



Welcome!

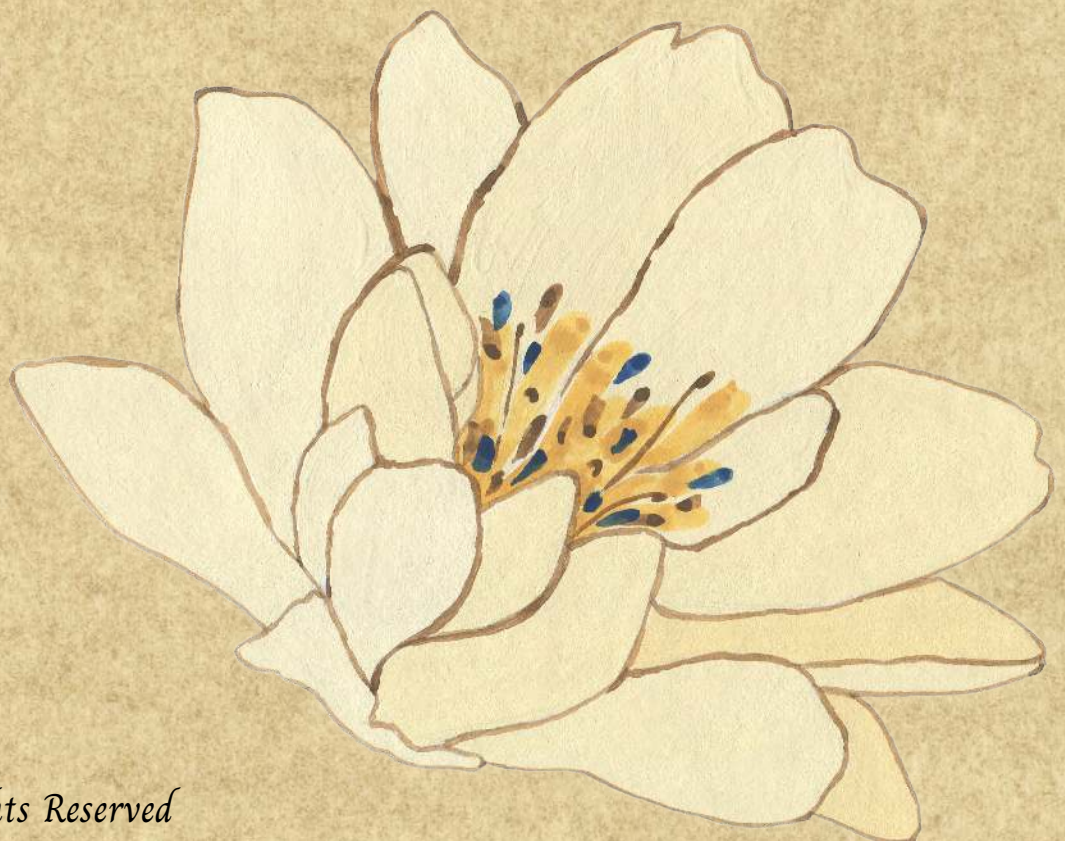
I'm Michelle Oliver, the author of Think Fast-Talk Slow-Shoot Straight. I'd like to personally thank you, whether you signed up for our service or were gifted a package.

Every product and service we offer is created to fulfill the mission of helping as many women as possible reignite the dreams within their hearts, gain self-awareness, resiliency, power and the ability to make the next ten years of life absolutely incredible!

I'd love to hear what you think of this product and our customer service. If there is anything we can improve or you have any questions, please reach out. I'm always here to help!

Kind regards,

Michelle Oliver





Introduction

Last night I couldn't sleep. At 4:00 this morning I was still arguing with the darkness, trying to convince it to cover me like a blanket and grant me the comfort of slumber. Instead, as the morning crept steadily forward, all I could think about was you, whoever and wherever you are. I may not have met you, but I know that if you are even just a bit like me, you have spent hours, days and years in the attempt to simply be who you really are in a world that never invited you to do so. Maybe it even laughed at you and mocked you for your presumptuous assumption that you had something worthwhile to share, to be, to express.

