

**WAY
TO
BE**

**FORTY INSIGHTS AND
TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICES IN THE
HEART OF BEING**

**TEJPAL
& SHARI GOOTTER**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: ON BEING ACKNOWLEDGED

This is a unique book that will help many people. Drawing on their substantial experience and wisdom, the authors guide readers to self-discovery and awareness, offering novel insights and strategies that will allow them to find their own “Way to Be.”

- **Andrew Weil, MD, author of *8 Weeks to Optimum Health and Spontaneous Happiness***

Being rather than doing? There are already thousands of books about this topic on Amazon. And those books you bought and never finished because there was no place to dig in your toes and find enough traction to change anything about your doing life. This book is different.

If taken to heart, these 40 “Be” practices offer a profound taste of how to live in your body, kinder and more awake. Don’t miss this opportunity.

- **Deborah Jones, Spiritual Director Nine Gates
Mystery School**

It takes 40 days to develop a new habit, but only one to change your life—the day you buy *Way to Be*. Wise, witty, and insightful, this transformational book has 40 practical chapters that don't just teach you how to be mindful—but how to “Be Kind”... “Be Playful”... “Be Sacred,” and “Be Wrong”—just to name a few. This is the perfect gift for yourself or someone else you truly love. Open any chapter and find a new...*Way to Be*.

- **Keith Merryman & David A. Newman,**
Screen-writers of *Friends with Benefits* and
Think Like a Man.

ON BEING THANKFUL

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INTRODUCTION

ON BEING GRATEFUL

Thank you! We are so grateful for your interest in this book. We acknowledge and appreciate your curiosity and openness, knowing the path of being is not always a fairy tale. As we dive into being instead of doing, we create harmony within ourselves and others. As we dive into being instead of doing, we embrace the impermanence and fragility of our existence. As we dive into being instead of doing, we allow our diversity to come together, creating a tapestry that is a gift to the world. Being is not about “be-having;” don’t attach yourself to being one way or another. Have fun with it.

ON BEING TRANSFORMED

The journey of personal transformation is not about reaching happiness, or any peaks; it is about going inward so we can see what is beyond our fears, our rejections, and our judgements.

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As you go within, you may encounter unintended pain and discomfort. When we are able to be with our agitated mind, without grabbing for a better future or running away from a difficult situation, we are able to open our heart. An open heart brings lucidity, compassion, and detachment. When this happens, we can step away from any emotional waves of life, whether we call them great or awful.

Practice, patience, and repetition are the necessary ingredients to create healing and inner clarity. From there we develop a neutral mind; the pathway to peace regardless of what shows up in our lives.

ON BEING US

TEJPAL 'S JOURNEY

Let's face it; I've come a long way. I am now able to play and dance with life, but it did not start this way.

I was born in France and for as long as I can remember I was extremely unhappy. I felt disconnected and, in a way, nauseated to be alive. At a very early age I contemplated death, as I could not find any meaning and connection in this world and my life.

I survived my late teens by reading French literature from the 20th century, listening to classical music, often skipping school, and smoking pot. I had no idea who I was and was terrified to become an adult.

Without a sense of clear purpose, I went to university and chose to study psychology knowing that it would be beneficial regardless of my future work. Once I got my masters degree, still unsure about what to do with my life, I decided to get an MBA and eventually got my first job.

Work became a revelation: I felt recognized and appreciated. Very quickly I took on some important leadership roles and realized that despite my passion, my creativity, my vision, and my hard work, I did not have the right relationship skills. I was too impulsive, too judgmental, and too emotional. I also had too much fear and too much ego to ask for help.

At the age of thirty-three I decided to leave my good paying job, my country, and the relationship I was in. I moved from Paris to NYC in December

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1994. I was full of fear, yet I knew I would not turn around. Upon my arrival in the US, I stayed for two weeks in an ashram in up-state New York. I hoped my fears would go away, but they did not. With the help of a great therapist, I learned to feel my experience without shame and embrace who I was.

Through my journey I met great teachers and healers and wonderful friends who helped me in my transformation; at the time, they felt like angels who carried me.

During the years, always searching and seeking deeper healing and greater insights, I went back to various schools to become an energy healer, a life coach and a kundalini yoga instructor. Today I combine all my skills to offer one on one sessions, weekly classes on yoga, intuition, soul mission and vibrant living, as well as workshops in the field of spirituality.

Never ever could I have imagined the transformation I would go through and the healing that took place within me that would create a deep sense of

peace and joy in my life. I now know it is a never-ending journey of ups and downs and everything becomes a learning opportunity.

MEETING SHARI

Shari came to my Monday night Kundalini Yoga with her guide dog, Indy. Her presence touched me deeply. There is a depth that holds no words, and in a way that is not romantic, I fell in love with Shari: we became sisters. Her quick ability to comprehend everything, her great sense of humor, and her compassion were simply priceless. Within less than a year we decided to co-create together, teach together, and write this book. I am forever grateful for this sacred friendship.

SHARI'S JOURNEY

It should be easy to tell my story, after all I am a therapist.

Although I don't remember my early years, I know they were filled with physical challenges and pain. I was diagnosed with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis at the age of two. When I was six years old, my family moved from New York to Arizona for my

INTRODUCTION

well-being. I am extremely lucky to have great parents who took care of me and taught me unconditional love.

The arthritis went into remission, and I had a very fortunate upbringing, never knowing that we moved because of my condition. My college time was full of travels, learning, and great adventures. I met wonderful people who are still my best friends today.

