

AWAKEN YOUR INNER LEADER

Edita Atteck

Transform Stress,
Develop Emotional
Mastery and Thrive

A BUSY PROFESSIONAL'S ROADMAP
TO FREEDOM

**AWAKEN YOUR
INNER LEADER**

AWAKEN YOUR INNER LEADER

Transform Stress,
Develop Emotional Mastery
and Thrive

A busy professional's roadmap to freedom

Edita Atteck

Awaken Your Inner Leader

Transform Stress, Develop Emotional Mastery and Thrive

Copyright ©2018 by Edita Atteck

All rights reserved.

Published by Edita Atteck Creative Living Inc.

Illustrations by Julia Atteck.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—without the prior permission of the author.

The author of this book does not dispense medical advice nor prescribe the use of any technique as a form of treatment for physical or mental problems without the advice of a physician or health care professional either directly or indirectly. The intent of the author is only to offer information of a general nature to help you in your quest for spiritual, emotional and physical well-being. In the event you use any of the information in this book for yourself, the author and the publisher assume no responsibility for your actions.

ISBN: 978-1-7753976-1-8

Printed in Canada.

*This book is dedicated to planet Earth, to the rivers and oceans,
to the air we breathe, and to all living beings.*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am deeply grateful to all my clients whose stories are featured in the book...because they all are truly my teachers.

My gratitude also goes to my friends who offered invaluable insights and input into the book's first draft and who encouraged me throughout the process.

Thank you to Marianne Morton who offered many suggestions throughout the creation of this book and gave me such valuable feedback as I was writing.

To Michelle Podd: Thank you for always offering me such valuable insights and for all of your support. Thank you for generously cheering me on along the journey.

Many thanks to my brilliant editor, Joanna Guerriere, for her patience, hard work and dedication. Her enthusiasm and trust in my mission fueled the soul of this book.

Thanks to my family who offered unconditional love and support during the process of writing. Julia, your drawings inspired me more than you will ever know. I trust you already awakened your inner leader! Keith, you have always been my greatest champion and a pillar of support, and you never stop amazing me with the depth of your patience and encouragement. Your unwavering belief in me and my work helped bring this book from a dream to reality.

I cannot find enough words of gratitude.

INVITATION FROM THE AUTHOR

I have prepared a short personal welcome video for you.



<https://www.editaatteck.com/qr1-welcome/>

This book also includes two audio tracks and a worksheet as additional bonuses.

CONTENTS

Introduction	1
--------------	---

PART I

UNDERSTAND

Let's Unpack Stress

Chapter 1	What Is Stress, Anyway?	23
Chapter 2	How Does Our Operating System Work?	35
Chapter 3	How Did Your Pattern Get Formed?	63
Chapter 4	What Is an Emotion?	81
Chapter 5	The Missing Connection	103

PART II

CONNECT

Developing Emotional Literacy

Chapter 6	Connecting with Your Body	131
Chapter 7	Developing Emotional Literacy	157
Chapter 8	EL Leadership	185
Final Thoughts		197
Resources		201
References		203
About the Author		207

**AWAKEN YOUR
INNER LEADER**

*The space within us reaches out, translates each thing.
For the essence of a tree to be real for you,
Cast inner space around it, out of the space
That exists in you.*

– Rainer Maria Rilke

INTRODUCTION

Become the sky.

Take an axe to the prison wall.

Escape.

Walk out like someone suddenly born into color.

Do it now.

– Rumi

Do you feel stress and pressure on a regular basis? Do you struggle to find a balance between leading a professional life and having time to relax and unwind? Do you find yourself experiencing fatigue and having less and less patience due to an incredibly demanding professional and personal life? Do you feel stress in your body, showing up as headaches, tightness in your chest, stiffness in your neck, digestive issues or other bothersome symptoms? Do you yearn to find a solution that will help you break through the pattern of stress and fatigue in your life?

