

Spirited Personal Leadership

**for effective work,
meaningful living and a better world**

Martin Thoolen

Spirited Personal Leadership

for effective work, meaningful living, and a better world

Martin Thoolen

Spirited Personal Leadership

**for effective work,
meaningful living and a better world**

Martin Thoolen

Colophon

For more information about this and other works visit www.martinthoolen.com/en.

First Edition, March 2023

© 2023 Martin Thoolen, Nieuwveen

Editor: Tekstblick

Cover design, layout, and illustrations: Ontwerp van de Buren, Tilburg

Translation & editing of English language version: Bert & Ava Philippus

ISBN: 978-90-9036802-3

ISBN E-Book: 978-90-9036291-5

NUR: 801

All rights reserved. These rights belong to Martin Thoolen. No portion of this book may be reproduced in any form, whether electronically, mechanically, by photocopy, photography, or any other means, without prior written permission from the author.

This book is printed on environmentally friendly FSC-paper.

Spirited Personal Leadership

for effective work, meaningful living, and a better world

Martin Thoolen

Contents

Introduction and Reader's Guide	7
Part 1: The power of Spirited Personal Leadership	12
1. The key to effective work, meaningful living, and a better world	14
2. The three universal forces that determine your personal leadership	24
2.1. Ego – "I" as friend and foe	26
2.2. Soul – Your "true self"	57
2.3. Spirit – Universal consciousness	81
2.4. Casting a light on confusion between ego, soul and spirit	101
Part 2: Practicing Spirited Personal Leadership	106
3. Personal Ego-Leadership	110
3.1. Too little and too much ego	111
3.2. "Manage" your ego	136
3.3. Summary of Personal Ego-Leadership	184
4. Personal Soulful Leadership	186
4.1. Soulless or a Soul Out Of Control	188
4.2. Activate and dose your soul	198
4.3. Summary of Personal Soulful Leadership	246
5. Personal Spirited Leadership	248
5.1. Enrich your work and your life with more inspiration	249
5.2. Summary of Personal Spirited Leadership	294
Part 3: Creating a Better World	296
6. Creating a better world	298
6.1. Vision of a better world	299
6.2. Your contribution to a better world	301
6.3. Dealing with pitfalls	306
6.4. Supporters for your career and life path	316
6.5. Transition to a better world	318
6.6. Summary of Creating a Better World	324
Appendix: Overview of Spirited Personal Leadership	326
Acknowledgements	331
Sources	332

Introduction and Reader's Guide

Welcome, dear reader!

Is This the Book for You?

Do you want to live and work with more energy, effectiveness, meaning, pleasure and passion? All while contributing to a better world? It's possible! What's even better is that you can do it all yourself. In your own environment. At work or at home, every day. How? With Spirited Personal Leadership, as explained in this book.

This book is intended for anyone who, in their work or private life, wants to:

- ✓ Work more effectively;
- ✓ Develop their talents further;
- ✓ Have a healthy work/life balance;
- ✓ Increase the amount of control they have in their own life and work;
- ✓ Experience more pleasure, passion, meaning and vitality;
- ✓ Feel more inner peace and quiet;
- ✓ Contribute to better relationships - privately as well as in business;
- ✓ Make a meaningful contribution to a better world.

Regardless of whether you are a leader, lawmaker, entrepreneur, manager, professional, associate, student, parent, family member, teenager or adult, the knowledge this book conveys will be useful to you.

What to Expect?

This book will take you straight to the source of all your choices and behaviors. It will give you accessible insights, inspiring examples, and exercises that you will be able to apply immediately, and see results of quickly.

Part One of the book tells you why Spirited Personal Leadership is the key to working more effectively, live meaningfully and make a positive difference in the world. You will also discover what the three hidden forces are that determine your behavior and choices. Part Two explains how you can use this knowledge optimally in your daily work and life. Part Three shows how you yourself can create a better world.

Reader's Guide

In the first part of this book, you will gain insight into the three forces that determine all your behaviors and choices and are responsible for your personal leadership: ego, soul and spirit (universal consciousness).

In the first chapter of Part One you will see why Spirited Personal Leadership is the key to more effective work, meaningful living, and a better world. You also discover exactly what those three hidden forces are that determine all your behaviors, choices, and personal leadership.

In Chapter 2 you will find out the answers to these questions: What is Ego anyway? Should I jettison my ego? Which advantages and pitfalls does ego have? Also: What is my soul? Is there a reason for my existence? What are the five essential tasks your soul needs to take care of? What are the benefits of working and living from spirit? And: What is spirit? How can you use it in a concrete way to make business and personal affairs run more smoothly, while creating more peace for yourself and those around you?

If you are already familiar with these concepts and want to know quickly how to work with them, you can skip Part One. You can always go back and look at it if you need some more details. If you would like more detailed knowledge of ego, soul, and spirit, or if the concepts are not clear to you, start with Part One.

In Part Two of the book, you find out how you can make optimal use of ego, soul, and spirit by applying Spirited Personal Leadership. From practical examples, quotes, personal accounts and exercises you will glean concrete tips and ideas to use in your own work and life. Whether it just involves your daily routine, or making career or life choices.

At the beginning of Chapter 3 you will see how you are selling yourself short if you have, so far, neglected to develop your ego. However, you will also discover what happens if your ego goes overboard. You learn what the *undesirable*, ineffective and sometimes destructive results can be when this happens. You will also learn how to recognize this and how to correct the flow: with ego-management.

In Chapter 4 you will find out about the pitfalls of too little or too much soul. You learn to more quickly recognize when you have too much or too little soul, but also when your soul is dosed just right, so you can grow optimally. You are given five ways to help you experience more meaning, passion, persistence, and pleasure: by showing your true self,

increasing your independence, healing your soul pain, activating your soul's joy, utilizing your original talents, and bringing your dreams to life.

In Chapter 5 you will learn to experience more rest, connection and peacefulness in your life and work because you will connect directly with spirit. You will be given insights and exercises that will help you accomplish this with one or more of ten possible actions to take. Examples are practicing heartfulness, experiencing and using synchronicity, and welcoming intuition and premonitions.

In the sixth and final chapter, Part Three of this book, you will learn how your style of Spirited Personal Leadership contributes to a better world for you and for those around you. You will also see the pitfalls to avoid. For instance, how do you deal with the egos of others and ego-systems all around you? You will find out how your supporters can help you do your part in creating a better world.

What Inspired Me to Write This Book?

It hurts my heart to see how this world has become. My desire to experience a better, more beautiful world with one another has always been a burning torch in my life. How can it be that we make wars, both great and small? At work with our colleagues, customers, or suppliers, in private with our neighbors, family or partner? Or with each other as nations? What drives every one of us, really? And, once we know this, can we make our work and private lives better?

From when I was a child, I have been interested in what really drives all of us, individually, collectively, in the present as well as in times past. What is the 'passer-by' behavior that is responsible for all our choices and behaviors? Imagine finding out how that works, and maybe even pinpoint a reason for our existence! How nice it is to get road signs that actually help make the world a better place.

All this and more can be found in this book. It didn't happen overnight, by the way.

What Are the Sources of My Research?

About three decades ago I began my search as a spiritual explorer for what drives us. Before that, as a teenager, I got involved with astrology, and in high school I took Philosophy as an elective course. I kept digging, and in 1990 I received my Master's degree in Clinical and Organizational Psychology. I also learned about metaphysics and took an elective course in parapsychology at the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands.

The existing currents within psychology, such as behavioral psychology and models, don't cut it though. Today's psychology is limited when it comes to answering the big life questions and guiding my clients and customers, leading to less-than-optimal results.

So, I continued my search and went to the source of what drives us. How about all the centuries-old knowledge and healing abilities that exist with various indigenous peoples around the world? What do all religions have in common, and how does that impact our behaviors? Why is there war, and why is there peace?

Life, and the wide world, lured me with these and many more questions. I went looking for answers in literature but also at conferences and in podcasts about leadership, psychology, philosophy, religions, physics, metaphysics, and spirituality. I attended dozens of national and international conferences, workshops and trainings focused on personal development, mindfulness, spirituality, non-dualism and more. These were events hosted by Drs. Hal & Sidra Stone, Dr. Deepak Chopra, Eckhart Tolle, Almaas, Jadthen Jewall, Dr. Olga Kharitidi, Jeff Foster and Gangaji, to name just a few.

Because I spent the past thirty years dealing with these life questions in my personal and professional life, I gained many insights on the matter. There were many experiences with thousands of clients and customers from the corporate world, state, regional and local government, in health care, education, science and many other settings. I also learned a lot from the eight years I spent developing and executing week-long retreats called "Inner Nature," and from over thirty open courses called "Personal Empowerment", as well as from the training "New Perspective" for the Dutch government, where I educated the teachers and trainers involved in this program. I've also given international intercompany trainings on Personal Leadership (self-management), as well as thousands of professional coachings and dozens of teambuilding exercises, and more. I also gleaned insights from dreams and visions, several of which can be found in this book.

I also physically hit the road and traveled the world to find new answers. Over the last few decades, I have met many indigenous people, chiefs, and medicine people all over the world, including the First Nations people in Canada, the Native Americans in Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Arizona and California, the Maya in Mexico, Aborigines in Australia, Buddhist monks in Thailand, and others.

These contacts brought me clarity concerning the natural heritage many of us have forgotten about, namely Universal Consciousness, often called "spirit". That consciousness fundamentally influences our existence, and by extension our (work)behavior and choices.

I see it as one of my tasks to bring all this knowledge and experience together into something that matters and that has a practical application, in work as well as in life, and that can help make a better world. Universal knowledge is bundled into this book in a clear, organized, deep and usable way.

In short, this book is the product of decades-long study. The assumptions and thoughts you find in it originate from the sources listed above and the ones listed at the end of the book.

I sincerely hope this book inspires you to give your life and work a nudge so you and the world around you improve.

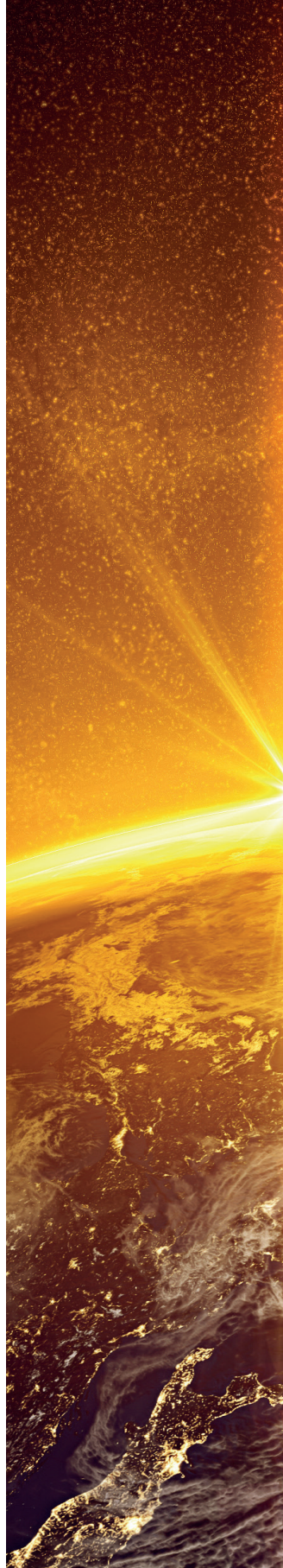
Cordially,

Martin



Part 1

The Power of Spirited Personal Leadership







Chp.1

**The Key to
Effective Work,
Meaningful Living,
and a Better World**

Everything is One

Everything is *one*. We all came from the same first humans and from nature. We are all *one* family. It's just that time (including our history) has created more diversity. In the present we have lost ourselves and our fellow humans, or worse, we have gotten into power struggles or wars with each other: it might be a one-on-one argument with your neighbors, a conflict at work with a coworker or employer, it might be a family feud or entire nations up in arms against each other. We all have a choice in this. You do too. You can either be a dreamer who tries to make the world better in your own circle, or you can be a victim and complain about a world that you do not like.

“

You can either be a dreamer who tries to make the world better in your own circle, or you can be a victim and complain about a world that you do not like.

Do you too want a better world, where you can live a meaningful life and work effectively? You can create it for yourself, with Spirited Personal Leadership. But first let's look at the dream that many of us carry in our hearts.

The Dream: a Better World

That dream is a peaceful world in which we sincerely, truthfully, equally, and peacefully treat ourselves, each other and our natural surroundings. This book provides deep insights and tools to accomplish this, for yourself and with each other, as the leader of your own life.

“

The dream is a peaceful world in which we sincerely, truthfully, equally and peacefully treat ourselves, each other and our natural surroundings.

Is This Dream Realistic?

Is it possible for us as people to create a beautiful society? This question presents itself when you look at the current world, so poisoned with judgments, quarrels and wars. This has been going on for at least five millennia, so there are plenty of reasons to doubt that it is possible. However, it depends on what you look at and what you do yourself. Amidst abundant conflicts there are many people who currently contribute to a peaceful and/or durable world. In the end it comes down to a very basic choice: *either* you choose to apathetically look at everything that's happening, *or* you're doing something about it, making your own life and that of those around you more meaningful and beautiful. OK, let's say that at some point in your life you draw the conclusion: "I want to make a meaningful contribution to a better world." What to do next?

Spirited Personal Leadership will guide you. It goes to the core of your behaviors and choices, and will generate more positive and durable effects in your functioning at work as well as in your personal life.

"Improve the world, begin with yourself" is pointless. Is it really, though?

You could say it is meaningless because by now most people's behavior is guided by ego-systems. But is that true, and what are ego-systems?

Ego-systems are systems that feed the egos of a (select) group of people and provide their personal needs, comfort, luxury or status. In principle, there's nothing wrong with that. I mean, isn't it great that some of these systems happen to meet your needs, especially if it's about things like your health or education? These ego-systems can serve you well, especially if they support you economically or financially.

However, these systems become unbalanced as soon as they don't include everyone, but instead just allow a small group of people to use or have access to them. It gets worse when an entire group of people is excluded and deprived of their privileges or if they are barred from using them. During the past several millennia the collective egos of one group have often benefited just that group at the expense of another, or of the earth. Things haven't changed.

So, if it was people that originally created and reinforced these ego-systems, then people can also correct these systems' courses. This has been proven many times throughout history. Most certainly when the consciousness of enough people has

grown, sooner or later a critical mass is reached that fights the ego-system, for example: the fight for the right for women and people of color to vote in the USA and South Africa. Then there are the patriarchal ego systems, where men have given themselves more rights than women and sexual-harassment is rampant, crossing the lines of equality and respect. The #MeToo movement flourishes.

We live in an era where old patriarchal power structures (putting men above women) and ego-systems are crumbling. More light is shed on the truth, both the shadowy side of the leaders of countries and organizations, as well as people in power and authorities who abuse women. So, it is not correct to say that ego systems are made to live forever, and “working on yourself” is pointless, certainly at a time of growing consciousness in a critical mass of people.

“Spirited Personal Leadership” For A Better World

When you’re living in a world full of these ego-systems it is not always easy to extract yourself from them. More so because you can expect resistance if you take a sincere and truthful life path, because it endangers the ego privileges of others. Or you could be endangering your own privileges. Sometimes you have to make ego sacrifices to walk a sincere and soulful life path, if you want to contribute to an equal and peaceful world. It could be a step back for you financially, or you could leave your current job with all the associated uncertainty, or perhaps you would be appreciated or applauded less because of your honesty. It is not always easy to be your best self and create truthfulness and peace for yourself and your direct surroundings. But Spirited Personal Leadership can help you do it, and do it very well.

Why the addition of the word *Spirited*? Because in this book I will explain what spirit literally encompasses, a part of which is Universal Consciousness. You will also learn how you can apply this in a practical and concrete way in your daily work and life. If you want to live and work meaningfully, nicely, and in peace with everybody around you, you won’t get there with ordinary personal leadership. Contributing to a better world is then largely out of the picture too.

Most books about personal leadership define it as gaining more control over one’s work and life. Spirited Personal Leadership as described in this book will also do this, but it offers you much more. On the one hand it shows you how to get a fundamentally better grip on your life and work, not by tips and tricks but by managing and properly dosing your ego. By going to the roots of your behavior, the effects are longer lasting than if you just receive some tips and tricks. On the other hand, Spirited Personal

Leadership activates your soul, allowing you to experience more vitality, enthusiasm and meaning. And there is even more that this type of leadership offers you: universal consciousness that leads to a better, more truthful and peaceful life and work. On top of that it is not just you who gets inspired, but you will inspire those around you as well with your new behaviors and choices. So: Spirited Personal Leadership.

Just imagine that besides you there are more and more people who are able to create peace for themselves and those around them. Then we're already creating a better world together!

What is needed to make this possible? Your self-awareness and your heart.

Your Heart Is the Key To True Connection and Peace

Think about it. Do you remember a time in your life that you softened your heart in light of what someone did to you? When out of curiosity you looked further, beyond your own judgment, and began to understand the other? Or the time that you sincerely expressed your regret or sincerely forgave someone? Your relationships change immediately and you experience peace right away, at work as well as in your personal life.

Your heart is also the source from which you feel a deeper truth, but also longing and pain. For example:, think about the hidden or neglected pain and sorrow you feel when there are arguments between neighbors or within the family, when seeing victims of wars, power games at work, or the destruction of excess food, flowers, milk etc., or think about your feelings of powerlessness as you witness the removal of the lungs of the earth, the trees; or the oceans becoming filled with plastic. Well, if you feel that pain, individually or collectively, there is hope.

The more pain we are willing to acknowledge and feel, the more the desire grows to change from the inside out. Your desire for unity, in contrast to the pain and sorrow you feel, may bring you to these conclusions: I don't want to live like this; I don't want to contribute to this; and what am I living in and what am I living for? Then you wake up. You wake up to make a meaningful contribution from the inside to a new world, where unity is respected and lived. Ask yourself: What kind of world do I want to live in? And what am I doing to achieve it?

“

*The more pain we are willing to acknowledge and feel,
the more the desire grows to change from the inside out.*

The Way Out Is The Way In

You can make a better society within your direct surroundings, wherever you are, and it starts with yourself. Why? Not much happens if everyone decides that somebody else needs to change but not them. In other words, if it's everyone's opinion that the other needs to change, nobody feels the need to change themselves. How will you improve the world or change anything at all starting from that premise?

Therefore, in order to get out of disharmonic associations (such as difficult relationships or conflicting societies), each one of us, including you, must look inward and to themselves. This is certainly true if a person has responsible (leadership) positions in society. Regular self-reflection and accountability are requisites to practice personal leadership.

As Carl Gustav Jung¹ once said: “Much of the evil in the world is due to the fact that man in general is hopelessly unconscious.” That is why bad history keeps repeating itself. If we want to break through this and set a course towards a better world, it demands a larger self-awareness and self-leadership.

¹ Carl Jung: www.discoverquotes.com

“

Much of the evil in the world is due to the fact that man in general is hopelessly unconscious.

- Carl Jung

Self-Leadership

When you practice personal leadership you do not wait around for others and so called good “leaders” to improve the world. No, you yourself take responsibility for how you want to live and work. That way you send a signal that together we can make a better world, as long as we don’t get stuck in the victim, complainer, or perpetrator role of our ego. So, we should not wait for a leader, but create a better world ourselves.

Why Look More Deeply Inward at the Roots of Your Behavior?

If you really want to create a better life you won’t make it with a superficial look at just your own behaviors and their effects on yourself and your surroundings. You can mow down the weeds but if you do not get the roots they’ll grow right back. Just like behaviors.

“

You can mow down the weeds but if you do not get the roots they’ll grow right back.

That’s why you have to attack the source of the problem. Beyond behavior, as a spiritual explorer I looked for the deeper forces that determine your life and work. This replaces being controlled unconsciously by forces in yourself that you’ve most likely never learned to recognize sufficiently, while they do lead to undesirable polarizing or destructive choices without your knowledge.

To get a look at how you can and want to contribute to a better world, you have to get to know yourself better. From the inside. So that you also know what you want, what you can do, what you have the guts to do, the essence of who you are and what you can contribute. And to learn how you can put yourself in charge.

Leadership Over Which Self?

Leadership over yourself: But which *self* are we talking about? Over the past 30 years I have found out that you can identify three different perspectives for looking at yourself in the world around you. The crystallization of my findings can be found in the book *Rijkdom is Gratis*² ("Wealth is Free") that I co-wrote and published in 2012. In that book you can see concretely how your thoughts, feelings, behaviors, experiences and all your choices change immediately when you work and live from either ego, soul, or spirit (universal consciousness.)

What do you mean, ego, soul, and spirit (universal consciousness)? What can you concretely imagine with these concepts? Well, it is not as ephemeral as it seems, because you experience it all the time during your career and life. Look, let's say you get in your car and you're on your way to work. You run into some major traffic, which makes you late for your very important meeting. Because you were afraid of the possible disapproval from your manager and clients, who would greatly value your presence, you floor it as soon as the road opens back up. Your race through traffic, going 25 miles over the speed limit, you tailgate and pull off some dangerous stunts. After all, you're in a hurry and you don't want to show any weakness. Your ego has literally and figuratively taken the wheel.

