. Medical science is dominated by the idea that awareness stops, when heartbeat, breathing and brain activity can no longer be detected. This is understandable, because the underlying idea is, that awareness is a product of the brain.

And yet, practical evidence shows that this idea is incorrect. The so-called near-death experiences are a good example. You will discover that there are many people who, while being ‘clinically dead’ from a medical point of view, still had very real experiences of awareness at that moment. After being brought back by resuscitation, these people were able to share their experiences with others. Today, many books on near-death experiences are available. For example, you can read the book ‘Consciousness Beyond Life’ by cardiologist Pim van Lommel.
There is more evidence to show that awareness as a product of the brain, is a misrepresentation of reality. This evidence comes from so-called ‘out-of-body experiences’. In ‘out-of-body experiences’, people step out of their body, while they are fully aware of it. They often recall floating above it, and ‘seeing’ themselves - their personality - lying in bed or on the couch, for example. This phenomenon occurs not only to people with near-death experiences. It may just as well be experienced by people in their everyday lives. People don’t talk much about these experiences, because their experience differs from the traditional view and they don’t want to be labelled ‘crazy’. This is why people often keep these experiences to themselves.

Anyone willing to ‘look closer’ and able to really open up to new experiences, their own as well as those of others, will discover and experience that awareness is not a product of the brain. The ‘traditional’ idea of awareness is in fact reality turned upside-down. The fact of the matter is that your psyche exists because of your awareness. It is your thoughts and feelings, existing in space, that you can call your awareness. So it is your awareness that provides the basis for existence of your thoughts and feelings. In other words, without this awareness, there would be no thoughts and feelings at all. For many people, this insight is revolutionary. It may be as revolutionary as switching from the notion that the world is flat, to the wisdom of experience that the world is round. And yet, deep down inside, everyone ‘knows’ that it is true.
And this ‘inner knowledge’ has its own force of attraction. It can be felt as the primal longing, which is present in you and in every other person, urging you to ‘look closer’. This primal longing is the Passion of the Soul. It is what causes you to start moving, towards the experience of your true Self. It is also what will make you discover it, experience it in awareness, and make it more profound. This is the most essential form of ‘coming home’.

The Passion of the Soul and the primal entanglement came into existence at the same moment. If you open up to it, the Passion of the Soul will make you start moving. Feeling this primal longing causes you to start searching for your own answer of experience, the answer to the essential question of ‘who am I?’ This causes you to discover your true face, hidden behind the mask of your personality. This is the moment when you ‘wake up’. You wake up from the illusions associated with ego-awareness.

The ‘awakened’ experiences of people who lived long ago, have probably led to the invention of the word personality. This word traces its roots to the Latin word persona. Among other things, it means mask. And in fact, this is what happens in the state of ego-awareness. Your personality hides your true identity, just like a mask. When you realize the Passion of the Soul, you put an end to this primal entanglement!
Everyday activities

There are many activities that you repeat every day. You often perform these activities on autopilot. That is exactly why you should change them. Turn those everyday activities into the most important thing in the world at that moment. Bring all of your awareness into washing your hands, combing your hair, making your sandwich and brushing your teeth. In full awareness, experience all the sensations that come along with it. If you notice your attention slipping, then simply direct your full awareness back at the sensations accompanying the everyday activity, which you are performing at that moment. In this way, you turn everyday activities into spiritual exercises. They are spiritual exercises because they help you live from ‘Heart and Soul’.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes
From relaxing to Being

There is an important difference between the state of relaxation and the experience of Being. The state of relaxation appears, when you experience a situation you desire. You experience that situation as desirable, because it is pleasant for your personality. These situations could be having a good conversation, reading, sports, listening to or making music, traveling, a walk on the beach or doing nothing at all. Everyone
has his or her own preferred activities. Although some activities take more physical effort than others, they all share the similarity to calm down the psyche. It becomes more relaxed. You may recognize the experience of doing a work-out to ‘empty your mind’. So indirectly, this says something about the constant activity of your psyche.

The state of relaxation is related to your personality. You can view it as a state of relative and conditional inner peace. I call it relative and conditional, because it depends on the situation. You only experience relaxation as long as the situation you are in is pleasant. This is accompanied by a certain degree of inner peace. However, this state of relaxation will always turn back into a tense feeling at some point. This happens as soon as the situation changes in a negative way, or if you move on to a new situation, which you experience as unpleasant, uncomfortable, disturbing or unsafe.

Pleasant moments make you relax, physically as well as mentally. You feel a sense of inner peace rise up inside. Since your personality is a system, all the facets of that system are affected. In a relaxed state, your skin is less tight, your breathing slows down and your psyche is calmer, for example. Those are the moments when you feel good. As you have seen, this state of ‘relaxation’ is linked to situations that occur in your life. This makes it form-dependent and time-dependent. Because it is caused by a certain situation. That situation is a form. And since it occurs at a specific moment, it is related to time.
When you only focus on experiencing pleasant circumstances, you remain ‘stuck’ in a state of limited awareness. In that case, you fail to experience the dimension of now-awareness. You also make yourself depend on these pleasant circumstances. That is because without being aware of it, you assume that you can only relax, if the circumstances you experience are pleasant. This dependency has a limiting effect. Your personality is actually connected with the reality of the real world. This reality is a whole, made up of countless different forms. All of these forms only exist for a certain period of time. They come and go. There are no forms that exist forever. And neither do the circumstances you find pleasant. Of course, pleasant circumstances occur in your life. But sooner or later, they will go away again. Why should you resist them disappearing? It is part of life. Enjoy these forms while they last, and play with them. Without getting attached to them. After all, every time one form disappears, it opens up space for something new in turn.

Be aware of the fact that the experience of Being is unconditional and absolute. By unconditional, I mean that the experience is independent of all the situations occurring in the life of your personality. Therefore, it doesn’t matter if the situation, which you are in at a particular moment, is pleasant or unpleasant. For deep down inside, you are always in the presence of a radiant and infinitely profound inner peace. Experiencing it cannot be described in words. That is why I simply call it the experience of Being. When you experience this state of awareness, in full awareness, you will discover for yourself how substantial and how
absolute it is. What you experience then, is infinite space.

The gateway to this experience of Being, can be found in the ‘here and now’. By being fully ‘awake’ and by being present in the moment with all your attention, the experience will enter your awareness without effort. It is the experience of Being, which is connected to your true Self. That is because the pure awareness, which you are, and the radiant and infinitely profound inner peace, are one and the same.

**Sounds of nature**

*Step outside to do this exercise. Pick a spot where you would like to do this exercise. You can either stand or sit down somewhere. At that spot, first arrive in the ‘here and now’, by following your breathing in awareness. Close your eyes, and spend some time following the cycle of each breath, with as much attention as possible. Then, as you keep your eyes closed, focus part of your awareness on the sounds of nature around you. Observe which sounds of nature come and go. Meanwhile, keep practicing at breathing in awareness. Do this exercise for as long as you want to.*

*Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.*
Waking up and being free in now-awareness

By doing and repeating awareness exercises, you keep on moving deeper into the state of now-awareness. You are waking up, spiritually. You are starting to experience your true Self, the awareness that you are, in full awareness.
Up to that point, your awareness had been ‘trapped’ in your personality for a long time. You were chained in ego-awareness. And somewhere deep within, you have always felt ‘trapped’ somehow. That is the very reason why instinctively, you have always longed for total freedom. It is because you want to break these chains, to escape from being ‘trapped’, in ego-awareness. If you listen closely to your inner voice at this moment, you know that this is true for you. Because the Passion of the Soul that is inside you wants to be lived.

By taking the step from ego-awareness to now-awareness, you separate yourself from your personality. You break the chains that held you for so long. Space becomes available. And instinctively, you feel that this space is very substantial. It is ‘something’ that rises far above your personality. It is experiencing yourself, as awareness. So in fact, the longing for total freedom and space, is really the longing to experience your true identity, your true Self. That is because you are that space!

In experiencing now-awareness, you wake up from the illusion of your personality. At that moment, a new and substantial dimension starts to flow into the ‘awakened’ part of your awareness. It is a formless dimension, in which a radiant and infinitely profound inner peace is always present, unconditionally. Human problems, which are always big at the level of ego-awareness, are small at most here, in now-awareness. There, a sea of space exists around the problem. That is the space of pure awareness, which is you.
Being present at a tense facial expression

Most people know the experience of tension and stress. When that happens, you can often read it in their faces. Experiment with how it is, to observe one of your own tense facial expressions. Do this exercise as soon as you are in a tense condition. At such a moment, take a time-out. First, arrive in the ‘here and now’, by following your breathing in awareness. Close your eyes, and for a while, follow the cycle of every breath, with as much attention as possible. Then, focus part of your awareness on your tense facial expression, while you use the rest of your awareness to keep following your breathing. Be especially aware of the sensations in your face. Be especially aware of the sensations in your face, focus on them. Check whether, as a manner of speaking, you experience ‘sunbeams’ emerging behind your tense facial expression. These ‘sunbeams’ may even break through your tense facial expression. These are the beams of your true Self. The radiant awareness that you are.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
Breath journey

Realizing the Passion of the Soul is an art of living. It requires constant attention. Every single day. There isn’t a single day in the life of your personality that is an exception to this. For you are continuously faced with temptations, which invite you to become less aware again. These are impulses tempting you to step back into thinking. As soon as you succumb to the temptation, you slide back down to a lower level of
awareness. You get tangled up in ego-awareness once again.

Breathing in awareness helps you to become more firmly rooted in Being. This is why in this part of the book, you will find many exercises, which keep focusing on ‘breathing in awareness’. The reason is that your breathing happens in the ‘here and now’. As soon as you connect to your breathing in awareness, your awareness arrives in the ‘here and now’.

As you do these exercises, however, you will notice how strong the pulling force of thinking is. One moment, you are present at your breathing, attentive and ‘awake’, and the next moment, you are unaware again. At that point, thinking has claimed you all for itself again. You will see this more clearly as you advance. Because the next moment when you are attentive and ‘awake’ again, you will realise how unaware you were just a minute ago.

For this reason, realizing the Passion of the Soul is a process of trial and error. Be mild with yourself, when in an ‘awakened’ state you reflect on previous moments of unawareness. Accept it as it is. Surrender to it. Stay ‘awake’. Stay with your breathing. This will help you to stay present, with what is there. For instance, when you start grumbling about your numerous moments of unawareness, there is inner resistance. At times like these, you are thinking in unawareness again.
If you do awareness exercises every day, you will experience a process of spiritual growth. Gradually, you will be more firmly rooted on the level of higher-awareness. You become more ‘awake’. Moments of not-thinking come more often. Moreover, the spaces between thinking and not-thinking get bigger. And when you do think, you do so in full awareness ever more often. Breathing in awareness helps you in this process of growth. Because you take your breath with you no matter where you go. Symbolically, it is like a ‘lifeline’, available at any moment, serving as an anchor to keep you in the ‘here and now’. This happens as long as you keep following your breathing in awareness.

**One-minute meditations**

*Pick moments on this day or in this week, to do several one-minute meditations over the course of the day. Remind yourself of it. You can have these meditative moments during your everyday life. If possible, close your eyes, and if you can’t, just keep them open. During these one-minute meditations, arrive in the ‘here and now’, by following your breathing in awareness. During that minute, use all of your awareness to follow each breathing cycle. When you are finished, just pick up whatever you were doing and carry on your activities.*

*Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.*
The sense of ‘I am’

Every person experiences the very real sense of ‘I am’. This sense is the presence of the pure awareness that you are. Many people automatically link this sense of ‘I am’ to their personality. They think that their personality and sense of ‘I am’ belong together, and that these are the same thing. This is the primal entanglement.
By doing daily awareness exercises, you will grow aware of the fact, that the sense of ‘I am’ is not of this world. It is the presence of another dimension, existing within the reality of the world. The only way to experience this is doing awareness exercises. As long as you only think about it, you cannot have the experience. The important thing is precisely to let go of thinking, and to step into the experience of doing. Only then will the dimension of Being reveal itself to you.

The sense of ‘I am’ is not ‘something’ that you can understand. This is because it is essentially formless. It is also impersonal. This means that the ‘I am’ you experience, is exactly the same as the ‘I am’ experienced by someone else. It is the exact same pure awareness, which has temporarily ‘moved in’ or ‘incarnated’ in your personality, as well as in the personalities of others. When you penetrate deeply into now-awareness, you will arrive at this experience yourself. However, most people are not yet aware, of how the sense of ‘I am’ comes from another dimension, and how it is separate from their personality. I say ‘not yet’, because this can change. That is because every person is perfectly capable of waking up in now-awareness.