Despite achieving external success, many 21st century professionals are overwhelmed and struggle with stress, fatigue, and overactive minds. Reducing stress has been widely discussed in the past decade. Studies have been conducted, many books have been written on the topic, and entire industries have grown up around attempting to help people take more control of their lives. Stress relief has been linked to emotional intelligence, and it has been suggested that if we are more aware of our emotions and can take control of them, we can enjoy reduced stress levels.¹

Yet, the anxiety and pressure of stress is still a steady fixture in our lives.

Why?

Despite the attempts we might have made at approaching stress management from an exterior perspective—understanding how to find balance in our lives, learning how to control our reactions to external events, and other such strategies—the truth is, the experience of stress comes from *within our bodies*. This means, stress doesn't equal our external circumstances. Yes, stress can be triggered by external factors, but no amount of changing things outside of ourselves or trying to control how we react to those external circumstances will get us to a place of actual, sustained relief from stress, and to a place of equilibrium. So how do we relieve stress, and thrive?

What Is Fragmentation?

Let's return to the first questions I asked you. Do you experience symptoms like inner agitation; edginess; tension in your neck, back or shoulders; overwhelm; hyperactivity; or a tendency to bottle up your emotions (and perhaps from time to time experience emotional outbursts)? Do you deal with digestive distress that you cannot seem to shake off? Do you struggle with excessive thinking to the point of having difficulty sleeping or staying asleep? Do you often feel as if you are drained, or fatigued, or at times even emotionally numb? Do you wonder how you could better “control” or “manage” emotions like anger or frustration, or even “hide” some of your emotions?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you are not alone. I call this the *human fragmentation syndrome*. Symptoms like these are common and have more or less become our “normal” way of functioning while living in a busy and noisy world.

But what if you could live without the tension, racing mind, or the digestive disturbances you have been experiencing? What would

that make possible in your family or professional life? How many more productive hours would you be able to enjoy if you could get a good night's sleep? How would your quality of life improve if your headaches or back pain eased, and you could actually peacefully relax during your downtime, giving you a chance to truly rejuvenate? What would your life be like if you could actually stay present in any situation at work or at home?

I wrote this book for *you*. The information and exercises among these pages will help you learn how to transform the stress you have been feeling in your body, enabling you to build a roadmap to thriving.

All of the symptoms I have listed above are related to your *nervous system*. Your nervous system is an evolutionary gift consisting of your brain, your spinal cord, your sensory organs, and all of the nerve cells that connect all of the organs and systems in your body. Simply put, it's a network that regulates how your entire body functions, and how it responds to internal and external stimuli.

One specific part of your nervous system functions automatically and is directly linked to how you handle stress. It's called your *autonomic nervous system*. Your emotional, mental and physical health, and your capacity to be resilient and to thrive in life, are highly dependent on your ability to connect to your nervous system by becoming aware of your body, knowing what it is telling you, and releasing excess energy. Being able to do this will give you what is called a *regulated nervous system*. A well-regulated nervous system will support your body to function optimally. A poorly regulated nervous system can lead to many of the symptoms I listed earlier.

Let me introduce you to a concept I refer to as *Emotional Literacy*. Emotional Literacy is the ability to understand, appreciate and recognize how our emotions communicate to us through our body. This in turn helps us, over time, competently work with our

emotions (the “good” ones, the “bad” ones, and the “ugly” ones), enabling us to overcome adversity and nurture our capacity to flourish. As you become proficient in Emotional Literacy, you will gradually build up your capacity for *emotional mastery*. Emotional mastery is the ability to consistently work with your emotions and the sensations in your body that are orchestrated by your nervous system in such a way that you are able to transform stress every time it arises. There is no such thing as a stress-free life, but it is possible to practice achieving a stress-free body. Developing Emotional Literacy will gradually lead you to a state of mastery. Emotional mastery is a practice that allows you to consistently free up pressure built up inside your body, enabling you to awaken your innate ability to take every circumstance in stride.

