

THE WISDOM BEHIND EMOTION AND FEELING

Your daily life as a mirror



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Your daily life as a mirror

Colophon

This book is not intended as a substitute for the advice of a health care professional. The reader should consult a health care professional in matters relating to his/her health and particularly with respect to any symptoms that may require diagnosis or medical attention.

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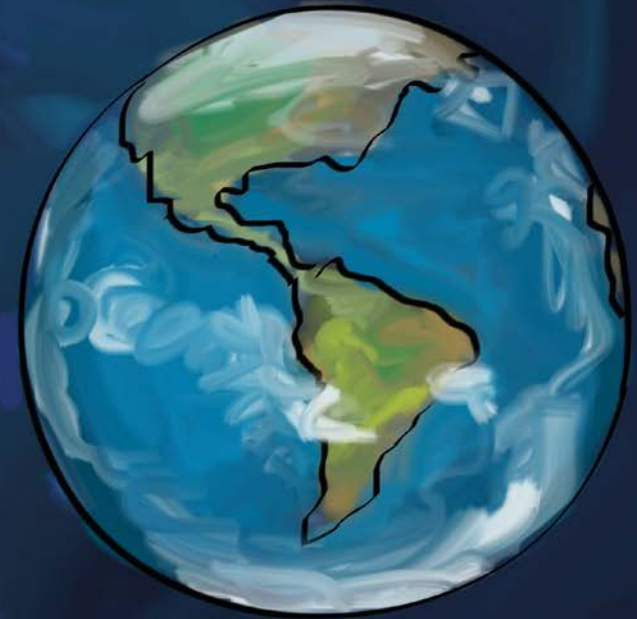
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WENDY VAN MIEGHEM

To Amélie and Robin



*"May you feel carried by the earth
and nurtured by the stars."*

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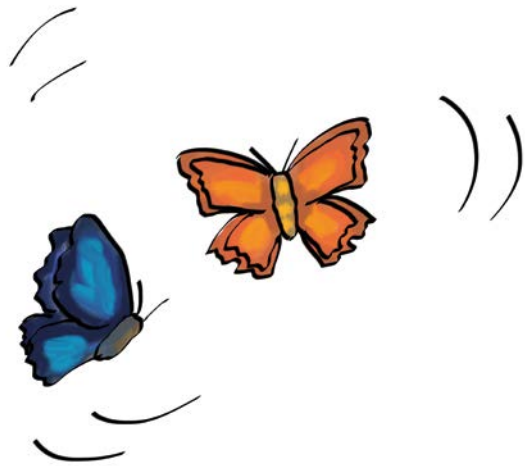
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Introduction

During the consultancy tracks, training courses and individual sessions I provide, I am repeatedly surprised by the resemblances in human feelings, thoughts and behavior. The clients' individual backgrounds and causes of their problems may differ but the underlying human dynamics are the same. They offer an enormous richness and lots of content – nourishing to anyone who is present.

What you bring along and contribute to this world is unique. There is no one like you. Sometimes you wrestle with pain, sadness or the shock of a drastic event. You may withdraw yourself temporarily as a result. It may also feel like you're the only one who struggles with this.

When you get entangled or locked up, it is good to know that emotions, feelings and pain are not just a burden. They also offer you strength, insight and wisdom, as soon as you let them breathe.

This book provides insight into your human nature. Instincts, emotions, feelings, thoughts and inspiration are set out layer by layer. The clear explanations, tips, reflection questions and examples help you to comprehend the wisdom behind emotion and feeling.

For you, the reader of this book, some digital content is available through a **free online minicourse** on the website. It offers you depth and convenience, with additional inspiration, audio and video.

Happy reading!

Warm wishes,

Wendy van Mieghem

Chapter 1

Your daily life as a mirror

1.1 What is inner growth?

You long to be nurtured, loved, praised and appreciated for who you are and what you do. You carry a treasure inside you with an abundance of qualities. Using your qualities to express who you are and what you need leads to the deepest fulfilment and joy you can possibly get out of life. It leads to one hundred percent being. It is your responsibility to become aware of your deepest longings. And to learn to understand them, so you can express them and truly start to shine. No one else can do this for you; it is a personal, individual road that only you can live. It is probably not that you're reluctant to do so, but somewhere along the way, while you are getting to know yourself and life, you become entangled or distracted.

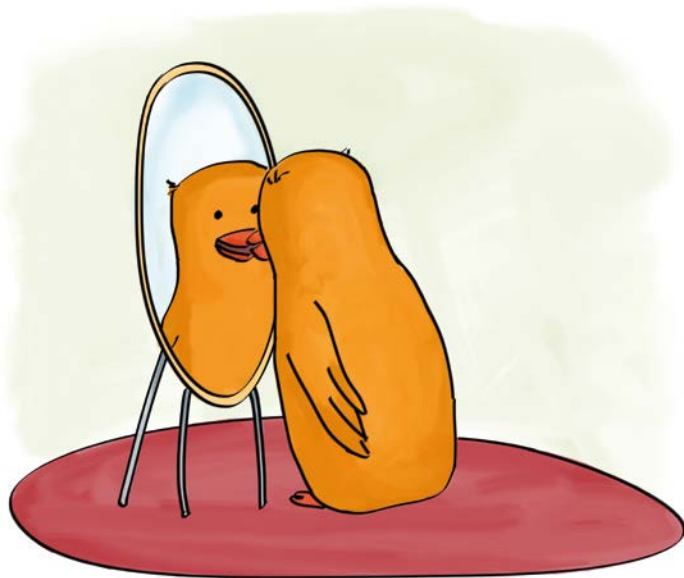
To me, it feels like you're a brave person when you take the effort to tune in to your inner being and listen to what you need. For the place where you find your deepest qualities and longings is also where you meet your deepest fears: fear of rejection, fear of loneliness, fear of death or loss, fear of illness or madness, fear of intense emotions. To find your way and balance through this, is what I call **inner growth**: to get to know and experience your own emotions at a continuously deepening level, so that you get to know yourself and life better and better. Becoming aware and learning to allow or endure your instincts, emotions and feelings leads to the deepest possible fulfillment in your life. At the same time, anywhere in the world, there is nothing that people find harder to achieve than this. You tend to run away from feelings and to suppress or deny instincts and emotions.