Pure awareness, ‘I am’, can witness what is. When this awareness is focused on the inner and outside world of your personality, it observes what happens there. When it is focused on thinking, for example, it observes the thoughts that circulate in the psyche. When focused on feeling, it observes feelings. In this regard, you could also call ‘I am’
observing awareness.

Experiencing ‘I am’ in awareness, is equal to experiencing your true Self in awareness. These two are exactly the same. This true Self exists in everyone, always and everywhere. It doesn’t matter whether you are asleep or awake. The sense of ‘I am’ is here now, while you are reading this sentence. Just as it was here ten minutes ago. Maybe the mood of your personality was different at that moment, but it is still the same ‘I am’ that observes everything. It is aware of what exists, in and around your personality. In the same way, that sense of ‘I am’ was there a few hours ago, yesterday, a month ago, a year ago and ten years back. Not-being there is simply not possible.

In other words, you have been carrying this sense of ‘I am’ with you, for as long as your personality has existed here on earth. The pure awareness, which you are, has been present in your personality from the start. Of course, the situations that occur there keep on changing. So your personality has its own history, in the shape of a life story. Your personality has a past, a present and a future, too. Nonetheless, the sense of ‘I am’ is always present, in each of these life situations. There is always that unchanging and timeless ‘I am’, experiencing everything. It exists in the ‘here and now’. Whether you are awake, or dreaming, or deep in dreamless sleep: ‘I am’ is always there.

From 1879 until 1950, a famous wise man named Sri Ramana Maharshi
lived in India. One of the people who documented his wisdom is the writer and philosopher Paul Brunton. In his book ‘Conversations’, he quotes Sri Ramana Maharshi on ‘I am’ as follows:

>The three conditions are intrinsic to thinking. The self always remains unaffected. It is the substance running through all three of these conditions. The waking state passes, ‘I am’ remains; the dream state passes, ‘I am’ remains; the sleeping state passes, ‘I am’ remains; they repeat themselves, but still there is I AM. These conditions are like images moving across the screen in a cinema. The screen, however, remains unchanged.

4) 

A ‘silent’ hand

Lay your hand on an animal or another person in silence. Close your eyes if you can, or just keep them open if you cannot. Then, arrive in the ‘here and now’, by following your breathing in awareness. Now, focus part of your awareness on your hand, and on what your hand is touching. Use the rest of your awareness to keep following your breathing. Observe all the sensations in and around your hand, with as much attention as possible. Remain present with these sensations for a while, in silence.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.

Focusing awareness

‘Inwards’
Pure awareness, which you are, can be focused inwards as well as outwards. If awareness focuses inwards, it merges with its source, becoming one with it. This is the state of All-awareness. It is the highest state of awareness. That state is limitless. On the awareness ladder, this can be understood as the highest step. In this most ‘awakened’
state, there is only pure and formless awareness. It is unimaginable, as our human psyche cannot imagine it in any way.

The sense of ‘I am’ remains, even in the state of absolute awareness, also called first reality by some. In this state, awareness is fully aware of itself, as formless and pure awareness. Such experiences are sometimes called unity experiences or mystical experiences. Metaphorically, this is the condition in which The Passion Pyramid, made of frozen ocean water, starts to melt. As it melts, it becomes one with the ocean, and then it realizes that it is the ocean itself. At that point, you become ‘aware-of-Being’.

This is the experience that answers the question of ‘who am I?’ The answer to this question comes from experience, and the answer is:

_I am the formless and pure awareness, the living space, in which all forms temporarily manifest themselves. This can be summed up by the words ‘I am’. _

So in essence, the answer to the question of ‘who are you’ is the same for everyone. It is ‘I am’. Of all the words that exist, these provide the best way to talk about the experience of the Passion of the Soul. Because this experience makes you realize that you are at one with everything that exists, and that you are only separated on the level of ego-awareness. Anything you add after the words ‘I am’, will bring
back the illusion of separation. It invites you to become unaware again.

‘Outwards’
Awareness can also be focused outwards. When it does that, it starts to detect individual forms. The reality of the world will appear in the awareness. This is a diverse world, because it is a world filled with forms. These forms can include the forms that occur in the inner world of your personality. Examples are sensations of your physical and non-physical body, thoughts, dreams, feelings and the intuitive impressions that you experience. In addition, there are innumerable forms in the outside world of your personality. These include people, animals, nature, material objects and energies. Everything that is ‘something’, is a form. You can observe it as a particular form.
Realizing that you are speaking

Become aware of the speech of your own personality. As your personality is speaking, notice that you are able to witness it in awareness at the same time. Talking slowly helps in doing this exercise. You could do this exercise by yourself, or while you are talking to one or more other people. Just let your personality say what it wants to say. Be present at it. Be as ‘awake’ as you can, as you observe every word that is spoken. Realize that this is your personality speaking, and realize that you are observing its speech from a higher dimension. Be aware as the silent witness of speaking.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
All forms are objects of awareness

All is one. All the forms that you observe, in the inner world and in the outside world of your personality, comes from the same source. That source is pure awareness. They exist in a space, and that space is the awareness that you are. This is why forms can be called objects of awareness. They are objects that come and go in awareness. They come forth from the formless, and they appear. Then, they return to the formless.
So forms can only exist because there is pure awareness, a living space, in which they can appear. Every form that appears is something. It represents something, and you can observe it. It can be seen, heard, felt, smelled or tasted. It doesn’t matter what it is. By definition, everything you can observe is a form, or in other words, an object of awareness. An object of awareness is an object in awareness.

**Be aware of the space**

Close your eyes and arrive in the here and now, by following your breathing in awareness. Spend some time using all your attention to follow the cycle of every breath. Then, focus part of your awareness on the world of your personality. Use the rest of your awareness to keep following your breathing. Be a witness in awareness, of what is there in the ‘here and now’. Notice the images, sounds, feelings, and sensations of smell and taste that present themselves. Let them come and go. Be present as it happens, in silence and awareness. Become aware of the space, in which these ‘objects in awareness’ exist. Move deeper into it. Notice how much ‘silent space’ surrounds the object. Realize that you are that space. This is the dimension of Being. It is the pure awareness that you are.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
Separating the observer from the observed

As you have just seen, anything you can observe is a form. Every form is an object of awareness. It is an object in awareness. An object is ‘something’, and you can observe this ‘something’. It follows that there is a difference, between that which you can observe, and that which observes. Objects can be observed. That which observes all of these
forms, is the observer. This is also known as the subject. The subject
which observes, is the pure awareness that you are. If you remove all
the objects, then pure awareness is still there. This is the unchanging
and timeless ‘I am’.

So a big difference exists between object and subject.
This is emphasized by the following wisdom:

“That which can be observed, cannot be the observer.”

I can make this wisdom more concrete, by specifying it for the different
senses we all have. This results in the following wisdoms:

“That which can be seen, is not the seer.’
“That which can be heard, is not the listener.’
“That which can be felt, is not the feeler.’
“That which can be smelled, is not the smeller.’
“That which can be tasted, is not the taster.’
Moments of silent awareness in conversations

Moments of silent awareness can also be created in conversations with other people. An example would be talking to one person, or a meeting held with several people. Agree before you start, that you will create one or more moments of silence throughout the conversation, lasting for at least one minute each. On these moments, everyone breathes in awareness. When the minute has passed, simply continue from where you stopped the conversation.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
De wereld die in jou bestaat, is vol met vormen. Vol met bewustzinsobjecten. Je neemt deze waar. Zo neem je waar wat er is buiten je persoonlijkheid. Dat is je buitenwereld. Ook neem je waar wat er innerlijk is, dus in de binnenwereld van je persoonlijkheid.

Binnenwereld
In je binnenwereld neem je verschillende soorten vormen waar. Praktische voorbeelden hiervan zijn gevoelens, intuïtieve sensaties en lichaamelijke sensaties, zoals bijvoorbeeld pijn of tintelingen. Ook neem je gedachten waar, sensaties die samenhangen met je niet-fysieke lichaam en dromen. Want ook een droom kun je tenslotte waarnemen. Als er een droom is, is er ook altijd een dromer van die droom. Die dromer is dezelfde ware Zelf, het vormloze en zuivere bewustzijn, waarbinnen de droom zich afspeelt. Ook de droom is dus een vorm, een object, die verschijnt in het bewustzijn dat jij bent.

Buitenwereld
Net als in je binnenwereld, zijn er ook in je buitenwereld tal van vormen die je waarneemt. Dit zijn alle vormen die zich buiten de grens van je lichaam bevinden. Praktische voorbeelden daarvan zijn mensen, dieren, bomen, planten, stenen, verkeerslichten en huizen. Dit zijn allemaal voorbeelden van materie. Het zijn fysieke objecten die je vast
World

The world that exists within you, is filled with forms. It is filled with objects of awareness. You observe these objects. That is how you observe what exists outside of your personality. That is your outside world. You also observe what is within, or in other words, what exists in the inner world of your personality.
**Inner world**

In your inner world, you observe different kinds of forms. Practical examples include feelings, intuitive sensations and physical sensations, such as pain or shivers. You also observe thoughts, sensations linked to your non-physical body and dreams. Because after all, dreams can be observed too. Whenever there is a dream, there is also a dreamer who is dreaming the dream. That dreamer is the same true Self, the formless and pure awareness, in which the dream presents itself. So that dream is also a form, an object, that appears in the awareness that you are.

**Outside world**

Just like in your inner world, your outside world is full of forms, which you observe as well. These are all the forms that occur outside the limits of your body. Practical examples include people, animals, trees, plants, rocks, traffic lights and houses. These are all examples of matter. They are physical objects that you can hold in your hands. They have a fixed form. There are also objects in your outside world, which you can experience even though they have no fixed form. Think of oxygen, temperature, wind and noises, for example.

**Temporary nature**

All the forms in the world, in your inner world as well as in your outside world, exist only for a certain period of time. They can exist for a second, a day, a month, a year, a hundred years or even longer.
Nevertheless, there will come a point at which they no longer exist. There is always a beginning and an end. At that moment, the form returns to its primal origin. That origin is formless and pure awareness. You can also call it All-awareness or absolute awareness.

**Observer in awareness**

The forms that you observe, in your inner world and in the outside world, are objects. You are the awareness, the space, in which those objects exist. Be present at all the objects of awareness that present themselves, without getting tangled up with them. Be the observer in awareness of what is there.

**Exercises in Being aware**

*Allow the following wisdom to sink in, in full awareness:*

- There are thoughts, but you are not your thoughts;
- There are feelings, but you are not your feelings;
- There are dreams, but you are not your dreams;
- There are longings, but you are not your longings;
- There is a body, but you are not your body;
- There is a non-physical body, but you are not your non-physical body;
- There are intuitive impressions, but you are not your intuitive impressions;

You are the space, in which all these objects of awareness exist!
veel gedachten in je binnenwereld. Vaak is het zo, dat de ene gedachte de volgende gedachte oproept. Zo ontstaat al snel een aan- 
eenschakeling van gedachten. Zonder dat jij je daar bewust van bent. Het denken neemt je dan compleet in beslag. Je gaat volledig op in de 
gedachten, die zich voortdurend aandienen. Voor je het weet, ben je als het ware continu achter al je gedachten aan het aanhollen. Het is de kunst om deze vicieuze denkspiraal te doorbreken. En dat kun je. Daarvoor is het belangrijk om te weten wat denken is en hoe gedachten zich in jou manifesteren. Dat zorgt ervoor dat je gedachten innerlijk gaat herkennen. Zodra je denkvormen herkent, is het een stuk eenvoudiger om deze los te laten, wanneer ze zich aandienen. Hierdoor realiseer jij de staat van hoger-bewustzijn. In die toestand neem je gedachten in vol bewustzijn waar, zonder ermee verstrikt te zijn. Je neemt iedere gedachte waar als denkvorm, die verschijnt in het bewustzijn dat jij bent.