My sense of adventure led me to Brazil. I lived there for about seven years. That time was filled with rich culture, discoveries, and personal and professional growth. My entrepreneurial spirit woke up. From night clubs to clothing design, I was on a roll: nothing was out of reach. During this time, I became a mom, which was the most life-affirming experience.

Returning to Tucson, my vision was decreasing. Although I was losing my sight, I was not losing my way. Through the love and support of my family and friends, I went through more physical and personal challenges, including surgeries and divorce. I also experienced the sudden loss of my brother.

This tragedy and grief brought family and friends together to create a foundation in his memory.

I turned challenges and potential barriers into life lessons and dreams. I did numerous trainings and became a yoga teacher. I finished my master's degree and became a therapist.

I did a lot of volunteer work and eventually led a nationally recognized program for high school students. I created and facilitated workshops in the field of leadership, diversity, and personal growth for youth, adults, and therapists.

Today my life is filled with love and gratitude. I have been blessed with a true-life partner. The breadth and depth of my work brings me joy and purpose. I love and nurture my family, my friends, and my animals. These relationships greatly support and encourage me and are the key to my essence.

MEETING TEJPAL

It was meant to be, and I still wonder why it took so long. What I feel in this relationship has no limit. I wonder if I will ever be able to describe what

we share. We have similar interests and paths and had attended many of the same workshops before we finally met. When we are together, whether it is writing, traveling, or working, it is timeless. There is magic.

ON BEING THE READER

We have chosen forty ways to be, for you to explore. In the yogic tradition, it takes forty days to create a new habit. Therefore, it takes forty days to start a process of personal transformation. Each practice is presented through specific lenses in a concise manner. Some titles may surprise and attract you, yet look at each one, as the content may not be what you expect.

There is no specific order of the practices, and you can dive in any way you wish. The following are a couple of suggestions:

- You can do one practice a day and go through the whole book.
- You can do the same practice for forty days.
- You can open the book randomly and make that page the practice of the day.

- You can choose the practices which attract you the most, doing them until you feel inspired to choose another.
- You can pick a practice a week and share your process with someone or a group.
- The options are endless, and they are all good.

As in any kind of practice, consistency is where magic happens.

ON BEING CONSISTENT

Who wants to be consistent? We need adventure, change, and diversity, right? Being consistent seems as though you will fall asleep from boredom. Change, new, and different are very appealing.

But what happens when you are not consistent?

- You don't get results.
- You don't go deep.
- Your mind experiences agitation.
- You fall into old patterns.
- You don't create transformation.
- You stay stuck.

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Consistency is the core of any practice. It allows us to integrate our learning and doing into being.

BE INSPIRATIONAL

How do you inspire? By being courageous, heroic, or uplifting? The road to inspiring does not lead to perfection. When you are inspired you are deeply touched: your breath changes, your energy shifts, you pause, and at that moment, you are present.

Inspiration has little to do with motivation. When you inspire, you touch the heart; when you motivate, you engage the will. Also, inspiring is not the same as convincing. When you convince you push through, you force others to look at things a certain way; you are attached to a specific outcome. When you inspire, you elevate others and let them be. There is no attachment to the results. Inspiring also has nothing to do with impressing others. When you impress, your ego leads.

Inspiring starts at a quiet place within; there is no big flag to carry, no tag line on your forehead; it

starts deep in your heart. It is the combination of your vulnerability and your resilience; it is a blend of fragility and courage. When you inspire, your heart is pure and authentic. You can use every experience as a teaching opportunity.

Inspire comes from the Latin, *inspirare*, which means breathe or blow into. Inspiring brings your breath to the center, not your mind or your agenda. Your breath is your life force; it is what makes you vibrant and healthy. Breath builds your prana, which is an important energy body in the yogic tradition; without prana, there is no physical body. Without inspiration, there is no elevation, no magic, and no transformation. Inspiration allows you to go beyond duality, beyond your physical limitations; it taps into the divine.

When you realize inspiring has nothing to do with accomplishing or conquering, but everything to do with awakening through the subtle touch of the heart; then you know that you do not need to be big to inspire, only authentic and constantly open to learning.

To inspire, breathe and put yourself aside; drop your ego and let your breath take over your mind. Explore both aspects of inspiration, the giving and the receiving. Listen deeply and allow yourself to be inspired by your surroundings and people's lives. Take the risk to inspire and to be seen as fragile and unsure, willing to go beyond your comfort zone to touch the heart of others. Give for no reason, in a way that touches you. Surrender to your breath, and at that very moment, you will be inspired, and you will be able to inspire as well.

THE PRACTICE

MEDITATION: CLEARING BREATH

The purpose of this meditation is to generate energy and clear the mind. You will feel uplifted and relaxed at the same time. By bringing your hands in prayer position, you balance the right and left hemispheres of the brain.

- Sit in a comfortable position. Lengthen your spine and draw your shoulders down your back. Soften your face and your jaw. Close your eyes and focus on the brow point.
- Bring your hands in prayer position.

BE INSPIRATIONAL

- Inhale four times (four segmented breaths without exhaling) through the nose.
- Exhale four times (four segmented breaths without inhaling) through the nose.
- Each segmented breath should be approximately one second.
- Repeat this cycle for three minutes.

JOURNALING

- Think of someone who inspired/inspires you: this person can be living or deceased, famous or familiar; it could be anyone.
- Write a letter to that person, letting them know how they inspired you, regardless if the person is alive or not. You do not have to physically send the letter.

TAKE ACTION

- Choose to be inspired and inspire every day for one week.
- Everyday, take a picture that inspires you and send it to a loved one.
- Everyday, read a poem or a quote and share your insights with others.