I imagine you as a free thinker, challenging the conventions that cloud the vision of so many, or at least you were at one time. It's likely that the audacious version of you, the creative spirit, the powerhouse that's inside of you has been scratching, panting and howling to be released.

You may be a doer who impulsively acts or a dreamer who is too frightened to. I know you are pulled to see further than your surroundings and you are drawn onward, upward and outward in spite of whatever your current circumstances are. These words are for you, whose dreams tear at your heart like a thorn because you have ignored them for too long. You, who haven't the time, energy or apparent ability to deliver your message into the world. You, who are weary of constraint, restriction, limitation and frustration. You, who know that your unfinished hopes, dreams and projects simply must come out into expression and into fruition now.

The year, the month, the day stretches out before us in the same way the promise of the Great American West lay before the bold pioneers in our history. Like so many small business owners, single parents and all human beings with a dream, I've made great decisions that opened up new possibilities for my life and stupid ones that left me flattened in the dust.

A few years ago, I lost a business through a series of blessings disguised as painful, traumatic, devastating experiences. At the time, that business meant everything to me; some of the details of which I will share later. I knew then that the actual business was really just a vehicle that allowed me and my incredible team to touch people's lives in simple, but very powerful, profound ways. I realize now how necessary it is for me to openly share those same values, intentions, stories and passions with the people, clients and businesses I serve every day.

You've heard from Ecclesiastes, Shakespeare, Solomon, Marie Antoinette and many others in language much more eloquently phrased than mine, that there is nothing new under the sun. It's not what you do that's unique, but how it is done. There are no new ideas in what I share here, but foundational truths shared in a personal narrative that I hope will resonate with you and bring light where you may need it to take your next step.

Think Fast, Talk Slow, Shoot Straight has grown into a deliberate mindset strategy and tactical training that is implemented in businesses of all kinds and sizes through private consulting, group coaching, live and virtual training and live events. Companies, of course, are made up of unique human beings who are driven by silent dreams that are seldom shared. Our program addresses core values, vision, culture, strategies, communication, marketing and many more areas that contribute to the ultimate success of a business. Personally, it allows you to reach beyond your current circumstance into a personal New Frontier and become the person you say you want to be.

This book provides strategies and tactics that can alter your perception and daily experiences in ways you won't be able to ignore. Each segment lays the foundation for the next and invites you to a complete reset for your life and your business. My personal narrative will weave in and out of the exercises that offer a practical application of the concepts we discuss and hopefully assist you in reflecting on your own narrative. In addition to sharing what it means to Think Fast, Talk Slow and Shoot Straight, I can't wait to tell you about Cowboy Kindness, Spirit of the Wild West and share an Unforgettable Love Story.

I love the analogy of the American Wild West, the New Frontier, because every business owner is a pioneer braving a great unknown. The wide expanse of possibility and the dream that pushes a person to take the risk and bet on themselves is not unlike the pioneers of the past. The journey is no different, the wide open prairie looks inviting at sunrise, but by midday, when your family is short on food and water, the sun is beating down on you and your horses are weary, it is a different story.

I suppose there are as many reasons why not to bother to start a business as there were reasons why the first pioneers wouldn't want to take that first step out West.

I imagine I have heard most of them and I have a pretty good idea that your mind - and oftentimes family and friends - can come up with bushels full. Whether it is starting a business, shifting to a new career or striving to be at the top of whatever game you are playing, we are going to focus on the reasons why you should do it. You know you are ready to take that first step when the discomfort and risks of the reasons not to bother pale in contrast to the impulse to move forward. The initial quality required for success contains the courage to take initiative.

