

From Sickness
To Solace

From Sickness To Solace

*A journey of self-insight,
self-healing & self-awareness*

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As soon as I stopped being the victim, life began to bless me.

When I began to dance with life, life danced harmoniously and freely with me.

No longer craving others' approval, I found acceptance and inner peace.

From the moment I detached myself from societal expectations, I was able to follow my dreams and desires, without concessions.

When I began to love myself unconditionally, I felt for the first time what true love is.

You are the medicine for everything you need.

The choices you make determine the life you live and the path you will take. Year by year, layer by layer - you get closer to yourself, the connection to your inner self, the source of your true power and well-being.

Fears, big and small, will give way to love. I believe in you, just as I believe in myself.

If you dedicate yourself to your own healing process, with determination, you will restore confidence in your body with dignity.

Start living life the way you deserve, and you will shine!

In your journey of self-discovery, anything is possible, without facing failure.

Love, Annemarijn

Here's what to expect

In a world full of disease, the need for healing is greater than ever. The degree of your health has a huge impact on your quality of life and that of those around you. For ten years I struggled with various pains and ailments. I was surviving day in and day out. I was stuck in my own physical, mental and emotional prison. A programming that caused me to unknowingly make myself sick.

In this book I take you through my story, how my sickness eventually became my greatest solace. Of course, this did not happen overnight. This journey, a voyage of discovery in search of answers, life-changing insights and valuable knowledge, I would like to share with you. Hopefully you can find recognition, information and inspiration for your own journey of self-healing. The book offers practical tools on how you can set the process of change in motion for yourself. How you can let the subconscious paths of your brain come to the surface and reprogram from there to a state of consciousness in which you can break your unserving habits and patterns. Pick out what resonates and is helpful for you. Making your own choices and taking back control of your life allows you to heal.

This is what the quest for self-healing is all about. No one should tell you what choices to make or how to arrange your life. This can only be done by yourself. By realizing this, you come into your own power and are actually already in the process of self-healing.

Healing is not an end in itself, see it as an ongoing process. It is a journey you take to get closer to your true "I," so you can start living your happiest life.

For whom is this book?

For those who, want to begin or continue their journey to self-insight, self-healing and meaning.

I found the strength and inspiration after starting my own business-in which I guide people in their journey to self-healing-to not keep all the knowledge I had gained to myself.

I was often asked by clients (I prefer to call them, fellow travelers): how I managed to achieve such an immense transformation.

The question triggered me and I was eager to answer it. I wish others this intense feeling of wholeness, fulfillment and happiness in life as well and want to let as many people as possible see, feel and experience what you can do to heal yourself.

This led to a deep self-examination, reflecting on my recovery and how I achieved it. For what caused me to finally find that inner peace in body and mind? Something the doctors and specialists had said would be very unrealistic.

The question seemed so simple, but the answer was not found very quickly. In the moments when I came to an answer, it could not be described in a few sentences.

This book originated initially from a form of self-therapy and later from a desire to give my fellow travelers more insight into what

changes are needed to initiate a healing process and achieve unprecedented results. I decided to write down my journey and finally I knew, this is the story I may bring to this world.

You may be wondering why I have made this valuable information so accessible. The answer is simple: anyone can turn sickness into solace, no matter what you are struggling with. It takes a lot of courage and self-reflection to enter into the process of transformation.

With this book, I hope to give you the confidence that anything is possible and take you through how to turn this knowledge into a life-changing process.

The present does not equal the past. You can create your dream life, your deepest desire, through the choices you make from day to day. Healing comes from within yourself; no one can do it for you. The healing process takes time, energy and a willingness to grow as a person. In order to take your health to the next level, you need to start shaping your life differently. You **MUST** be willing to shape your life differently. Because if you do what you always did, you will get what you always got. When you are no longer willing to let ill health take over your life, you may take a different path.

There is a difference between having the knowledge and then actually applying it to your life. If you can imagine that one day your current life is going to be very different, if you have big dreams, then you are more than ready. It's time to take action.

And if you take action, I dare to assure you: great things are going to come your way.

Take the time to read this book to allow the information to excite you. Stick in post-its in this book as a reference for your own process. Make sure you can find all the information and insights relevant to you.

