

# A COLLECTION OF THOUGHTS

ON  
GROWTH, GRATITUDE,  
AND SELF-DISCOVERY

A BOOK WITHOUT JUDGEMENT AND RULES

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I dedicate this book to all the women who ever doubted themselves.

I dedicate this book to those who are still (and maybe in vain)  
searching for themselves.

I dedicate this book to the overthinkers.

I dedicate this book to those who once wanted to truly take hold of  
their own life.

I dedicate this book to those who need a little support or a gentle push  
on their way to their dreams.

I dedicate this book to those who feel they have to face everything  
alone.

I dedicate this book to the young, the old, to women, to men. To  
anyone whose life it might brighten, even just a little.

I apologize in advance for probably breaking every grammar rule in  
this book. This book was created in my own world.

For me, it is like unleashing a chain of emotions and thoughts, a space  
where I create my own rules.

My safe place, without judgment, without limits,  
written the way I like it, the way I feel it.

So please, have no expectations. Read without judgment.  
Just observe how your mind reacts.

Where you may recognize yourself,  
to my mistakes, from which you might learn.

Use your own life filter.

Nice to meet you, readers,

At first, I wasn't sure if I even wanted to introduce myself here. We could just stay an anonymous community - and honestly, I kind of like that idea. On the other hand, I (we) don't have to be shy about what I feel and how I feel. Sharing is caring, right?

This year I turned 28. How? When? I have no idea where all the younger years went. But I think most of us ask ourselves that question at some point. As I'm writing these words, I live in the Netherlands, though I originally come from the Czech Republic.

My life always had a strict rhythm (until about the age of 25) - school, riding my horse, studying, exams, university, boyfriend, then work, horse competitions, and so on. Lots of responsibilities, but not much time to think about the true meaning of my life. After finishing my bachelor's degree, I found my first job as a financial accountant. I can't say a single bad word about that position: I had a kind boss, friendly colleagues - everything I had ever prayed for at the time. BUT. That was the first time I realized that even when you seem to have everything, you might not be truly happy.

And then my moving marathon began: from Czechia to Amsterdam, then Hoevelaken, back to Czechia, on to Slovakia, and finally back to the Netherlands - to Zwolle.



*Nicola Donkhorst*  
PHOTOGRAPHY



How to start?

I don't know. I never really know. My mind is always full of thoughts, and it's not easy to put them all into words.

Slowly.

Gradually.

Clearly.

In this book, you will find some of the sentences that were born in my head while living my life.

Some sentences helped me.

Some made me stop and think.

Some are not easy to hear.

Some can touch your soul.

I hope there are people in this world whom this book can help. Help with making decisions, help you listen to your soul, help quiet your mind, help you slow down. Most of these sentences come from my life experiences. The rest, I probably saw somewhere along the way.



Nicole Donker  
PHOTOGRAPHY

I hope these words will help you gain confidence, be more yourself, and trust yourself more. Maybe even help repair relationships with yourself, with others.

I hope everyone can find a safe space here. A safe moment. Time to trust yourself. Time to heal. Time to think.

I will be with you as you read this book. Hugging you when times are hard, celebrating when times are brighter.

Enjoy reading, honey.

You are loved. You are enough.

I will try to give you what you might be missing.

P.S. Don't bother looking for page numbers because you won't find them. If a thought inspires you, feel free to tear out the page and place it somewhere you'll see it every day. Or simply fold the corner. Create your own way to come back to the inspirations.

xxx



Enjoy this year.  
It's just your time and your decisions.  
Have fun and create your own life.

Girl (or guy), take responsibility for your life. Finally. Now. Don't wait for anything. Don't wait for anyone. Time flies so fast. Make yourself happy. You create your life with the choices you make every day, every minute.

So be careful and think about your steps. Or be bold, take risks, do crazy things, make memories. But always remember: you hold the pen to write your own story.

You can't blame anyone for how you live. If you don't like it, change it. I hope this book gives you the courage to do just that.