While emotional mastery is a noble goal to reach, it can take a long time to get to the point where you are able to consistently release stress from your body and become highly attuned to the language of your nervous system—your sensations. The way to get there is by practicing Emotional Literacy, which is what I will guide you toward in this book. The more you practice listening to your body and reading your sensations, the more emotional competency you gain. With growing emotional competency, you will be able to tune deeper into your inner guidance, awakening your innate capacity for leadership.

What Is Self-leadership?

Now let’s take this a step further. How easy do you think it would be to consistently perform well at work under conditions of extreme internal stress and turmoil? How easy is it to lead an effective meeting, and engage your team when you haven’t had a good night’s sleep in two weeks and your stomach is in knots? And

at the best of times, how do you handle your co-workers' emotions, especially the ones labelled as "negative"? What do you notice about yourself in conflicting situations? Do you notice a racing mind and find that you habitually get defensive and argumentative? Similarly, how do you handle emotionally charged conversations with your relatives? Do you tend to walk away from challenging conversations? Is it easy for you to shut down when someone confronts you with a difficult conversation? Do you later mentally re-enact various what-if scenarios?

These are all ways the functioning of your nervous system can affect your daily performance at work and your conversations with everyone in your life. When you are in the middle of a conversation and the person you're talking to says or does something that triggers a reaction in your nervous system, that reaction bubbles up and may suddenly completely take you over. You may lose your temper, get frustrated and walk away, shut down, act like a deer caught in the headlights not knowing what to say next, or exhibit another habitual behavior. Then later you might ask yourself something like *Why do the same things keep happening at work? Why do I keep losing my temper with that person? Or, Why do I always go blank and never say what I want to say when my boss (or spouse or relative) confronts me with a question?*

In addition, you might find that when you come home from a busy or challenging day at work, it takes you a couple of hours to wind down and to fully connect with your loved ones. Do you recall a time when you were with your partner or children but your thoughts were miles away, as if your body was there but your mind was elsewhere? Becoming aware of your body and learning how to regulate your nervous system will enable you to respond with more awareness in every situation, both at work and in your personal life with those you love most. It will even help you connect to passion and meaning in your life.

As you read this, you might be thinking that the issues you're facing at work or in your personal life are because of the people around you. You might be saying to yourself: *Well, if the people on my team were actually doing their jobs, I wouldn't have to get so angry all the time. That's where the source of my stress comes from. Or, I get annoyed with so-and-so because they just don't listen. That's not my fault.* I assure you, when you start working on regulating your own nervous system, and you start changing the way you react to things, the things you have been reacting to change as well. And, even if they don't, your experience of them will, which is just as powerful. There are two decided advantages to doing this work yourself:

1. ***It's good for you even if you're the only one doing it.*** If someone at work or elsewhere in your life continues to be difficult to work with or talk to, you will grow your capacity to be less affected by them and this will, over time, improve your well-being and resilience.
2. ***You will become a leader, everywhere.*** As you improve your well-being and resilience, you will be better equipped to handle difficult conversations or situations and therefore can affect change and even have a positive influence on the people around you, both in your personal and professional life. In addition, as you make changes yourself, you will likely find that others around you start to change as well.

Simon Sinek, author and motivational speaker, says that leadership involves having followers who are inspired by your vision, cause or purpose. He believes leadership is about leading people; not about money or numbers. He notes that leaders inspire trust in the people around them, and that "trust is like lubrication. It reduces friction and creates conditions much more conducive

to performance.”² Understanding how your own nervous system functions is the foundation for not only understanding yourself, but understanding others too, which fosters *trust*. Becoming aware of your reactions to the people around you brings out your ability to connect and build trust with others, therefore enabling you to step into your leadership.

Is This Book for You?