If sincerity and vulnerability are part of your life, you might have made a different choice, in any case a conscious (spirited) choice. You grab the phone and call your manager: "Sorry boss, I had 15 minutes of wiggle room, but the entire highway is closed and all the traffic is being detoured. It'll take me at least a half an hour to get there." You deliberate with the boss what the best thing is to do. He moves your presentation out a bit in the schedule and lets everybody know you'll be a little late due to unforeseen circumstances. Your drive to the office is more tranquil, and you don't get in the way of other people on the road. It's that simple to let consciousness help you with your personal leadership.

2 *Hobbelink & Thoolen: Rijkdom is gratis (de Ego-Ziel-Spirit-trits™, page 17)*

When your career is at stake you can probably imagine that your ego sometimes makes a different choice from what your soul tells you. Your ego's voice could be: "I better stick with this boring job, because at least my mortgage and my kids' college education is paid for." Conversely your soul is whispering something different in your ear: "But that new job gives me so much energy and the salary is quite adequate. It's exactly what I believe in. I can be meaningful there even though I don't have a long-term contract." Which 'self' do you listen to and how do you make a conscious choice?

These three hidden dimensions, ego, soul, and spirit, that are always with you, determine all your choices and behaviors as you will see in Chapter 2. The cool thing is that you can use these three forces every minute of every day and make Spirited Personal Leadership a reality with all the advantages that come with it. Then you will give conscious and spirited leadership to your own ego and soul.

In the model *Spirited Personal Leadership*™ you see how the inside (ego and soul with or without spirit) impacts your behaviors and, through that, your surroundings. That ultimately brings us to the definition of Spirited Personal Leadership.

The Definition of Spirited Personal Leadership

Spirited Personal Leadership means that you know the inner forces (ego, soul, and spirit) that determine all your behaviors and choices, and use them consciously and well-considered, to be a truthful, sincere and peaceful human being, to yourself, each other and the natural world.

To practice Spirited Personal Leadership, you must know your inner strengths. Let's begin our adventure and first have a look at what exactly those three forces are that control you, me and others every day, often without us knowing it.

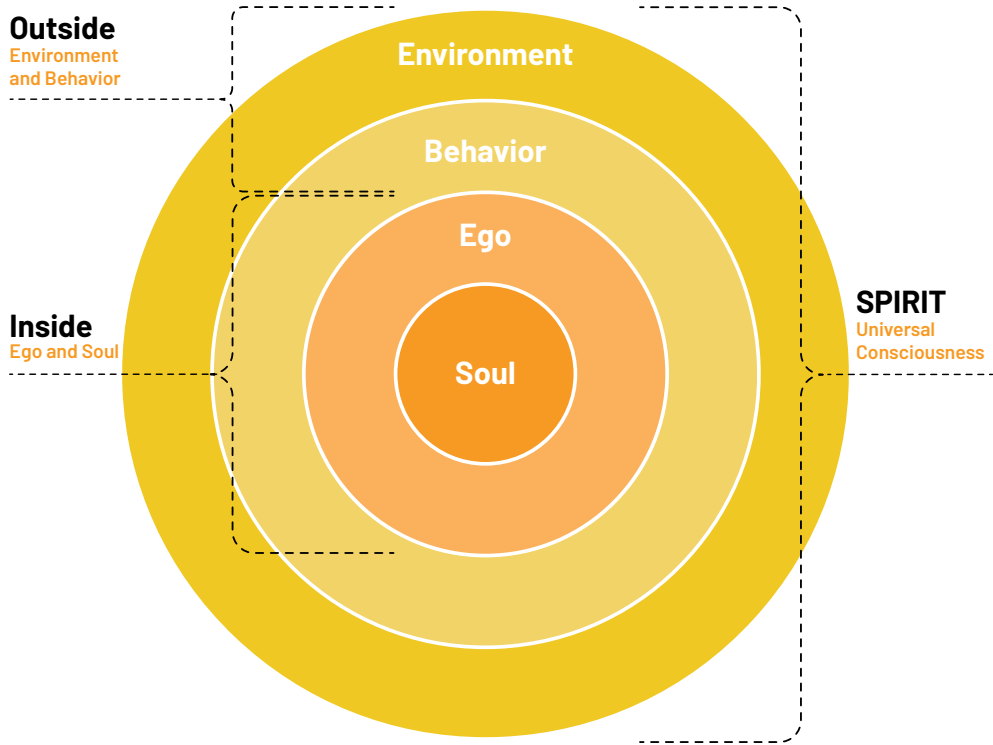


Figure 1.1 Model Spirited Personal Leadership™

Summary of Ego

Your ego is everything you identify yourself as and that you indicate with: “This is me.” With ‘I’ you differentiate yourself from the outside world, from others and from your environment. For this purpose, you use (often without noticing) ego-labels, to identify yourself with, like your profession, your income, your education, your family situation, etc. One of the biggest, driving ego-forces is the identification with your personality, AKA your ego-bus.

This ego-bus has many passengers that take the wheel to guide your thoughts, feelings and actions without you noticing it. The *pleaser*, *perfectionist* or *pusher*, whom you identify as primary passengers, are often at the wheel. You don’t need to shed them. But if you’re not aware of what’s going on, they can be unguided missiles that dictate all your choices and behaviors. Besides these, there are many more ego-forces living inside of you that can be of assistance, namely your *secondary sides*, which are typically less developed.

Advantages of a Conscious Ego

With insufficient awareness you easily get mired in showcasing too much or too little ego, causing you to be less effective. Ideally you should learn how to know and dose your ego, so that it works to your advantage. Then your ego provides for your survival, protection, needs, profiling, visibility, accomplishments, and strategic actions, and it becomes a vehicle for your soulfulness and spirit.

In Part Two you will discover how to optimally dose your ego with Personal Spirited Ego Leadership.

2.2 Soul – Your ‘True Self’

The second force that influences your (personal) leadership and all of your choices, is your soul. Through the ages numerous books have been written about the soul, and different terms have been used to describe it. In the Quran, the Bible and the Torah the ‘Soul’ is mentioned, while in Buddhist writings it is described as the ‘True Self,’ and in Hindu literature it is known as ‘Atman.’ In Native American and Canadian First Nations traditions it is the ‘Authentic Self’, New Agers call it the ‘Higher Self’ and still others have the ‘Eternal Self.’ There are many more names that refer to the existence of the soul, in addition to the ones mentioned here.

But why give attention to your soul? And how can soulfulness enrich your work and private life? What is the soul really, and which five ways can help you to do your soul justice? This chapter will answer those questions.

Benefits of soulfulness

Put briefly, soulfulness will provide you with the following:

- ✓ Your work leads to more success.
- ✓ You are ‘yourself’, truthful, and ‘what you see is what you get.’
- ✓ Your relationships become deeper and stronger.
- ✓ Your dreams come to life and your talents flourish more.
- ✓ You experience more joy and pleasure.

1. Success

From Angela Lee Duckworth’s 2013 research¹⁶ we learn that the most important factors for (business) success are passion and persistence. Those happen to be exactly the attributes that come to light when you work and live *soulfully*.

16 Duckworth, Angela Lee. TED-presentation. *Grit: The power of passion and perseverance* (April 2013)

2. Meaningful living and working

Your individual mission and vision are tightly connected to what your soul brings to the table. As soon as you know what's in your soul and you give form to it, you will experience your life and work as meaningful. This is certainly true if you give your natural talents free reign in your career or private life. It happens when your soul participates more

3. Vitality

When you're doing what you are naturally good at and passionate about, you experience more positive energy, which in turn will increase your vitality considerably. People can move mountains when they're passionate.

4. Freedom to be yourself

When you make more space for your soul, you give yourself the freedom to 'be yourself.' Then you speak your own truth without inhibition, do what makes you happy and gives you joy, and go to those places where you flourish and your talents are appreciated.

5. Deepening connections

From soulfulness you share your strength and vulnerability, success and failures, while your relationships are deepened and strengthened. By sharing some of your soul, you open the door to a deeper and more fulfilling connection. In your work as well as in your personal life, this deepening is not only more satisfying, but it also leads to long term relationships that bring more pleasure and success.



By sharing some of your soul, you open the door to a deeper and more fulfilling connection.

6. Dreams come to life

When you follow your heart and soul, your dreams will come to life sooner. Without soulfulness, there is no dream that comes to life. However, if you feel passionate about realizing a dream, the chance of achieving that goal is simply bigger.

7. More joy and pleasure

When you are soulful, you will generally experience more joy and pleasure in your life because you are doing what you want to do, and what you’re good at.

These advantages will come your way as soon as you take ‘Spirited Personal Leadership’ of your soul, as you will see in Chapter 4 of Part Two, which goes into Personal Soulful Leadership. But what is soul? And what *are* those five ways to help you do justice to your soul?

Definition of Soul

The soul¹⁷ is an original, individual package of energy, consciousness, individuality, stored experiences and memories (joyful and painful), talents, desires and dreams. Every soul, including yours, faces five existential tasks/desires:

1. Growing in consciousness by felt experiences;
2. Having sovereignty regarding the development of your own existence;
3. Healing soul pain;
4. Living soul joy;
5. Bringing original talents and dreams to life.

Below, I will clarify these five aspects, in light of the journey of your soul throughout your life, which gives you a tangible reason to live.

Think about what happens if you as a soul (or collective soul as it applies to a people with its own history) do or don’t have a place in the world? How come Mozart wrote his first composition at age five? How did a four-year-old girl manage to learn four languages? Four or five years of education? No way, they brought these talents with them in their soul baggage, to share with the world. These are things that cannot readily be explained by science, but they do exist!

Journey of the Soul

My assumption is that everyone existed for a long time before we came to live on earth. Nobody can deny this, even armed with facts. In Hinduism, the soul is seen as individualized spirit. Every soul is a spark of the Light of Spirit/the Divine that finds a home in each of us, as the Gnostics¹⁸ have shown us.

¹⁷ Definition partly originates from book: ‘Rijkdom is gratis!’ Thoolen & Hobbelink

¹⁸ Slavenburg, J. Nag Hammadi Scriptures (2009)

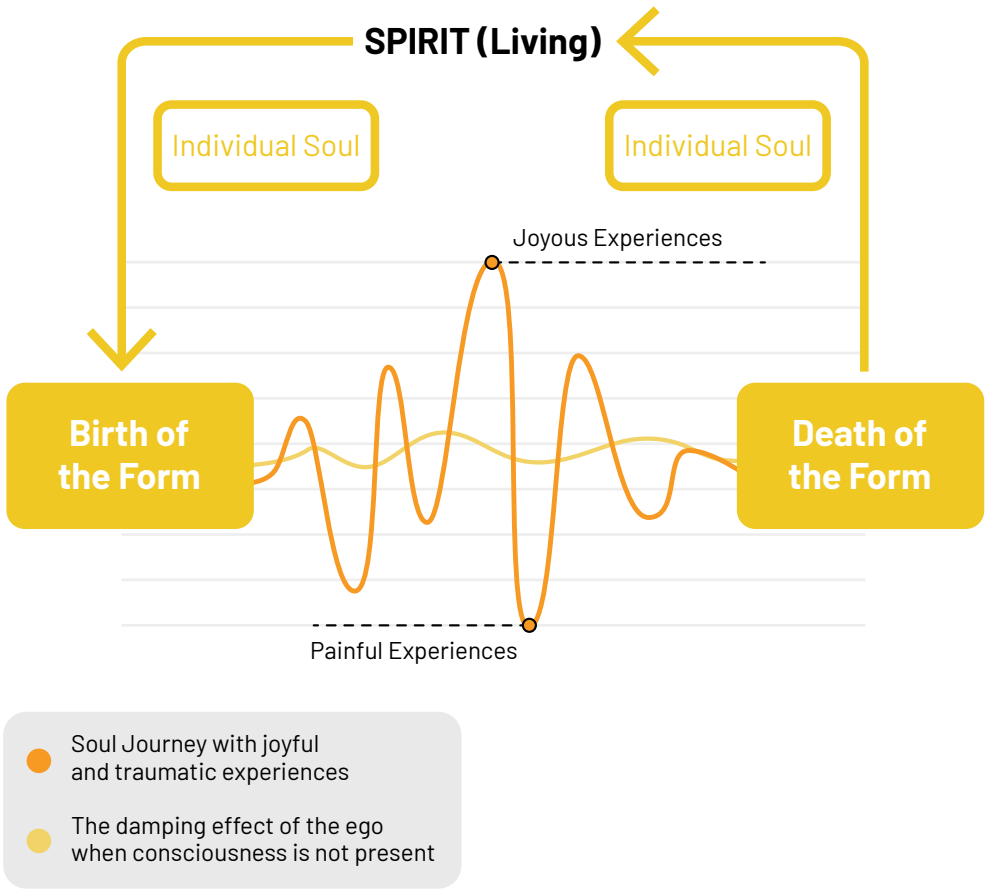


Figure 2.4 Soul Journey

The Gnostics are an early Christian branch, from the early years of the common era. The core theme of the Gnostic philosophy is that humanity has forgotten who they really are. In the Gnostic texts, Jesus is a messenger who reminds humanity to remember itself: “Stand up and remember yourself!” Gnosis is the Greek word for knowledge, and here it means: knowledge of your true self. Because, as a human being with your true self, you are part of true reality, knowledge of yourself is also knowing true reality. Gnosis as a way to know yourself is knowing ‘the All.’ Who knows themselves knows the All.

“

The soul knows neither birth or death. She did not come into being, she isn't coming into being and she won't come into being. She is unborn, eternal, forever-being, immortal and original. She is not killed when the body is killed.
– Bagavad Gita¹⁹

Life was around long before you existed on earth. It has always been there, just like plants, that die in fall and winter, only to bloom again in spring. Underground and invisible, life always went on. And so it is with us humans, because we all come from one nature.

The origin and return of the soul can be attributed to one infinite primal force, primordial soup, or spirit. The soul can temporarily find a home, for example: in your body while you are living on earth. However, it will shed that form sooner or later to continue its evolution. Individual life, then, goes on. Birth and death are only temporary physical transitions.

Soul in the temporary human form

The force that is responsible for all creation and destruction of form, fed from an ultimate source of light/consciousness, is spirit, symbolically: the sun. Your soul, then, also comes from this. In essence, you are a spark of light and consciousness.

¹⁹ Bhaktivedanta Swami Sri Srimad Prabhupada A.C. Bhagavad-Gita zoals ze is (2012)

Your actual human form is created by Mother Earth, whom we needed to let our body be born. Imbued with a soul, that comes from spirit, to experience new things and grow your (self) awareness. This is why some see our walk on this earth as a human being, as the sacred marriage between Father Sun (spirit/soul) and Mother Earth (body), which provides us all with our current lives in human form to gather new experiences and consciousness.

Armed with this knowledge, everyone is born with five essential tasks to complete, that make work and private life more pleasant and meaningful.

Let's look at these tasks I mentioned earlier, more closely.

1. Grow your consciousness by felt experiences;
2. Develop sovereignty of your own existence, and live it;
3. Heal soul pain;
4. Live soul joy;
5. Bring original talents and dreams to life.

1. Grow Your Consciousness Through Felt Experiences

An existential task that each one of us faces as a soul is to grow our consciousness by feeling experiences and insights. Throughout your life you accumulate intensely felt experiences, from ecstatic to painful/traumatic, that are seared into your soul. Search your own memory: when were you happy in your work or life, and what did you learn that made you happy? When were you at rock bottom, and when were you sad, angry or bitter about something for a long time? What insights about yourself did you gather?

Deeply felt experiences are stored as memories. From these, insights can be born, allowing your soul to grow. These memories are added to the existing soul baggage you have acquired throughout your life (or in another life.) Therefore, memory is stored in your soul. The brain functions as a temporary vehicle for calling, *triggering* and storing memories. In dementia patients, for example:, these functions can fail, which does not mean the memories are gone! It's just a malfunctioning brain vehicle. There are many sources that report that souls who have passed on have access to all memories, especially those that are positively connected to their hearts.

All signs of illness would be gone, and there is no longer any judgment about oneself or others. (Eindeloos Bewustzijn by Pim van Lommel²⁰, Three Waves of Volunteers and the New Earth by Dolores Cannon²¹; When heaven calls by Matt Fraser²²).

Gathering new experiences and memories that touch your heart and soul *during* your present life, enriches your consciousness with new insights. They are really more like *through-sights*. They grow from the inside, allowing you to know yourself better.

When all goes according to plan, this growing consciousness will give you ever more information to live and work from spirit. As a result, you will live more from a position of friendliness, sincerity, truth, connection and respect. You will leave this life with more consciousness. Some say this will have increased the vibration frequency of your soul. Higher frequency means that rather than your basic instincts and ego, your heart and soul determine your life, with respect for everything and everyone. In short, you live and work more from spirit.

When you experience a consciousness moment, a symbolic lightbulb comes on. The more often and the longer you experience these moments, the more they morph into periods of consciousness, which in turn can morph into living from spirit continuously.

In order to gradually evolve more in that direction, we accumulate many experiences on our soul journey, from joyous to painful and traumatic, and this leads to consciousness. So it is in this life. At some point during your mom's pregnancy, your soul comes, from spirit, into your body. Why these parents, this family, in this region, in this country with this culture, religion, in this time? It could be that your soul was ready to gather felt experiences in these circumstances in this life, accommodating your consciousness' growth to a higher frequency. In other words, to be a more peaceful human being.

20 Lommel, Pim van. *Consciousness beyond life. The Science of the Near-Death Experience* (2011)

21 Cannon, D. *Three waves of Volunteers and the New earth* (2011)

22 Fraser, M. *When heaven calls* (2020)

✂ Exercise: Grow Your Consciousness Through Felt Experiences

- ✓ Which joyful experience in your life changed your mind? In other words: what did you learn about how to live and work since that moment?
- ✓ Which painful experience in your life changed your mind? In other words: what did you learn about how to live and work since that moment?

Reason for being

Your current life is nothing other than a temporary education, teaching life lessons to your soul. Not so much to just accumulate knowledge and skills, or to achieve successes, but above all to learn from those life lessons and to grow to be a sincere, truthful and peaceful human being, for yourself as well as for others, *and* the (natural) world around you.



Your current life is nothing other than a temporary education, which helps your soul grow towards being a sincere, truthful and peaceful human being towards yourself, others and your (natural) surroundings, by way of conscious life lessons.

Life evolves in a spiral, like you see with the seasons in nature. Sooner or later, you will be confronted with a new facet of an old theme and you can use that to develop into a truthful and peaceful person. If, for instance, you are too dominant and that pushes people away, you are contributing to more conflicts in your life, whether it be with colleagues, friends, neighbors or family. Until you realize what role you are playing in this, history will keep repeating itself. You will keep encountering the same problems. However, if you were to look at yourself, and learn how to deal with this differently, because you *really* want to change, you will make a giant leap in your soul's evolution to a higher frequency. Or, if you feel like nobody is taking you seriously, this feeling will not go away until you take a look at what you *yourself* can do, or change, about it.

If you want the soul to grow, you will sooner or later have to let go of old forms. This way you will make room for new experiences and forms. You can compare this to trees that let go of their leaves in the fall, making room for new foliage in the spring. If you stick to old forms you don't want to lose, you will delay the development of your soul. You can even experience a regression in your development, like taking steps back down the ladder.

For instance, staying with a partner longer than is good for your growth; keeping a product or service beyond its freshness date; or staying in a job longer than is useful to you, etc.



If you want the soul to grow, you will sooner or later have to let go of old forms, to make room for new experiences and forms.

In other words, you develop your soul towards becoming a sincere, real and peaceful human being by letting go of old forms, and distilling life lessons from them. The very moment you are confronted with one of your own learning-themes or are compelled to release an old form, you have a choice. Every time. Because you have been given free will while you're here on earth. Let's say you are having a conflict with someone for the umpteenth time. You have a choice: either you learn from what you are doing that's causing conflicts, and elevate yourself above it, or you keep blaming the other party, while staying squeaky clean yourself. In the second scenario your soul does not evolve. You are really taking a step back, and your development regresses. There are some people who live their entire lives this way.

Some people believe that you rid yourself of these learning-themes when you die and your soul goes to heaven, but I think this is nonsense. Death in this sense is nothing other than the end of a relationship with a partner, an employer or with anything or anyone else. For example:, you can change jobs, but you will still be in the same place with your development. You can choose a new partner, but you will run into the same themes, that you didn't resolve in yourself with your previous partner. You may experience a new life as a soul without a body, but your learning-themes remain the same. If you did not sufficiently complete your life lessons, you probably will need more lives to accomplish these goals. You made a choice to stall or even regress in soul growth. In short, your development doesn't stop when you're dead.



Your development doesn't stop when you're dead.

Paramahansa Yogananda²³ from India shared the following about this: *"Don't depend on the death to liberate you from your imperfections. You are exactly the same after death as you were before. Nothing changes; you only give up the body. If you are a thief or a liar or a cheater before death, you don't become an angel merely by dying. If such were possible, then let us all go and jump in the ocean now and become angels at once! Whatever you have made of yourself thus far, so you will be hereafter. And when you reincarnate, you will bring that same nature with you. To change, you have to make the effort. This world is the place to be."*

When you die, your soul leaves your body and takes with it your development and your experiences to grow as a soul elsewhere. According to Buddhists and Hindus, your soul goes on with consciousness-storage, whether in a body or not. They speak of Karma, the law of cause and effect: *What goes around, comes around. What you sow, you shall reap*, across lives. Good deeds have good outcomes, bad deeds have bad consequences. If you did something bad in a previous life, your soul will bring this baggage with it, to further solve the problem with the life lessons on your new life path. In other words, if you messed up in a previous life, here's the chance to do the right thing.

