



Introduction

This companion book contains poetic pages, quotes and more that are in the Novel 'Wrapped in Hope.' Captured photographic moments that I took whilst out and about with my camera, illuminate in a visual way the meaning of the poems, drawing you into the stillness of life.

In my time spent studying herbal medicine I learned so much beyond the medicinal value of herbs. A large part of my studies was dedicated to the connection between our emotional state and its effects on our physical body. Expressing our emotions in a healthy way is healing for the mind, body and soul. An emotion held in, is a blockage that begins. As we hold in anger, hurts, disappointments or fears we create a blockage of energy within our bodies that interrupts the flow of life within us.

Chinese medicine for example believes that we have channels of energy flowing through us. When there is a stagnation of energy for a period of time symptoms will begin to show. When this energy is unblocked it allows

*"Every day is
a gift,
some are just
wrapped
up
differently."*

the body to heal itself. What I have learned is that stress, our thoughts and emotions create a negative or positive impact on this flow of energy within us. Herbs also work energetically on the body, bringing healing properties, balance and nourishment to the body. I myself had problems conceiving and after eight years trying it was only when I turned to herbs and acupuncture that I finally conceived. I now have two boys aged four and seven and I was exactly six weeks having acupuncture treatment when I fell pregnant with each of them. There was something that I had built up within me emotionally, perhaps even subconsciously that was blocking me from conceiving.

There are many ways of dealing with our emotions and perhaps there is something in this little book that may release a blockage within you. We have all had hardened days and nights which have left their mark embedded in us. Though we may think we have moved on, many of us deep down have buried an attachment to those difficult times. Those attachments can be fears, anger, hurts, jealousy, grief, sadness, self pity, blame etc. It is natural that we have these feelings and reactions to life but they have a time to exist

*"It's amazing
how
many thoughts
one can
have whilst
filling a
kettle."*

and a time to depart so they don't become who we are, eating away at our insides, flaring at unwarned moments. We were given the beautiful gift of tears to release and not suffocate in our emotions, to allow our internal river to flow, cleansing as it does. In allowing these tears to flow and in indulging our souls in moments of stillness, forgiveness will ease its way out even where it seemed impossible. The anger attached to the hurt will begin to dissolve and that space within the body where it took rest will be free to breath life again. We are only hurting ourselves when we cling to negative emotions. Nurturing the soul is as important as nurturing the physical body. It brings balance and where there is balance there is harmony and where there is harmony there is peace.

In the fast pace of life today that many of us experience it can be difficult to find some quiet time for ourselves but when we do, it helps bring balance to our lives. As our pace and breathing slow down, away from the hustle and bustle of life we allow our bodies to rest and heal. It brings clarity to our lives and gives a positive boost to our days. This is why it's important

*"A walk sure
has the
power to turn
lives
around."*

to find this time to just be at one with life and let our mind empty out. There are many ways to achieve this and it is for each individual to find the one which is best suited to their personality and lifestyle. The most direct way is to practice the art of mindfulness. Anyone who succeeds at this will tell you all the benefits it will bring to your life. It really helps us to drop all the worries we carry around and instead fills us with peace and a knowing of what's really important in life.

For some, myself included sitting in silence can be difficult at first. Frustrations can build and your busy mind tries to fight against the silence giving you every excuse to exit. There are other ways to ease yourself into quietening the mind. It doesn't always have to be through the act of complete mindfulness. You may find your peace and stillness of the mind whilst gardening, knitting, sewing or any form of creative expression such as art, dancing, photography, music and more. It's for each individual to find their own little escape which suits them best and then try and make it a regular practice.

*"Just what is
today
wrapped
up in?"*

For myself I found it first out with nature, carrying my camera and capturing moments such as those I have placed in this book. It drew me into a different kind of silence where my mind stopped rambling with thoughts and instead entered a space, where I lost myself in the beauty of the images that were in front of my eyes. It filled me as it still does with an understanding of the oneness of life as that lovely feeling of bliss and peace enfolds within you.

A walk is one of the best ways to clear the head and turn a day around. A walk is never just a walk. It is the air we breath, the sounds we hear, the breeze that sweeps across our face, the smells we meet and the hundreds of different sights we see. It is the people we pass, perhaps even greet and it is that one special little greeting that can put a smile on our face on a day where smiles were lost. This is the magic of a walk.

Let this book draw you into the essence of life, find a place within you to take rest from a busy day. When you look deeply see not only the pictures as a whole but as many different pieces of life, energy and nature that enfolds around us each and every day. See the gift that may be in a

*"Forgiveness
is the
ticket to
liberation"*

photo as it captures a moment in time. See the beauty and magnificence of life around us and the power of the great creator that is always at work

There are humps and bumps in every life that have met many hurts and heartaches but there is a healthy way to reach the smoothness that exists beyond them. Life can seem unfair, unbearing and too challenging at times. It can break us to the extent that we become numb but a broken life can always be built again. This journey is yours as you grow into the completeness of who you are, blossoming as your true essence is revealed and your authentic self surfaces. Every life, every body is on a different journey and no two can be compared. Injustices occur on different levels and so with this knowing I can only hope that in this book you will find some form of comfort and healing.

*"It's not the
mean things
we are to love.
It's the person
that's hiding
behind the mean
things.
That's where we
send the love,
never for the
bad
stuff but for the
underneath
stuff."*

I am

Say now I am I have
Believe the life you live
Is part of many pieces
Of perfection in your plan
Where growth strengthens
The weakened threads
That threatens to snap apart
But clinging on you weave
Your way to an understandable day
Then on you go and travel more
Where a rested mind intertwines
With the highest love that carries you
To the peak that makes all shine.
Here you find in that space
A joy no fear nor loss can take.