You may have picked up this book because you are searching for answers on how to reduce stress in your life and feel freer. Perhaps you have already read many books about stress relief, listened to audiobooks, attended seminars and tried numerous techniques... yet, you feel something is still missing. You may be intrigued by the title and wonder if you are truly in touch with your innate capacity for leadership. You may be feeling the effects of long-term stress on your body and are wanting to find a way to relieve that stress. You may feel stuck in certain areas of your life, like you are being held back from being your best self at work or at home. Or, you may be a perpetual student of life who is eager to explore Emotional Literacy, resilience and the pursuit of emotional mastery. Whatever may be the reason you picked up this book, I am glad you did.

Thousands and thousands of people of all ages, genders and ethnicities struggle daily with physical issues due to stress, although many do not like to talk about them, and some don't even want to acknowledge them; yet, they dream of prospering and succeeding in life. Others are willing to look deep within and explore new possibilities: They're ready to act, and they are open to growing by learning, falling and getting up again, better than they were before. If you feel this latter description fits you most, this book is for you.

You may feel a yearning inside you to take your career, business

or life to the next level. Perhaps you are looking for a source of inspiration, whether it be momentary or one that will carry you forward for a long while. Maybe you want to ignite a spark that will open up into a flame of desire to create change in your life. Whatever your motivation is, I invite you to have an open mind and heart as you read.

You do not need to be an executive or manager in a company for this book to be valuable for you.

Inner leadership, or self-leadership, is an innate capacity available to every human being.

And if you *are* an executive or a manager, developing Emotional Literacy will not only help you process stress differently so that you can solve the physical issues you may have been dealing with for years, but it will also help you to better understand your team's needs which will help them get improved results for your business.

In short, then, breaking out of the patterns that your nervous system has kept you in for years—and maybe decades—will enable you to step into your leadership and cause a new life for yourself, and even those around you, both at home and at work.

Self-leadership arises out of Emotional Literacy and the ability to process your own emotions. My hope is that by the end of this book, you will no longer ask *Why is this happening to me?*, and that you will recognize your emotions as information, and ask instead *What is this emotion telling me and teaching me?*

Leadership is relevant and important in every situation, personal or professional. By virtue of the fact that we are social beings who do not live on deserted islands and we are always around other people, we all have opportunities for leadership in our lives. In fact, I believe we all need to master the art of

self-leadership before we can lead others. What would it be like if, rather than having the same experiences and situations happen to you over and over, you could start positively influencing the people around you and your situations? What if you could break out of the patterns you've been stuck in for a long time, perhaps years or decades? What if you could masterfully work with even the most challenging emotions to propel you to create a better life for yourself and those you care about?

Where the Story Began

How I came to do this work was an interesting journey. I am not a physician, nor a scientist. I obtained a degree in law believing that I could fight injustice, but deep down, I always knew that it wasn't my path. After immigrating to Canada, I graduated with a degree in political science and history because I was determined to master the English language and assimilate into the Canadian culture. My career journey then included a decade in the financial industry. All of these experiences were interwoven with the insatiable desire I've had since my teen years to study everything I could put my hands on about personal transformation, ranging from Western scientific approaches to Eastern philosophies. I believe that as I moved through all of these moments in time, I knew deep inside that I was ultimately on a journey of discovering the full potential of who I was and that I was striving to become a "whole human," eager to help others do the same. This book was born out of this journey and my desire to share my insights and revelations from my own path toward emotional mastery and wholeness.

So just where did that insatiable desire to study personal transformation when I was a teen come from?

Growing up in Slovakia, I'd never heard of Halloween. October

31 was known as All Saints Day. To me, the day meant visiting with my cousins and running around the cemetery where my paternal grandfather was buried. All Saints Day was wedged into my mind as a vision of candles flickering their lights in the breeze.

The terrain of the city of Košice is described as a basin. The downtown part of the city sits at its base. I can close my eyes now and imagine the sound of the “singing” fountain nested in between the gorgeous gothic cathedral and the neo-baroque state theatre. At the time, the beautiful historic core symbolized poise and mystery to me.