Wat is denken eigenlijk? In feite is denken niet meer, dan het innerlijk gebruik van je zintuigen om te zien, te horen, te tasten, te proeven en te ruiken. Naast het feit dat jij deze zintuigen inzet, om de buitenwereld rondom je persoonlijkheid te ervaren, gebruik je dezelfde zintuigen ook als je denkt.
Thinking

*Every thought is an object of awareness. It is a form of thought, which appears in the awareness that you are.*

Thinking is everywhere in your everyday life. That is because many thoughts are living in your inner world. Often, one thought gives rise to the next. In this way, it is easy to generate a chain of thoughts. It
happens while you are not aware of it. You get completely occupied by thinking. You lose yourself in all the thoughts that keep presenting themselves. Before you know it, you spend all your time as if you were chasing after all of your thoughts.

The trick is to break out of this viscous spiral of thinking. And you can do that. In order to do so, it is important to know what thinking is, and how thoughts manifest themselves in you. This enables you to recognize your thoughts from within. Once you recognize your forms of thinking, it becomes much easier to let go of them, whenever they present themselves. That is how you realize the state of higher-awareness. In that state, you observe your thoughts in full awareness, without getting tangled up with them. You observe every thought as a form of thought, which appears in the awareness that you are.

So what is thinking, exactly? What thinking basically means, is the inner use of your senses to see, to hear, to touch, to taste and to smell. In addition to using these senses for experiencing the outside world that surrounds your personality, you also use those same senses when you are thinking.

Seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and smelling

Thoughts present themselves visually, in different ways. This means presenting themselves through images. Imagination conjures up static and moving images in your head, before your ‘inner eye’. This ability is
also expressed in our language. The word ‘imagination’ comes from the same root as the word ‘image’. This enables you to see images in your head, almost without effort. You use your thoughts to create them. As soon as you do that, you will see images that are different from the images of the environment you are in at that moment.

So one of the meanings of thinking is ‘inner sight’. Like everything else in the outside world of your personality, these images in your head come with all sorts of details. There are differences in color, distance, depth, context, space and sharpness. You can even change these details. Your powers of imagination enable you to change any of your inner images. Have a go and see for yourself. In your thoughts, imagine someone dear to you. Then, when you see this person in your mind, give him or her a different hair color. As you will notice, this is a very easy thing to do.

Apart from images, you can also conjour up sounds in your head. This is the auditory part of thinking. It is all about sounds that, as in seeing, differ from the sounds that you hear in your surrounding environment at that moment. These sounds are a product of your brain, too. A frequent occurrence is hearing a ‘voice in your thoughts’. This can be your own voice or that of someone else. The thinker in you often presents itself in this form of thought.

For example, you are reading this text right now. Here too, the auditory
component of thinking is present. That is because when you read, you hear a voice in your head. Pay attention to it, and you will notice that you know that voice. It is the voice of your own personality, reading the text. All of this goes on inside your head, in your thoughts. As long as you don’t read out loud, other people around you cannot detect it, but within, it is clear to you.

A fun way of experimenting with this is changing the voice, which you hear in your head, into someone else’s voice. Find out that this is possible. In a way, someone else will be reading to you. Like inner sight, inner hearing is widely varied. Sounds you hear may be soft or loud, distant or close by, or have high or low tones, for instance.

Your thinking also consists of the ability to touch ‘things’ in your head. Here too, a wide range of sensations can be experienced. You can distinguish warm from cold, for example, or solid from fluid, rigid from flexible or smooth from coarse. Another ability you have is the power to summon flavors in your thoughts. This brings the inner experiences of sweet, sour, salty and bitter. And finally, you are also able to experience very different smells in your thoughts.

*The problem of thinking*

In today’s world, many people are suffering. Their suffering is the result of continuous thinking that is not aware. You are thinking without awareness, if the connection of awareness with your true Self
is missing during thinking. When you are not thinking in the full light of your awareness, that is. In that case, you are in the state of ego-awareness. This state is the cause of all suffering. It doesn’t matter whether suffering is physical, mental or emotional in nature. The biggest factor by far, is that of suffering at the level of diffuse-awareness.

In the state of ego-awareness, you are like a blind person running after all of your thoughts, which are random, automatic, in most cases repetitive and large in number. And there are many of these thoughts, usually. You fail to notice how you are living in an imaginary world of thoughts. In that case, most or all of real life in the ‘here and now’ simply passes you by.

Thoughts lead your awareness away from the moment. They carry you off to the past and the future. Or your thoughts may tempt you to start thinking about the present. And thinking about the present is substantially different from being in the ‘here and now’, in full awareness. For thinking reduces the infinite depth of the ‘here and now’, and the dimension of Being, to a present that is finite and very limited.

There is a constant risk of becoming unaware, in many different forms. Images may flash up in our heads, claiming our awareness. At other times, it is the voice of the thinker in us. It can also be imagined touch, smell, or taste, which drags us away from the ‘here and now’. That is why staying ‘awake’ demands constant attention.
Transcending your thinking

All thoughts can be observed. As you have seen earlier: ‘that which can be observed, cannot be the observer’. So thoughts are nothing more than objects, in the awareness that you are. You are the observing subject. You are the formless awareness and the space, in which all of these thoughts can exist. In that space, all thoughts come and go, while ‘I am’ remains.

Thoughts are forms. They are objects of awareness that appear all the time. Thoughts have a strong pulling force. In a way, a thought will claim all attention for itself. When that happens, you have become unaware. Since this danger is always waiting just around the corner, it is important to be on the lookout all of the time. This is a matter of training your awareness. And you can do that!

Train yourself in being a silent and attentive observer, as thoughts appear in the ‘here and now’. Without getting dragged away by them. Notice how all these thoughts come and go. Notice also that the sense of ‘I am’ remains. Recognize the various forms of thinking. These are the disguises, in which your thoughts present themselves to your awareness. By now, you know what to focus your attention on. You know, because forms of thinking can present themselves either as inner ‘sight, hearing, touch, taste or smell’. As you observe these thoughts, connect yourself to the sense of ‘I am’. Observe how thoughts come and go, no matter what their form is. Be aware of the space that surrounds all
these thoughts. Because you are that space!

**Letting go of judgments**

Accept the following challenge. Find out to what extent the ‘thinker’ in you judges other people, people you meet on your way through everyday life. Be attentive to thoughts that arise, when another person enters your awareness. This can happen in all sorts of ways. You could be thinking about someone, for example. Or you could physically meet someone. That could happen because you see someone walking across the street, or because you are talking to someone. Notice whether you have some kind of judgment about this particular person. If you do, then let go of that judgment. Make it your goal to approach the other person as free from judgment as you possibly can.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
Feeling

Any feeling associated with the personality, is an object of awareness. It is a form of feeling that appears, in the awareness that you are.

Thinking has an effect on you, which extends far beyond your thoughts alone. As your personality can be viewed as a system, thinking also influences the other elements of your personality, such as your feelings.
This too happens in the state of ego-awareness, usually automatically and without being aware of it.

Your thoughts and your feelings combine into a psychological whole. This whole can be summed up as your psyche or ego. So besides thinking, feeling forms the other half of your psyche. Just like thoughts, feelings have a strong pulling force. Feelings invite you to become or remain unaware too. Feelings have the same potential to pull you into the state of ego-awareness. If this is the case, then these feelings claim all attention for themselves. In a way, you are the feeling at that moment.

To prevent this from happening, it is important to know what feeling is, exactly, and how feelings reveal themselves within you. As with thinking, this will teach you to recognize feelings, right at the moment when they present themselves. This will allow you to let your feelings flow through you, without being tangled up with them. You stay ‘awake’. Then you can observe, from higher-awareness, how feelings come and go in your personality.

‘Feeling’ unraveled
In our regular everyday language, we often talk about feeling and feelings. But what is feeling exactly? We all know what we mean by it, to a certain extent, but what is the difference between feeling and emotions, for example?
Feelings manifest themselves in various ways. You can touch something, for instance, or you can sense something from a distance. You can also be emotional, experience a certain mood, have feeling for something, feel intuitively, have gut feelings about something, follow your feelings and experience bodily sensations. All these feelings occur, but that doesn’t mean they are all the same. Each of the types of feelings mentioned has a specific meaning. These are as follows:

**Feeling:**
The collective name for observing sensations in the outside world of your personality, by touch, but also by inner observation of emotions, moods, intuition, gut feelings and bodily sensations.

**Touching:**
Approaching physical and non-physical objects in the outside world of your personality, and using your skin to touch them. Either by actual physical contact, or by approaching the object from a distance by means of energy.

**Emotion:**
The energy charge that builds up in your body, resulting from psychological processes and energy transfer.

**Mood:**
The mental-emotional state, in which your psyche finds itself during a
certain period.

*Having feeling for something:*  
The natural ability of your personality to perform certain activities, with ease and with strength.

*Intuition:*  
The ability of every person to observe information within, without thinking and by immediate inspiration.

*Gut feeling:*  
A part of your intuitive abilities, enabling you to know something based on your feelings, without thinking and by immediate inspiration.

*Follow your feelings:*  
Trusting your intuition and acting accordingly.

*Bodily sensations:*  
Feeling the impulses sent by your physical body, and using them to determine the state you are in at that moment.

All of the forms of feeling listed above are related to your personality. These too are objects, which appear in the awareness that is you. Train yourself in observing feelings in the ‘here and now’, without getting carried away by them. Whenever feelings present themselves, simply
let them be. Accept it as it is, and stay present at it in full aware-
ness. Without wanting to change anything about it. Notice how all the
feelings come and go. While the sense of ‘I am’ remains. Be aware of
the awareness, in which all of these feelings occur. Because you are
that awareness!
Staying out of emotions

‘An emotion arises at the point where mind and body meet, and it is the body’s reaction to the mind. You could also call it: a reflection of the mind in the body.’

This quote by Eckhart Tolle paints a striking picture of how emotions and thinking are connected. Building on these words, the present awareness exercise invites you to break free from the emotions, which present themselves in your everyday life. Root yourself deeply in the ‘here and now’, as soon as an emotion appears. At that moment, close your eyes, and for some time, using all the attention you have, follow the cycle of each breath. Then, focus part of your awareness at the emotion that is there. Be present at the emotion as a witness in awareness, as long as it lasts. You don’t have to change anything about it. Observe the emotion in full awareness. As you do this, let the following realization cross your mind: ‘There are emotions, but you are not those emotions.’ Experience that you are the pure awareness, in which all emotions can exist.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.

Getting tangled up in forms

Every time you move one step down on the awareness ladder, the awareness that you are, gets further removed from its source. At that point, forms appear. As soon as you move from the level of now-awareness to the level of ego-awareness, you get tangled up in these forms. This is an entanglement, because at that point you are no longer aware of your true identity. It is being covered up by the activity of your psyche.
In this state, the only reality that remains is the inner and outside world of your personality. What happens is that you observe only forms, or objects, in other words, and take these very seriously. At that point, you are not aware of how they are only ‘objects in awareness’. All you ‘see’ are the objects themselves, which makes you forget about the most essential aspect of all: the sense of ‘I am’. This causes all forms to start pushing you around. You are completely under the spell of ego-awareness, and without being aware of it, you become tangled up with the thoughts and feelings of your personality.

When this happens, nearly all of your life becomes dictated by all sorts of thoughts and feelings. One thought brings forth the next. Obviously, this is accompanied by all the feelings that come with these thoughts. These thoughts and feelings take control over you. You lose yourself in them completely. When you experience someone doing something that makes you angry, for example, that anger takes control over you. Tension rises in your body, you go red in the face, and your head is full of thoughts about the other person and the situation. You are filled to the brim with these thoughts and feelings. All of this happens, despite the fact that you never chose to do this in awareness. After all, it wasn’t you who decided to fill your body with tension, to go red in the face, or to have all sorts of thoughts running around in your head. All of that seems to happen by itself.
You can compare it to visiting the cinema. People watching a movie often lose themselves completely in that movie. At such moments, the notion of ‘it’s only a movie’ has disappeared. All that is left is the movie. This is exactly what happens in the state of ego-awareness. In this state of (un)awareness, people lose themselves completely in the thoughts and feelings that present themselves. At such moments, the awareness of the sense of ‘I am’ has disappeared. It lies outside of the ‘awakened part’ of their awareness.
**Recognizing thinking in images**

‘One of the ways in which thinking manifests itself, is by images that appear in your head.’