"I've been told I can move mountains" TC Wood 1875

I call this quality the Spirit of the Wild West, which I define as:

The same invisible force that inspired pioneers and the first cowboys to follow their dreams so long ago. An irresistible impulse to honor the spirit that brings people together and tears them apart to pursue a vision of hope and draws out all the necessary grit to get there. A deep, innate wisdom of the ages that produces the insight, vision, determination and energy to drive us to follow our dreams!

Why did any pioneer step out in the wilderness?

- Because their current experience was lacking in some way.*
- To pursue freedom and joy.*
- To create.*
- Because of the possibility.*

Sound familiar to the thoughts in your own mind?

If you think the Wild West was a frontier filled with peril, try starting a business after the age of... let's just say 49 and 1/2 with absolutely nothing. For me age may have been the thing, but we all have a version of the "thing". Regardless of your age, education or experience, starting a new business will have some element of a Wild West adventure and you will do well to become familiar with the Spirit of the Wild West, because that and a special kind of six gun will help you survive and thrive.

Spirit of the Wild West is the wild inside you that allows you to move from your passion; into the vastness of opportunity and possibility with the commitment of a pioneer. The commitment to opportunity is not the faculty that focuses on the strategy to make this possibility a tangible fact, Spirit of the Wild West is the inner impulse that fuels your imagination, your hopes and grants you permission to dream of audacious possibilities for your future. It allows the present to fade into the past and frees you to focus only on where you want to go and who you want to be. This Spirit will weave its way throughout narrative and instructional portions of this work.



WESTWARD HO!

The chance to manifest a dream.

"Sometimes at night, I lie awake thinking of far away places,"

Martha Lloyd 1904

Go West Young Man! was a popular slogan in the 1840s that reflected the belief that the United States was destined - some believed by God- to expand across North America to the Pacific Ocean. It's unclear as to who deserves credit for the phrase; American author and newspaper editor Horace Greeley or John B.L. Soule, an Indiana journalist.

Straight Talk

The topic of this Western Migration contains a web of controversy and I in no way support the obvious and blatant genocide against Native Americans. In an article recently published in the Global Times titled The US genocide against native Americans and the continued injustice today, it is noted that Native Americans were expelled from the lands that they had lived on for generations and deprived of the right to life. The 1830 Indian Relocation Act compelled southeastern Indian tribes to move from east of the Mississippi River to the west. The westward journey was overseen and controlled by army and militia patrols. Between 1830 and 1850, the government forced nearly 100,000 Native Americans to leave their homelands, thousands of whom died of disease, hunger and cold. This dangerous journey later became known as the "Trail of Tears".

What's more, Native Americans were seriously discriminated against and the killing of them was rewarded. Obviously, I only touch upon this vast topic here for the simple reason that I want you to please understand that everything I share when I use the terms blazing trails, cowboy culture, the wild west, the spirit of the west, cowboy kindness, pioneer, etc. are metaphorical representations and in no way support gun violence, discrimination or any other negativity. We are all humans and have our stories and this is mine.

Regardless of gender, race or age, not only CAN you do this at any age, but you MUST! This is our motto and it means that you must go West for all the same reasons young men were encouraged to seek their fortune in the American West so many years ago.

In 1872, Horace Greeley was still editorializing the idea and included two significant points worthy of consideration. "I hold that tens of thousands, who are now barely holding on in the East, might thus place themselves on the high road to competence and ultimate independence in the West."

There were many who chose to remain where they were. And for many of the same reasons that so many people now choose to follow the well worn paths that are shown to them by educators, parents and most of society. The status quo is reasonable. It's a proven method for... well, for holding onto the East-staying where we are. If you find yourself barely "holding on to the East", as Greeley says, your destiny may be pulling you forward urging you to travel the "high road to competence and ultimate independence in the West." To manifest your dreams in the expanse that lies before you.

For as long as I can remember, I barely held onto the conventions of my version of the East. I know now that I was meant to be an entrepreneur, a creator, dreamer, visionary and leader. The inner push I experienced often conflicted with the restrictions I felt around me that were often unspoken, but powerful messages accepted as absolute.