Whatever form it takes, it is the goal of your life to become a better human being, at peace with yourself, other people, and the earth we live on.

Young and Old Souls

Every soul has its own frequency when it comes to development and level of consciousness. During your soul's development across lives and times, you gather a lot of experiences and lessons that can bring your soul to a higher plane; In the process of soul development, young and old souls are a common topic of discussion.

Old souls have acquired more life experiences and self-awareness. On this foundation they shape their current life and work, giving spiritual values more space, to contribute to a better world (higher frequency of self-awareness.) In this case, material things matter less and you serve the aforementioned mission in your own way.

²³ Parmahansa Yogananda. *Sayings of Parmahansa Yogananda* (2004)

However, these same old souls can also abuse their acquired soul experiences and soul lessons to the detriment of humanity and the earth if their ego takes over! Mythical or not, think about the story of the select group of Atlantis souls who in time abused their talents purely for the sake of power, leading to the fall of Atlantis. Pride goes before a fall. That is where extreme ego leads. And, Atlantis or not, we see a lot of this in today's (world) leaders.

On the other hand, some young souls can be so preoccupied with control, safety, fear, material things, and power/influence, avarice, envy, retribution and aggression (lower frequency of a more instinctive nature), that they bring these attributes into their current life. The influence of this seeps through into the choices this young soul makes.

Independent from a soul's age then (even if you've already lived 20,000 past or future lives), some souls may have different frequencies. A soul with a higher vibration number will embrace the light as well as the shadows, and can be present full of joy, or full of pain, and be touched by them.

For example:, some children are born into families that naturally tend towards creating fights, quarrels, power/weakness, fear and intimidation. There are also children who sincerely enjoy bullying or otherwise hurting others. On the other hand, there are children whose actions from the very beginning show openness, transparency, peacefulness and a full presence. Some of them have such a high frequency and high consciousness as a soul, that they can shape their talents from those to contribute to a better world. This phenomenon is sometimes called the "Wave of New Age Children". They often possess special qualities, such as telepathy, clairvoyance, claircognizance, a strong intuition, high sensitivity and wisdom.

Apart from the height of the frequency, a soul can feel unfathomably and deeply lonely, because most of the people around them (with a lower frequency) do not understand them, or find them too wise or too weird. Before you know it, you're thinking to yourself "in heaven's name, what kind of world did I end up in?" That's why it is very important to protect yourself, which is where your ego can step in and help. Conversely, a highly developed soul can feel incredibly and intensely at home with souls in the same frequency band, whether they be children, adults or elders. In your life, you will often encounter the same souls in a cosmic "birds of a feather stick together," to support and recognize your own themes and development: your soul family, which is different from your biological kin.

From the perspective of spirit, however, young or old soul, it's all the same; young and old don't exist, everything is equal. If you secretly think your old soul is a little bit better or a little bit further along, you're elevating yourself above others, which is a typical example of too much ego. It's just wrapped into a spiritual mask, also called your *spiritual ego*. Then it's not spirit, but ego that's dominant, nothing else. On top of that, a young soul can go through an experience that causes an evolutionary jump in the development of their consciousness. This happened to the Tibetan Buddhist monk Milarepa (see below,) who became enlightened²⁴.

To put it briefly, even if you have built a mountain of bad things in your life, you can still turn the tide during this lifetime!

Practical example: A Giant Leap of Your Soul

When Milarepa was seven years old, his father died. Family members abused the possessions of his mother, who incited him to practice black magic to get revenge. He did this for many years, murdering many. In no time, he had built up a mountain of bad karma and lowered his soul's frequency.

He later regretted his actions and decided to clean up his karma, and asked for help. Eventually, he ended up with 'Marpa', one of his most important teachers. Marpa gave him the assignment to build tall towers of stone by hand, only to take them apart again and re-build, time after time. He had built up so much bad karma that had to be torn down with bare hands. This humbling experience brought a complete turnaround and eventually enlightenment for Milarepa.

24 Lhalungpa, L.P. *The Life of Milarepa* (2002)

2. Developing/Living Sovereignty Over One’s Own Existence

Every soul has a specific originality, that *no other* soul has. Every soul has its own history, with experiential and consciousness history. Every soul has peculiarities, desires, dreams and talents that another doesn’t have. Just look at the differences between identical twins even at a young age. The individual ‘color’ that you bring with you essentially typifies you, even before ego became dominant after the first few years of your life.

During the time that your soul walks the earth, it wants an independent space and a reason to exist, to express this originality. Not just as an individual, but also as the collective soul of a people. If you take a look at the definitions of sovereignty²⁵, you will see self-rule or oppressive rule, or the authority to rule oneself, your nation or country. Sovereignty is identified by (among others):

- ✓ One’s own territory;
- ✓ Independence;
- ✓ The authority to shape one’s own laws;
- ✓ Intolerance of interference of others, respect for ‘national’ borders.

Everybody wants the right to exist, or, ‘every soul wants to be allowed to be.’ Every soul wants to be free to exist, and to independently live or work, and develop itself. Any system or relationship your soul ends up in, that leaves insufficient room for independence, leads to (accumulated) soul pain, or even soul traumas. And those have a long shelf life. The soul’s flame burns low or even dies altogether for a while. Soon enough, depression, addiction, feelings of retribution and aggression take you over, dulling the pain temporarily.

“

Every soul wants to be allowed to be.

²⁵ Encyclo.nl. Dutch definitions sovereignty. www.encyclo.nl.

Then, when a soul has made a choice to find a different (work or life) environment, one that offers more space for independence, people experience this as a liberation or relief. It is as though it broke out of a spiritual prison, and got a full-fledged place from which it can continue living and flourishing. Soulful! Just like a plant or a tree will thrive in certain places, a human being will also come into its own, and develop more, in certain environments. Obviously, as a human being you have the advantage over plants, in that you can choose to go wherever you want.

Every soul wants to show its individuality, and to be able to express *its* own truth. Every soul has its own uniqueness and authority over itself, and wants space for those. It wants to express *its own creations*, whether it is about music, knowledge, an idea, research, an opinion or anything else. You have no other choice, and you feel like a creation has to be expressed through you. As if there is no avoiding it. It speaks for itself. Are you familiar with this feeling? When it really would be better to call it a day, but you're so inspired by your job that you are eager to work, full of passion, through the night. Or imagine you wake up at three in the morning, full of insights, but you would really rather keep sleeping. Or you see or hear something in a movie or in a meeting, which gives you new ideas that slip away easily, if you don't record them right away. Well, your soul can't help itself, and lets you stand up, record, express yourself, as long as you have space, or make space for it if it was limited or taken away altogether.

In many cases, you can still develop that self, but you have to take responsibility and declare personal ownership towards it. In Chapter 4 of Part Two, in Personal Soulful Leadership, you will see how to increase your soul's independence and personal authority.

Exercise: View of Your Own Sovereignty

- ✓ When did you have and take the space to share your truth about something?
- ✓ When do you not feel free to share what's really going on with you?
- ✓ What needs to happen to feel even freer and be more yourself in your work and life?

Personal story: About the Importance of Sovereignty

In 2014, I had offered my help providing coaching sessions (which I also called "Healing Talks") for some First Nations people in British Columbia, Canada, on the island of Bella Bella. This took place during the 25th anniversary of the Intertribal Canoe Event, which is a ten-day ceremony attended by a few thousand people. A few years later, in 2018, I was in Sedona, Arizona in the USA, and offered my help again, this time to the Native Americans in Navajo country. The answer chief Mario Cruz gave me was: "We are not waiting for your help. The only thing we need is sovereignty."

3. Healing Soul Pain

If you're honest with yourself, is there something that still bothers you because it doesn't feel like it has been resolved? Think about conflicts at work, a family quarrel, an incomplete farewell to dear ones, or living space that has been taken from you. Which soul wounds, that weigh you down, are you carrying with you?

Can you remember when you incurred emotional pain that you will perhaps never forget? Trauma-expert Dr. Peter Levine²⁶ shows in his work that everybody has certain emotional traumas. No exceptions! Some survival patterns were born among your ancestors, in times of danger, out of fear of emotional and physical pain. For example:, survivors of war can display defensive or even unpredictably passive, or actively aggressive behaviors in their daily life and work. Their fear of pain is often, by way of upbringing, given to their children and/or grandchildren, the second and third generation of war victims. This kind of thing may still be influencing you, and explain some of your behaviors. The thing to do is to heal that old, long pain in your family. This also shows that soul pain can be of this life, but still stem from before this life.

Which emotional pain have you not given a sufficient amount of space, causing it to keep coming back and impacting your behaviors and choices?

²⁶ Levine, P. *Waking the tiger* (1997)

“

Most of Us have Traumas.

📖 Practical example: The Impact of Traumas in Your Career

Take the example of an account-manager from a large bank, whom I was coaching. He had been promised a promotion multiple times, based on his achievements over the past few years. As long as he aced the final assessment, he could surely count on a promotion after waiting for so long. He passed the assessment with 9.5 out of 10.

Two weeks later he was told the promotion was called off for strategic reasons. His heart sank into his shoes. This was an enormous slap in the face. He didn't care anymore and became less ambitious in his work. He would now choose the safe route and forget about his ambition.

In a case like the one in this example, you can be touched so deeply by 'long pain' that the experience is etched into your soul, and stored with your baggage. In this light you can also see your soul as the 'storage consciousness' that you carry with you, and from where your other choices are made. You may recognize the moment you felt 'liberated' when you stepped away from a job or relationship, or you let go of a fixed idea about yourself or another.

Sometimes you come to a point in your life and work, when you ask yourself: is it cowardly to leave, or is it cowardly to stay? In short, how loyal are you to your soul's voice? The injustice, inequality, anger and grief that touch you ask for healing. A healthy mourning process, with expression of emotions and support from others progresses, so that you feel lighter after this 'energetic shower', and you can carry on with more positive energy. Similar to what happened to a participant in my course called Personal Empowerment, who had deeply buried her bottled-up grief and had become too hard on her colleagues. After recognizing that she had deeply buried the death of her father, she finally let the pain flow, and allowed grief to take its natural course. After this, she was relieved and she became fundamentally milder towards her colleagues and clients.

If you don't go through this processing, you can easily surrender to victimhood, hardening and complaining, or inflict (emotional) pain on others as a response to your own unprocessed soul pain. In turn, that will just feed and strengthen your soul pain.

Your soul pain can be so great that you start protecting yourself against feeling any more pain. And here's your ego to help you. How? By denying or downplaying, by judging, by getting even or by retribution. You may feel temporary relief by having one of these reactions, but in fact, you're just contributing to the polarization. By sharply condemning others from a sense of injustice you just feed the conflict, feed the separation from others, and amplify the soul pain in both you and others, not simply as individuals, but also collectively. The latter can be the case for peoples who are fighting for their collective soul to regain the sovereignty that was taken away from them, such as Native Americans and Canadian First Nations.) If the collective ego takes the upper hand, we see fight after fight, war after war, and history repeats itself, for millennia on end.



*Old unprocessed soul pain and the ego
cause history to repeat itself.*

If there is much accumulated emotional pain living inside you, it is time to lighten the load, so you can carry on with less of a burden of negative thoughts and emotions. If you let go of expectations, for instance that things will become different, get better or more beautiful, there will be space (spirit shining through) and healthy sadness can come in. Allowing grief is the most essential key to healing after a loss or when processing grief. During the development and execution of a transition-training for the Dutch government called "New Perspective" as a psychologist I delved into the optimization of grief processing for years, while also teaching career counselors and trainers how to do this. From the most recent insights about this by loss-expert de Mönningck²⁷ is clear that everything that you structurally keep at bay in order not to feel pain, will keep this pain in place.

²⁷ Mönningck, Herman de. *Verlieskunde* (2017)



*Allowing grief is the most essential key to healing,
in emotional pain processing.*

The solution is to go to the pain in a well-dosed, safe way, and to allow anger, shame and grief to come in, so that the pain can evaporate like raindrops, and your soul's baggage will feel a bit less full. Lighter and relieved. It is the alchemy your soul craves and feels cleansed by, if you dare take this emotional journey.

Exercise: View of Soul Pain

- ✓ What is bothering you deep down, in your life or work?
- ✓ What's something that still touches you when people bring it up?
- ✓ What needs to happen for you to feel lighter in life or work?

'Lost Soul and Possession of Soul'

The problem is often that your ego (which tends to be focused on your own comfort) will avoid, downplay and deny this pain if you're not aware of it. If this persists for a long time, it can degenerate into a 'lost soul' or 'possession of soul,' according to Russian psychiatrist Dr. Olga Kharitidi²⁸. We speak of a 'lost soul' when the soul has chosen to often be 'out of the body', in order to feel less pain. Depression, dissociation, lifeless or empty looking eyes (the mirrors of the soul) and an empty, nearly uninhabited body are often the result.

The other path the soul may have chosen is an overly alert, neurotic inhabitation of the body, as a fearful soul that keeps shivering on the inside ('possession of soul'). There is a deep-seated, slumbering unrest and fear of coming under threat again. Like you might totally lose it and throw admonitions at someone because they said you could do better. Your hypersensitive reaction may come from old, buried soul pain, for example:, because your dominant mother or father always told you others did better than you. The deeply buried misunderstanding of your soul creates a reservoir of pent-up disappointments and anger, which suddenly bursts when someone thinks you're not good enough.

28 Kharitidi, Olga. *Master of Lucid Dreams* (2003)

Regardless of which soul trauma you have, it will depress your energy levels, as it were, which will in turn dampen your vitality, strength, clarity and joy in life. Sometimes you will be aware of something pushing you down, but you don’t know what is causing it. In cases of severe traumatic experiences, it is advisable to seek professional help. This can be the ultimate opportunity, during your ‘dark night of the soul’, for you to get a good insight into your affairs, to heal, and to bring your energy level back up to normal.

Some experiences can touch your soul so deeply that they leave spiritual wounds. The soul pain has cut so deeply, you could speak of a ‘soul trauma.’ This often is pain that is so bad that it can no longer be dealt with, and it’s buried in the unconscious. You can see this in survivors of war, who have experienced severe traumas. It’s not just the pain that gets buried, but also memories, and a part of their vitality.

This can happen on an individual level, for example: after a bank robbery or following a bad experience with a superior that haunts you for a long time. But this can also happen on a collective level, for example: if the reason to be, or the land of your people has literally been taken away, or a pipeline is being constructed through your ancestors’ burial sites, causing their graves to be cleared.

Sometimes, you can see soul pain in the eyes of an infant. It looks as if that pain was acquired elsewhere, but is still coloring the soul. If we assume that your soul has known multiple lives, you may have made certain choices in the past, causing you to have to get right with this soul pain, in order to evolve as a soul. This is what many Buddhists and Hindus believe is karma, the law of cause and effect.

Regardless of the origin of the pain, the important thing is that you see it in yourself *now*, recognize it and start healing. With the consciousness you currently possess, you can heal old soul injuries, even those you acquired before you were born into this life.

During the healing process, your spirit serves you by way of forgiveness, tolerance, understanding, recognition and apologies, allowing your soul to heal. In Part Two, in paragraph 4.2, under ‘Healing Soul Pain,’ you can see the ten healing steps you can use to accomplish this.

4. Living Soul Joy

When the soul really gets room to be itself, it is very easy to see and experience: you will be enthusiastic, genuine, authentic, radiant, happy, vital, open, uninhibited and/or inspired. This is often contagious, and it is convincing and inspiring to see your soul participate fully in your activities.

Soul joy enters your existence more if you do what you enjoy and feel passionate about. For one person that means making lots of money, for others it means painting, making music, or just party. It can also be helping others, or contributing to a sustainable world. Whatever it is, when you follow your heart, more joy and inspiration will enter your life. So, follow your passion.

“

Do what your heart tells you, and you will experience more joy.

Joy cannot always be prescribed or planned – it will often ambush you instead. Remember moments when you spontaneously felt joyous? For example:, when you were approached in a super-friendly way by someone, when you saw a lovely bird fly past, or when you took time to admire the beautiful sunlight, when you were completely transported by a piece of music, or when you were just enjoying sitting in a bar with some friends. That's the spontaneous joy that every day can give you, provided you are open to it.

Apart from spontaneous moments, you might also have a bucket list of things you want to do or experience, maybe bungee jumping, traveling the world, seeing the Northern Lights, etc. A bucket list reflects a few of your desires. Fulfilling these wishes will give you (temporary) joy and a sweet, lasting memory.

✂ Exercise: View of Your Own Soulfulness

- ✓ Can you remember one of the most joyous experiences in your life?
- ✓ Where were you?
- ✓ What did your surroundings look like?
- ✓ What caught your eye in particular?
- ✓ What did you see yourself doing?
- ✓ What made you so happy?
- ✓ What can you do to experience this more often?

That's what makes you soulful!

5. Bringing Original Talents and Dreams to Life

Everyone appears to have been born with their own purpose. Everyone is born with original talents, which vary from person to person, and vary in intensity. One person may be great with material things and money, another is a musician or artist, and yet another is good at theorizing or cooking.

“

Some are born
- Jon Anderson²⁹

Everyone has a (hidden) mission and everyone, without exception, has something to offer: a *silent calling* to bring something to the table, born from the natural talent and passion you came to earth with. It doesn't matter what you do, but your soul wants to utilize these original, individual passions and talents. It is naturally imbued with creative qualities and wants to prove its right to exist and its talents. The soul is in that sense creative. The soul is a creative being that wants to express its own creativity and inborn natural talents.

²⁹ Lyrics from the song 'Some are born' from album 'Song of Seven' by Jon Anderson



The soul is a creative being that wants to express its own creativity and inborn natural talents.

According to the parable of talents in the Bible³⁰ using and expanding your talents are in fact divine deeds, which certainly are preferable over burying your talents, and not using them out of fear. On your mission, you wish to explicitly contribute to the development of society. What supports you in this is the building and realization of an individual vision, a dream of a future world that you long for, and how you ideally see yourself working and living in it. Like a stand-up comedian who visualizes a performance in a famous, sold-out venue, or a janitor, who feels good about seeing a clean and fresh bathroom. As a policymaker, you might see an image of a sustainable society without chimneys, made possible by the use of non-fossil fuels. The dream will then have a direction, so that you can focus on it with dedication, and subsequently realize it with strategy and actions. As Manfred Kets de Vries³¹ once said, a vision without action is a hallucination.

By the way, it is not like one is better than the other (like a leader versus a janitor). This is unadulterated nonsense, which the collective ego would like us to believe. From spirit, everything and everyone is equal, and we are all creators in our own right. The janitor makes as meaningful of a contribution as the leader, just in a different way, with a different impact.

A vision can therefore be very simple and can be practiced every day, and with it, you make a meaningful contribution to a better world in your unique way. An example: "Every day I will approach others with kindness!" Greeting people from this spirit quality often produces a better world around you than what the current ego leaders are wreaking. So don't underestimate your own presence and significance by comparing yourself to others, because that's all about your ego. Everyone has light to bring, without exception; so do you.

³⁰ Matthew: 25:14-30 New Testament. *The Parable of the Talents*.

³¹ Kets de Vries, M.F. *The CEO Whisperer* (2020)

If you want to contribute even more to a better world, you can broaden your vision, perhaps even globally. To realize your dream, you can then build a personal and professional vision as a compass to shape your career and life. But collective visions can also set a lot in motion. Just think of all the joint ideas in the field of sustainability and influencing the climate. However, if a shared vision has no spirit values, but is mainly out for collective ego gains, at the expense of another group in society, it can do a lot of damage and feed soul traumas. We may make a profit from arms production, including the banks that finance it, but this is at the expense of the lives of others. Just look at the wars and polarization that have resulted from it over the past centuries.

Perhaps you have other passions that you like to engage in, and where you can use your talents. Think of hobbies such as golf, cooking, listening to or making music, photography, dancing, etc. The instant you engage in these hobbies, you experience enthusiasm, inspiration and pleasure in your life more often, because following your passion often fuels your creativity, and releases a lot of positive energy.

In this section we have seen which five tasks your soul faces. If you now want to know how to deal with this optimally, go directly to Personal Soulful Leadership (Chapter 4, Part Two).

In addition to the ego and the soul, there is a third force that influences your personal leadership and all your choices, namely *spirit*. This is the only thing that contributes to *Spirited Personal Leadership*. Why? Because spirit means, among other things, that you are aware of your ego and soul, with everything that has been described above and with the benefits that you make real with this. But in addition to better direction, meaning and passion, it also contributes to more fulfillment, and also to peace, both within yourself and with others around you. But what is spirit, and what can you do with it?

Summary of Soul

The soul is an original, *individual* package of energy, consciousness, individuality, stored experiences and memories (joyful and painful), talents, desires and dreams.

The present life is nothing but a temporary school, that teaches life lessons to your soul. Not so much to gain more knowledge and skills, or to achieve successful achievements, but above all so that you learn from your life lessons and thus develop into a sincere, genuine and peaceful person, both for yourself and for others, and your (natural) environment.