This awareness exercise invites you to free yourself, from the images that appear in your head. To do so, it is important to recognize such mental images, as soon as they appear in your everyday life. This exercise helps you do that. First, root yourself firmly in the ‘here and now’. Close your eyes and for some time, follow the cycle of each breath, with all the attention you have. Then, focus part of your awareness on the activity of your brain. Notice the inner images that appear. Experience them as a witness in awareness. Observe how these mental images come and go, in full awareness. As you do so, allow the following realization to cross your mind: ‘There are mental images, but I am not these mental images. Experience that you are the pure awareness, in which all mental images can exist.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
Pain and gain, two sides of the same medal

Your psyche tends to be busy all the time, occupied with labeling and valuing the world around you. All the situations that occur, have occurred or might occur, can eventually be reduced to a set of two polarities. These polarities are ‘gain’ and ‘pain’.
Anything you place in the ‘gain’ category, will be experienced as desirable by your psyche, and so you usually welcome these things with open arms. When pain is felt, however, your ego will start to resist, because it wants to get rid of the pain as soon as possible. The ego feels threatened. This resistance becomes apparent in a number of forms. What these forms have in common, is the fact that they are different kinds of ‘pushing away’.

You could, for instance, build a sort of armor around yourself, to make the painful situation bounce off, as it were. Examples include ignoring or avoiding an undesirable situation, which takes place in your outside world. You close yourself off to it inside. If you still feel the pain in spite of this, you will typically want to get rid of it as fast as you can. One of the ways to do so is called projection. This means placing the pain outside of yourself, as it were, by projecting it onto someone else.

Projection means making someone else responsible for the pain, the undesirable thoughts and emotions, of your own personality. Your ego often uses random excuses to do this. Something that occurs is used as an excuse by your ego, to release the tension that you already had about something else. In reality, therefore, the tension is not about the random situation that your ego focuses on. The real cause of the tension, is linked to something completely different. The ego doesn’t want to know about that, however, because it is too much of a threat.
Apart from projection, there are many other ways to redirect pain. Examples can be seen in sports or sexual behavior. In some situations, though, redirecting the pain is impossible. In such cases, your ego can employ its ‘last resort of pushing away’, and that is to redirect the pain to the deepest catacombs of your psyche. This is the ego’s way of removing the threatening pain.

This is how, in the state of ego-awareness, many undesirable feelings are stored out of reach from the ‘awakened part’ of your awareness. In the hopes of never running into them again. That, however, turns out to be impossible. In the depths of your psyche, it all festers on. It will get an even firmer grip on you. You just aren’t aware of it. This is because it all happens outside of the field of view of your awareness. It is hidden in patterns of thinking, automatic responses, and reflexes that you are not aware of. It attaches itself to places in your body, and this in turn can lead to all sorts of complaints and diseases. And whenever the pain surfaces anyway, in spite of your efforts, your ego will try to suppress the pain. It can do so for example by forcing your personality to eat, drink, do drugs, use medication, watch television, or other kinds of distractions.

‘Pushing away’ feelings of pain restricts the experience of Passion. Both the Passion of the Heart and the Passion of the Soul. This because life can be seen as an ever-flowing stream, in which all sorts of situations occur. Desirable and undesirable situations come and go. As long as
you keep following the tendency of holding on to what is ‘gain’, and pushing away what is ‘pain’, you are resisting this natural stream. This keeps you chained in ego-awareness.

The solution and liberation are very simple matters, really. Accept what is there, and accept what presents itself in the ‘here and now’. Connect yourself to the level of higher-awareness. Be present at what is there. Observe your thoughts and your feelings. Notice which patterns of pushing away occur within. Also be aware, of how your thoughts often keep repeating inside. Symbolically, it is like a gramophone needle that gets stuck. The same thought or line of reasoning is repeated, over and over again, with all the feelings that accompany it. This repeating in your head, of what happened or what might happen, keeps you in a tight hold. This will continue until you break from it, by expanding your awareness to the level of higher-awareness.

From higher-awareness, you will discover how ‘gain’ and ‘pain’ are two sides of the same psychological medal. That is because both experiences are linked to your psyche. They occur in your psyche, and so they exist only at the level of ego-awareness. In that sense, there is no difference between euphoria and depression. When you live in ego-awareness, they are two different forms, in which the primal entanglement is expressed. By witnessing your thoughts and feelings in the ‘here and now’, you free yourself from this primal entanglement.
Walking in awareness

Train yourself to walk in awareness. To do this, first arrive fully in the 'here and now'. Close your eyes, and spend some time directing all of your attention at the cycle of each new breath. After a while, open your eyes, while you keep practicing breathing in awareness. Then start moving, by beginning to walk. Silently focus part of your awareness on your walking. Keep the rest of your awareness focused on your breathing. Be a witness of your walking in awareness. Let any thoughts and feelings that appear during walking pass you by, like clouds in the sky. Keep your awareness rooted in the 'here and now. Experiment in varying your walking speed. Walk quickly as well as at a regular pace, slowly as well as very slowly. Experience how different walking speeds bring different sensations. Experience, which speed of walking helps you to be in the 'here and now', and to stay there.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
‘Presence’

The state of ‘presence’ is linked to now-awareness. The fact is that when you reach this level of awareness, you are ‘present’ by definition. This means the following. At such a moment, while rooted in Being, you are present in full awareness, at what is there in the ‘here and now’. As a consequence, this is state of awareness that is ‘wide awake’. This higher state of awareness can be expressed by the single world
‘presence’. It is the presence of your true Self, which you experience in full awareness.

The ‘awareness ladder’ shows that now-awareness can be divided into two levels. These are higher-awareness and All-awareness. At the level of All-awareness, the pure awareness that you are merges into its source. The awareness that you are then expands into an absolute whole. You experience that ‘all is one’. This state of awareness is a state of total awakening. It is the most ‘awake’ state. It is also called an enlightened state of awareness. In this state, the aware sense of ‘I am’ expands to the most substantial level. It experiences itself as the source of all forms that exist.

At the level of higher-awareness, ‘presence’ is characterized by observing in awareness. This means being a silent witness in awareness, observing what is there in the ‘here and now’. You are connected with Being, and from there you observe what happens in the world. You do so both in your personality and around it. You observe your thinking with great attention, for instance. You are aware of the thoughts that present themselves. Without getting tangled up with these thoughts. All you do is observe how these thoughts come and go.

Sometimes, your thoughts are a turbulent bunch. At those moments, each thought triggers the next, at breakneck speed. One thought causes the following thought, and it just keeps going on. In that case,
your thinking is like the furious motion of a wild river. Sometimes, however, your thinking is relatively calm. At such times, it is more like a gently streaming brook. Regardless of the speed of your thinking, in the state of ‘presence’, you let all these thoughts drift by, like clouds in the sky. You stay connected, with the higher dimension of Being.

‘Presence’ is about more than just thoughts. From the level of higher-awareness, you also observe all the feelings that come and go. You stay present in all of these feelings, as long as they are there. Without having an opinion about them and therefore without thinking about them. You remain rooted in Being. You observe all of these feelings, as objects in awareness. You are aware of the fact that the sensations of your physical and non-physical body, and every form in the outside world, are in fact all objects of awareness. The more you are ‘present’, the more intense your awareness experiences become. Because when you are deeply rooted in Being, you add depth to your power of observation too. At that point, you are aware that all forms spring from the same source.

It follows that ‘being present’ means being rooted in Being, and from that position, observing what happens in the ‘here and now’, without attaching yourself to it. This detachment is also called de-identification. That is because you have separated yourself from your personality. The primal entanglement has been disentangled. At such moments, you no longer identify with your personality. The reason is that you have
become aware of your true identity, and that is pure awareness.

When you are detached while observing objects of awareness, such as thoughts or feelings, a meaningful space arises around the object you are observing. That space is the awareness that you are. This space ensures that you no longer get tangled up with it. The object of awareness can no longer claim you for itself. Being claimed means losing yourself in it. When that happens, only the object remains, without any space surrounding that object. At that point, you have become absent, and you are tangled up once again.

In detached observation, by contrast, you observe pain in the physical body of your personality, for example, without being that pain. This is also how you go about detached observation of your personality’s mood, without getting dragged away by it. Or emotions, without sinking down into them. Or thoughts that present themselves, without being lost in thoughts. Or intuitive observations, without making absolute truths out of them. By detached presence at everything there is, you experience a radiant and infinitely profound inner peace, which is inextricably bound up with the dimension of Being.

Absence
Another way of saying that you are living in ego-awareness, is calling it a state of awareness marked by ‘being absent’. In that state, there is nobody to witness observations in awareness. This results in a ‘free fall’
from the level of now-awareness, down to the level of ego-awareness. Spiritually, you become unaware again. The psychological concept of ‘time’ presents itself, and this brings past, present and future onto the stage. Inevitably, suffering will come calling too. It can be either psychological suffering or physical suffering, or a combination of both.

Rooted in Being
When you are firmly rooted in Being, you always keep part of your awareness connected to this dimension. You can see the connection as a kind of lifeline, to keep you securely anchored. This anchor serves to keep you ‘present’ in what is there. This will make you more aware of the entanglements, tendencies, urges, longings, patterns and conditionings, which your personality carries along. Becoming more ‘present’ allows you to let go of these things. Because as you have seen before: ‘that which festers in the dark, dissolves in the light.’ That is the light of your awareness. The awareness that you are.

Awareness exercises help you make the light of your awareness brighter and brighter. For ‘presence’ is not some level of awareness that just pops into existence. It takes effort. You activate this level of awareness as soon as you connect with it. That requires silence, calmness and attention. If you do ‘something’ in a rush, you will usually lose your awareness of the sense of ‘I am’. You, the witness in awareness of your observations, become absent again. This is why the Passion of the Soul can be regarded as an art of living, one that you can put to
practice every day. It takes continuous effort to stay ‘awake’ and ‘present’ in what is there. Practicing meditation can help you with this.

**Penetrating deeper into Being**

Find a quiet place, and take at least thirty minutes to do this exercise. Because this exercise invites you to penetrate deeper into the dimension of Being. To become even more ‘awake’. To do this, close your eyes and arrive in the ‘here and now’, by following your breathing in awareness. Focus all the attention you have on following your breathing. Be present at every breath with your full awareness. If any ‘objects in awareness’ present themselves, just let them be. Become one with your breathing as much as you can. Allow your breath to carry you as deeply as possible into the dimension of Being. Experience how the sense of ‘I am’ keeps existing, even in this very ‘awake’ state of awareness.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
Meditation helps you in realizing the Passion of the Soul. That is because when you meditate, you create an exclusive moment of now-awareness. At such moments, you practice breathing in awareness. This helps you to be as ‘awake’ as possible, while you stay present in the ‘here and now’. These moments allow you to root yourself in Being ever more firmly. With it, you lift your awareness to a higher level. This
will also affect your everyday life. As you go ahead, you keep becoming more ‘present’ at what is there.

You can meditate in the traditional way. This involves sitting on the floor, possibly using a meditation cushion or stool, in a meditative posture. Different ways are available, though. Meditation can be just as effective if you do it while walking, lying down, standing or sitting in a chair. No matter what you choose, make sure that you sit in a ‘wakeful’ position. Don’t slump backwards or forwards, for example. Sit as straight and upright as you can. Keeping your back straight will help you stay ‘awake’. It allows the energy of your body to flow freely.

You can also meditate for longer periods, such as half an hour, an hour or even an entire day. Don’t feel obliged to do so, however. You could also create several brief moments of meditation throughout your day. Anchoring your awareness at the level of higher-awareness is perfectly possible, if you practice ‘one-minute meditation’ a few times a day. You can do it while you are stuck in traffic, waiting in line in the supermarket, walking to the office, listening to music, cooking dinner in the kitchen, and while you are washing the dishes. These are all examples of everyday situations that are perfectly suited for practicing ‘presence’.

Because after all, that is the ultimate goal of meditation. It is not about being very ‘awake’ for ‘just’ a few moments of your life, due to a few long meditation sessions. On the contrary, it is about being ‘awake’ as
much as you can in your everyday life. Brief meditations help you do this too. They have the benefit of being easy to realize. Brief meditative moments are easier to fit into your everyday life. You can actually practice it anywhere and anytime. No situation is an exception to this!

What is meditation?
It turns out that people explain the practice of meditation in different ways. Many answers are available for answering the question of ‘what is meditation to you?’ Examples include listening to music, doing yoga, reading religious or philosophical texts, singing, doing relaxation exercises, guided visualizations and many other things besides.