The idea of working for someone was much more terrifying to me than creating something of my own. I wanted freedom to create. I wanted room to explore; to excel without conforming. I wanted to initiate, direct and lead and still be loved and thought of as kind. I needed and wanted to make things happen and kept hitting a wall of ice. I couldn't find the way.

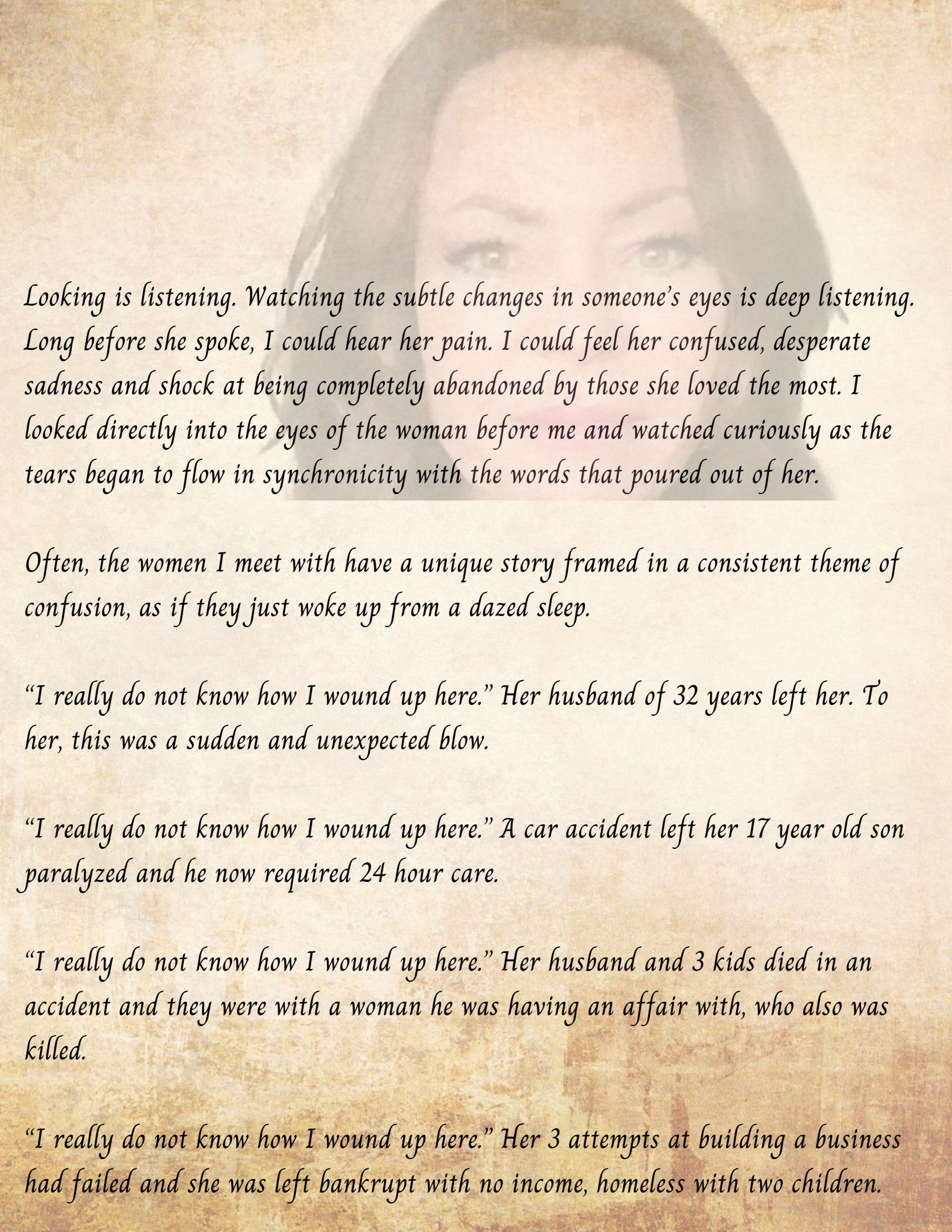
For me the paralyzing, delusional internal agents of my life came in three shots: potential, deference and hope for tomorrow.