It was October 30 at around 7:00 a.m., one day before All Saints Day, only a few months after I had started my second year of high school and after I had celebrated my sweet sixteen birthday. Following my usual morning routine, I walked to the tram station in one of the newly built subdivisions. My school was in the historical downtown area. Due to an unusual city transport delay that morning, the tram was packed tightly with people. I looked out the window of the tram barely noticing the grey high-rise buildings. Little did I realize what that morning would bring for me.

The tram started moving toward the downtown area. It was quite a steep hill downward into the basin. We picked up an unusually high speed as we were rolling downhill. What transpired next is a blur.

When I became aware of what had happened, I realized that the driver had lost control of the tram and it had derailed. We had flipped over. With close to 200 people on board, almost everyone got hurt, and some died. It was a shocking scene of massive destruction.

I was unbelievably lucky to walk away from the wreckage without so much as a scratch. The following day was October 31, All Saints Day, except that year, I didn't participate. Truthfully, I don't have many memories of that day.

On the surface, my life continued as usual. I learned, in time, that there was far more going on beneath the surface in my nervous

system as a result of that accident that I would need to both understand, and heal.

In Every Obstacle, There Is an Opportunity

There is evidence to suggest that the universe started with a big bang. In many ways, that tram accident was the big bang of my never-ending quest to transform not only my life, but also the lives of others. After that experience, I embarked on a life-long search to understand the many questions I had:

What makes us whole?

What helps us thrive?

What breaks us down?

What makes us resilient?

What helps us stay in integrity?

What connects us to our planet and makes us want to take care of it?

What drives our behavior?

What makes us compassionate?

What makes us good leaders, parents and partners?

I wanted to learn it all.

In the quest to answer these questions, I read books by many reputable scientists, attended numerous trainings, seminars and workshops, walked on burning coals with Tony Robbins, and learned from fiction, science and poetry. I experimented with numerous techniques and practices, and observed the results.

Over time, I came to the realization that there was something in my body that was helping me keep myself in a state of balance, or equilibrium. I came to experientially understand my nervous system —what it is, how it works and why it's important to keep it regulated.

I also saw that there was a gap that I wanted to fill—that what I learned on my journey is not being taught in schools. I believe understanding our main stress processing system, the nervous system, should be a prerequisite course, perhaps called the *Art of Living* or the *Art of Being*. I've seen along my journey that what we are taught in school is mostly the art of *doing* and *thinking* (also important, yet incomplete!).

My journey of exploration led me to reconnect with my body. I learned how to experience intense excitement, how to process healthy anger and define my boundaries, and how to respect and invite sadness in the presence of a loss. I learned how to move myself from excitation back down to a state of calm, rest and relaxation, giving my body time to heal and restore itself. I experienced what it feels like to have deep meaning and a purpose in my life that is so much greater than I am. I learned how to taste life in its deepest sense.

I discovered what the sensations and emotions in our bodies really are, and how we can understand them and release them. I learned how detrimental it is for us to keep our emotional energy stuck inside our bodies. I learned that we live in a culture that glorifies intellect and ignores the experience of the body, or even downright denies it. I learned both firsthand, and working with many clients, what the health and well-being implications of this *human fragmentation syndrome* are. I learned what the implications are for our families and the organizations we both work and play in, and what this syndrome does to our futures and even the next generation.

I also learned how I could leverage my emotional energy to have a better quality of life. I discovered that I could get through any challenging circumstance by connecting to my body. I learned how to really read my body and what my emotions and sensations were telling me, and I'm still learning more and more about what

my body is telling me, daily. I intimately connected with the deep meaning of the word *resilience* and I found my roadmap to my own inner leader through building Emotional Literacy myself. I found this roadmap because of my insatiable drive to not only understand myself, but to be able to help you as well.

I built this roadmap through my own experience, but also with the wisdom I learned through the stories of my clients. No matter how many stories I heard, I saw common patterns: people getting lost inside their thoughts, having unprocessed feelings, being stuck in the perception of not having enough of something, and pursuing the desperate search for “something” that would soothe their unease. I learned that most people have various coping mechanisms to deal with the dysregulation of their nervous systems and their own fragmentation, be it spending hours gaming or on social media, drinking a bottle of wine, shopping, overworking, snacking on junk food, zoning out in front of the TV, engaging in excessive physical activity, and the list goes on. I saw that these patterns were common no matter how much external “success” they had achieved.