I fully agree that all of these activities can be enjoyable for your personality. However there is one critical remark that you should bear in mind. Apart from the ‘pleasure’ these activities can bring, it is also perfectly possible to practice them from a state of ego-awareness. As soon as that happens, I no longer call it meditation. I define meditation in the following way:

*Meditation is a spiritual exercise, in which you make the choice to focus your awareness inwards as much as you can, for a certain period, in order to penetrate as deep into now-awareness as you can, and to stay there. All activity is directed at realizing the level of higher-awareness, or even to transcend it, by being in a state of All-awareness.*
Let’s have a look at what Ken Wilber, also called the ‘Einstein’ of human awareness, has to say about meditation in his book ‘Grace and Grit’:

*What meditation or contemplation is all about - regardless of East or West, christian, muslim, buddhist, or hindu - is indeed to free us from the ‘optical illusion’ of being separate ego’s, isolated from one another and from the eternal spirit, and instead to discover that, once we are free from the prison of individuality, we are one with God, and therefore one with all manifestations, in a perfectly timeless and eternal manner.* 6)

Sri Ramana Maharshi, the famous Indian sage, says the following about meditation in the book ‘Talks’:

*Meditating on an object will not help you. That is why you must learn that subject and object are one. If you meditate on an object, you destroy that realization of being one, and so you create duality. Meditate only on the Self. Try to become aware that the body is not you, the emotions are not you, the intellect is not you. When these have all been silenced, you will notice that there is something else; hold on to that, and it will reveal itself.* 7)

The same book includes another quote on meditation from Sri Ramana Maharshi:

*Visions and sounds occurring during meditation, must be regarded as distractions and temptations. The aspirer must not be seduced by these matters. Visions simply add to meditation, and no more than that.*

It is certainly true that practicing meditation, as I understand it, has all kinds of positive side effects for every personality. Meditation can strengthen thinking, for instance, and increase concentration, bring relaxation and reduce or even remove physical and psychological complaints. However, these side effects are not the ultimate goal.

The model of the awareness ladder illustrates that now-awareness consists of two layers, which are higher-awareness and All-awareness. In meditation, both layers are practiced as well as being put into practice. The essential purpose in doing so, is to realize a higher state of awareness, throughout your everyday life. It follows that, at a glance, meditation can be viewed as the cultivation of now-awareness. In it, all activities are carried out from ‘presence’, and as such, you are free from identification with your personality.

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A warm bath of silence

This awareness exercise is highly similar to the awareness exercise of ‘penetrating deeper into Being’, from the previous chapter. The difference is that in the current exercise, you choose to be silent and ‘awake’ for an even longer period. Take at least an hour and a half for this. Make sure you are alone. Avoid being distracted by other people, a telephone ringing, an alarm clock going off or music playing in the background. You can do this awareness exercise either indoors or outdoors. If you decide to go outside, be sure to pick a quiet spot out in the countryside, for example.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
Position of your Soul

*Between ‘heaven and earth’*

In ‘The Passion Pyramid’ model for an outlook on life, the tip marks the position of your Soul. On the ‘awareness ladder’, this is the level of higher-awareness. These positions symbolize that your Soul resides between ‘heaven and earth’. Your Soul is situated on the dividing line between two dimensions. These are the reality of earth, in which your
personality exists, and the dimension of Being, the formless and pure awareness.

The reality of earth consists of a world full of forms. Every form is a manifestation. It is ‘something’. Pure awareness is ‘not something’. It is the formless source, from which all forms originate, and to which all forms also return eventually. Therefore the awareness, which is you, is situated precisely on the line that divides non-manifested and manifested awareness.

The name higher Self, or higher-awareness, is used to indicate that your true Self rises above your personality. This makes higher-awareness essentially different from your intellectual abilities, for instance. That is because an intellectual ability is an ability of thought, and therefore it is connected with your personality. By contrast, higher-awareness transcends your personality. It is able to observe thoughts, without being tangled up with it.

As long as the awareness, which is you, is directed at observing forms, it will be aware of doing so. At these times, the world will manifest itself in awareness, as a totality of objects. These are all the forms from the inner and outside world of your personality. As soon as awareness focuses on its source, it will merge into that source, and become one with that source. At that point, there is no longer a distinction between the observer and the observed. There is only ‘Being Aware’.
The ‘presence’ of a flower, plant or tree

Let yourself be inspired by the full ‘presence’ of a flower, a plant or a tree. Experiment with it. As you do this exercise, start by fully arriving in the ‘here and now’. Close your eyes, and follow the cycle of each breath, with as much attention as possible. After a while, open your eyes, while you keep practicing breathing in awareness. While doing so, silently focus part of your awareness on the flower, plant or tree that you are watching. Keep following your breathing with the remainder of your awareness. Let any thoughts or feelings, which may appear as you are watching, drift by like clouds in the sky. Keep your awareness anchored in the ‘here and now’. Notice the full ‘presence’ of the flower, plant or tree. Become one with this ‘presence’.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
Putting the Passion of the Soul to practice

Make every moment the most important moment of your life, and experience it from now-awareness!

The Passion of the Soul and the Passion of the Heart can exist alongside each other perfectly well. The Passion of the Soul invites you, to
live every moment as now-aware as possible. The Passion of the Heart invites you, to allow the energy of your personality to flow in full, as freely as possible, straight from the Heart.

By making every moment the most important moment of your life and by experiencing that moment from now-awareness, you put the Passion of the Soul to practice. You keep doing it every single day. Because you are never finished with the realization of it. For the realization of the Passion of the Soul, is not a goal as such. The way is the goal. This way is made up of all the life situations, which you come across every day on your path through life. That is why you should walk this path from the state of now-awareness as much as possible.

This will free you from the constraints of time, and keep you out of the grasp of compulsory and ongoing processes that occur in your psyche. Because anchored in the ‘here and now’, from a higher level of awareness, you are present at that which is there. As such, you experience every moment in now-awareness. ‘Awake’, you observe what happens in the ‘here and now’. Both in the inner world and the outside world of your personality. You are aware that these are one. Only one single world exists.

Live! Experience life as intensely as possible. See a flower and keep watching, be ‘present’ in the experience. Let any possible comments of the thinker inside, pass you by. No matter what it tells you about
the flower. Smell it, and allow this sensation to pass through you. Notice how it is to be ‘present’ while experiencing the flower. Watch the shades of its petals, and keep watching. Allow its colors to affect you. Feel the ‘presence’ of the flower, and become one with it. Become firmly rooted in the ‘here and now’!

Be ‘present’ in everything you do. Allow yourself to be touched by a sunset, the gentle descent of an autumn leaf, the sight of a child at play, the sound of a chirping bird. Enjoy, and observe your own enjoyment. Be ‘present’ in the taste of a sip of tea, the sound of a flowing stream, feeling the wind caressing your skin, listening to silence, smelling the fragrance of spring blossoms, following your breathing, observing a thought, feeling your hand as it touches the hand of another. Live!

Be ‘present’ in the emotion that presents itself, feeling the energy between your hands, the pain in your body, gazing deep into someone’s eyes, allowing someone to gaze deep into your eyes, speaking, walking, listening, eating and drinking, hearing the rhythm of raindrops falling onto your roof, feeling the sun’s warmth on your skin, brushing your teeth, feeling your feet planted firmly on the ground, the tears that roll down your cheeks, feeling the life in your hands, receiving a compliment and laughing about a joke. Stay ‘awake’, and experience everything you do as now-aware as possible!
Create exclusive and silent moments of intense now-awareness. Remind yourself of this, by setting some kind of signal or sticking something in your pocket, to keep reminding you of it whenever you touch it. Cross out a section in your daily schedule. Or pick a few fixed moments over the course of your day. At these moments, stand still, have a seat, lie down or walk, and dive as deep into now-awareness as you can. Practice ‘being Awake’. Connect with your breath, your loyal ally, which brings you into the ‘here and now’ and keeps you there.

Experience the ‘presence’ in the form of ‘I am’, in everything there is. Allow the radiant and infinitely profound inner peace to flow into your awareness, and let it be there. Sometimes powerful and prominent, sometimes subtle and withdrawn. Be aware of the bliss that this brings!
‘Seeing’ the true Selves of others

Every person has the same true Self. By doing this exercise, you can experience what it is like to connect yourself with that. First, connect with your own true Self. Arrive in the ‘here and now’, by following your breathing in awareness. Close your eyes, and follow the cycle of each breath, with as much attention as possible. Focus your awareness on your breathing as much as possible. Leave the ‘objects in awareness’ for what they are. Be one with your breathing to maximum effect. Let your breathing carry you as deep as possible into the dimension of Being. After a while, open your eyes, as you keep putting breathing in awareness to practice. Let any thoughts and feelings drift by your true Self, like clouds in the sky. Remain anchored in the ‘here and now’, with the sense of ‘I am’. Then, go on your way, and walk out onto the street, for instance. Direct your awareness at the people you see. Realize that their personalities are masks, behind which there true Selves reside. Silently connect yourself with the true Selves of all the people you meet. Do so from a great deal of ‘presence’.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
Korte samenvatting

Passie is datgene ervaren wat je diep van binnen, vanuit je kern, graag wilt ervaren. Diep van binnen, in de kern van je persoonlijkheid, verlang jij naar bepaalde ervaringen. Dit verlangen is in essentie universeel. Het is in jou en in ieder ander mens, waar dan ook ter wereld, aanwezig en in de basis hetzelfde. Dit verlangen bestaat al duizenden jaren. In die zin kun je het een oerverlangen noemen. In de Passionaire visie op Passie is dit verlangen tweeledig. Jij hebt namelijk twee oerverlangens. Dat is de Passie van het Hart en de Passie van de Ziel. En deze twee Passies, hangen nauw samen met jouw wens om gelukkig te zijn.

Vanuit de ‘oude kijk op geluk’, die tot op de dag van vandaag nog steeds voortleeft, zoeken veel mensen geluk buiten zichzelf. Zij maken hun geluk afhankelijk van externe omstandigheden, zoals het hebben van een goede baan of het hebben van succes. Zo lang mensen zich alleen blijven richten op het leven van deze ‘oude kijk op geluk’, zo lang zullen zij onbewust blijven. Het gevolg daarvan is namelijk, dat zij de stralende en oneindig diepe innerlijke vrede, die altijd onvoorwaardelijk in hen aanwezig is, niet ervaren. Ook zijn zij zich er dan niet van bewust, dat je iedere situatie vanuit je Hart kunt leven. Dit alles is het ware geluk, dat overal en altijd
Brief summary
Brief summary

Passion is experiencing that which, deep down inside at your very core, you truly wish to experience.

Deep down within you, at the core of your personality, you long for certain experiences. In essence, this longing is universal. It is present in you just as it is present in everyone else, anywhere in the world,
and it is essentially the same for all of us. This longing has been with us for thousands of years. It could be called a primal longing. In the Passionary’s outlook on Passion, this longing has a double nature. In fact, you have two primal longings. These are the Passion of the Heart and the Passion of the Soul. Both Passions are closely linked to your wish for happiness.

The ‘classical notion of happiness’, which is still in use today, causes many people to look for happiness outside of themselves. They let their happiness depend on external circumstances, such as having a good job or being successful. As long as people keep focusing on this ‘classical notion of happiness’ they will remain unaware.

As a consequence of the above, these people cannot experience the radiant and infinitely profound inner peace, which is always and unconditionally present inside them. They are also unaware of the possibility of living every situation from the Heart. This is true happiness, which can be realized anywhere and anytime. It doesn’t matter whether the living conditions of your personality are favorable or unfavorable. That is living from ‘Heart and Soul’. Or, to be more specific, it means living the Passion of the Heart and the Passion of the Soul.

Passion is closely related to a process of ‘waking up’, and this calls for moments of reflection. Reflecting on your Passion comes down to switching off your autopilot and actually becoming aware of how you
live your life. Such moments of contemplation are crucial. Moments like these can make a difference in your quality of life. Of course, this also depends on the actual things you do with the insights you have gained at a certain point. Your moments of reflection may cause you to wake up from a life of unawareness. Being unaware is not what you want at all. In fact, it could be harmful to yourself or to other people.

*The awareness ladder*

The model of ‘the awareness ladder’ classifies the degree to which you are ‘awake’ in a system of four different levels. These are four levels of awareness. The model illustrates the process of ‘waking up’ as you make your way up this ‘ladder’. Discovering your Passions involves increasing degrees of ‘waking up’. You grow aware of a wider range of things. In the inner world as well as in the outside world of your personality. The following overview describes the four different levels of awareness:

*Diffuse-awareness:*

Without being aware of it, you live ‘from outside to inside’. The world around you is the measure of all things. This includes its multitude of associated patterns, survival mechanisms and conditioned behavior. Diffuse-awareness means living life largely on autopilot. At this level of awareness, you experience your personality as your true identity.
Core-awareness:
You live ‘from inside to outside’ in awareness. From your Heart. At this level, your inner world has become the measure of all things. You are fully aware of your own personality, with all the Passion Drives included in it. You live these Passion Drives to the best of your abilities. At this level, as in diffuse-awareness, you experience your personality as your true identity.