Disclaimer: This book is not here to fix you, because you are not broken. You have yourself to rediscover, start to feel and see what works for you.

Feeling a little bit better each day than the day before. Everything is allowed in small but consistent steps. And from my own experience, I'm going to explain to you how to take those steps.

You may think you are immediately healed after this book. I will wake you up out of that dream. This book is a part of your self-healing journey, a stopover and a source of inspiration. You will see what it takes to face your pain and obstacles. Once started, there will undoubtedly be times when you will sabotage yourself - when you will fall "safely" back into your old daily patterns. It can be a frightening, confrontational and an exhausting process. The moment you reach the top of the mountain and can enjoy the view, you will realize that it has been well worth the hard climb.

If you prefer to stay where you are now, that's fine too. The choice is yours. If you decide to continue reading this book and fully commit to this exciting journey, then you have just taken the first step. A step outside your comfort zone, which little by little will help you a step further in your healing process. You feel when you are ready to take it with both hands. What you need to heal is, first of all, the willingness to listen to your body's signals. And then the willingness to actively work with them. In this book, I'll take you through how I've scrutinized my life to make connections between what signals I've received for years but ignored. To be able to use this to start embodying the best version of myself, and this is what I wish for you too!

Wherever you are, I hope this book inspires you, gives you more confidence and peace so you can get back to basics. It's up to you to scrutinize your life, to get the answers you've always longed for.

"I am already incredibly proud of you, and I wish you all the health and happiness in the world. May you find the strength to bear life's burdens, allowing you to create the life you've always dreamed of."

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Wake me up!

I stare at the ceiling; next to me I hear how my boyfriend is already starting to breathe deeply and heavily. I feel how the mattress stings my hip and tendons. It is as if my bed has turned into an unsafe place of restlessness. I experience pain in every fiber of my body as I turn and toss from side to side.

The clock ticks away the seconds, and every time the pointer jumps a bit, I feel my heartbeat begin to beat faster and faster. It is a few minutes before midnight.

Tick, tock, tick, tock. *Will I still manage to get five hours of sleep?*

Tick, tock, tick, tock. *Did I set my alarm clock?*

Tick, tock, tick, tock. *How on earth am I going to defy my busy schedule tomorrow?*

Another glance at the clock tells me that another ten minutes have passed that I have not spent sleeping. My boyfriend awakes and snarls "just stay still." A fiery anger that I have kept hidden for a long time pops out of me like a volcanic eruption, "I can't sleep!" I yell, turning my back on him in one motion. "Annemarijn, it really saddens me," the fact that he called me

by my first name and the tone in his voice betrayed that this time it was serious. "I don't recognize you anymore, you've changed."

The clock has stopped ticking. The realization kicks in like never before, my body can't take it anymore. I give him a close hug and say nothing, but in my mind I know that this is exactly the message I need. He is right, I am no longer myself, who is Annemarijn anyway? The anger I experienced earlier changes to intense sadness in no time. Tears stream down my cheeks. It relieves, and at the same time I know that this is only the beginning of a long and difficult road I have to travel. Lying in his arms, I finally fall asleep.

In that period before, he had said these words to me many times, but it didn't come in, I ignored it. It hurt too much to face the truth. I knew what I had to do. I had to find Annemarijn again, although I still had no idea how. At that moment, I did not yet realize what an incredibly important life changing moment this was in my life. Never could I have imagined that this moment led to my illness becoming my greatest blessing.

To break the vicious stress cycle, I needed a wake-up call. It was time to look myself straight in the mirror and heal my old wounds. I was determined to put my life's journey under a magnifying glass and get to the bottom of why I was always fighting so hard. Fighting the mundane things of life. What made

me struggle with so much restlessness, a sense of emptiness and physical and emotional pain. I began my journey in small steps in search of answers. By learning to listen to my body's signals and embrace my deepest desires, I came closer and closer to the essence of what life really is about.

Surely I know who I am!?