For the longest time, I didn’t realize that this most powerful operating system of the body—the nervous system—had a massive influence on our level of resiliency and our personality, health and relationships. Most of us are unfamiliar with this powerhouse within us on an *experiential* level, even if we understand how our nervous system works intellectually. I learned firsthand that true power and liberation comes from *experiential* knowledge.

Being able to connect with your body is like being able to communicate with your computer’s main operating system (whether you use Windows or IOS!). How liberating would that be? You likely know that when your computer’s operating system is not working properly; it becomes susceptible to viruses, slows down your applications, and could even crash your computer. Well, this is very

similar to how your nervous system works. Now, imagine you could affect change in your main operating system. How would that enable you to bring out your inner leader and influence all areas of your life?

It Starts with You

In Part I of this book, I will explore your inner “operating” system with you. I’ll explain how the automatic portion of the nervous system works based on research and my own understanding and experience, and how emotions, stress and your capacity to thrive are connected to it. I have included artistic representations of a few of the concepts drawn by my 15-year-old daughter. I was fascinated by her interpretation of the nervous system after she had attended a few of my seminars.

I will also offer my understanding of what may be missing in our work and professional environments (especially in North America), what the “operating system” of our corporate culture is, and why so many employees today are feeling deeply unhappy and disconnected.

In Part II, I will take you through the steps to developing Emotional Literacy in yourself, connecting with your body, and differentiating between your emotions and their source. I will connect the dots to demonstrate why developing *Emotional Literacy* is the prerequisite to pursuing *emotional mastery* and resilience, and thriving. Every emotion and sensation that you have in your body is valuable. There is no such thing as a false emotion. Every emotion is information, and when you delve into that information, there is a wealth of wisdom at your fingertips. This work also requires that you learn to understand the difference between your emotions and thoughts, as you may have learned to blur the boundaries between the two. I will walk you through understanding your emotions as information in this section of the book. As you develop Emotional Literacy while going through the

information and exercises in this book, you can open the doorway to discovering your inner leader and ignite a change within you enabling you to have a positive influence on others.

Interestingly, I often get asked the question of how to manage someone who displays a difficult behaviour or emotion, whether it's in the workplace or at home. Here is how Emotional Literacy becomes essential: You need to be aware of what *you feel*, first. With increased self-awareness, you can learn to recognize your own triggers. Becoming aware of what you feel helps you create clear boundaries between your own feelings and the other person's feelings. This way, you stop getting trapped in someone else's emotional energy.

Hence, leadership without self-leadership
becomes elusive, at the very best.

What are some of the patterns that have been repeating themselves in your life? Have you been having the same frustrating conversation over and over with someone in your life? Do you find that no matter what job you're in, you keep getting only so far at work? Have you suffered with self-sabotage, anxiety, or symptoms of chronic issues for years and you know it's draining your time and energy? In which areas of your life are you stuck? What would it be like for you to break out of these patterns? ***That is the power of Emotional Literacy***, and breaking these patterns starts with *you*.

How to Read this Book

Before we go any further, there is a reason I called this book, *Awaken Your Inner Leader*: to raise your awareness about your incredible inner wisdom and the intuitive guide inside you. I wrote this book to tell you your inner leader is more powerful than you may think.

At the same time, this book is not a “quick fix.” As you will learn in Part I, the patterns that govern how your body’s operating system works got programmed into your body when you were very young. Whatever age you are now, one thing is certain: Your system has been operating in one particular way for many years. Even if you’ve only been alive for two decades, that’s still a lot of time you’ve spent operating in a particular way. If you’ve been alive for 30 years or 40 years or more...well, you get the picture! Changing your human version of Windows or IOS may take a while. So I invite you to be patient with yourself through this process.