Every soul, including yours, stands before five global existential tasks/wishes to realize this. In the second part of the book, you will be given five ways to help you to experience more meaning, passion, persistence and fun. By showing your colors, increasing your independence, healing your soul pain, activating your soul joy, using your original talents and bringing your dreams to life.

Benefits of a Conscious Soul

What benefits does it bring you if you activate your soul optimally? There are quite a few: your life and work become more meaningful; you feel more vital; you are 'yourself', 'genuine', and "what you see is what you get"; you experience more joy and pleasure; your work leads to more success because of your inspiration; your relationships are deepened and strengthened; dreams come to life and your talents blossom more. This is explained in Part Two, under Spirited Personal Leadership of your soul.

Summary of Spirit

Spirit is the force of consciousness that ensures an optimally 'managed' ego, an activated and dosed soul, and for much more that enriches your work and life.

Spirit is, among other things, characterized by:

1. All-encompassing consciousness;
2. Universal driving force of life & natural cycles;
3. Life, unconditional love & neutrality;
4. Awareness of abundance & willingness to share;
5. No time limits, development or management, but free will and here-and-now;
6. Equality & equal rights;
7. Acceptance of polarities;
8. Truth of the heart;
9. Unity, source, interconnection & synchronicity.

Benefits of Spirit

With spirit you are more aware of the functioning of your ego and soul, and you can make conscious choices. You can fulfill the five tasks of your soul, so that you experience more meaning, vitality and pleasure. If you allow more spirit, you will also experience more rest, connection and peace in your life and work. How?

Through Personal Spirited Leadership, which you will find in Chapter 5 of Part Two. You will receive insights and exercises that help you realize this, namely by taking one or more of the ten actions, including practicing *heartfulness*, experiencing and using synchronicity, allowing intuition and hunches, striving for sincerity, equality and truth and being open to the support of 'spiritual' allies.

Part 2

**Practicing
Spirited
Personal
Leadership**



3.3 Summary of Personal Ego Leadership

To take charge of your own ego in order to make it work optimally, you must be able to recognize too little and too much ego in yourself. In addition, you must be able to identify the presence of your own ego passengers, such as your pleaser, perfectionist, pusher or inner protector or strategist. But recognizing alone is not enough. Acknowledging your ego is a condition for being able to dose it. Also allow yourself to experience your ego passengers, and ultimately make a conscious choice, while not being guided by your fear. Below you can see point by point how you can do this.

Recognizing Too Little Ego

1. Decreased chance of survival;
2. Insufficient protection;
3. Too little strategic action;
4. Unmet own needs;
5. Reduced adaptability;
6. Invisibility;
7. Substandard performance.

Recognizing Too Much Ego

1. Predator
2. Wall
3. Greedy child
4. Chameleon
5. Chest pounder
6. Ruler
7. Rat
8. Beggar

1. Recognize Your Own Ego Passengers

Recognize your pleaser, perfectionist, pusher, patriarch, strategist, being side, inner child, rebel, etc. by:

1. Recognizing characteristics of ego passengers;
2. Feedback, questionnaires and assessments;
3. Strong judgments about yourself;
4. Allergies and admirations;
5. Missteps;
6. Slips of the tongue;

7. Physical signals;
8. Dreams;
9. Autobiography.

2. Acknowledge Your Ego

Recognize your ego defense mechanisms: repression, denial, justification, trivialization and projection. Those who do not want to hear must feel later (the cosmic boomerang).

3. Experience What Ego Does to You and Others

Allow feelings and emotions to exist and give yourself time to muse.

4. Manage Your Ego by Choice

1. Use free will.
2. Feel powerful and vulnerable at the same time.
3. Make a choice.
4. Cross the threshold of unfamiliarity, tension or fear.
5. Surrender.
6. Evaluate and learn.

Practice Personal Leadership of Your Ego through Management of Your Ego Passengers

Developing a new balance, in order to form a more effective ego, can be done, among other things, by applying Voice Dialogue:

- A. Taking space and distance from your primary ego passengers, such as you pleaser, perfectionist, pusher, patriarch, strategist, being side, inner child, rebel, etc.
- B. Inviting and strengthening your secondary sides.
Which secondary sides can you invite for a new ego balance?
 1. Your rational side versus your predator;
 2. The open, vulnerable side versus the wall;
 3. The limiting parent versus the greedy child;
 4. The truth-teller versus the chameleon;
 5. The vulnerable, failing and permissive side versus the chest pounder;
 6. The pleaser versus the ruler;
 7. The transparent, honest side versus the rat;
 8. The giver versus the beggar.

4.2. Activate and Dose Your Soul

How do you optimally activate and dose your soul, so that you can enjoy all the benefits of that soul, including more vitality, individuality, enthusiasm, independence and meaning?

These can really become a bigger part of your life, but then you have to know how they work with you. The four keys to self-reflection offer you a solution, just as you saw in the chapter on Personal Leadership about your ego, namely:

1. Recognize
2. Acknowledge
3. Experience
4. Choose

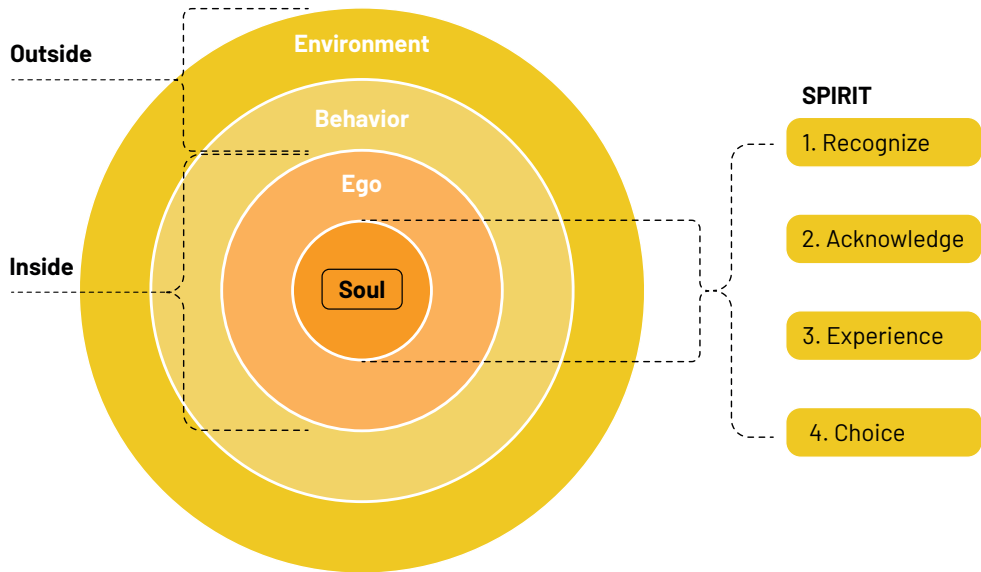


Figure 4.1 Model Spirited Personal Leadership™: Soul under the Microscope

Recognizing Your Own Passion: Too Little, Too Much, Dosed

In order to estimate whether you can do something to make your life and/or work more inspiring, you need to know whether you experience too little, too much or correctly dosed passion. How do you recognize that?

How Do I Recognize Too *Little* Passion?

If you are less inspired for a longer period of time, you can recognize this by:

1. **Automatism & routine:** If your individuality does not participate and you make your choices mainly dependent on what (you think) others, whether or not in your immediate environment, ask of you, you are a plaything of those others. You routinely work from the idea "I work to put food on the table, that's all." We do also need that healthy piece of ego, but what if this is the only thing? Then you quickly become a robot who is not really happy.
2. **Victim Role:** If you are unable to activate your own soul, you may simply dwell in victimhood longer than is desirable or necessary. Self-pity and a powerless, helpless feeling, or resignation, then take you over. Because you place the blame, or a share of why you are feeling bad, on the other person, you think that not *you* should change, but *that other person* definitely should. Also if your soul has been deeply touched by others. If you continue to live in your old soul pain, you will not let go of the nagging discontent. It is then time to get up and move forward, unless you want to continue sleeping in victimhood.
3. **Mental preoccupation & no discernible heart:** If you strongly identify yourself with your IQ ("I am very intelligent!"), your rational side and mental capacities, you will usually go far in life in terms of achievements or (relative) social success. But if this makes it so it's difficult for you to *feel*, so you do not know what you *really* want, and it makes you push away vulnerability, such as incompetence, failures or painful experiences, then you lose touch with life. And you miss what you as a soul can learn from life by feeling and experiencing. You are then less accessible and touch others less, as a result of your predominantly rational presence.
4. **Not feeling at home in your own body:** Sometimes your soul has been through such intense injuries, that it no longer feels safe to be in the here-and-now. Your soul then subconsciously chooses to 'feel less discomfort or touch', and you leave your body, so to speak. You see this, for example:, in threatening situations. When you step out of your body for a while, you don't feel much. However, this can

degenerate into a longer period of upheaval, if your soul feels unsafe for a longer time. According to psychiatrist Dr. Olga Kharitidi, this is a phenomenon also known as *lost soul*, where your soul doesn't actually live in your body, as it were. This is characterized by depression, being lost, and off one's soul path. Your body is then just kind of an empty shell. I literally experienced this while physically embracing someone and it felt cold, energetically distant, misunderstood and boundless.

5. **No individuality:** Your own desire, your opinion, your arguments and your limits are not given any space if your soul, your individuality, is absent. Your own color in everything is then not visible, audible or tangible and your real thoughts and feelings do not come out. It's easy to let others trump you, even if you don't actually agree with them. You also let others or authorities determine the course of your own life and work.
6. **Not experiencing meaning or added value:** If you do not experience meaning or added value, you can quickly end up in an existential crisis. In that case you experience no, or insufficient, satisfaction from what you have to offer the world and the people around you. From spirit, of course, everything is meaningless and meaningful at the same time, and meaning does not matter. According to non-dualism, that emptiness and meaninglessness are precisely the gateway to consciousness and enlightenment. Only, in addition to spirit, there is also your soul, which seems to have no place in non-dualism. That soul has to learn and grow here on earth. And, every person has equal value, and is therefore also of added value for the development of everything! That is why it is important to know and recognize your soul. And to activate it, so that it becomes clearer what your *raison d'être* and mission are here on earth.
7. **Lack of Dedication, Enthusiasm and Energy:** When your soul becomes less involved in your life for a while, you experience rapid chronic fatigue and a decrease in energy and pleasure. You can hardly get excited about something that could normally ignite your soul flame, and go to work with difficulty, rather than whistling. Your appearance is dull, while you are less visible socially and you go through life like a gray mouse.

In short, how do you recognize whether there is little passion in your life or work?

1. Automatism & routine;
2. Victim role;
3. Mental preoccupation & no discernible heart;
4. Not feeling at home in your own body;
5. No individuality;
6. Not experiencing meaning or added value;
7. Lack of dedication, enthusiasm and energy.

How Do I Recognize Too Much Passion?

If your soul is out-of-control for a longer period of time, you can recognize this from, among other things, the three characteristics that you saw in the previous section, namely:

1. Lack of a healthy brake;
2. Compartmentalized and uncoordinated;
3. Fundamentalist fanaticism.

How Do I Recognize Dosed and Effective Passion?

How do you notice that your soul participates in a dosed and optimal way?

1. You have a touchable & protected heart;
2. You feel and share strength and vulnerability;
3. You are at home in your own body;
4. You show individuality, aligned within appropriate boundaries;
5. You experience and share inspiration;
6. You feel and heal soul pain;
7. You experience and express joy of the soul;
8. You experience meaning or added value.

1. You Have a Touchable & Protected Heart

The soul is only there when you are in touch with your heart. That's makes it so you are always in touch with what feels good and what doesn't. The pipeline with your heart is just more open. Compare it to when you are sad about something that is coming your way, because it is close to your heart. This may have to do with painful experiences you have had, or with your own or someone else's health, but also with what is happening in and with the world. You feel both the individual and collective pain of yourself or others. And because you feel pain in your heart, natural and genuine compassion can grow out of this acknowledged and felt pain.

Also think about that moment, for example:, when you really stop to think about an orphaned child, somewhere in the world, that is about to starve to death. This is true compassion, and not the compassion that you learned from books or courses. That real compassion is only there if you keep your heart open. Moreover, with this tangibility, your connections get much more depth and fulfillment. In this way you maintain contact in an essential way regarding things that really matter, and that mutually reinforce human dignity.

But you also don't want to let too much negativity or pain get into your system, so it's in your best interest to protect your heart, especially if you're highly sensitive and don't want to get upset. Then, for example:, you turn on the TV less often, to be less influenced by N.E.W.S. (which I sometimes say stands for Negative Energy Worldwide Spread). Or you distance yourself at a young age from bullies. Or you avoid negative stimuli, for example: from victims, complainants and perpetrators who are stuck in their roles. For example:, you visit that one particular acquaintance less often, because you are always running on empty every time you say goodbye these days. Or you sit by yourself more often if colleagues continue to complain day after day. If the ego of another person has identified with the victim, the complainant or the perpetrator for a longer period of time, then that starts a structural *energy drain*. But don't let yourself be drained energetically. In such a case, protect your soul from negative or painful comments or experiences.

However, a touchable heart does not only mean that you let yourself be touched by selective doom and gloom. An open heart also means that you let in a lot of positive feelings, and your life takes on a new color! You allow yourself to be influenced more often and more easily by the soul of nature or by that of music, or by the soul of others. Think of a beautiful sunset or a boat trip on a lake while you hear the silence. Or music that touches the strings of your soul and moves you. The homecoming of your soul when meeting soulmates can also be a breath of fresh air. Joy gets more space, and you enjoy life more in fun and love. You literally see yourself smiling or laughing more and you feel lighter and lifted, touched or passionate. You feel more passion and notice that you are alive and have more energy. In short, you are in love with life again.



In Love with Life Again!

2. You Feel and Share Strength and Vulnerability

If you keep in touch with your heart and remain touchable, you allow for space to feel, share and possibly heal your vulnerability. The danger with too little dosage of your soul is that you may lose yourself in that vulnerability and forget your strength.

The power of your soul tells you, among other things, what you do and don't want; it ensures that you fight for your sovereignty, that you dare to confront others with your truth; it sets limits to what does not feel right for your soul, and you make more choices from your soul. If you keep in touch with both your strength and your vulnerability, as in encounters with others, you embrace both polarities, which makes you complete. A conscious soul is always, to a greater or lesser degree, in touch with both your strength and your vulnerability.



*A conscious soul is always in touch
with both your strength and your vulnerability.*

3. You Are at Home in Your Own Body

A soul feels at home as soon as you are literally and figuratively comfortable in your own skin, as if your soul is sitting in a comfortable armchair in your own body. You do not often feel like you are floating or daydreaming, or that you are halfway out of your body. You are focused, down-to-earth, grounded and feel everything from head to toe. Many Buddhists and Eckhart Tolle also refer to this as 'presence'. Your body gives concrete form, with hands and feet, to what animates you and serves, as it were, as a vehicle for your soul, like when you make a dream come true.

Your body is a magnificent indicator of all kinds of experiences. For example:, you sometimes notice that your throat feels like it is being squeezed, you feel your heart beating faster or slower, you have a rock in your stomach, feel a heavy burden on your neck and shoulders, butterflies in your stomach, an empty head, etc. These physical signals indicate precisely whether something is good for your soul or not.

4. You Show Individuality, Tuned within Appropriate Boundaries

If your soul participates in a dosed way, you stand up for what inspires you, for what your desires are, and you recognize what (still) hurts you. You are also letting others hear the deeper, true voice of your soul. You share what you care about or what you really want. You just make sure that you don't keep taking up all the space at the expense of others. You are aware that you can go overboard with your own point of view or opinion, and the actions that result from it. So, you pull the brake on time.

The sacrifice you have to make is that you may be less likely to understand what your soul wants. The pace of soul development may become slightly slower. But in the end, you really do share yourself, in a way that avoids all the drawbacks of too little or too much inspiration. And with that, your soul is ultimately more effective in its development into a true, sincere and peaceful human being.

5. You Feel and Share Inspiration

Your soul is active in a positive way as soon as you feel inspiration. Think about when you last felt inspired, perhaps today or last week. Was that because of a piece of music, because of an insight when you were walking in nature, or just when you sat still for a while? Because of a certain text that touched you and gave you something extra? Or something a comedian said? Maybe a pet inspired you? Anything can inspire your soul, really, if you just open yourself up to it. By the way, what inspires you can change just like that. Something you used to be passionate about can now leave you indifferent or be neutral to you. And vice versa.

I was once inspired by words from an interview with British artist Peter Gabriel⁶⁶. He was allowed to ask his audience one question himself, and the question he asked was "How can you leave a better world behind than the one you've entered?" It hit me like a cannonball of inspiration. I was instantly *uplifted* and the phrase kept singing in my mind for days afterwards. That's what inspiration, and food for your soul, do. When I passionately shared this inspiration with a few clients, I noticed that most of them also were impacted by it.

66 Peter Gabriel. *The Red Couch Interview* (1999)

“

*How can you leave a better world behind
than the one you've entered?*
- Peter Gabriel

6. You Feel and Heal Soul Pain

Part of everyone's learning experience is gaining deeply felt experiences in order to learn from them. To learn about your emotions, thoughts, images and sensations, so that you come to new insights and choices. These can be both fun and painful experiences. Dealing with a hurt heart is a college level art. It's not easy.

A conscious soul recognizes that pain, feels and acknowledges it, and then does something about it. And that often means emotional tightrope walking, as soul pain quickly triggers old emotions that challenge you to keep your distance from yourself. It challenges you not to lose yourself in your own emotions, and unnecessarily increase drama in yourself. To relieve yourself of the heaviness of buried soul pain, you must heal it. Below you will see how to do that.

“

Dealing with a hurt heart is a college level art.

7. You Experience and Express Soul Joy

When you let your soul speak more, you work and live with dedication, with passion for what you do. Your dreams come to life more, because you dose the right ego passengers to make those dreams come true. However, passion alone does not get you there. It has been found that with perseverance and an effective ego, you have a better chance of actually achieving your dreams. After all, your original talents are more important for your career development than what others want to see or can put to good use from you.

Because you do what makes you happy and gives you energy more often, you will feel more vital and more will come from your hands. Your enthusiasm is contagious for

others and activates the inspiration of the people around you without it being noticed.

8. You Experience Meaning or Added Value

A soul that is in the right place, and that actually walks its soul path more often, experiences a meaningful role in the world, however small or large. You know that you add value to the lives or work of others, or to your natural environment. That meaning, or giving meaning, releases a lot of energy. Everyone has an individual mission, a kind of 'calling' to realize what they mean to themselves, others and the environment. Everyone is cut out for something.

“

Everyone is cut out for something.

—

In order to be able to carry out that individual mission, it is extremely useful to recalibrate an individual vision for the coming months/years. That way you don't have to keep wandering, if your soul compass has been spinning for years.

Acknowledging Too Little or Too Much Soul

You now know how to *recognize* too little, too much or just dosed passion. Once you've done this, you'll move on to the next step, just like with leadership over your ego. And that is *acknowledging* what's going on with you *deep down*. Because activation of your soul often has an emotional intensity and asks for ego sacrifices (such as giving up a previously won privilege), fear often kicks in and your ego defense mechanisms suddenly become active. These are the mechanisms mentioned in the first part for ego: repression, denial, trivialization, justification and projection. These mechanisms can even be so strong that even if you see that you want things to be different, you still stick with the old.

You can only properly dose the functioning of your soul if you *recognize* too little or too much passion, but also *acknowledge* it! Let go of your ego for a while and look at yourself sincerely, let the truth of your heart speak, and dare to be vulnerable. By making these ego sacrifices you create the opportunity for your soul to shine more. But then, you (your ego) sometimes must eat dirt.

Experiencing the Soul

Personal Leadership of your soul requires that you allow experiences, because the soul learns and grows through feelings, emotions and emerging insights. Clear analytical insights about yourself or others from your rational side or psychological knower, from your ego alone, are not enough. If you are not used to it, it can be quite a step to enter the realm of feelings, emotions and physical sensations. But it is a necessary step.

By experiencing feelings and emotions you make deeper contact with life possible to the fullest. Then you can enjoy a conversation, a babbling brook, a beautiful text, a piece of music or a rising sun. You undoubtedly know the difference when you walk alone, in your head (full of thoughts about a problem), through a forest, then come out of the forest and wonder where you have been for the past hour. Or you might have a very different experience, for example: when you smell the pine trees, see the blue sky with the passing clouds, hear a bird and feel the wind on your skin as you walk. That can be a very refreshing, lively experience and, out of nowhere, a solution may suddenly come up in your head as an answer to a problem. And by the way, you can do this not only in nature, but also while walking through the hallways at your workplace. And when something has touched your soul, it often lingers in your mind for a long time. You can still enjoy it for days or sometimes even years afterwards. How beautiful is that? Live and work with passion.

This means that you make space for your own vulnerability, but also for your own will and power. You consciously make room for what is important to your heart and allow yourself to feel moods such as sadness, anger, joy, pleasure, relief, shame, guilt, etc. You carry all this within yourself, as Jeff Foster⁶⁷ so powerfully expresses and shows in his seminars, where self-acceptance is practiced so sincerely. Don't run away from your vulnerability and don't choose distractions every time. Time shifts everything and gives you the insights you can use to move on.