Perhaps you're afraid of change; afraid of the physical and mental intensity of emotions; afraid that you're unable to express what's inside you and to find the form that suits you; afraid of emotional pain; afraid of the feeling of despair and the lack of control over yourself and over life itself, when you let your emotions **be** in the core of their being. Perhaps you're also afraid that the pureness of your emotions can lead to destruction. And thus, you put the least pleasant emotions and experiences away. Good riddance, but for how long?



1.2 Your daily life as a mirror

There are many different ways to become more aware of who you are. Whatever road you choose, the core is to get to know and trust your own humanity. When you'd like to grow more conscious of what it is that you need to experience inner peace and contentment, you don't have to look any further. Your daily life is packed with information and mirrors. Whether you're working, cleaning the house, taking care of the (grand)children, exercising or resting in your lazy chair; you bump into yourself everywhere. Your daily life is by far your most important school. You can use all instincts, emotions or feelings that you experience throughout the day as a steppingstone to get to know yourself better. But is that what you want?



Your inner and outer worlds mirror each other. When you suppress your own emotions and feelings and you do not want to get to know them, you don't want to (learn to) deal with the emotions and feelings of others either; nor with the world around you. Everything you suppress continuously demands your attention. It takes time and energy to hide whatever it is

that you do not want to be confronted with on a daily basis. This is how you become involved in a fight against yourself – an exhausting battle that no one else notices.

Sometimes you need to stray far from who you are and what makes you happy in order to discover that what you desire has been within your reach all that time. You just didn't recognize it yet, or it was still too hard for you to find an attitude through which you could allow your deepest desires into your daily life and search for ways to express them. Your humanity embraces instincts, emotions, feelings, thoughts, convictions and inspiration; they are all instruments that enable you to realize your needs and desires. Your humanity shows you the way.

Emotions and feelings are therefore not the end of the line over which you have no or barely any control. Instead, they are a station on the way towards more insight and wisdom; they offer you information on how you can embrace yourself in such a way that you feel nourished and carried. However, in order to receive such insight and wisdom it is necessary that you do not lose contact with yourself. This can be quite difficult because, instinctively, your first response to pain is to withdraw. Learning to stay connected to your current feelings and emotions, step by step, helps you to build trust in your ability to deal with whatever is happening inside and outside of you. **You** are the one who chooses how to take care of your life. Of course, drastic events beyond your control will continue to take place; however, the choice of how to deal with them is always yours, time and again.

1.3 Constructive and destructive

One of the choices you frequently make during each day is whether you deal with something in a constructive or destructive way. Both ways enable you to experience joy, e.g. when you first build a tower with building blocks, then let it fall apart. But they can also be equally painful for you. Both allowing and not allowing what is there, can hurt. The difference lies in whether or not you delay the experience of pain.

Example: constructive expression

Charles is a vital, 19-year-old young man. He has been feeling unheard and unseen by his parents for a very long time. Most of the time, they are occupied with themselves; with their own problems and struggles. After the death of Charles's brother Thomas, 9 years ago, it has only become worse. For years, no one has mentioned Thomas in any way. It looks like the whole family, including Charles, is locked in its own grief.

Charles notices he's becoming angrier inside. He feels frustrated. Things in life don't go the way he wants them to go. At the same time, he feels unable to change. He decides to find an outlet for his anger and joins a boxing school. Every now and then, he tells his sparring partner Mo how he feels. As a result, Charles feels free to vent all of his frustrations by beating and kicking. Mo is fine with catching his punches. The gloves, pads and techniques they learn offer enough protection and it will be Mo's turn soon.



Example: destructive expression

Charles is a vital, 19-year-old young man. He has been feeling unheard and unseen by his parents for a very long time. They are mostly occupied with themselves; with their own problems and struggles. After the death of Charles's brother Thomas, 9 years ago, it has only become worse. For years, no one has mentioned Thomas in any way. It looks like the whole family, including Charles, is locked in its own grief.

Charles notices he's becoming angrier inside. He feels frustrated. He contacts a group of peers that hangs around the nearby square almost every day, from the afternoon till late at night. They drive each other into demolishing things. Recently, they collectively took down a lamppost and completely destroyed it. Charles himself took his anger out on a trash can. It was like something snapped inside of him. There is not much left of the trash can; Charles set it on fire after it had already been broken. Then he took off.