This book is about awareness and taking the first steps to regulating your nervous system. Building Emotional Literacy will help you do that. Mastery—honing your skills and changing your patterns—is a life-long practice; however, you can also make significant progress and feel better, now, with consistent practice.

This book is meant to awaken and strengthen something inside you that is already inherently yours. This *something* may be called many different names: wisdom, guidance, inner power, intuition, knowingness...choose the word that fits you best. This work is a *process*, and the journey to awakening this part of you will require a beginner’s mind, the willingness to explore ideas, and feelings and physical sensations that your logical mind may label as “boring,” “irrelevant,” or “I know this already.” You will get the most value from this book if you bring this beginner’s mind to each section.

I invite you to keep a notebook with you as you go through the chapters and to jot down insights as they come to you. Resist the temptation to take it for granted that you will remember everything you learn about yourself as you read along. Sometimes insights are fleeting and can be forgotten as quickly as they popped in. Writing down insights as you go can also help you deepen your understanding of the concepts and ideas I present to you. Take notes as you read

so you can look back and reflect on them.

I would also recommend writing down your questions as you go. Some of the concepts can be a bit tricky to understand at first, so make a note when something doesn't make sense. I want you to know that although you are reading this and may never have met me, I am available to answer questions you might have about this material. Write down your questions as you go and feel free to reach out through my website: www.editaatteck.com.

I am excited for you as you begin this journey with me. I trust that so many possibilities will open up for you when you believe in, and awaken, your inner leader. The language of the body is truly the universal mother tongue and it is the key to connecting to your inner leader.

When you understand and appreciate the operating system of your body, you can transform stress and potentially alleviate the symptoms of fragmentation that have been plaguing you for years, or even decades. You can break these repetitive patterns. You can become a self-leader and a leader for others at home and work. You can enhance your experience of vitality, freedom, and joy. It is my sincere wish that this book will offer you the opportunity to do that.

It is not my intention to tell you what you should or should not do, nor do I want to tell you what you should believe in. I wrote this book simply to offer you a glimpse into my inner world of experiences and practices that I have applied to myself and to my clients over the years in the hopes that these will help you see new possibilities for yourself. I am offering you a roadmap to developing Emotional Literacy and resilience among these pages, but how you apply any inspiration you glean from this book is entirely up to you. After all, transformation is personal, inner work.

We often measure success in terms of financial markers, returns on investments, business size, material possessions, ranks, fame, and

many other external indicators. However, at the end of the day, success is about how we *feel*. And I don't mean this in a "fluffy" kind of way; I mean *this is actually how we human beings work*. Why is success about how we feel? Because biologically, we are *feeling* beings that happen to be able to *think*; not the other way around. We know that our biology hasn't changed for thousands of years, but the environment we live in has changed drastically. Our society tells us to value our intellectual faculty over all others, including the wisdom of our bodies; however, our body is a rich source of information that we have been largely led away from.

Your body's wisdom holds the key to your inner healing and wholeness. As such, this is an *experiential* book: It will involve more than just your eyes, your thinking and your imagination. This book is to be felt, tasted and experienced through each of your senses and the never-ending fluctuations in your body.

This book is about the power and strength I believe you have within you. It is about the incredible wisdom of your body and your connection to everything around you. It is also about the struggle that you encounter along the way to emotional mastery and the effort involved in bringing out your inner leader. It is about self-leadership, so you can be a leader in your own life: a leader in your family and at work.

I believe the material in this book is essential for us to evolve as human beings. Although many people are talking about wanting to change others or the world, the only way we can change anything is through working on ourselves and changing ourselves first. ~~When you change, your relationships change.~~ Consider the impact of this statement!

I believe our world needs leaders who can bring humanity and our planet to the next stage of evolution. *I believe it's time to awaken our inner leaders.*

INTRODUCTION

I also believe you are that leader. It is my sincere wish that this book will support your journey in awakening the whole human within you.