Higher-awareness:
At this level of awareness, you break free from your primal state in which your true Self is tangled up with your personality. You discover and experience that your true identity is pure awareness. This brings the experience of a radiant and infinitely profound inner peace into your awareness. It is unconditional bliss. This experience is always present deep inside, regardless of your personal circumstances. It is the presence of your true Self. In this state of being, you experience the inner world and the outside world of your personality with clear awareness. You approach the environment of your personality free from judgments, expectations and interpretations. You perceive what is present in the ‘here and now’, without getting tangled up in it. You are at one with the silent witness, which is the aware witness.

All-awareness:
This is the highest level of awareness, free from any kind of limitation. This is boundless awareness. Here, you will discover and experience
that deep down inside, at the very core of our being, we are all essentially at one with everything. At this level, you will experience the awareness, which is you, as infinite, formless, impersonal, loving and alive. This is the condition of enlightened awareness.

*The Passion Pyramid*

The Passion Pyramid is a model for an outlook on life. It represents a whole and passionate person. A person of higher-awareness, living in complete harmony with him- or herself and with his or her environment. This person lives from ‘Heart and Soul’. This is why The Passion Pyramid is a holistic and spiritual model. The four corners that constitute its base provide great stability. Each of the four corners has a meaning. Together they symbolize the various dimensions of being human. These dimensions are the physical body, the non-physical body, thoughts and feelings. Taken together, they form the personality. Thoughts and feelings make up the psyche or ego. You could consider personality to be a ‘vehicle and instrument’. The tip of the pyramid represents the true Self of any person. In practical terms, harmony in this model is reached by fully acknowledging and taking good care of all five dimensions.

*The Passion of the Heart*

Every individual person flourishes under certain inner conditions. Under these conditions, the energy of one’s personality is able to flow freely. These inner conditions are easy to map by using the seven universal
Passion Drives. Each specific Passion Drive covers a unique range of topics, and each one provides an answer to a specific question.

- **Core-Gifts**: what am I really good at?
- **Core-Values**: what is important to me?
- **Core-Beliefs**: what are my guiding principles?
- **Core-Activities**: what activities do I like the most?
- **Core-Growth**: what areas in myself do I want to develop?
- **Core- Contribution**: what do I want to contribute to society?
- **Core-Contact**: what do I experience by intuition?

Thinking about these questions, and finding the answers, will give you a complete view of your own Passion of the Heart. It will become clear to you what truly drives you as a person. This is a process of becoming aware. It will enable you to live according to your Passion Drives in awareness. You too have that longing to live a free life from the Heart. Living such a life will take you directly to the experience of Passion. The Passion of the Heart!

*The Passion of the Soul*

Deep within you, at the very core of your personality, is a second primal longing, residing next to the Passion of the Heart. This is the Passion of the Soul. When you connect with this Passion, you will set yourself in motion. You discover and experience in the ‘here and now’, that your true identity is pure awareness. You experience that you are at
one with everything. At that point, the awareness that is you, becomes aware of itself as awareness. This is where you feel: ‘I am’, or in other words: the ‘experience of Being’. This experience sets in at the level of higher-awareness on the ‘awareness ladder’. Each and every one of us can achieve that level. In fact, all it takes is connecting to your own essence.

**Letting go of expectations**

In your everyday life, you meet many different people. Experiment with meeting these people ‘free from expectations’ and find out how that feels. Just let go of whatever you expect of the person in front of you. Step up to them from a field of space. Without setting conditions - without expectations, that is. Experience the free space this creates in your encounter, with all the awareness you have in you.

Experience what it’s like to do this exercise and the difference that it makes.
It is the 21st century’s turn now
‘Living history’

Many people are not yet aware - to a certain extent - of the insights described in this book. This limited awareness has immediate consequences for the quality of their lives. After all, how can you be yourself, as long as you don’t know your true Self? And how can you live from your Heart, if you don’t know how to do that? In this way, living from ‘Heart and Soul’ will remain in the background. This is
contrasted by the ego, which will keep occupying the front stage. It will present itself with great emphasis. As a result, the personality seems to be the only reality that is left. At that point, we are dealing with the primal tangle in ego-awareness.

The word ‘primal’ refers to the long history trailing behind this tangle. For thousands of years, people have been under the spell of their psyche, on a collective scale and without being aware of it. Even though naturally, there have been some exceptions, the ego has been festering in our inner- and outside world since time immemorial. With all the disastrous consequences that accompany it.

Unfortunately, we don’t have to search very hard to see this. Our history is not the only place where we can find the madness of the ego. For just as human history is riddled with ‘human suffering’, so ‘human suffering’ continues to the present day. In that sense, we are dealing with ‘living history’. All around us, we can see the consequences of our tangle with ego-awareness. In a way, we have taken over this primal tangle from the generations before us, like a baton in a relay race.
The ‘positional dance’

Know Yourself’

Knowing your true Self is important for everyone. This message can be found throughout history, too. The proverb ‘Know Thyself’ was already used in Greek antiquity, for example. The phrase was an inscription decorating the temple of Apollo, in Delphi. The Ancient Greek philosopher
Socrates (approximately 470 - 399 B.C.) is also reported to have used the expression on many occasions.

Today, more than two thousand years later, the invitation to ‘Know Yourself’ is still every bit as valuable as it was back then. In spite of all the time that has passed since those days, we, humanity, still haven’t made the collective breakthrough into now-awareness. Because many people still don’t recognize their true Self. This keeps their self-image limited to a psychological image. If you ask them ‘who are you?’, their answer will only contain a description of their personality. This shows how ‘living history’ continues to perpetuate itself.

Who are you?
As we have seen, people often tell something about their personality, when they answer the question ‘who are you?’. They usually start by saying ‘I am’, and then they connect ‘something’ to it. This connection can extend to a wide range of subjects. That is because people have different doors they can open. One of the options is mentioning their name. In that case, they say ‘I am’, after which they add their name. Or they tell something about the family they grew up in. Something along the lines of ‘I am the youngest sibling in a family of four children’. They could also mention their profession. In that case, the answer would sound like ‘I am’, followed by their job title. Or they tell about their nationality, as in ‘I am a Dutchman’, for example.
Dozens of other connections are possible, following the words ‘I am’. Moreover, when answering the question of ‘who they are’, people also explain ‘who they are not’. This happens automatically. The answer ‘I am a Dutchman’, for instance, automatically indicates that the person is not ‘an American’. In their everyday lives, people tell and reveal ‘who they are’ by operating in one of two different ways. These are the ‘authentic dance’ and the ‘positional dance’.

‘Authentic dance’
In the ‘authentic dance’, people show themselves exactly as they are. Pure and authentic. When they tell about the facts of their personality, these facts are an exact match of the truth, as they experience it. They don’t hold anything back, and they don’t hide anything either. They don’t try to present their personality any better or worse than it is.

‘Positional dance’
This is contrasted by the ‘positional dance’, in which people choose their position carefully. Here, everything is about creating, maintaining and protecting a specific ‘image’. This is an identity that has been ‘made up’. In this way of operating, what is authentic is pushed to the background. The front stage is occupied instead, by a mode of operation that matches the ‘image’. Thinking is the creative force behind all this. Many people spend much of their daily lives working on their image. This is expressed in the ‘positional dance’. These people often wonder
about questions such as ‘what fits my image?’, ‘how will this affect my image?’, ‘how can I protect and maintain my image?’ and ‘what do I need to improve my image?’.

The carefully selected behavior we see as a result, is the ‘positional dance’. Unsurprisingly, this dance is often accompanied by holding back and masking feelings and the truth. It can be regarded as a theatre play, in which many people still play along today. It is a collective play. Oddly, this usually happens without the actors being aware of the roles they play. This indicates how they lose themselves in their image roles. In a very real way, they have become the image they have ‘made up’.

Boosters and dampeners
The ‘positional dance’ that goes on around an image, is characterized by certain habits. These are expressed in material forms, as well as in immaterial ones. Many ‘Harley Davidson bikers’, for instance, would prefer not to be seen riding their motorcycles wearing a three-piece suit with a briefcase and a laptop computer. Likewise, the average corporate executive will prefer not to be seen dining in a fancy restaurant with a homeless person. These are both examples of upholding a certain image. Some aspects match it very well. They reinforce the image. These are the so-called ‘boosters’. They are prized highly, and people collect them. Other aspects weaken or undermine the image. These are called ‘dampeners’ and are avoided where possible, because they pose a risk. The risk is that when things don’t go well, these
dampeners can cause the image that was built so carefully, the ‘made up’ identity, to collapse.

Herd animal

Many people recognize the ‘positional dance’, and yet, many of them still dance along in their everyday lives. Even though they would love to do otherwise, if you look deep into their Hearts. So why does that happen? This is partly because of the way we have arranged our society. We see so much of this behavior around us, that it seems as if this is how it’s supposed to be. It causes us to move along unaware and ‘automatically’, just to fit in. Like some sort of herd animal, we follow others in this behavior. Without stopping to think about whether it actually contributes to our happiness and well-being. The ‘historical’ outlook on happiness adds to this effect as well.

The ‘historical’ outlook on happiness

The ‘historical’ outlook on happiness gives people the impression, caused by a lack of now-awareness, that experiencing a pleasant and peaceful feeling depends on the circumstances that occur in our lives. If you adopt this ‘historical’ outlook on happiness, you will focus heavily on the outside world. You keep paying attention to what happens out there. Outside world circumstances then become the norm. You do this without being aware of it. This will make you join the ‘positional dance’ in no time. You do it to affect these circumstances in a positive way. In the hopes of realizing your happiness in this manner.
Due to this outlook on happiness, which is included in quite a few dictionaries, the experience of happiness is shifted to somewhere outside of yourself. You make yourself depend on what happens in your ‘outside world’. If those circumstances are favorable, you experience happiness. If they are disappointing, you experience unhappiness. By adopting this outlook, you turn the way you feel into a kind of ‘plaything’ of external circumstances. Depending on these circumstances, this ‘plaything’ can move in the ‘right’ direction, or in the ‘wrong’ direction.

If you view happiness as being dependent on external circumstances, it makes sense to pay close attention to all circumstances, and to judge every single one of them. This means a lot of work for your thinking, which plays the starring role in this entire process. The better your circumstances, the more you seem to experience happiness. Consequently, your thinking will act as the big organizer and the strict referee, in its attempts to influence the circumstances. Anticipating potential situations, and reacting to these in the right way, becomes very important. That is why you keep a close eye on your surroundings. You pay attention to what happens there. This keeps your thinking ‘running ahead’ all the time. There is no room for the experience of ‘Heart and Soul’. That is because thinking demands all of your awareness for its own purposes. This process keeps repeating itself every day. Partly because so much happens in your surrounding every day. Just consider all the impulses that keep on hitting you,
inviting you to keep on thinking.

**Impulses**

Every day, you are bombarded by an incredible number of impulses. Not just through encounters, telephone calls and messages from the people you know or meet. They also come from billboards, the internet, radio, television, newspapers and magazines. One of their sources is the advertising and marketing business, which has a huge influence on your thoughts whilst being motivated by the desire for personal or corporate profit. There are an infinite number of slogans such as ‘you are what you eat, buy product X’, for example, and ‘product Y is for cool guys and girls’. These slogans are attempts to make us believe that it is very important to buy the products and services of some particular organization. Slogans such as these appeal to your image, directly as well as indirectly. It seems that these products are necessary to keep up with everyone else. And that is precisely what many people believe. Without being aware of it, they accept these opinions as the truth, and dance along automatically.

*To connect, or not to connect?*

The ‘positional dance’ produces a strong and compelling urge to test and judge other people’s behavior. This happens because a ‘positional dancer’ often regards people as ‘boosters’ or ‘dampeners’ of their own image. In that case, you check whether you recognize yourself in the other person, and whether that person matches your image. If so,
you will tend to connect yourself with the other person. If not, your tendency will be to avoid connecting with the other person. That means you reject the connection. Of course this inner decision, of connecting or rejecting, will determine your future behavior in the situations concerned. You act in accordance with those decisions.