It is a cold and dark Monday morning in October. Suddenly I startle awake, I see in the corner of my eye the alarm clock light up, it is 5:00 am. I feel my heart pounding and my chest rising and falling. I cling to the covers, my thoughts racing in all directions. I am so incredibly tired, my battery is dead. A soft little voice tells me I'd better stay in bed. Quickly I wave this thought away. With all the energy I have in me, I get out of bed with one leg and lift myself up with all my strength. Sloshing, I walk to the bathroom. I grab my toothbrush, but I can't manage to get it to my mouth - the tension in my body is so present, I can't raise my arm. The inexplicable nauseous feeling I experience every morning resurfaces. I put my just-made smoothie into my bag. With a deep sigh and heavy reluctance, I get dressed. By now it is already six o'clock. In my mind I encourage myself: *keep going, giving up is not an option*. Across the bridge at the Station, I see the train approaching in the distance. With everything in me, I run down the station steps with my heavy bag. My wallet slips from my hands and all the cards fly across the floor. Meanwhile, the beeping sound of the sprinter is already coming closer. My heart pounding in my throat, with a quick hand movement I beat the drops of sweat from my forehead. A deep sigh of relief follows the moment the

doors close behind my back. Panting, I look for a place in the crowded compartment. Fortunately, I have fifty minutes to catch my breath before my hectic workday begins.

For months I had been working far too long days - in most weeks I easily reached sixty hours. Whenever I felt I was doing too little, a great sense of guilt crept up on me. Now, thinking back on that time, the muscles in my body immediately contract again. A heavy energy presses on my shoulders - as if I had to carry ten sandbags with me, fighting to reach the finish line. Only at the finish line can I throw off all the burdens once and for all, but when will I get there?

Less than six months ago I returned from a long backpacking trip through Australia and New Zealand. A breathtaking trip, and at the same time one that immediately brought me back to face to reality: I had spent over fifteen thousand Euros in six months. Time to replenish my savings account instead of plundering it. I didn't regret it for a second. Seeing the most beautiful places and unlimited freedom, nobody takes that away from me anymore. Mornings consisted of quietly waking up and then making my beloved oatmeal with fresh fruit and coconut chips. And while enjoying the morning sun, thinking of my day's activity: a visit to the koala sanctuary, walking on the pearly white beaches or getting a breath of fresh air on a boat. Anything was possible!

As determined as I was during my trip to completely change my life upon returning home, I quickly fell back into my old pattern. The system had me fully in its grip again, and before I knew it I found myself back in the madness of the overwhelming performance society: engulfed in the world of self-created stress and energy-hungry cities. In my mind, I had no choice; the money had run out. Driven by the necessity of putting bread on the table, I went back to work as a consultant in Den Bosch. My days consisted of performing, meeting targets, working overtime and rushing. To be home by 7:15 p.m., if I was lucky, to cook a quick meal, cram it down my throat and exercise. Because hey, I didn't want my health to suffer because of it. My pattern seemed to repeat itself over and over again. It was all or nothing! Often I was too tired to do anything at all. Yet I never cancelled a social occasion and ran from one appointment to the next: a friend's birthday, the weekly office happy hour, I was there. They felt like a "to do". A carefree and free life like I had during traveling, no longer existed. As if I had put it in boxes along with the not-more-needed stuff, somewhere in a corner on a high shelf in the attic. Gone under the dust, forgotten it was ever there.

Many things I dreamed of as a child had been crossed off my bucket list before I was twenty-five: studying and living in America for a year and backpacking in Australia and New Zealand. Every great career opportunity I grabbed with both

hands, even abroad. To the outside world, everything seemed it all worked out just fine. I wanted so badly to get everything out of my life. Crazy was not crazy enough, good was never good enough. I had an adventurous life that was praised and admired.

No one knew how unfulfilled I was and how badly I was really doing. Since I was an infant, I had been experiencing various health problems. After all these years, I had gotten used to it - pain was part of me. What it felt like to be pain-free, I couldn't even remember. My chronic symptoms had become unbearable after my journey and began to control my life. Day in and day out, I felt as if my body and my health were against me.

Despite the pain, I had to stay strong. I reminded myself not to complain, considering that others have it much worse. With a great partner, a good income, a world map full of pins on all the beautiful places I had already visited, dear friends, a warm family and a happy childhood, I really had nothing to complain about. This is what happiness was supposed to be! Right? I felt empty, as if my life had no meaning. My brain had the power. On autopilot I went through my daily routines, without really thinking about things. I continued to make high demands on myself and made life choices based on social pressure and what society required of me, even though everything inside me was screaming for change.