67 Foster, J. *The Deepest Acceptance: Radical Awakening in Ordinary Life Paperback* (2017)

Imagine that both you and your conversation partner experience passion. Then you actually make a more sincerely felt connection with the other person. That is something that also benefits some professional relations, organizations and multinationals, because empathy and 'touching' or motivating each other play a bigger role. Imagine that you approach your business relations without any fine tuning or empathy with your customer. There is a good chance that you will attract fewer customers than you could, unless you really connect and listen to the other person from a position of truthfulness and interest, like Apple founder Steve Jobs⁶⁸ did. His starting point for technological development was not the latest technological innovations that came onto the market, but *customer experience*. That meant really listening to what the customer wanted, and then making a product to fill that need, for which you may need or develop innovative technology. In short, through your emotional world, you can strengthen your connection with others and your environment, and contribute to more business success.

Choice to Activate Inspiration

After you have recognized, acknowledged and experienced too much or too little passion in yourself, you are faced with the *choice* to activate your passion: rekindling your soul's flame!

How do you do that with too little or too much inspiration?

As with personal leadership of your ego, the following is asked of you:

- ✓ Use your free will and feel powerful and vulnerable at the same time.
- ✓ Take action: step over the threshold of unfamiliarity, tension or fear.
- ✓ Surrender.
- ✓ Evaluate and learn.

Let's first look at what you can do if you experience too little inspiration.

How to Activate Passion when There Is a Shortage of It?

If you have not been very passionate for a while, what do you do to activate your passion? There are at least five ways:

1. Show your colors;
2. Increase independence;
3. Heal your soul pain;
4. Activate your soul joy;
5. Live your original talents and bring dreams to life.

⁶⁸ Steve Jobs. Presentation Steve Jobs at Stanford Commencement Address (2005)

1. Show Your Colors

‘Just’ be yourself. What do you *really* think, even if it goes against everyone else’s opinion? What are you naturally very good at? What do you see and hear yourself doing when your natural individuality is given more space?

In addition to recognizing and acknowledging, expressing these soul stirrings and talents is particularly important here. How? By expressing all the events, experiences and thoughts, feelings and emotions that bring you pleasure and pain. And by making what you really think heard more often, at the risk of being rejected or banned by others (ego sacrifice).

Why is it Important to Express Your Soul?

You then share what is really going on *deep-down* inside you, which often brings relief and extra support for you from those you share it with. But it encompasses much more, because expressing what is on your heart and mind is balm for your soul. It helps you to be seen sooner by others. Through this deeper, and real, visibility, you connect with what really matters to you. You feel closer to yourself *and* the other when you share your soul’s emotions. You often feel warmed, and then it turns out that everyone can be family (and actually already was). So close. Your contacts are pure, real and intense.

“

Everyone is family.

Only sometimes you do not dare to take this step, because your own ego (and the associated social desirability) is holding you back. You may feel ashamed, which is simply an ego coup from your inner critic. An example: “I choose blue, while everyone else chooses red. I am ashamed to call myself ‘blue’ in front of everyone, because I am the only one and can be looked at as an apostate. But actually, I like blue better.” If you dare to say that, and don’t let your inner critic get you down, then you show your true colors. And maybe there are more things that you are ashamed of, but that you do not always dare to say.

However, if you think you are the only one, you're wrong. Because, for example:, the most intimate and personal, is at the same time the most universal. And so, it occurs in all people to a greater or lesser extent.

“

*The most intimate and personal is
at the same time the most universal.*

It may also be that you don't really share something, because you don't want to burden the other person with your troubles (ego coup by your pleaser). In that case, personal leadership of your ego can support you to let your soul speak, so that you do not keep falling into these ego traps.

In short, expressing what really goes on inside you sometimes has its price. Sometimes it is not socially desirable. In that case, others can lose the privileges they have with you, and reject you. This sacrifice often evokes fear, so that the choice to show your colors is ultimately not made. As we see in the selection steps, sooner or later you will come to a point where you have to cross over this fear threshold. In the previous part, in Personal Leadership of your ego, you saw how you can deal with this.

By really expressing yourself, you give yourself and the other person the chance to really get to know you, but not in a socially desirable way. 'What you see is what you get', because you don't use ego filters, but let your real self speak, just like you see among children that are six years old or younger. Because you show yourself in an essential way, you are less likely to be ignored in the long run, so that the chance of victimization also decreases and you come into your own! Or even better, your soul is listened to and taken into account, as happened to Janet.

“

Show yourself, you know who you are!

Practical example: Showing Your Colors

During a Personal Leadership course, there was a female chemical engineer from an industrial company named Janet, who was unhappy. Actually, she had been unhappy for a year and a half already. She looked dull, and considered looking for an outside position through HR.

During a visualization exercise, she envisioned herself bobbing merrily in a small boat in the middle of the ocean. When I asked her to explain what made her feel so good, she quickly said "Freedom!" I asked her to name three concrete areas where she would like to experience more freedom, and she said "More authorization to service large suppliers (which had previously been reduced to a lower amount), more external vocational training or conferences, and more important business instead of routine tasks due to lack of capacity because of long-term illnesses of colleagues."

I asked her what it would be like if she told her boss with full enthusiasm that she really needed this to happen, and that otherwise there would be no good prospects for her at this company. Her supervisor listened and within six weeks the desired changes were made, allowing her to continue working in an adjusted position, with new joy and challenges.

Personal story: Show Yourself

In the summer of 2013 I attended a powwow near Pyramid Lake in Nevada, USA. A powwow is a cultural gathering where Native American identity is celebrated. During a powwow, members of different tribes come together to dance, make music and meet old friends.

It was striking that everything went in circles, that all generations participated and that the older generation was approached with extra respect. As soon as the words “The People of the Golden Age” blared from the speakers, everyone stood in reverence for the older generation. That was a bit different from what I sometimes experience, where the elderly are more likely to be seen as a burden, and shunned by younger peers. What also struck me was that when announcing the next generation of dancers, the speaker (announcer) uttered the following words, “Show Yourself, you know who you are!” This invitation of everyone’s individuality nicely colored in the diversity, as I saw literally and figuratively in these powwows, among other events.

These words resonated deeply with me, also because of the way they were expressed with respect, strength and love. It was a total recognition that everyone can be and show themselves!

2. Increasing Independence

Another person has power over you if you allow yourself to be made dependent. Even when you think you are really dependent on another for a while, you can feel free and make yourself free. Like Nelson Mandela found freedom in prison.

“

Another has power over you if you allow yourself to be made dependent.

What makes you dependent is the attachment to your *own expectations and demands* that others can or must fulfill for you. In exchange, you give those others control,

authority or direction of your life. People often use power to meet their own (ego) needs, or those of their select group, according to preference. And others often allow themselves to be made dependent, in exchange for, for example:, money, including their first or second mortgage, material goods, luxury, status, comfort, etc.

Let's look at how ego programming unconsciously directs people's lives and makes them dependent on others.

Take, for example:, the statement "If you give me a lot of money, I'll give you sex," as an unconscious relationship contract. Suppose you make yourself dependent on spending a lot of money, wanting more and more expensive things. The other person can then demand sex whenever they want, and with that they have more power over your life. You have then relinquished your own power and let yourself be made dependent.

"I'll give you a reservation so you can have your own land, and we agree in the contract that you'll never whine about anything more or anything else. And we also agree that we can do whatever we want with national affairs, such as oil pipelines. Even clear your holy graves, if it suits us best."

If your own grandfather or grandmother or other family is buried there, would you do it? If you stand for your freedom as a soul, and do not allow this power, for example: by not accepting strangulation contracts, you increase your independence.

"I will give you a lot of salary and bonuses, so as a boss I get to decide what I do with you." Many people continue to work under such leaders with this ego programming, in exchange for privileges, including a high salary or lucrative bonuses. For example:, a vice president of a bank once told me, during a course I was teaching, that he had to step out of the course for a while because of an annual bonus that he could easily buy a second home with. And most people don't want to miss this ego privilege. They prefer to stay in the golden cage, which is also a cage for the soul.

“

The soul is always imprisoned in a golden cage.

For example:, I once spoke to Apple employees from Silicon Valley, CA, who lived in San Francisco. One of their quotes: "You can hardly manage to buy a house here anymore, but I have more than enough. No worries. It's just that I work hard and we only get fourteen days off in a year!" He also told me "I have a job and I am rich, but I have no life."

“

I have a job and I am rich, but I have no life.

To this day I find it strange that for centuries many of us have become unwittingly dependent on banks, or on rich people. Why? Because with our ego we want to have more than we actually have and can afford. Many banks are still cleverly responding to this global ego-market need, making millions of people dependent in the process. And those banks themselves depend on a few extremely wealthy families.

What do we want more of? A bigger or renovated house, a vacation or second home, one or even two cars, etc.? And then you become a modern slave to the financial system, which has only grown over the past millennia. We then have to work very hard to meet all our demands, become gloomy, overworked or end up in burnout, as I often see in my work with clients. And gone is the personal leadership over your life. But why? Because most do it that way? You see, that is your ego, and not your soul, which naturally wants its own freedom to really live. There is nothing wrong with a temporary loan to get something you want or, for example:, need for your children, but just make sure that you do not relinquish control of your life as a result.

Grounds for Existence and Authority

To actually give the freedom of your soul space on earth, you need a life basis: your own ground for existence and a territory where you are free to shape your own laws, ideologies and traditions.

And that is easy to achieve for everyone in the world, because there is enough space for everyone. Until? Simply put, until one person believes themselves entitled to more land, more powers, or more privileges than you. For any reason. This ego conviction was born some five millennia ago, during the first agricultural practices in Mesopotamia, as Peter Toonen shows after thorough historical research in his book 'Locked in a Pyramid'.⁶⁹

Much later, more and more people or groups of people, started to make historical claims on their land, arguing for example: "I was here first, I belong to the chosen people who have a right to this land," or "this has been my holy ground for centuries, and therefore I have more rights to it than anyone else." Sometimes they bring in religion and religious scriptures to claim this. Then one is using religion for the benefit of oneself or a select preferred group, but at the expense of others. This is nothing but (spiritual) ego and contributes to further separation instead of unification. However, when spirit comes through, you will act like a good Samaritan who actually helps his so-called enemy, as you can read in the Gospel of Luke⁷⁰. The story tells of a man's journey from Jerusalem to Jericho, where he is robbed and left for dead. A priest and Levite pass by him, but ignore him. Then one of his so-called enemies comes along, a Samaritan. He takes the man to the inn, tends to his wounds, and gives the innkeeper money to allow the man to heal for weeks. Spirit makes no difference between friend and foe, or chosen ones or not. Everyone is chosen from spirit.

“

Everyone is chosen.

69 Toonen, Peter. *Opgesloten in een Pyramide* (2018)

70 Bible: Luke: (10:25-37): *The Parable of the Good Samaritan*.

Sovereignty for Everyone

'I and the other', 'friend and foe', 'believer and apostate' are just ego stigmas, with which you can connect yourself with soul and bliss, and even holiness. Suppose we all choose to let go of our own and everybody's history for once! And to do it differently than in recent years and millennia. And make room for everyone. This means that previously taken and self-justifying privileges and claims to power or land must be relinquished. However, if you have gained more power in recent years, centuries or millennia, that is a spiritual challenge and choice that you face as a ruler. And then it simply comes down to ego, or to mercy for your fellow man, who actually has the same wishes as you.

When you are in power, you can contribute to everyone's sovereignty by stopping the *perpetuation* of an unequal balance of power. Because that is always at the expense of the other and leads to initiation or continuation of conflict or war. And you are responsible for that yourself.

If you are the *underdog* in the power relationship, then stand up for your own land and your own powers to express what inspires you. If you feel shortchanged in this, because a ruler overwhelms you with his demands, it does not do justice to your existential right, and that of every other soul, to live in freedom. That means you must bring this injustice to the light, and choose to express this. You then make your wish known permanently and share the injustice with others to get support until a choice is made, whereby all souls can coexist peacefully. And not just for yourself or your own people, or your own nation. That is (individually or collectively) selfish and does not contribute to the optimal connection between all people.

3. Healing Soul Pain

To allow your soul to come into its own optimally, you can 'clear up internally' what has been nagging you as emotional pain for years. Ask yourself: What's been on your mind for a long time? What still hurts your heart? What sticks to you as bad memories? What loss has not yet found a peaceful place in you? What in yourself has not yet been cleared up?

As we saw with the soul earlier in this book, we also go through painful experiences. But why? Because it is a profound way to learn and grow. We can only experience cold if we know about warmth, and vice versa. That means that in addition to joy, we also know and experience pain. If it were absent, you would learn and grow less as a soul. Moreover, pain is the other side of the medal of love. The drummer Neil Peart of the Canadian rock band

Rush writes in his autobiography “Travels on the Healing Road”⁷¹ about the tragic loss of his only daughter and shortly afterwards, within a year, due to a serious illness, that of his wife. (According to some, her soul wanted to be with her daughter.) To give everything a place, he decides to travel alone on his motorcycle for months. In one of his diary entries he writes: “There’s no love without pain.” For several years he was unable to make music, but then he picked up his drumsticks again and with incredible dedication, passion and visible fragility he came back purified and renewed. When you read his book, you feel that not suppressing his pain, but allowing and experiencing it in addition to continuing to progress, gave him healing and purification.



There’s no love without pain.
– Neil Peart

What kind of soul pain can you experience? First, emotional pain that continues to nag you, for example: because you have been betrayed; the promotion that was promised to you is suddenly denied; you have been passed over by your colleagues or supervisors; you are dismissed one year before your retirement after thirty years of employment; you have been abandoned; they have taken money or land from you; they have hurt your friends or family, or worse, murdered, etc...

Wherever the pain comes from, it contaminates your life and well-being. Everyone’s heart is sometimes overshadowed by dark thoughts and feelings. Only, before you know it, your heart is turning black and the problem is staying with you. The good news is that you really can make a choice!

⁷¹ Peart, N. *Ghost Rider: Travels on the Healing Road* (2002)

Either you linger in victimhood or complaints, and poison your own soul, or you go to work and tackle the arrows of pain that once struck your heart. Moreover, tackling your soul pain is an excellent opportunity to enlighten yourself. Because not letting go of old pain strengthens that karma, and also delays growth and development as a soul into a true, sincere and peaceful human being.



Either you linger in victimhood or complaints, and poison your own soul, or you go to work and tackle the arrows of pain that once struck your heart.

As you read about the soul earlier in this book, the solution is to go to the pain in a measured, safe way and to allow and express anger, shame and sadness, so that the pain can evaporate like raindrops, and your soul baggage feels a bit lighter. Lighter and relieved. It is the alchemy that the soul craves and it feels purified when you dare to embark on this emotional journey.

Dealing with soul pain, as with any decision, requires recognition, acknowledgment and experience of the pain. Then, you need the following, nuanced choices to apply and heal your pain. Which steps will help you on your way to feeling better and freer and to true purification of your soul?

The Ten Healing Steps

1. Go to and define the pain.
2. Acknowledge the pain.
3. Experience, accept and bear the pain.
4. Express or release the pain through ceremony.
5. Air your heart out and ask for the right support.
6. Learn from the experience and take responsibility.
7. Forgive yourself and the perpetrator.
8. Let go of everything. Pass it off. Surrender.
9. Wish for the new and good in the future.
10. Celebrate the new life and move on.

1. Go To and Define the Pain

The first courageous dive into the deep end that is asked of you is to go to the pain, which does make you feel uncomfortable temporarily. Or, as Jung says: “Where your fear is, there is your task.” Our ego often helps protect us from pain. We see this in societies where the ego has taken over. We don’t let ourselves be rained on, and provide warm clothing and shelter, but we miss the liveliness of ‘singing in the rain’. We heat our food with microwaves to eat quickly, while vital nutrients are lost. We prefer a warm shower, but we then miss the vibrance that cold water gives us. Many of us have learned about convenience and comfort, removing discomfort from being a part of personal well-being, vitality and growth.



Many of us have learned about convenience and comfort, removing discomfort from being a part of personal well-being, vitality and growth.

Temporary avoidance of emotional pain is extremely healthy and functional, especially in the beginning, like with the death of a loved one. Your ego comes to your rescue through disbelief or denial. This helps you in the beginning, to not experience too much pain at once, and to arrange necessary matters rationally. However, if you hold on to comfort for a long time, the pain will keep coming back and contaminating your well-being, because it has not been given enough space to heal naturally. In short, *going to the emotional pain is necessary to heal.*

Imagine that as a child you gave a lot to your parents and relatives, but got hardly anything in return. For example:, you helped them with odd jobs, fulfilled their wishes, lent them money that you never got back, or you had parents who, despite your good attitude, paid more attention to others than to you. Before you know it, you feel ignored, and treated unequally and unfairly. And then you get depressed, because you don’t know if you’re allowed to exist, or if you even matter.

This existential doubt is a deep soul pain, with the result that you close yourself off from others who could hurt you. Your ego with your inner protector and warrior put up a wall, so that you can be hurt less in the present, but they also make you less accessible and reachable. You may even develop a hostile attitude, if you interpret the behavior of others as unequal or unjust. Like when your partner goes away for a while and you have closed yourself off in cold rage upon their return because they aren't paying enough attention to you. You have then interpreted the absence of your partner as a lack of attention for you, which immediately triggers the old pain of a bad experience from the past, when you were abandoned by a parent or ex-partner, for example:. All the buried emotions associated with those unpleasant experiences suddenly reappear in the here-and-now. To prevent this pattern from recurring, you must first make sure that the old pain is healed, to take the fuel away and put it where it belongs. And that demands that you go to that old pain.

You may have experienced very different things than these examples, but every house has its own worries. As a soul, you too have 'buried pain' to a greater or lesser extent, which is responsible for a number of your (less effective or sometimes dysfunctional) behaviors, which can disrupt relationships in business and in private.

In order to define the pain, you must first dare to go there. The starting point is often sadness or anger about something that has happened just now or recently. For example:, a boss who short changes you at work, a friend who betrays you, or a sister who enriches herself at your expense. In an instant, that produces an enormously explosive spark of anger or intense sadness, and there is a good chance that it will touch on 'the silent or buried sadness', or the pent-up anger or sadness that you have accumulated in your life as a soul. You go back in your life and look at those situations that have touched you the most. This is a regression method, aimed at clearing up within yourself what is messing with you. You look at it from a distance, without completely disappearing into that pain. What are the predominant thoughts associated with these feelings and emotions? Which thought about yourself ends up hurting the most? In the example above it was "I don't matter." With this you have defined your pain in order to be able to work on it concretely.

2. Acknowledge the Pain

Traumas, me? Me, bothered by my past? I don't have that many problems. If these thoughts are dominant in you, there is no reason to look for your pain. However, if you were completely liberated to cultivate your old pain, you would be *enlightened*. And most people, myself included, aren't. It is functional if your ego comes to the rescue as a protector and does not immediately let all the pain enter your soul. That would be unbearable, and in that case disbelief, or temporary denial, can be very helpful. Except, if you let your ego take over, and never engage in this process with yourself, you are not ready to go through this growth now. If you reject it, there is a good chance that sooner or later very painful situations will present themselves via a cosmic boomerang, which you have to go through and learn from. In short, there is an insane potential in your soul to be awakened, which happens, among other things, when you seek out the pain and engage in the healing. But then you do have to acknowledge it.

3. Experience, Accept and Bear the Pain

Prolonged emotional pain also requires that you let it do its own work naturally. That pain cannot always be controlled, but instead often comes in waves. The moment such a wave of pain arises in the here-and-now, give it your full attention and don't push the pain away. Just keep quiet about it. It presents itself naturally. Don't look for distractions. Make room for it to exist. You will then notice that the intensity decreases over time, just like with oncoming ocean waves.

The moment you don't bear the pain like this, but resist it because it doesn't work out for you, you give nourishment to that pain. This makes the waves bigger and maintains them. It only delays the pain.

4. Express or Release the Pain Through Ceremony

Emotions are feelings in motion, or literally energy in motion, 'E-motion.' The moment you counteract their natural course, you lock in the pain that naturally wants to flow and dissolve, as characterizes spirit, in natural cycles. Figurative and literal movement, such as walking and exercising, often helps to get this going. Or, write down everything without censorship, including what you feel and what moves inside you, with expletives if necessary. As James Pennebaker demonstrates in his books on Bereavement and Expressive Writing⁷², "writing-it-out-of-you" involves significant healing.

⁷² Pennebaker, J. *Expressive Writing, words that heal* (2014)

In the here-and-now you give space to the feelings that arise naturally. You just follow the natural movement, in spite of what your ego tells you. Specifically, when you are grieving, allow crying. When you are angry, you express that anger by, for example:, exercising, shouting your anger, or singing. Or just talk about it with someone who gives you the right support, with whom you feel you have space to express your emotions safely.

There are many other forms of expression, such as painting, gardening, dancing, making music, etc. What matters is that you give space to your emotions and express them, so that you do not turn your heart into a murder hole and sink into victimhood. When you get rid of the negative energy, the charge goes away.

Expression of the Pain

Dr. Peter Levine has been researching the effects of trauma on the nervous system and the body for 35 years. He describes an employee who felt a paralyzing fear when his supervisor became angry (in his view, “completely lashed out at him”), automatically locking himself down, unable to react and wanting to sink through the floor. This is one of the three instinctive survival responses which we initially tend to in trauma: *freezing* (in addition to *flight* or *fight*).