I heard about my potential from all my teachers, in English, dance, theater, philosophy, psychology and science. I heard in business that I was full of the ability to have, do and be anything. Full of potentiality; overflowing with it, oozing with it in sales, management, performance, athleticism, business ownership. You name it, I had potential. Unfortunately, it just wasn't congruent to remain "nice" and support others and also fulfill my potential, so unconsciously the fear of losing acceptance and love battled constantly with my need to achieve, which leads to shot #2.

Third shot? Hope for tomorrow. Let's suffice it to say that hope for tomorrow is nothing more than an excuse not to achieve today. It's giving up responsibility in the name of a false understanding of faith.

The reasons why, we'll come to later. The very thing that we use as the excuse not to achieve, is what will allow us to do so. In my current circumstance, my age is not the reason why not to go after my dreams, but another catalyst to seize the day. The pain and trauma of rejection is not the reason to lie down and die, but to stand up, breathe again and run.





Looking is listening. Watching the subtle changes in someone's eyes is deep listening. Long before she spoke, I could hear her pain. I could feel her confused, desperate sadness and shock at being completely abandoned by those she loved the most. I looked directly into the eyes of the woman before me and watched curiously as the tears began to flow in synchronicity with the words that poured out of her.

Often, the women I meet with have a unique story framed in a consistent theme of confusion, as if they just woke up from a dazed sleep.

"I really do not know how I wound up here." Her husband of 32 years left her. To her, this was a sudden and unexpected blow.

"I really do not know how I wound up here." A car accident left her 17 year old son paralyzed and he now required 24 hour care.

"I really do not know how I wound up here." Her husband and 3 kids died in an accident and they were with a woman he was having an affair with, who also was killed.

"I really do not know how I wound up here." Her 3 attempts at building a business had failed and she was left bankrupt with no income, homeless with two children.

The tragedies my global sisters have suffered are varied and have no end. Some types of trauma and the destruction they leave are obvious and the post trauma effects make sense. For example, an unexpected accident that leaves a child permanently disabled and changes the trajectory of a person's life is something everyone can see and understand. There is another type of trauma that silently eats away at a woman and simply by virtue of the fact that there is no obvious, dramatic event to blame, the inner trauma becomes a source of deep shame. There is no obvious, apparent socially acceptable excuse for it and thus the blame is turned inward and the cycle is compounded and further exacerbates the trauma.

In comparison to most, my little story may appear insignificant, but it is after-all the only one I have. I share it because I wonder... I wonder what would happen if my experience were enough. What if by sharing the simple, real life that I have lived, without justification, without apology, without dramatizing or minimizing, what if ONE SINGLE OTHER Human Being on this planet was encouraged, inspired, educated, freed or helped in any way? I have nothing else to be, nothing else to offer except for this hope. I've only been able to help in ways that seem small, but the impact can be surprisingly monumental. It's possible that I am here to walk just one step ahead of you on this rugged trail, reaching back to grab your hand and pull you over the next boulder.

That lurch forward could mean the revenue in your business is doubled. It could mean that you get a better night's rest. It could mean you gain the courage to set a better boundary that frees you from years of angst or abuse. It could mean that you change a tiny habit that gives you a glimmer of hope and allows you to make a better choice just for today and you do it for two days, then three and then... It could mean that your gaze is lifted, you begin to see possibility and start moving towards it.

*“Inside all of us is Hope. Inside all of us is Fear. Inside all of us is Adventure.
Inside all of us is... A Wild Thing.” Maurice Sendak*



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