Rejecting the connection produces a sense of distance. This distance will express itself through behavior such as reduced eye-contact, for instance. Or you no longer listen to the other person with your full attention. Your interest in the other person fades into the background, along with your sense of empathy. In a way, you step back from the other person, creating distance. You close yourself off to him or her. This means closing your Heart. The result in everyday life is that people no longer notice each other. And if any contact is made at all, it often goes hand in hand with detachment, rationality, cynicism, coldness, rudeness, irritation and conflict.

If on the other hand, as a ‘positional dancer’, you recognize (part of) yourself in the other person, and you think he or she matches your image, then you will make a connection. Suppose you meet someone you never met before, and you start talking. You are a tennis enthusiast, and at some point, the other person tells you he or she just loves tennis. You will probably respond in terms of ‘so do I’. Before you know it, you find yourself in a lively conversation about your most recent match, the club you are a member of, or Wimbledon. Just
like that, the connection has been made. You connect with the other person, because you recognize a part of yourself in him or her. In a way, you have moved one step closer to each other. You open yourself up and because of that, you approach each other. You do so because you experience the other as a ‘like-minded person’. This is how many close relationships and friendships come about. All of this happens because we recognize ourselves in the other person. Imagine what would happen, if people discover on a collective scale, that they have the same true Self as everyone else?

*How long will this go on?*
People have been dancing the ‘positional dance’ since time immemorial. All this time, this dance has held many people in an iron grip, day in, day out. Because of this, many people still live in unawareness. They miss the experience in awareness of the Passion of the Heart and the Passion of the Soul. This also causes the absence of a deep and intense connection with other people, animals and nature. Today this process has reached a point where quality of life for people, animals and nature is under great pressure. This can be experienced all around us on a daily basis. That is why the time has come to stop our ‘positional dancing’. Because by now, there is an urgent reason to ‘wake up’!
Necessity

The quality of our awareness determines the quality of the world around us. Diffuse awareness creates a world full of suffering. Higher-awareness creates a healthy and sustainable world. It’s as simple as that. This explains why we can look at the quality of our ‘outside world’, to find out about the quality of our awareness. And yes, doing that confronts us with a very harsh reality. There is nothing woolly about
that. The menacing crisis that threatens our society today, is a direct result of the crisis that we ourselves are in. And the cause of that crisis, essentially, is the primal tangle with ego-awareness.

It is time to end that crisis, and to ‘wake up’ at a large scale. By now, we have exhausted our planet, our living environment, to a considerable extent. We have drifted away from nature, and we have the tools at our disposal to destroy humankind in its entirety. How did we ever get to the point of creating such tools in the first place?

Our society, phrased in an analogy, is ‘seriously ill’. The present generation and the one that comes after it, face enormous social challenges. It is time for the 21st century to make a move. Because the continued existence of humankind is by no means self-evident. It is naive to assume that our current way of living will remain successful in the long run. The ‘serious illness’ that we are dealing with, is the ‘captivity’ in ego-awareness. More specifically, it is the state of diffuse-awareness.

Continuing to follow our present path is not an option. That has become perfectly clear by now. An evolutionary step in human awareness is absolutely necessary. Not by a single person or a few people, but at a collective level. It is necessary for us to engage in a joint effort for an ‘awakened’ society. This can be viewed as the dawn of a new dimension. The dimension of an enlightened society. That society is one in which humans continue to exist as a form, only without the
tangle with ego-awareness.

A real shift in the way we live our lives will only occur if people ‘wake up’ on a large scale. A shift that does justice to every human being, one that will cause us to move towards a sustainable and healthy world. A crucial aspect of this process of ‘awakening’ is for people to experience, that the higher level of awareness is already present within them. All it takes is for people to connect with that level. Every person who really opens up to this, is able to experience it. In fact, it is even one of our Passions to keep on experiencing this, and to make it more profound.

These are all very substantial experiences. For we, as humanity, can only continue to exist in a sustainable way, if we succeed on a global scale. We will have to guide large numbers of people in taking the essential step towards higher-awareness. This requires major reforms in our society. Education is one of the fields that we will have to change. Because after all: to what extent do children and young adults receive specific guidance, directed at living the Passion of the Heart and the Passion of the Soul? Exactly: to a very limited extent, if at all. From day one, we drill them into using their brains. We teach children and young adults that their intelligence is what matters most. And traditionally, when we say intelligence, we generally mean simply the ability of ‘proper and quick’ thinking.
Sadly, this often involves teaching children and young adults to repress their feelings, or even to mistrust them. Regardless of the consequences this brings along. By doing so, we are pushing them into the state of diffuse-awareness. From that state of awareness, they eventually grow up into adult people. How long are we going to keep this up?

We really need to ‘wake up’, and realize that the quality of our awareness determines the quality of the world around us!
Intelligence

In our society, we attach great value to the concept of intelligence. It makes perfect sense that this concept is so deeply rooted in our educational system, as well as in other areas. We have even designed tests, which we use to measure someone’s intelligence, allowing us to express it in numbers. Many educational and assessment institutes use these tests with great confidence and diligence. We use these tests to
give lessons, draw conclusions about people, plan our careers, and so on. Such tests have become a major influence on the social positions people occupy. And yes, people derive self-esteem from it, or in other words, identity. Intelligence is a key factor in our society.

And yet, how ‘logical’ is it for us to glorify intelligence like this? What exactly is intelligence anyway? And how does intelligence relate to now-awareness? These are important questions for us, as people. Let’s begin by looking at my answer to the question: what is intelligence?

*The ability to observe information units in the psyche, to analyze them, to store them and to connect them to other information units, with the option of acting upon these information units.*

When we look at this definition, we can see that intelligence is essentially a psychological ability. Traditionally, the notion of intelligence is closely connected to IQ, the intelligence quotient. This figure is used to express a person’s measure of intelligence. Still, a gradual change is affecting the way we view intelligence. Presently, there are also people who put intelligence in a broader perspective. Among the concepts they use are emotional intelligence, practical intelligence, spiritual intelligence, creative intelligence, motor intelligence and social intelligence. This demonstrates that intelligence is a psychological ability, which can be divided into a range of different subjects!
Intelligence is connected to our personality. It is related to psychological activity, which you can convert into actions if you want to. It is valuable, because we can use our intelligence for creative purposes. At the same time, however, intelligence is dangerous. This is because we can literally start to identify with our psyche, which causes us to become tangled up in ego-awareness. And this has been going on for thousands of years, right up to this very day. The primal tangle in ego-awareness is still ‘living history’ today. It is the cause of the current crisis that threatens our society.

As a result, humanity faces a fundamental choice in the 21st century. Do we stand by and watch in unawareness, or are we actually going to commit ourselves to creating a healthy world? We can achieve that, by joining our forces from ‘Heart and Soul’, and then continuing together, focusing on the drastic reforms, which are necessary in the world around us.
Reforming from now-awareness

The reforms needed in our society start with an individual choice, which everyone can make for himself or herself. So can you. This choice consists of your answer to the question: Do you want to live from ‘Heart and Soul’ as much as you can, starting today? If so, then live that way. Commit yourself to it, and invite others to do the same. Because if we all sit around waiting for someone else to make the first
move, nothing much will happen in the end. When you live from ‘Heart and Soul’, it will have an immediate effect on the quality of life. Because, as you will remember: ‘the quality of our awareness determines the quality of the world around us’. That means you can contribute to making a substantial difference!

Reforming our society goes hand in hand with letting energy flow. If we don’t focus energy on reforms, then they will simply never happen. And as you have seen, the flow of this energy starts by making an individual choice. This is true for you too. One form of energy, necessary for reforming our society, is money. Money is a tool that can help us. Therefore, let us have a look at this tool.

Money is a psychological concept. I will use an example to make this clear. Suppose you were in the Stone Age, carrying a briefcase full of paper money. If you put the briefcase down in front of the first caveman you met, then he would have had a lot of fun with it. However, the fun would look different from that in our present society. He would have used flints to set fire to the money, and it would have kept him nice and warm for a while. Perfectly enjoyable. Now suppose, however, that you gave the same briefcase to a random person from the 21st century. And suppose that right away, a thief would snatch the case out from under this person’s nose and run off with it. Chances are that this person would end up in a severe depression.
This example shows that the meaning of money is determined, by the
meaning we attach to it in our own thoughts. And from the perspective
of many people’s psyche, money is considered very important. Because
the general mental image is that money enables you to live in freedom.
This mental image is linked to the ‘historical’ outlook on happiness.

Money is very important in organizations too. In the experience of
many organization executives, everything revolves around money. As
a result, their efforts are all directed at making as much money as
possible. For many leaders, money is the main goal. Practical everyday
reality indicates that many other goals must be abandoned to achieve
this main goal. This causes many organizations to offer little or no room
for people’s soulfulness. In fact, in many organizations, ‘people’ have
been reduced to a production resource. As soon as these resources no
longer serve their purpose, you simply remove them and replace them
with new ones.

In our society, where many people live in diffuse-awareness, the
possession of money equals the possession of power. This has been
demonstrated by a long list of scandals over the course of history. Such
scandals can be found in all layers of society, from families to organiza-
tions, from sports to politics, from commercial organizations to religious
institutions, and the list goes on. Money is often hoarded, causing it to
end up with a select few members of society, sometimes in ridiculous
amounts. This gives them power over other people. And such power
is generally used on behalf of their own personality. How long are we going to regard this as normal?

Just look at how many people die due to shortage of food and water around the world, for instance. This social problem only exists, because many people in our society are still trapped in ego-awareness. This is true even though the matter could be settled in no time, if we would all live from ‘Heart and Soul’. Plenty of food and water is in fact available, from a global point of view. The problem is not a matter of insufficient resources either. Just look at the top-grade quality of our technology, infrastructure and logistics systems, for example. All we need to do is put these systems to use. The crucial point is, that we have to consider it important enough. And for that, we need a collective breakthrough to now-awareness.

People who are (still) trapped in their ego-awareness, attach a different meaning to money, so they deal with it in a different way than people experiencing now-awareness. This is because everyone who lives in now-awareness is free! To them, living is an art of life. It is the art of expressing ‘Heart and Soul’ in everything they do. I call this living your Passions, the Passion of the Heart and the Passion of the Soul. When we let these Passions flow freely in our lives, a meaningful shift comes about.

Living from ‘Heart and Soul’ makes a real difference in many respects.
Dealing with money is only one among them. If in this state you collect and use money at all, you will do it in the service of living from ‘Heart and Soul’. Spending money thereby becomes a direct expression of Passion. For this reason, an enlightened society will end social disasters like famine in no time. And it won’t stop there. When people start to discover and live their Passions, total reform will unfold across our society in a wholly organic way. This is a substantial and simultaneously creative process.

At that point, we will let go of old forms that no longer fit, or we will adjust them to suit our new purposes. We will add new forms, which support us in living our Passions. This will bring about major changes, affecting the fields of politics, education, healthcare and business, as well as family life. All of these changes originate from the experience of Passion on a collective scale. New leaders are needed, in order to guide these evolutionary changes in the 21st century. Leaders who choose to live from ‘Heart and Soul’.
The new leader is a passionate guide

It is crucially important, for each individual person as well as for society as a whole, that a high level of ‘wakefulness’ is achieved. For this higher level of awareness enables us to make responsible and inspired choices. Our Passions are connected to these.

Therefore, Passion is the key in bringing about an inspired society.
Passionate leaders play a vital part in such a society. By living from ‘Heart and Soul’, they are an example to other people. They invite others to join them in living ‘awake’, and to bring out the best in every individual. New leaders guide the people around them, towards the experience of Passion. The effects of such guidance can be noticed immediately. Soulfulness becomes tangible as a meaningful and driving force. It starts to flow!

The 21st century leader, the new leader, is a person who lives from ‘heart and Soul’ to maximum effect. Such a leader follows the flow from within. He or she is committed unconditionally to guiding others towards living from ‘Heart and Soul’.

In organizations, the new leader accomplishes this guidance based on two essential principles. This can be summed up in two words: ‘Be meaningful.’ The word ‘Be’ symbolizes the business economics side of the organization, in the broadest sense of the concept. This concerns safeguarding continuity in a team, for instance, or in an entire organization. This principle covers many different forces. Examples include technology, capacity, logistics, administration, commerce, money and many more besides. This principle is common knowledge around the world. Most leaders are clearly aware of this principle, spending much time on dealing with it.