Levine writes that animals have a certain technique to be able to discharge themselves after a bad experience. Ducks, for example:, shake their feathers vigorously when they have fought each other. We humans are usually perfectly capable of discharging ourselves through an unexpected strong cry, laughter, or uncontrolled trembling of parts of the body, like the hands or feet.

Through these emotional releases, traumatic experiences are stripped of their charge and will have less of a negative impact on you. As we see in Wim’s example during the “Inner Nature” retreat below.

“

Through the tears the pain of your soul evaporates.

—

📌 Practical example: Healing and Purification of the Soul Through Ceremony and Expression of Soul Pain

During one of the eight annual weekly retreats 'Inner Nature', which I co-developed and guided, participants were invited to experience a ceremonial exercise 'Objects of Reflection'. They were asked to sit silently by one of the presented objects for a while and see what would naturally happen in silence. One participant was Wim, who as a father had been concerned, for the past eleven years, about the conflicted situation with his daughter, whom he could not really reach. That had hurt him for so long. In his dreams, he was sometimes plagued by broken relationships with children and woke up crying. The object he was intuitively drawn to and dwelt on for a long time was a feather attached to a ball, with the text next to it on a plate: "How much vulnerability is there allowed to be?"

The invitation was to keep repeating the question within yourself and to really contemplate. Then Wim shed a tear, which escalated into an intense crying fit that lasted more than a half hour. The pain that had been locked inside him for so long was liberated. A day later, he realized how much he had cut himself off from his daughter. And he decided, from his soul, to make a new choice. Three months later, his daughter told me, "What happened to my father at that retreat? I have my father back!"

Healing through Ceremony

Almost all indigenous peoples work with various ceremonies, because at a deep soul level those can take people further in their life phases, and let them heal. I was able to experience that for myself when visiting the First Nations in Canada, during a sweat lodge ceremony, in which you cleanse your soul of bad habits, thoughts or behavior. Ceremony can help you too, to heal your soul pain.

“

The more you do the ceremony with surrender and intentionality, the stronger the healing.

—

✂ Exercise: Create Your Own Healing Ceremony

An exercise you can do yourself is to write down everything that has hurt you, for a few days, uncensored, complete with swear words and expletives, to relentlessly show the deepest depths of emotions in your life.

On a day or evening that is good for you and feels natural, you can then create your own ceremony. Perhaps use lighted candles or a small altar, and invite spirit to help you let go of the old. As you burn your writings, ask your spirit to leave everything behind

This only works if you do it with full intentionality and without reservations. The more you do the ceremony with surrender and intentionality, the stronger the healing.

(This modified exercise partly originates from the training 'New Perspective' – Thoolen & Hobbelink).

At the right time, you burn what you have written down the past few days and you ask that it may leave your system entirely, so that you think less about the old pain. And so that it no longer influences your current behavior too much, and cooperation and living together will run more smoothly. And also, so that you don't withdraw excessively or go off the rails in contact with others when pain points in you are touched.

It is also striking that healing methods with a powerful and proven healing ability have been used worldwide for millennia. This is mainly because the soul and spirit are addressed and activated in their own way during healing. Some medicine people or shamans appear to have an enormously powerful effect, with which even 'prisoners' can be helped. An example is the Russian psychiatrist Dr. Olga Kharitidi. She talked about healing experiments using shamanic methods on people in a cell. You can find them in the various books to her name, such as 'Entering the Circle' and 'Master of Lucid Dreams'⁷³.

73 Kharitidi, Olga. *Entering the Circle* (1997)

Olga states that there are basically two types of trauma reactions, namely: occupation of the soul or the lost soul.

In the first situation, people can become highly neurotic and anxious in their behavior. In the second case, you see that people can become depressed. You can then often notice, when you make eye contact or physical contact with them, that their eyes are hollow and the body is empty (uninhabited), as if you were looking at an empty shell. A person cannot be felt or checked, even if their body is present. In addition to the regular psychiatric approach, Olga has also used unorthodox, shamanistic methods to heal these two forms of trauma.

How nice would it be if, in addition to Dr. Kharitidi, more people would combine scientific health care and shamanism to see what works. The East does not have a monopoly on wisdom, but neither does the West. Neither science alone, nor shamanism alone. Everything together works, because spirit excludes nothing.

In addition, there are many other ceremonies where spirit comes through, including those that strengthen the bond between family members. Like the ones that take place every year during the Buddhist New Year (also called Songkran) in Thailand. In the “Karen” culture, found around Kanchanaburi in Thailand, all children and grandchildren wish for forgiveness from their parents, holding each other’s shirts at the back and praying, asking for forgiveness.

5. Air Out Your Heart and Ask for the Right Support

Being alone with your pain, without sharing it with others, slows you down and is counterproductive. As small as it may seem, do not trivialize what hurts you emotionally, but air your heart out. Various scientific studies have shown that support plays a significant role in processing pain more effectively and faster. In his book “Verlieskunde⁷⁴,” Herman de Mönink describes the importance of the right support, and he states: ‘You have to lift the weight of the loss (impact) yourself (coping), but not alone (support)’.

According to him, social support has more effect if your social network is larger, closer, varied or more accessible. And you can (still) organize that for yourself.

⁷⁴ Mönink, Herman de. *Verlieskunde* (2017)



If you air your heart, it won't be a murder hole.

De Mönnink also states that if the support is really felt as support, this has a positive effect on loss processing. If friends support you with advice from their own experience, or with bad suggestions ("Now you should put an end to it!"), it is usually counterproductive. The right support is above all when someone 'listens openly' and shows genuine empathy. Moreover, you can then really tell your story, so that you are no longer all alone with it, and perhaps gain good, new insights from those others. This does mean that you have to cross the threshold of ego shame (your inner critic) to really actively ask for help. Otherwise, it may not come in, even though that support is standing at your door.

Other Forms of Support

You can get and experience support not only from your partner, family, friends or colleagues, but also from animals, which can offer unconditional comfort. You can also go to a strength place or quiet place in nature, and feel recharged and better afterwards. You can surround yourself with anchors of love in your home, such as candles, flowers, crystals or photos. Or mentally ask for help from a dear departed as a guardian angel before you fall asleep. And how about listening to music or singing along to it? For many experience experts, this is a proven comfort. Try to remember which music touched and comforted you so deeply and at what time in your life. What a gift you have given yourself!

Professional Guidance

Sometimes the right support from friends or the application of healing ceremonies is not enough and professional guidance is desired, from people who have shown experience, and proven help, in the treatment of trauma.

One way to deal with your soul pain is to explore the autobiographical highs and lows of your soul. Without there being any immediate cause, you look at what painful experiences you have had in your life that occasionally still resonate in your mind or cause your emotions to flare up. Only, you no longer dive into the experience, but keep your distance and create space. You review your painful experience, and learn how you might be able to handle that experience differently. This also applies if a similar experience arises again in the future.

Take the example where you think you don't matter because of the pain of structural neglect by your parents or relatives. By going back in time, you suddenly realize an incident from your childhood when your parents literally ignored you. Even though you asked for attention at the time, their response was "we can't leave your sisters and brothers by themselves!" But you thought "what about me?" If your parents do this again, in the here and now, you will stand your ground by expressing that it hurts you, that for years they have seemed to prefer others over you. And that you wish they would handle this differently. Then you are no longer a victim of your old soul pain, but have learned from it, regardless of the reaction of your parents.

We see another form of regression in regression hypnotherapy, in which stored memories and pain are activated in the subconscious. It often brings up something that you may have long forgotten. You learn to look at your painful experiences in a new way. You will approach and go through that same experience again, but now with the awareness of how you would deal with it differently. In this new visualization, you imaginatively deal more effectively with that old experience. The experience gets a different label, because you have learned to deal with it differently. With this, you rid yourself of the 'heaviness' and of the intense emotional charge that the experience carried.

It is not uncommon during some hypno-regression methods for painful experiences beyond this lifetime to suddenly surface. They seem to have their origin in one or more past lives, in which you have built up karma. For example:, it may be that you have harmed others in a previous life, which now comes at you from completely unexpected quarters in this current life. Your soul is then challenged to restore the balance in yourself, and you learn to deal with the evil that comes your way with a limited degree of love.

In the case of complaints related to a severe or complex form of post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD), the drug MDMA (XTC) with supportive psychotherapy has been shown to provide good results. As a psychiatrist and professor, Eric Vermetten⁷⁵ emphasizes that the results of the American research are astonishing: “MDMA therefore appears to be a medicine, not just a party drug.” The effect is that patients no longer suffer from symptoms such as reliving nightmares and insomnia. It also relieves addiction and depression.

Going back to the painful experience, reliving the traumatic situation from a distance and expressing the emotional pain is essential for healing. Many trauma experts use psychological methods such as EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing). EMDR therapy is a form of treatment in which you recount the memory of a trauma and at the same time are distracted by your therapist with distracting stimuli, whereby the charge of the old memory can be (partly) dissolved.

Which form of therapy, method or ceremony works for you is something to experience for yourself. There is not one best method for everyone, so it is important that you are open to all the methods that really work for you in order to experience optimal healing.

6. Learn from the Experience and Take Responsibility

Every experience, even a painful one, only serves as something to learn from, and to evolve as a soul. If you have been a perpetrator, you learn from your experience and see the suffering your behavior has caused the other person. For example:, if you have cheated and as the perpetrator you have hurt your partner a lot, you cannot sincerely go on if you do not take responsibility for your part. In that case, don't just justify your own behavior and choices, but especially look at the consequences they have had for the other person. When spirit comes through, you sincerely apologize. Not as a temporary socially desirable solution, to simply continue on as before. Apologies are only sincere if they come from the bottom of your heart, through the experiences that touched your heart. Only then do you sincerely regret your part.

⁷⁵ Vermetten, E. *Handboek posttraumatische stressstoornissen*. (2007)

Look into your heart to see if this is really what you want to continue to accomplish in your life. Learn. And make a soul decision about how you want to continue to nurture or prevent these kinds of experiences in the future.

If you were a victim, learn from that experience as well. At what point may you have let yourself down? When did you not stand up for yourself? What could you have done differently, to prevent something like this from happening, or happening again? And if there was no escaping it, how did you deal with the perpetrator? Nelson Mandela, like many others, was a victim of the Apartheid regime in South Africa for many years. But he managed to make peace with his prison guard during his captivity. He did not languish in victimhood and become depressed or bitter when he had every reason to. In fact, he continued to believe in standing up to inequality and fighting against it. Learn from the experience, let go and move on.

Exercise: Write a Heartfelt Letter of Apology as a Soul Healer

Record, in an analog or digital way, the following somewhere in a quiet place:

- ✓ Remember someone you have deeply hurt in the past.
- ✓ State their name.
- ✓ Write down two things you did that hurt the other.
- ✓ Describe your sincere apology for those two things, as if you were actually telling the other person this right now. Do not defend or justify yourself. Let the words rise up from your heart.
- ✓ Sincerely ask yourself how you could have done things differently, and would do differently in the future.
- ✓ Describe which two things the other person has done for you, that you are grateful for. And thank that person from your heart.
- ✓ Sign the letter with your name, date, place and signature.
- ✓ Have a look at the letter in a few weeks' time and see if you feel a difference.

(This modified exercise partly originates from the retreat 'Inner Nature' - Thoolen & Hobbelink).

7. Forgive Yourself and the Perpetrator

In order to continue in a healthy way, it is important that you forgive yourself as a victim or perpetrator. You know that feeling, when you have said that you forgave someone, but that person and situation keep coming back into your thoughts and feelings? Then you haven't really forgiven yet. If you have really taken responsibility, then it serves no-one to linger in feelings of guilt or blame towards yourself or the other. Apparently, you have not yet processed the pain of your soul sufficiently to be able to truly forgive, from your heart. I once attended a weekend training about 'family sculptures' of Hellinger's family constellations⁷⁶, which provide insight into family and generational patterns that occur in your current behavior, thoughts and emotions. Guided by this authority in his field, I was shocked by his firm statement that forgiveness is useless. If you continue to cling to that belief, you can guide all you want, but with this thought you maintain the perpetrator-victim cycle and soul pain, no matter how clearly you explain it.

On the other hand, I have also seen people who have transcended this stage, in whom spirit had taken place. Such as in confrontations between Holocaust survivors and Nazi perpetrators they knew in person. In these cases, forgiveness (as one of the characteristics of spirit) actually worked as a balm for the soul, with healing as a result. Edith Eva Eger⁷⁷ is an American psychologist. She is a Holocaust survivor and a specialist in the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder. In her memoirs titled "The Choice - Embrace the Possible" and "The Gift - 12 Lessons to Save Your Life," she demonstrates that moving toward the pain and ultimately coming to forgiveness produces true healing.



The moment spirit enters, through forgiveness, tolerance, understanding, recognition and sincere apologies, the soul can heal.

⁷⁶ Ulsamer, B. *The Art and Practice of Family Constellations: Leading family constellations as developed by Bert Hellinger* (2020)

⁷⁷ Eger, Edith. *The Gift- 12 lessons to save your life* (2020)

When forgiveness has set in, your soul has accomplished something essential and has made a huge evolutionary leap into becoming a peaceful human being.



When spirit comes through, the perpetrator-victim cycle is broken and individual and collective karmas and traumas are resolved.

8. Let Go of Everything. Pass it Off. Surrender.

Once you have thoroughly taken the previous steps, there's no point in holding on to old pain. It is then no longer useful to repeat to yourself what you could have done differently, to continue to feel guilty, or angry or sad. That no longer serves anyone. Moreover, not letting go of old pain increases your karma and delays the growth of your soul into a true, sincere, and peaceful human being. So it is time to let go. But how do you do that?

✂ Exercise: Let it Blow in the Wind

For each of the following sentences, ask yourself the questions with your head, just don't answer them with your head. You are going to see what happens to your feelings, by taking at least 3 minutes per question to see what occurs, without going any further. You can repeat the sentence, worded slightly differently, if something, or your thinking, distracts you.

1. I let go of my past pain and anger.
2. I let go of all my past regrets.
3. I let go of my need for suffering.
4. I let go of all my mistakes.

You thank yourself for the lessons you have learned from these statements and move forward.

By doing nothing. Or giving a little push, for example: by visualizing that you let go of all old thoughts and feelings of pain. And by asking the cosmos and loved ones to help you let go. By meditating, by praying, by ceremony, as many Buddhists in Asia, for example: in Thailand, do. There, releasing fish during a ceremony symbolizes letting go of pain. Because in spirit everything is connected with everything, these parallel actions have a strong effect at the soul level, if they are done with sincere intention from the heart.

How do you know that you have really let go of something? If you feel relief. When you feel lighter inside. When you no longer feel intense anger or sadness. You have discharged something essential from your soul baggage that bothered you enormously.

Then you will feel very alive sooner or later. It seems as if you are stepping into a new life, with a rising morning sun, which makes you a lot happier, as if you see the world new and fresh for the first time. Your soul has returned, in a new guise. You are reborn and feel the renewed firepower and vitality.

9. Wish for the New and Good in the Future

While your soul has become free from the old soul pain, you may grant yourself a wish for the future. This reinforces the positive, which will make you feel happier. Such as "from now on I will live and show myself to others, with the conviction that I matter." And with that, you release yourself from the old trauma, and your right to exist is re-established. Show yourself!

Grant yourself and the other, whether you were the perpetrator or the victim, the best for the future. Wish them well. With this compassion (which is also a spirit characteristic) you empower peace for yourself and the other.

10. Celebrate the New Life and Move On

After you have taken all the previous steps and accomplished something essential, it is a victory for your soul. And that should be celebrated! Because you have made a giant leap in your development as a soul. You celebrate your new life, which is a huge boost to continue like new. Don't look back, because that is done and gone, and unnecessarily brings you back to something that no longer serves anyone. Or as you see in the Bible (Philippians 3:14)⁷⁸, "But one thing I know for sure—and in doing so I forget what is behind me and reach forward to what lies ahead."

In summary, you can take the following ten healing steps, to refresh and activate your soul:

1. Go to and define the pain.
2. Acknowledge the pain.
3. Experience, accept and bear the pain.
4. Express or release the pain through ceremony.
5. Air your heart out and ask for the right support.
6. Learn from the experience and take responsibility.
7. Forgive yourself and the perpetrator.
8. Let go of everything. Pass it off. Surrender.
9. Wish for the new and good in the future.
10. Celebrate the new life and carry on.

“

*But besides the pain of the soul, life also
brings a lot of joy, and you can even intensify this!*

⁷⁸ Bible: New Testament. Philippians 3:14

4. Activate Soul Joy

Another positive way to give your soul space is to develop, or do, exactly what brings you joy. It's really there for the taking and doesn't have to be complex. Give yourself a chance and take five minutes to dwell on the next exercise.

Exercise: **Allowing more positive energy and joy into your life**

Questions 1:

- ✓ What really makes you happy? What else does?
- ✓ What do you enjoy getting out of bed for?
- ✓ When do you feel a lot more energetic?
- ✓ What makes you really happy in your work?
- ✓ At which encounter, with whom, do you feel 'uplifted'?
- ✓ Which places give you energy?
- ✓ What inspires you?
- ✓ Which activity makes you feel good?
- ✓ What else makes you enthusiastic or makes you shine?

(This modified exercise partly originates from the Course 'Personal Empowerment' - Thoolen & Hobbelink).

Exercise: **Allowing More Positive Energy and Joy into Your Life**

Questions 2:

- ✓ How will you make time and space to actually implement your answers in the coming days?
- ✓ Do it!
- ✓ And if you're not going to do it, what's stopping you?
- ✓ What can you do, or do differently, to tackle this blockade another way?
- ✓ Check whether you indeed experience more joy, and if so, guard this positive time for you.

(This modified exercise partly originates from the Course 'Personal Empowerment' - Thoolen & Hobbelink).

Bucket List

Some people partly get their zest for life from creating a bucket list of desires that they want to fulfill in their lives. Like once in your life wanting to see the Northern Lights, skydiving, attending the Super Bowl, taking a dream trip to Patagonia, or meeting a dear family member or close friend you haven't seen in years. There is nothing wrong with that. And yes, it usually gives you an unforgettable life experience, which can resonate for a long time to come. An experience that you cherish, and that can give you a blissful feeling again, if you go back to it in your mind, see the images of it again and experience the experience again.

However, if your ego gets involved too much, the joy can quickly turn into frustration. You might think that your desires absolutely *must* be satisfied. Are you attached to them? In other words, do you become dependent on a possible future outcome, or do you stay independent from it and remain flexible, no matter which way the wind blows in your life? Because spirit is also like the wind. With spirit everything is possible, everything can change at a moment's notice and you also accept being unfulfilled. And if you embrace that idea, you can go for what you want, and you can live with whatever comes or doesn't come your way.



*If you allow spirit, you go for what you want,
and you can live with whatever comes your way.*

Moreover, an old desire can no longer give you that charge or joy that you had previously thought it would. After all, your soul evolves, and your desires can therefore also shift, because they no longer fit in the here-and-now.

Humor

Humor is the medicine against too much heaviness, gloom and negativity. This puts things into perspective and allows you to see everything from more of a distance. With humor your life becomes so much lighter, because you no longer take everything so seriously. Life literally smiles at you more, and you experience more pleasure. Invite yourself to laugh more often with someone else, make silly jokes or do something stupidly playful. Watch more comedians or comedy videos that give you fresh air and a smile.

5. Bringing Original Talents and Dreams to Life

As you saw in the previous section, we all have original talents and dreams that we can bring to life. When that happens, most people experience more sense and meaning in their lives. And they contribute to something that matters!

But how does that work? How do you become a co-architect of your own life? For that, we have to go to the origin of you as a co-creator. Co-creation is born from a dream, image, desire or thought that takes shape.



*Co-creation is born from a dream,
image, desire or thought that takes shape.*



In his books, Robert Fritz⁷⁹ explains how you can change your current reality by developing a personal and/or professional vision. Before I explain how to do that yourself, there are three dimensions that you can build a vision for, namely, your ego, your soul, and your spirit. Let's look at the three different types of visions.

Ego visions

- ✓ I want to be set when I'm in my forties, so I no longer have to earn money to continue enjoying life without any worries.
- ✓ I want to be a political leader by the age of 30 so that I can be more respected.
- ✓ I want to own a Lamborghini or Ferrari in three years.
- ✓ I want to have enough food, drink and good shelter for myself.

Incidentally, you can commit to ego visions with so much heart and soul that this combination increases the chance that you actually realize them. Why? Because passion gives you a flow of energy with which you will reap more success with passion and perseverance, than if these two soul qualities do not participate in your vision. Passion and perseverance are the keys to success.

79 Fritz, R. *The Path of Least Resistance* (1989)



Passion and persistence are the keys to success.

Soulful Visions

- ✓ Within five years I will turn my hobby into my profession.
- ✓ I want to be a professional musician in my thirties, because I have a natural aptitude for it and it is what makes me the happiest.
- ✓ I want to become a pilot, because this is what I have always dreamed of.

Whereas ego and soulful visions can still be individually focused, spirit visions transcend this level. The latter type looks *beyond* the limits of you as an individual, and aims at making the community as a whole better, thereby realizing the unity between everything. And spirit visions by definition also embrace your soul, the latter being an antenna for spirit.

Spirit Visions

- ✓ I want to fight injustice by becoming a crime reporter by the time I'm 33.
- ✓ I will become a political leader by the age of 40 in order to further develop equality and democracy.
- ✓ I want to contribute to a better world by committing myself to sustainability and finding a profession in it before I am 25 years old.
- ✓ I want to work in developing countries by the age of thirty-five.
- ✓ I want to help others less fortunate than me, throughout my life.

Beyond the *I need*, you look at what is good for the community and the earth, or at what makes us better globally. From ego to geo.



Spirit Visions: from Ego to Geo.

But how do you create a vision that has a great chance of success? First you will find an exercise below, and then a concrete example from the real world with which you learn to apply this.

Exercise: How Do You Realize Your Vision?

You can take the following steps to realize your vision:

1. What are the desires that you want to fulfill in the future?
2. What are your natural talents that you want to give more space?
3. Which mission or calling naturally appeals to you the most?
4. What images do you see when you visualize the future you desire?
5. How can you make a short and powerful vision formulation that considers all the previous building blocks?
6. What resistance do you encounter on your soul path?
7. Which strategy helps you with concrete action steps over time, to get your vision on the ground?

(This modified exercise partly originates from the Course 'Personal Empowerment' - Thoolen & Hobbelink).

A concrete real-world example shows you how to apply this.

Example: Creating a Personal and Professional Vision

1. What are the desires you want to fulfill in the future?

Suppose your desire is to help others, because this makes you the happiest.

2. What are your natural talents that you want to give more space?

You have an innate talent for genuinely serving others and develop this talent further through learning, literature and conferences. And through training and coaching. For example:, Daniel Coyle⁸⁰ shows in his book "The Talent Code" that you can (further) develop talents through a lot of practice and visualization. This book showed, for example:, that one tennis team achieved much better performance than another by taking this approach.

80 Coyle, D. *The Talent Code*. Cornerstone Digital (2010)

3. Which mission or calling is naturally most appealing?

Deep down you have always known that you want to help others. The passion for it has always attracted you like a magnet. What answer comes up when you ask yourself the following questions?

- ✓ What do I want to leave behind when I am no longer there?
- ✓ What do I want to be said about me after I say goodbye?
- ✓ When is my life meaningful?
- ✓ What is my real added value for customers, clients, organization, country, environment or the planet, no matter how small or large?
- ✓ In short, what am I here on earth for?

Suppose the answer is: I can leave the earth when I have really meant something of value to others. In that case, you're on top of your mission.

4. What images do you see when you visualize your desired future?

For example:, the images you see during the visualization of your dream show people who walk out the door relieved, happy and grateful after meeting you.

5. How can you make a short and powerful vision formulation that takes into account all the previous building blocks?

In a formulation of a maximum of half of an 8.5 by 11 sheet of paper, or even in just one sentence or one word, on the basis of a number of criteria, you make clear where you want to be in a while. Those criteria include: formulate in the present tense and describe in a positive way the images you see of yourself in the desired future in a challenging and realistic way, with a specific deadline. For example:: I see myself working as a nurse in a developing country in exactly five years.

That is your ambition. Ambition is what you have in mind, what you want to do in terms of talent development and what you want to leave behind as the end result.

6. What resistances do you encounter on your soul path?

Can I? Can I let go of my own country? Do I have enough money to do this? Am I being stupid?

A thorough assessment of these ego-convictions (which are sometimes also very realistic) is necessary. How? By entering a dialogue with yourself and examining an opposing belief to see if it might contain just as much truth.

For example: Can I do it?

Am I maybe not the best nurse, and will I run away screaming after a month?

Ask yourself: is that one hundred percent true?

Or is an opposing truth at least equally or even more true?

I don't have to be the best to do a good job as a nurse. If I don't like it after a month, I'll see what I do. And gone are the resistances, and you have cleared the way to realize your vision like water in a stream, running over the rocks of resistance. Which strategy with concrete action steps in time will help you to ground your vision? You only get your castle in the sky on the ground through action.

Which strategy with concrete actions steps in time help you to ground your vision?

You only get your castle in the sky on the ground through action.



You only get your castle in the sky on the ground through action.

What helps is to draw up a strategic calendar, in which you literally plan those actions in time that are necessary to realize your vision. Then you become the co-architect of your own meaningful and joyful work and life. Like Willem did after he developed a vision in one of my 33 Personal Empowerment courses, and on that basis arrived at a new job that made him shine again.

📌 Practical example: “I Walked Around with My Soul under My Arm, But I Gained Wings Again in My Work.”

Willem had been working as a senior advisor for a municipality for years and had recently become quite dissatisfied. In one conversation, he said he walked with his soul under his arm. He had many negative judgments about the way things were going and the new position he was promised was repeatedly canceled. In the course “Personal Empowerment” he came back to his original desire, and then to his enthusiasm and dedication. He discovered how much he enjoyed giving lectures in a quirky and creative way, that deeply touched people inside and outside the organization.

By doing what he really wanted, he also became more transparent in communication with his colleagues, who increasingly asked him to think along with them. He eventually decided to go for it, and started applying externally for positions where he could give his creativity and own vision even more space than with the municipality. At that stage, the council finally offered him the job he had always wanted, but it was too late. Within two weeks, he had three external offers and he chose a role as an external consultant, where he was able to shape his creativity with passion and dedication.



Become a co-architect of your own meaningful and joyful work and life.

You have now seen how to activate your soul by:

1. Showing your true colors;
2. Increasing independence;
3. Healing soul pain;
4. Activating soul joy;
5. Bringing original talents and dreams to life.

But what to do when your soul goes out of control?

How to Dose Soul When You Have Too Much Passion?

If you overshoot in your passion, there is no healthy brake; either you become compartmentalized or misaligned, or you get bogged down in fundamentalist fanaticism.

With consciousness, or spirit, you can prevent this, by recognizing this in yourself, acknowledging and experiencing the consequences it has, and then making a new choice. Let's see how you can put this into practice.

From No Healthy Brake to a Healthy Balance

Imagine you are committed to your work, because it is so much fun, and you can't stop. At night you lie in bed and you keep getting ideas about your work. You are so attached to it that you cannot let it go. Silently, however, you develop more and more complaints: you are often tired or even exhausted, have more and more headaches, cannot deal with things as well, and more often respond harshly to your partner and children. Even after your vacation, you still feel dead tired.

When consciousness joins in, you can see this in yourself from a distance. You are aware of yourself, and in that moment, you have taken a vital first step. But then comes perhaps the hardest part: recognizing that you are out of balance. Your ego defense mechanisms like to quickly brush away what you see of yourself, because it does not benefit your ego. And after all, you don't think of yourself as a wimp, and your natural vulnerability is brushed right under the rug. If you are really brave, you recognize this in yourself.

When you start to feel and see what this does to you and others around you, you will really wake up. Sooner or later, you conclude that going on like this is no longer worth it and you see what the cost is. If this realization comes from your perception and felt experience, it comes from within. Then, a naturally grown choice arises, which tells you that you must slow down. You will immediately set boundaries and make room for relaxation, which will restore your work-life balance.

Yet another example where the brake can fail on you. If something suddenly touches you deep in your soul, such as an unjust treatment, you can suddenly become incensed or be deeply saddened. For example:, when your supervisor makes a derogatory comment like, "I thought so for a long time, but now I know for sure, you were indeed born a loser!"

However, when spirit joins in, you quickly see that your boss is just pushing an old button. Just like your father or mother used to sometimes humiliate you, which has always stayed with you. Even if you are intensely angry or sad, you carry yourself through, and just let these emotions exist in yourself. You recognize, acknowledge and experience what is happening.

Only you do not let yourself be governed by it. You have that choice. Anytime. You consciously bring in your controller and protector from your ego bus, and do what is good for you, without losing it like your boss did. What can you do? You interrupt him, say you aren't in a good place, walk out the door and let him know that you will come back to it later. Remember, sometimes it's cowardly to go, but sometimes it's cowardly (to your soul) to stay.

It is also possible that you tell your boss, at that moment, or later, that it affects you and that you do not like these kinds of personal attacks that demotivate you. You ask him to apply a different leadership style in the future. Next, you turn to your ego's inner strategist, who makes a plan to protect yourself. If you sense that your boss will soon give you an unjustifiably low rating, arm yourself. In an e-mail to him, you list all your successes and fulfilled agreements of the past year. You also consult a confidential counselor in your organization, find out where you stand legally and draw up a written objection, with evidence, if there is a negative decision. Then you have not let yourself be taken in by your uninhibited soul, but you have taken good care of it!

And if that takes too much energy, you can also choose to leave for another department or organization, where a manager will give you the necessary space to thrive.

From Compartmentalized to Open and Attuned

Your soul will also run away with you if you are overenthusiastic about just telling your own story, without seeing your surroundings. And it is spirit that brings solace. Why? Because a feature of this is environmental awareness, allowing you to look beyond your own limits.



The higher you fly, the more you see the whole.



Then you 'hover above' yourself, and you notice how compartmentalized you are. But you also begin to see your surroundings again, which is a hallmark of spirit, as you read in Part One. Then you see more and more people around you drop out, frown, yawn or walk away. It is then that you experience these consequences of your own behavior. Based on that, you make a choice and stop. Then you ask bystanders what they think of you, and you adapt, so that your inspiration can touch more people.

From Fundamentalist Fanaticism to Co-Existence of Diverse Opinions

If you commit yourself wholeheartedly to an opinion or body of thought, that's not a problem, until you elevate it as the only one that leads to salvation. Or even coercively impose it on others, thereby compromising their opinions. Ego and soul then go hand in hand, at the expense of others. What does it take to get out of this dogmatic bubble? Recognize, acknowledge, experience, and make a new choice. And that takes true courage.

Do you *recognize* that you ardently want to impose your opinion on others? Do you *acknowledge* that you actually do not want to make room for the (opposing) opinions of others? Do you *acknowledge* that you actually want to nip those others in the bud? Do you *feel* through this course of action that you contribute to polarization and never bring about unity and peaceful dialogue? Then there is hope.

Then you choose, however much you are married to your own point of view, to be open to, and listen to others. Then you use the slogan "We agree to disagree," without getting into a fierce battle. Then you look for ways through which you can come together, and also work and live side by side, even if you think differently. Then you are open to learn from each other's ideas and see the good in them. Then you allow yourself to be approached by people who give you feedback about what is good and not good for the other person, and what you can do better. Then you build bridges that restore unity.



An open dialogue builds bridges that can restore unity.

In this chapter you have seen how Personal Leadership of your soul can give you more vitality, enthusiasm and meaning. But there is even more that Spirited Personal Ego Leadership offers: universal awareness that leads to a better, true and peaceful life and work.

4.3. Summary of Personal Soulful Leadership

What is lurking when you are not aware of your soul? The danger that you end up in the booby traps of your soul, namely too little or too much inspiration. How do you recognize that and can you dose it more effectively, so that you achieve optimal growth?

You can recognize too little inspiration from:

1. Automatism and routine;
2. Victim role;
3. Mental preoccupation and no discernible heart;
4. Not at home in your own body;
5. Lack of individuality;
6. Experiencing a lack of meaning or added value;
7. Lack of dedication, enthusiasm and energy.

You can recognize too much inspiration from:

1. Lack of a healthy brake;
2. Compartmentalized and inconsistent behavior;
3. Fundamentalist fanaticism

Practicing Personal Leadership of Your Soul

You practice personal leadership of your soul by:

1. Showing your colors;
2. Increasing independence;
3. Healing soul pain by performing the ten healing steps:
 1. *Go to and define the pain.*
 2. *Acknowledge the pain.*
 3. *Experience, accept and bear the pain.*
 4. *Express or release the pain through ceremony.*
 5. *Air your heart out and ask for the right support.*
 6. *Learn from the experience and take responsibility.*
 7. *Forgive yourself and the perpetrator.*
 8. *Let go of everything. Pass it off. Surrender.*
 9. *Wish for the new and good in the future.*
 10. *Celebrate the new life and move on.*
4. Activate soul joy;
5. Exploit original talents and bring dreams to life
(establish a vision that you carry out).

Do you want to check whether your soul is optimally expressed?

Then you will notice the following:

1. Touchable and protected heart;
2. Feel and share strength and vulnerability;
3. At home in your own body;
4. Show individuality, aligned with appropriate boundaries;
5. Experience and share inspiration;
6. Feel and heal soul pain;
7. Experiencing and expressing joy of the soul;
8. Experience meaning or added value.

5.2. Summary of Personal Spirited Leadership

In this chapter you saw how you can gain direct access to spirit, making your work and life even more enjoyable and comprehensive. This makes virtually *all* your business and private relationships more pleasant, meaningful, and effective. In addition, making practical contact with spirit also brings more rest, connection and peace in your life and work, in such a way that you create a better world inside you and directly around you.

What else can you do to experience more peace and fulfillment within yourself?
How can you further inspire your personal leadership? By:

1. Practicing religion, prayer, ceremony, meditation or silence;
2. Practicing heartfulness: increasing your heart for yourself, each other, and the natural environment;
3. Living in the here-and-now and practicing mindfulness;
4. Experiencing and using synchronicity;
5. Allowing intuition and hunches;
6. Living according to natural cycles;
7. Transcending polarities and emphasizing commonalities;
8. Standing up for sincerity, equality, and truth;
9. Experiencing abundance;
10. Being supported by spiritual allies.
 1. Sources of inspiration
 2. Dreams
 3. Soul and spirit anchors
 4. Nature
 5. Allies on earth
 6. Allies in heaven
 7. Holistic counselors and caregivers

Part 3

**Creating
a better
world**



6.2. Your Contribution to a Better World

A peaceful world does not happen by itself; you must do something for it.

“

To achieve peace, you have to do something yourself.

There are at least four areas in your life and work in which you can contribute to a better world:

1. Your daily behavior and choices in your private life;
2. Your daily behavior and choices at your work;
3. Choices in study, profession, and career;
4. Choices pertaining to your life path.

1. Your Daily Behavior in Your Private Life

Practical example: Peace at Home

Imagine: you get up cranky in the morning because you did not sleep well. Your children stay in bed too long while they need to get ready for school. And before you know it, you will want to give them some grief about being late for school. Except, you now recognize your own tendency to cuss out your kids. You also acknowledge this in yourself and experience anger, but you make a conscious choice.

In milliseconds you realize that your irritation has to do with your children being late for school and that indicates a clear boundary for you (dosed ego). You also realize that the force with which you want to say something has to do with your own sleep deprivation. You make a conscious choice to discuss the limits at the breakfast table. You ask, out of curiosity, why they are late getting out of bed lately. They say that they themselves sleep poorly, because they miss their deceased grandfather. That is why they oversleep more often. You show compassion for your children, and look for solutions for the future, so that they are no longer late for school. You are in harmony.

At that moment you made transparent contact with the other person and, on the spot, you contributed to a peaceful environment in your own vicinity, simply by practicing Spirited Personal Leadership, and using the four keys:

- ✓ Recognizing
- ✓ Acknowledging
- ✓ Experiencing
- ✓ Choosing

If you dare to look closely, dozens of example situations always come up *every day*, with your own family, partner, relatives, friends, neighbors, etc. And every time you apply this awareness to yourself, you contribute to a better world right around you, time and again.

2. Your Daily Behavior at Work

Practical example: Establish a Better Relationship with Your Colleague

Have you ever been allergic to a colleague's behavior? Imagine that during a meeting with colleagues, your words are often brushed aside by a new colleague, who seems to want to prove himself. You feel a spark of anger in yourself and you tend to keep your mouth shut, because you don't want to publicly denigrate the other person. You recognize, acknowledge and experience this in yourself and this time consciously choose a different approach.

You ask the chairman for speaking time, so that you can have your say, and you take the floor back when your new colleague interrupts you. After the meeting, you approach your colleague and give him some adequate feedback. He is startled, and unaware of the consequences of his behavior for you. He apologizes to you and indicates that he will take this into account next time.

In short, this approach is more effective than slinking away angry inside every time.

In your work, too, *dozens of situations like this come up every day*: with colleagues, with your managers, with your board, with your shareholders, with clients, with suppliers, with customers and other parties. Every time you practice Spirited Personal Leadership, you contribute to better working relationships, with all the associated benefits, including profit-wise.

In order to make the dream come true, I hope that, through your own life and work experiences and insights, you will realize that with the life and work attitude described below you create a better world in your own immediate environment. Your entire attitude, your *daily way of looking at things*, your way of thinking, and your behavior and choices are then characterized by:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| ✓ Positive intentions | ✓ Curiosity |
| ✓ Gratitude | ✓ Willingness to grant |
| ✓ Willingness to share | ✓ Unreservedness |
| ✓ Openness | ✓ Neutrality |
| ✓ Honesty | ✓ Sincerity |
| ✓ Strength and vulnerability at the same time | ✓ Being loving |
| ✓ Community | ✓ Willingness to connect |
| ✓ Peacefulness | ✓ Self-awareness |
| ✓ Wisdom | |

Just consider what happens if you approach your work relationships from this attitude alone. Instant pleasure and more success are assured.

3. Choices in Study, Profession and Career

If you want to go the extra mile, and contribute even more to a better world, then choose a study, profession or job in an area that is close to your heart and contributes to a better world.

Topics that touch your heart are your guide. Such as a cleaner environment (waste processing, clean energy enrichment, combating deforestation, etc.); making society better for people (working for the government, etc.); conducting policies that support spirit, such as investigating, or living according to, equality and truth (as a politician, crime reporter, judge, etc); helping people physically, medically or mentally (development cooperation, physiotherapy, medical specialist and staff, psychologist, etc.). In order to contribute to a better world, choose a study, profession, or job that contributes to this. What you support with this is the development of a personal and

professional vision that is formulated from spirit (contributing to the whole) and about which you are inspired.

If you have formulated that spirit vision as a study or career choice, or as a career compass, it gives you helpful direction. Only, just because you have that vision, it is not yet truth. To accomplish that, your ego can do you a tremendous service. Make a strategic roadmap for yourself, on which you record plans, goals, your time schedule and (financial, physical, and mental) costs and benefits, so that you can really achieve your goal.

4. Life Path Choice

When you listen to a deeper voice from your soul, it sometimes takes you to a place very different from what you could previously have imagined. Like when something comes onto your life path and touches your heart and soul, and then invites you to go somewhere else to live. It could be a tropical scent from a country that attracts you, the rituals and customs of a culture that inspires you and where you feel at home, or finding a job or partner abroad.

What matters is that you stay honest with yourself and choose what makes your soul happier. And you will notice that soon enough, because you smile more often, are happy inside and just want to be in that particular place. Remember, sometimes it's cowardly to go, but sometimes it's cowardly to stay. This may mean moving to a different environment, culture, or country, where you thrive more.

If, in addition to your soul, spirit participates even more, your life path changes and your life is directed by 'life in service of spirit.' For example:, you may emigrate, because you want to help those in need in developing countries. Or you may find a job in which you can make a difference to the world (such as working at the United Nations), so that you end up moving to New York.

In short, there are plenty of ways to contribute to a better world. Every day, and in the long term!

The Shuswap Legend of the Two Wolves

One evening, a grandfather from the Secwepemc tribe teaches his grandson about life. "A battle is going on inside me," he tells the boy. "It is a terrible fight between two wolves. One is bad. He is anger, jealousy, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego."

"The other wolf is good. He is joy, peace, love, hope, tranquility, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and trust."

"The same fight is going on inside you. And in everyone."

The grandson thought for a moment and asked his grandfather: "But which wolf will win?" The Grandparent replied simply, "The one you feed."

However, in contributing to a better world you can easily fall into some pitfalls. What are those and how can you deal with them?

What happens if you do not do any of this?

Then there is a good chance that the ego will continue to dominate in you, make most of your choices, and determine your behavior. This contributes to unnecessary tension, polarization, difficult or bad relationships, dissatisfaction, conflict, and war, which makes you more likely to feel unhappy. It's that simple.

Every day you face this choice. Such as in the story above, which I saw framed in a museum in Kamloops, BC, Canada, on the Indian reservation. It is about a battle that is going on in every human.

In contributing to a better world, however, you can just get bogged down in some pitfalls. What are they and how can you deal with them?

6.5. Transition To a Better World

A better world

A better world is a peaceful world, in which we treat ourselves, each other and our natural environment honestly, sincerely, and peacefully.

The present world

The present world is ruled by our own egos and self-built ego systems. These are still most strongly represented among people, in number and in size. It explains why we pollute ourselves, each other and the Earth and have not yet found peace within ourselves, or with each other and our natural environment. So, time for a transition.

Global Transition

We live in a global time of transition, where the ego and ego systems have grown more and more and are currently contributing to our own spiritual prison. However, we have just entered the Age of Aquarius, when the energy of individual freedom will take more form. How? This is expressed, among other things, in the fact that you take control and direction over your own life. You do not allow yourself to be swayed from your soul path by those in power, or you may even rebel against them.

Those in power find it increasingly difficult to remain there, because their ego offers no solace in the long term. Ego systems, often fed by the inner patriarch, are increasingly ruptured. What someone first managed to achieve in their 'old boys network' is no longer so predictable. Integrity, truth, and sincerity are all the more. Those in power with a structurally oversized ego, or even ego disorders, are becoming increasingly obvious, because the truth is increasingly coming to light in this global turnaround.