This is different for the second principle. Here, much still needs to be
done. That is because the second principle represents safeguarding a sense of meaning, in a team or an entire organization for example. The word ‘meaningful’ is a symbol for this. The only way to experience a sense of meaning, is by allowing people to live - and therefore to work - from the Passion of the Heart and the Passion of the Soul. The new leader is clearly aware of this, and is committed to it unconditionally. The principle of ‘meaningfulness’ is every bit as important as the ‘business’ principle. These two need each other.

The concept of leadership can be understood in a very broad sense. A leader is a person who leads, supports, or guides other people on their path through life. Examples of leaders include politicians, CEOs, managers, executives, coaches, trainers, therapists, psychologists, educators, tutors, counselors and many others. For all of them, I have the following message:

You have a substantial part to play. A part in which you support others, in living and working from ‘Heart and Soul’. Be aware of the necessity that is present, and of the difference that you can make in this process! Create space, and step into the experience of Passion yourself, in order to continue making it more profound. Find likeminded people, because they are out there! Join forces, and boost each other’s strengths. Do this to rise up as an ‘awakened’ guide and commit yourself to a better world, a world that can keep existing in a sustainable way. A world in which people can fully live from ‘Heart and Soul’!
Afterword

When you live your Passion of the Heart, you express the seven universal Passion Drives, in every situation, and on every new day. Living these Passion Drives ensures, that the energy of your personality flows freely. In addition, you are aware of the four elements that make up your personality. Your physical body, non-physical body, thoughts and feelings, these are all in your awareness. You maintain these dimensions of your personality with all the care you have in you.

By living the Passion of the Soul, you live from a higher degree of ‘wakefulness’. You are aware of your true Self. Who you are, is pure awareness. This is expressed by the words ‘I am’. You break free from the primal tangle with ego-awareness, precisely by experiencing this felt sense. You no longer identify with your personality. There is a physical body and a non-physical body, there are thoughts and there are feelings, but you are none of these. You experience pure and impersonal awareness as your true Self.

You work towards the goal of being connected to your true Self every day. This allows you to experience the radiant and infinitely profound inner peace, which is connected to Being. You are aware, that this experience is always present, unconditional and deep down within your personality. This is the presence of your true Self. That is why in your everyday life, you try to act from the highest possible level of ‘wake-
fulness’. From this state, you are also aware of the activity in your psyche. Detached and attentive, you observe the thoughts and feelings that come and go in your psyche. You live from now-awareness.

In this state, you feel a deep connectedness with everything there is. You are aware, that everything originates from the same source. This is also what allows you to connect with the true Self of others, people you meet on your path through life. In turn they will often be inspired too. You invite to ‘wake up’ to life too. To join you in living from ‘Heart and Soul’ to maximum effect. You will also meet other ‘awakened’ people. You will connect with them. This group of people will gradually expand. In this way, the ‘light of awareness’ will grow ever brighter in our society.

This is why more and more people practice the art of living from ‘Heart and Soul’. In school, children and young adults are no longer taught just to think, but to develop their awareness of ‘presence’ too. What they learn, is to maintain contact with their source and we adults, serve as their living example. We achieve this by employing our human abilities, to create what our Heart tells us to. Thus, we create an entirely different world. An enlightened society!
An enlightened society is a society, in which people are freed from the primal tangle between ‘I am’ and their personality. This is realized by being firmly rooted in the ‘here and now’. In an enlightened society, the different dimensions come together in harmony. These are the worldly dimensions, connected to the Human form, and the dimension of Being, as the formless source of everything.

During a worldwide shift, from ego-awareness to now-awareness, the over inflated position of the ego is burst like a balloon. Unawareness, stress and suffering disappear in the process. This creates room for ‘presence’, space and inner peace. At that point, the experience of Being flows within us, and that is precisely what we long for.

Life then becomes more like a form of art. In such a life, what matters to us is continuously realizing the Passion of the Heart and the Passion of the Soul. Then, we allow the experience of Being to flow, in everything we do from our Heart. In addition, we experience Being, in all the forms around us. Let it Be so...

Namasté,

‘I am’
The world around us, is the mirror of our inner world. As it is inside, so it is outside. Our world is our own creation. When we ‘wake up’, we start to experience Passion within. If we experience Passion within, we start to create from Passion. Then, the world around us changes, into a passionate world!
Passiocracy: to live together, on a democratic basis and on a massive scale, with our Passions as our mutual starting point!

Firm foundations
We operate from firm foundations. These foundations consist of a clear outlook on Passion (at micro, meso, and macro level) and the engine that drives us, the United by Passion Foundation. Through our website unitedbypassion.com, we share out free inspiration every day, using books, videos, interviews, articles, phrases, e-learning, live streaming sessions, and more besides. With a clear vision of our dream, we hold on to these foundations as we direct ourselves at four cornerstones:
1. Sharing with new leaders
Through various channels including our website on shared leadership (delendleiderschap.nl), we provide guidance as we unite leaders to share their visions and experiences, and to engage in co-creation.

2. Sharing with children and adolescents
We share tailor-made insights and material on Passion with children and adolescents, parents, tutors, and education professionals, providing personal guidance along the way.

3. Sharing with your environment
Through our website on sharing (delen.nl), we use free software to unite people and allow them to share dreams, assets, experience, networks, talents, commitment, and expertise.

4. Sharing at events
We also share inspiration and moments of beauty by means of (large scale) events at which many people meet at the same time, including conventions, theatre performances, and festivals.

United by Passion Foundation
E-mail : m.raaijmakers@unitedbypassion.com
Internet : www.unitedbypassion.com

Donations
Bank : 01.97.77.42.63 (all donations)
List of works cited


Supplementary questions

If you like, you can use the questions listed below to map your Passion of the Heart. If you decide to do so, allow the questions to sink in after reading them. You can then set out to find your answer(s) to the question. Don’t just think about it, feel what your answer is as well. Invite yourself, when looking at these questions: ‘why is it like this for me?’ This helps you to get a clear overall picture of all the characteristics that are connected to your Passion drives. Some of the questions included resemble each other to some extent. This was done on purpose. Sometimes, if a similar question is posed in a slightly different way, new information comes to light.

What are your mottos in life?
Which different needs have you had in your life so far?
Which people have been major influences on your life, and how did that happen?
What have you (actually) been involved in for your entire life? Which activities keep returning in your life?
What is most important in your life?
What could increase the quality of your life even further?
If there were no limits in terms of money, health and time, what would your life look like?
In essence, what were the ten most decisive moments in your life so far?
Which ten people have been major influences on your life so far?
In essence, what were the ten most crucial decisions in your life so far?
What do you believe in?
What do you find important?
Which activities have you always been good at?
Of what are you certain that it is true or possible, even though others think it is impossible?
On what point do you make a difference, compared to other people?
If you look deep into your Heart right now, what do you find?
If it were up to you, what would you like to see more of in life?
What would you like to do in life, which appears impossible right now?
What achievements would you like to accomplish at work, which seem out of reach right now?
If you had magic powers, which currently unachievable situation would you realize?
What would you like to do all over again?
What do you detest?
What are your most important beliefs in life?
How would your life partner describe you?
What is most striking about you when you are at your best?
What opportunities and limitations apply to you?
What sort of feeling would you like to have more often?
Which aspects of yourself would you like to develop further?
What would you like to become even better at?
What fascinates you?
Which activities are challenging for you?
At what moments do you get bored?
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<th>Question</th>
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<td>To what extent do you have repeating situations when you do things</td>
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<td>against your will?</td>
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<td>What type of education did you always want to receive?</td>
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<td>What sort of course would you like to attend?</td>
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<td>Suppose you were allowed to choose a new hobby, what would you pick?</td>
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<td>Which themes of life do you carry along with you?</td>
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<td>Which opportunities for development have you been carrying along for</td>
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<td>some time now?</td>
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<td>What challenges would you like to tackle?</td>
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<td>How satisfied are you with your living environment?</td>
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<td>When you fantasize about your future life, what do you fantasize about?</td>
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<td>What longings do you have?</td>
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<td>What ideals do you want to realize in life?</td>
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<td>What do you want to accomplish one, two, five or ten years from now?</td>
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<td>What obstacles do you encounter when you are being yourself and follow</td>
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<td>your own path?</td>
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<td>Which unpleasant events in the past have made you into who you are today?</td>
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<td>As a child, what were you like at home, in school and in your circle of</td>
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<td>friends?</td>
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<td>To what extent does some form of religious faith play a part in your life?</td>
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<td>What is your very first childhood memory?</td>
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<td>What jobs have your parents been in, and how did these jobs affect you?</td>
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<td>What did you learn from your father, mother, brother(s) or sister(s)?</td>
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<td>What are your close experiences with disease, and how did these</td>
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<td>experiences shape your development?</td>
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What are your needs with regard to your living environment?

How did your choice of secondary education and advanced education come about?

If you were to follow only your feelings, what would your life look like?

Which lessons are offered by the difficult periods in your life?

What are your preferred ways of relaxing?

Which are the themes in your life that you have been pondering for a long time?

Which of your needs could you reduce, in order to clear more space for Passion?

What do you find deeply moving?

Which strong character traits do you carry along with you?

What are you really good at?

What have you always been good at?

What do other people appreciate about you?

What are you often asked to help out with in private life?

What are you often asked to help out with at work?

What do you enjoy doing?

Which things come very easy to you that are in fact quite difficult?

What do your parents appreciate about you?

Which activities can keep you going day and night, without getting bored?

What can I wake you up for in the middle of the night?

What gifts do you have?

What is the added value you contribute to other people’s lives, purely because of who you are?

What effect do you have on other people?
What is a good cause that you feel strongly connected to?
Suppose you have a great deal of money, what would you do?
Ideally, how would you like your loved one to remember you after you pass away?
What can you contribute to the world?
What is your calling?
Suppose there are only three important things you can pass on to your children, what would they be?
What are you very proud of?
What would you do in another way than the way your parents did it?
What would you like to pass on to a future generation?
Which conclusions do other people draw from life, because they know you?
What is the best thing you could do, from which other people can benefit?
What would you like to leave behind for the world?
What were the most wonderful moments of your life so far, and why?
What will you do when you know you are dying, and you don’t have much time left?
What is your favorite activity?
What would you like to do, which you expect to be a lot of fun?
Suppose you win 20 million dollars in the lottery, how will that change your life?
What is your favorite way of relaxing?
What is your favorite activity when you are alone, with your family, and with your friends?
What would your ideal holiday look like?
What are the most important moments for you in private life?
What are your hobbies?
What do you consider to be a good balance between work and private life?
What would you like to do much more often in life?
What do you find important enough in life to sacrifice your life for it, so to speak?
Which people do you admire, and why?
Which of your decisions in life do you regret?
What do you really despise?
What are things that annoy you?
What are you ashamed of?
What do you like to read?
What are your most important core values in life?
Which people serve as your examples?
What are the values you adopted from childhood?
What do you find important in your work?
How do you like to receive directions?
What does your ideal executive look like?
How do you picture the perfect job?
Looking back at your past (additional) jobs, which tasks were the most fun to do?
What are your most important beliefs in life?
What will you always keep standing up for?
What can you add to the greater whole?
What is the true meaning of Passion?
What does Passion have to do with ‘awakened’ living?
Which two types of Passion do you carry inside you?
What drives you and how can you map this clearly?
What is your true face, who are you really?
How to live from ‘Heart and Soul’ in everyday life?

This book provides an answer to all of these questions. The author of this book, Martijn Raaijmakers, has been active as a Passionary and Inspirer since 2001. He is the writer of the books ‘Live your Passion!’ , ‘Leadership of the 21st Century’, and ‘Natural Leadership’. Martijn is founder of the unique and extensive United by Passion inspiration network. An expert in the field of new leadership, he has managed to inspire many thousands of people with insight into living, working, and leading from Heart and Soul. Helping people discover and live their Passions is his personal mission.

This book inspires. It invites you to bring more Passion into your life. The unique Passionary outlook on Passion is described by using plain explanations, practical examples and many exercises. The reader is effortlessly carried along in the experience of Passion. This is what makes this book special. It guides you inward. Based on a wealth of insights, you make a journey of experience into your own inner world. And that makes a difference. It will let you discover that you can fully experience Passion at any moment of your life. Reading ‘Live your Passion!’ is a rich experience. It ‘wakes you up’ and makes you Aware. This will lead you to experience true Meaningfulness. At last, you can start living from ‘Heart and Soul’ in full!