In short, the old hierarchical ego matrix (or pyramid matrix) has been crumbling for a while. And that offers opportunities to expose issues, especially to look at yourself and see how you can concretely make your own contribution. Do you want a conflicted world or a better world?

How do You Contribute to the Realization of a Better World?

You do this by taking the responsibility yourself to contribute every day and, however small or large. From a friendly gesture to a stranger, to a career choice that gives you a sustainable position.



Only (self) awareness makes a better world.

Which prediction do you want to fulfill? Maybe you don't really believe in a better world, because this is how it's been going for five millennia already. Maybe you keep calling leaders to account for the mess they are making in the world. But you, what are you doing? If you persist in ego-beliefs, you are engaged in a 'self-fulfilling prophecy', namely to maintain or even contribute to a discordant world! So, a better world depends on what you do every day! Because everything you do, and don't do, matters.



Everything you do, and don't do, matters.

If you want to know whether you are contributing to a better world every day, ask yourself the following three questions. Because every day you face these fundamental (soul) choices and if you contribute or not:

- ✓ Do I work and live unconsciously, with all the consequences that entails, or do I practice Spirited Personal Leadership on a daily basis?
- ✓ Do I live and choose from sincerity, truthfulness, and love, or from fear, power, and prestige?
- ✓ Do I remain trapped in my pitfalls, or victim role, or do I take responsibility for my own thoughts, feelings, behavior and choices, and do I seek support for this?

Process of Global Transition

The global transition to a better world comes into focus more quickly when more people apply Spirited Personal Leadership. That also applies to you.



The global transition to a better world will come into view faster if more people apply Spirited Personal Leadership.

If you choose this path in your life, you sometimes end up in pitfalls. But what you fall into, you can also get out of, by allowing the sun (or spirit) into yourself. Because of course certain (ego) weather conditions come at you from the outside. However, it is up to you how you relate to it internally. In essence, you yourself are the one who lifts your own cloud cover within yourself.

Practical example: 'Dealing with Ego Clouds'

John had strong negative thoughts and emotions for a while, after a run-in with his colleague. At one point at home, he saw his child laughing, and 'a sunbeam shot through him.' And the incident with his colleague faded into the background. "Nice and important that stuff with my colleague," he thought. At that moment, you see the value of inner forms (aspects of your ego, your soul) and outer forms (objects outside of you), while realizing that each form is only temporary. Rejecting or denying this natural fact can cause extra pain and confusion.

Every time you expose your own ego, it is humiliating, but liberating at the same time. Then you remove your 'veils of clouds,' in order to meet spirit (the sun) as an old friend, which has always been present in you. Then it is like spirit shines through your ego and soul. If Spirited Personal Leadership becomes your new way of living and working daily, figuratively the sun will shine more in you. The ego clouds roll away more and the sunshine of your being radiates directly onto your own environment, which then inspires you. With spirit as your guide, you walk with spirit at your side. The native healer and inspirer Mario Cruz, whom I met in Sedona, Arizona, USA, said that ultimate soul development is something where you do not *walk* with spirit, but *are* spirit, or enlightened.

‘From walking-*with*-spirit to walking-*in*-spirit.’

Even with spirit as a travel guide you sometimes fall back into your pitfalls, only to make a quantum leap in your soul development later, and see how you contribute to a better world every day.

However, the more often you consciously look at yourself, the more spirit grows within you like a true radiant sun of light, illuminating others directly around you. Your ego, your behavior and choices are still there, but they are now more of an instrument of passion and of spirit, from which you live and show yourself.

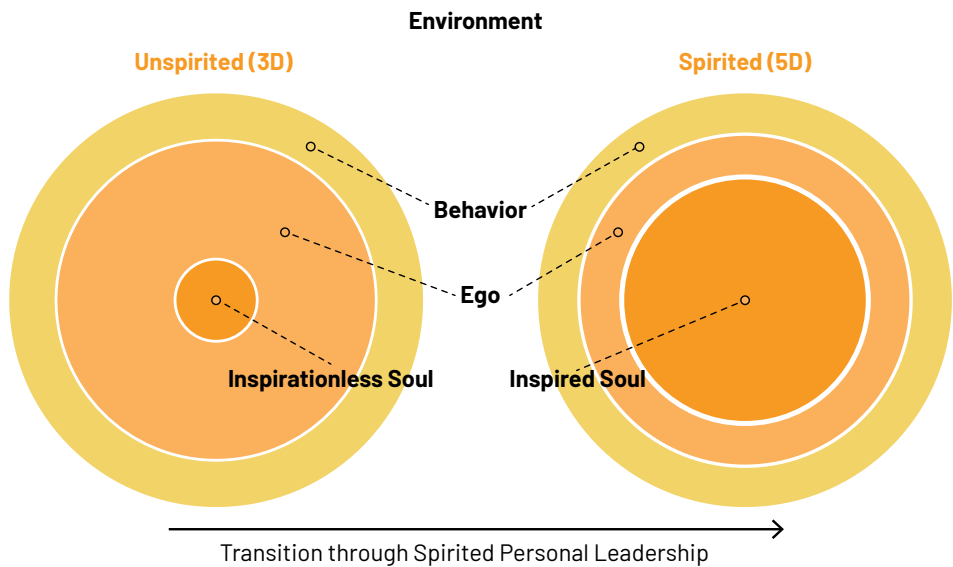


Figure 6.1 Model Transition through Spirited Personal Leadership

New Leaders Wanted

In the development towards a better world, we are growing as inspiring personal leaders, to reach a critical mass of conscious people, and inspiring leaders. If there are enough conscious people, even ego systems, which simply keep us from a better world, can break. What the world also needs is leadership from spirit, whether you are the mother of a family, or the CEO of a multinational, chairman of the board, head of government, political leader, or general manager. Of course, depending on your position your choices may have a greater impact on more people.

Since most current leaders are acting from their ego (and especially from the inner patriarch) unconsciously, they should ideally change this. But that is not realistic, because the personalities and egos of many sitting leaders have become so rigid, that this will not change anytime soon. Therefore, it is time for a new generation of leaders to stand up, to lead more from spirit.

However, you have seen that you do not have to wait for good leaders, to be able to make a meaningful contribution to a better world yourself. With more control over your own work and life, independence, inspiration and meaning, and sincerity and peacefulness, you bring much improvement to your own direct working and living environment.

Together We Do More Beautiful Things

How beautiful, and above all meaningful, is it if you contribute to the dream of a better world? And anyone can do that, if they want. You are not alone in harboring this dream, even if it sometimes seems to be an individual one. The more souls that join this dream, the stronger it becomes, and the greater the chance that it will lead to actual world improvement when it reaches critical mass. In this way the individual dream becomes a collective one, and the collective dream an individual one.

“

I have a dream, we have a dream.

—

I wish you a lot of strength, wisdom, and love in realizing this dream that will give you, and all of us, a lot, in your own way. When you first lost yourself, each other and nature, you can now bring everything together and create a new harmony, through Spirited Personal Leadership. Then, everything becomes one again instead of separated. Then we will be one big family again. As it has essentially always been, because "Everything is one."

6.6. Summary Creating a Better World

In this final chapter of the book, you saw how your Spirited Personal Leadership style contributes to a better world for yourself and those around you. That better world, that many of us long for deep-down, is a peaceful world, where we treat ourselves, each other and our natural environment honestly, sincerely and peacefully. There are at least four areas in your life and work in which you can make a valuable contribution:

1. Your daily behavior and choices in your private life;
2. Your daily behavior and choices at your work;
3. Choices in study, profession, and career;
4. Choices on your life path.

During your own journey to a better world you can also fall into pitfalls, such as:

1. Lack of self-awareness and self-reflection;
2. Other egos and ego systems. With the latter, you can take the following six steps to protect yourself:
 1. Protect yourself.
 2. Don't stoop to reactions to egos around you.
 3. Change the situation if you can.
 4. Get away from it if you can.
 5. Accept the situation as it is.
 6. Follow your own soul path and let spirit be and remain your guide.

But in addition to the 'setbacks' you encounter on your life journey, there are also supporters that you can consult, such as:

1. Sources of inspiration with information about consciousness/spirit;
2. Dreams;
3. Soul and spirit anchors, including spirit icons;
4. Nature;
5. Allies on Earth;
6. Allies in heaven;
7. Holistic counselors and caregivers.

Contributing to a Better World

Every contribution you make to a better world matters. Spirited Personal Leadership, as described in this book, gives you the insights and tools to actually shape it. Every day. Then you will make a better world together with many like-minded dreamers.

Sources

The sources underlying this book are diverse, from scientific literature to music lyrics and quotes from famous inspirers. First listed are the footnotes from the book. You will also find additional literature at the end of the list that has provided an important basis for information.

References

- 1 Carl Jung: www.discoverquotes.com
- 2 Hobbelink & Thoolen: *Rijkdom is gratis!* (de Ego-Ziel-Spirit-trits™, page 17), Dutch (Netherlands)
- 3 Definition partly originates from book: '*Rijkdom is gratis!*' Thoolen & Hobbelink, (Dutch)
- 4 M. Patel's. *Freedom of the Bhagavad Gita* (2009)
- 5 Walter Bradford Cannon. *Bodily Changes in Pain, Hunger, Fear and Rage* (1929)
- 6 Dilts, Robert, *Roots of Neuro-Linguistic Programming*, Meta Publications, Capitola, CA, 1983
- 7 S. Milgram. *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View* (2010)
- 8 R. Rohr. *The Enneagram. A Christian Perspective*. Crossroad; Illustrated edition (September 1, 2001)
- 9 J. Hedge. *The Essential DISC Training Workbook: Companion to the DISC Profile Assessment* (2012)
- 10 Myers, I: *Gifts Differing: Understanding Personality Type - The original book behind the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)* (1995)
- 11 Lewis R. Goldberg. *An alternative "description of personality": The Big-Five factor structure*
- 12 Freud, Sigmund. *A general introduction to psychoanalysis* (2012)
- 13 Jung, Carl Gustav. *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (1991)
- 14 Stone, Hal & Sidra. *Embracing Ourselves: The Voice Dialogue Manual* (1998)
- 15 Leary, Timothy. *Interpersonal Diagnosis of Personality* (2004)
- 16 Duckworth, Angela Lee. *TED-presentation. Grit: The power of passion and perseverance* (April 2013)
- 17 Definition partly originates from book: '*Rijkdom is gratis!*' Thoolen & Hobbelink, (Dutch)
- 18 Slavenburg, J. *Nag Hammadi Scriptures* (2009), HarperCollins Publishers Inc
- 19 Bhaktivedanta Swami Sri Srimad Prabhupada A.C. *Bhagavad-Gita zoals ze is* (2012) (Dutch)
- 20 Lommel, Pim van. *Consciousness beyond life. The Science of the Near-Death Experience*. HarperCollins Publishers Inc (2011)
- 21 Cannon, D. *Three waves of Volunteers and the New earth* (2011)
- 22 Fraser, M. *When heaven calls* (2020)
- 23 Parmahansa Yogananda. *Sayings of Parmahansa Yogananda*. Self-Realization Fellowship, U.S. (2004)
- 24 Lhalungpa, L.P. *The Life of Milarepa*. Books Faith (2002)
- 25 Encyclo.nl. *Dutch definitions sovereignty*. www.encyclo.nl, Dutch (Netherlands)

References

- 26 Levine, P. *Waking the tiger*. Healing trauma: The Innate Capacity to Transform Overwhelming Experiences. North Atlantic Books,U.S. (1997)
- 27 Mönnink, Herman de. *Verlieskunde*. Bohn Stafleu van Loghum (2017)(Dutch)
- 28 Kharitidi, Olga. *Master of Lucid Dreams*. Hampton Roads Publishing Co (2003)
- 29 Lyrics from the song 'Some are born' from album 'Song of Seven' by Jon Anderson
- 30 Matthew: 25:14-30 New Testament. *The Parable of the Talents*.
- 31 Kets de Vries, Manfred. *The CEO Whisperer*. M.F. Palgrave Macmillan (2020)
- 32 Definition partly originates from book: '*Rijkdom is gratis!*' Thoolen & Hobbelink. (Dutch)
- 33 Maric, M. *Albert Einstein The Love Letters*. Princeton University Press (2000)
- 34 Chopra, D. *Metahuman- unleashing your infinite potential* (2019)
- 35 Klomp, Kees. *Betekenisconomie, de waarde van verweven leven*. Noordhoff Business (2021)(Dutch)
- 36 Interview Bob Marley on Youtube 2012;
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iGKLkaRs1NE>
- 37 Tolle, Eckhart. *The Power of Now* (2004)
- 38 David, J. Papaji. *Amazing Grace*. Open Sky Press Ltd (2007)
- 39 Sadguru. *Inner Engineering*. Penguin Ananda (2016)
- 40 Gangaji. *The diamond in your pocket*. Sounds True Inc (2005)
- 41 Kuypers, B. *Group Development Patterns*. Dissertation 1986
- 42 Bode, G. & Delahay, P. *Horoscoop per sterrenbeeld*. Synthese-Mirananda (2002)(Dutch)
- 43 Planck, Max. *The origin and development of the quantum theory*. Andesite Press (2015)
- 44 Einstein, A. *The Einstein Reader*. Citadel (2006)
- 45 Darwin, C. *On the Origin of Species*. London (1864)
- 46 Schrijvers, J. *Hoe word ik een rat?* (2019)(Dutch)
- 47 Senge, P. & Scharmer, O. *Presence*. Academic Service (2015)
- 48 Harris, T. *I'm Ok, You're Ok*. Cornerstone. (2012),
- 49 Freud, Sigmund. *A general introduction to psychoanalysis* (2012)
- 50 Williamson, Marianne. *A Course in Weight Loss: 21 Spiritual Lessons for Surrendering Your Weight Forever*. Hay House, Inc (2012)
- 51 British Journal of Psychiatry, DSM-IV personality disorders in the WHO World Mental Health Surveys; 46-53 (July 2009)
- 52 Watzlawic. P. *Pragmatics Of Human Communication*. LORP (2014)
- 53 Eurich, Tasha. *What Self-Awareness Really Is (and How to Cultivate It)* (2018)
- 54 Bandura, A. *Psychology Classics All Psychology Students Should Read: The Bobo Doll Experiment* (2013)
- 55 Aristoteles. *Aristotele's. Nichomachean Ethics*. The University of Chicago Press (2012)
- 56 Spinoza, Baruch de. *The Ethics*. Createspace Independent Publishing Platform (2017)

- 57 Carpenter, Humphrey. *JRR Tolkien, a biography*. Houghton Mifflin (2000)
- 58 Russell, J. & Cohn, R. *Pascal's Law* (2012)
- 59 Bolen, J. Shinado. *The TAO of Psychology*. HarperCollins Publishers Inc (2005)
- 60 Peart, N. *Lyrics from song 'Freewill' from album 'Permanent Waves' from band RUSH* (1980)
- 61 Ryan, M.J. *This year I will*. Broadway Books (2006)
- 62 Abramowitz, J.S., Deacon, B.J., & Whiteside, S.P.H. *Exposure Therapy for Anxiety*. The Guilford Press (2011)
- 63 Dyak, M. *The Voice Dialogue Facilitator's Handbook*. Life Energy Press (1999)
- 64 Hoksbergen, R.A.C. *Child Adoption – A guidebook for Adoptive Parents and Their Advisors* (1996)
- 65 Vries, M.K.de. *Leiders, Narren en Bedriegers*. Scriptum (2003)(Dutch)
- 66 Peter Gabriel. *The Red Couch Interview* (1999)
- 67 Foster, J. *The Deepest Acceptance: Radical Awakening in Ordinary Life Paperback* (2017)
- 68 Steve Jobs. *Presentation Steve Jobs at Stanford Commencement Address* (2005)
- 69 Toonen, Peter. *Opgesloten in een Pyramide* (2018)(Dutch)
- 70 Bible: *Luke: (10:25-37): The Parable of the Good Samaritan*.
- 71 Peart, N. *Ghost Rider: Travels on the Healing Road*. ECW Press (2002)
- 72 Pennebaker, J. *Expressive Writing, words that heal*. Idyll Arbor (2014)
- 73 Kharitidi, Olga. *Entering the Circle*. HarperCollinsPublishers (1997)
- 74 Mönnink, Herman de. *Verlieskunde*. Bohn Stafleu van Loghum (2017)(Dutch)
- 75 Vermetten, E. *Handboek posttraumatische stressstoornissen*. (2007)(Dutch)
- 76 Ulsamer, B. *The Art and Practice of Family Constellations: Leading family constellations as developed by Bert Hellinger* (2020)
- 77 Eger, Edith. *The Gift- 12 lessons to save your life*. Rider (2020)
- 78 Bible: *New Testament. Philippians 3:14*
- 79 Fritz, R. *The Path of Least Resistance*
- 80 Coyle, D. *The Talent Code*. Cornerstone Digital (2010)
- 81 Bridges W. *Managing Transitions*. John Murray Press (2017)
- 82 Thomas, K.W, Kilmann, R.H. *Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument* (1997)
- 83 Katie, B. *Loving What Is: Four Questions That Can Change Your Life*. Harmony (2005)
- 84 Lommel, Pim van. *Consiousness beyond life. The Science of the Near-Death Experience*. HarperCollins Publishers Inc (2011)
- 85 Fraser, Matt. *When heaven calls*. Simon & Schuster (2020)

Supplemental Reading

- 1 Bolen, J.S. *Gods in Everyman*. Bertrams (1989)
- 2 Bolen, J.S. *Goddesses in Everywoman*. HarperCollins (2014)
- 3 Brugman, KJ, Budde J. Colewijn, B. *Ik (k)en mijn ikken*. Uitgeverij Thema (2010), (Dutch)
- 4 Chopra , D. *Seven Spiritual Laws Of Success*. Amber-Allen Publishing, U.S. (2015)
- 5 Chopra , D. *How to know God*. Harmony Books (2000)
- 6 Covey, S. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*. Free Press (2004)
- 7 Covey, S. *The 8th Habit. From Effectiveness to Greatness*. Simon & Schuster (2004)
- 8 Gershon, D. & Straub, G. *Empowerment*. Sterling (2011)
- 9 Melchizedek, D. *De Geometrie van de Schepping*. Hajefa (2016) (Dutch)
- 10 Palmer, H. *Living Deliberately: the Discovery and Development of Avatar*. Star's Edge International (1994)
- 11 Tolle, Eckhart. *New Earth*. Penguin Books Ltd (2009)
- 12 Stone, Hal & Sidra. *Embracing Ourselves*. Nataraj Publishing (1989)
- 13 Stone, Hal & Sidra. *Embracing Each Other*. Delos Publications (1989)
- 14 Stone, Hal & Sidra. *Embracing Your Inner Critic*. HarperCollins Publishers Inc (1993)
- 15 Zweig, C. & Abrams, J. *Meeting the Shadow. The Hidden Power of the Dark Side of Human Nature*. Tarcher/Putnam, US (1991)

Do you want to work more effectively? Or live a more meaningful life? Or contribute to a better world? Or all of the above? You can do that. Every day. How? With Spirited Personal Leadership.

This book is intended for anyone who, in their private or work life, wants to:

- ✓ work more effectively;
- ✓ develop their talents further;
- ✓ have a healthy work/life balance;
- ✓ increase the amount of control they have in their own life and work;
- ✓ experience more pleasure, passion, meaning and vitality;
- ✓ feel more inner peace and quiet;
- ✓ to contribute to better relationships - privately as well as in business;
- ✓ make a meaningful contribution to a better world.

Regardless of whether you are a leader, lawmaker, entrepreneur, manager, professional, associate, student, parent, family member, teenager or an adult.

What to expect?

This book will take you straight to the source and the three forces that determine all of your choices, behaviors and personal leadership, namely: ego, soul and consciousness (spirit). It will give you accessible insights, inspiring examples and exercises that you'll be able to apply immediately. You will see results quickly, helping you work more effectively, live more meaningfully and contribute to a better world.

The following questions will be answered:

What is ego anyway? Should you jettison your ego? What are the benefits of ego, and what are its pitfalls? Or, what is the soul? Is there a reason for our existence? What are the five existential tasks the soul has to tackle? What are the pros and cons of working and living from inspiration? And, what is spirit or consciousness? How can you utilize it more to have smoother relationships in private and at work and to create more peace for yourself and others around you? In the last section of the book you will see how you can make a real contribution towards a better world.



Martin J.M. Thoolen MSc. has over thirty years of experience as an inspirer of personal and collective leadership, as a senior coach/trainer and as a clinical and organizational psychologist. While working in these disciplines, he has guided many managers, professionals, leaders, entrepreneurs, CEO's and associates in their personal development and professional effectiveness. Both as individuals and in teams and groups, for commerce, business services, industry, government, healthcare and many other settings. For over 30 years he has developed and provided many courses, retreats, seminars, teamcoachings, public speakings and thousands of professional (business)coachings. Find more information at www.martinthoolen.com/en.

ISBN 978-90-90-36802-3



9 789090 368023



Awarded as: Best Awareness Coach & Clinical Psychologist of 2023 (Netherlands) by Global Health Pharma Mental Health Awards.



Martin Thoolen

AWARENESS AT WORK