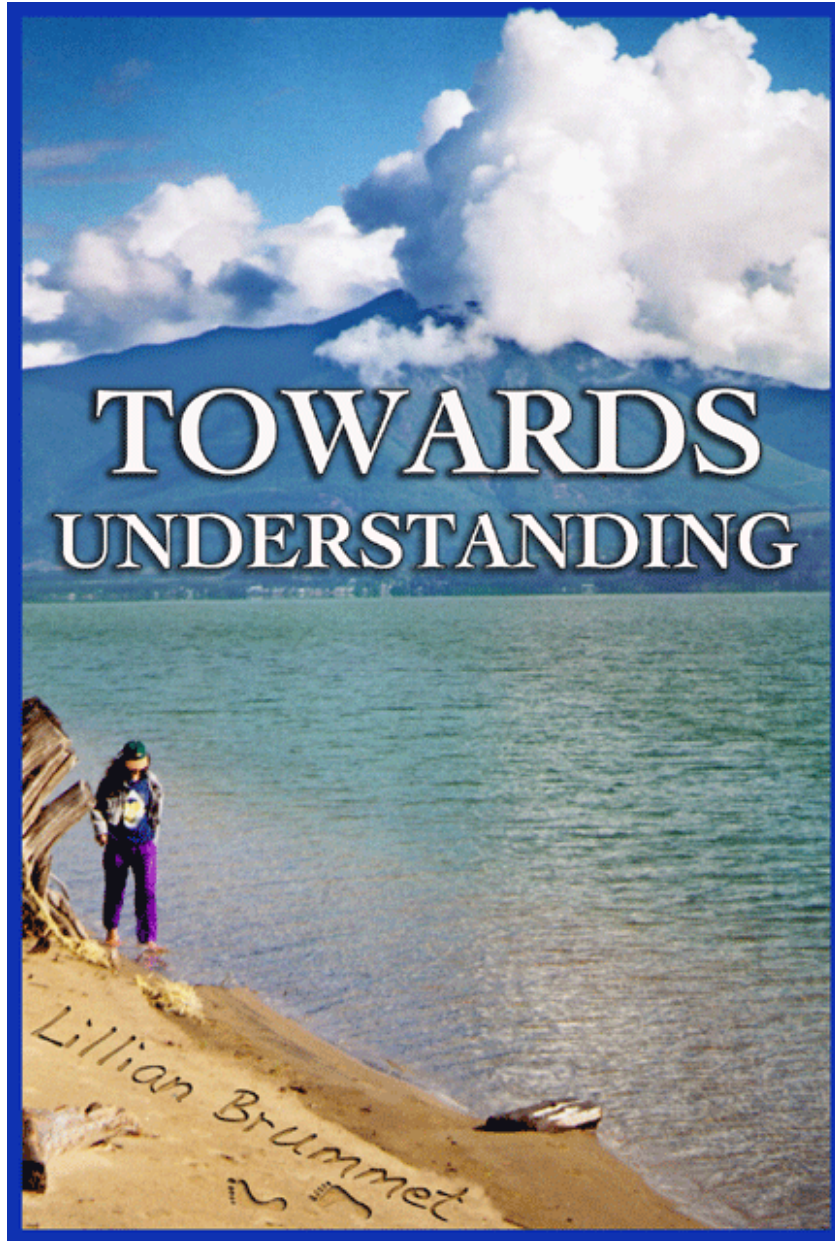


A poetic journey to understanding one's purpose & value in life.

Towards Understanding - revised edition

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Introduction

In 1990, Dave and Lillian met in Kelowna, BC – the southwestern province of Canada. The couple enjoy sharing their home with fur-kids that they adopt from the SPCA (Society Against Cruelty to Animals). Gardening is the Brummet's hobby of choice and you can often find them playing in the dirt.

Lillian's Story:

I would like to tell you a little about the history of my life- not because I want to hear a band of violins strike up a tune, but because I feel it is important for the reader to understand the author in order to relate to the poetry. Even with this understanding, readers will interpret the poetry in their own unique way, due to the experiences and knowledge and emotions they have grown over their lifetime – which is the beauty of poetry.

Like many others, my childhood turmoil spawned the beginning of my poetry writing. Home life was unstable for our family – we seemed to move from place to place all the time. I grew up in a broken home; my mother was married four times and two of those men found me too attractive, unfortunately. When my mother immigrated the family to Canada to marry, I found it very hard to adjust. It did not help that this husband was one of the two who found me more interesting than they should have. I was sent to live at an isolated farming boarding school for two years – which I later found out was done for my own protection. At the time, however, I thought it was to get rid of me. I saw my mother twice, I think, during that time. Both visits involved a long Greyhound bus ride alone, which I did not relish. Both of my brothers had left home by the age of 16, so I did not get to see them during those visits and I felt very lonely. Eventually, my mother found a way to leave her husband and a place for us to live together. However we did not know each other well, and did not have the skills to deal with ourselves – let alone each other.

Sadly there were no rulebooks at the time to help families deal with situations like this and I found myself on my own and on the street before at thirteen years old. For a while, I was able to sleep at various school friends' homes, but that did not last long. As soon as parents began asking questions, I knew I had to move on. I stayed only two nights on a park bench before I received my first Orphan's Benefit check, (courtesy of my biological father), which was just over the cost of rent for a small apartment. I stayed out of the government system by working the same jobs I always had up to then, such as working for nurseries and babysitting and yard chores and the like while going to public school. Soon, though, I found out how different I was from others at school and I just didn't fit anymore. So I stopped going to public school for a few years.

At age fifteen, I ran from an apartment complex that was having a very destructive weekend party. The place was being ripped apart by revellers and with no where to go, I looked to the women's shelter in town... and that was how I was caught living on my own and taken to a foster home where I was given the option of working part time, having some independence still, but going back to school to get my grade ten. Which I did, but when I soon was on my own again by choice this time, more due to my

discomfiture with family activities and bonding than anything else. This experience, however, allowed me to learn why I was plagued with nightmares, why I was feeling the way I was. Jan, my foster mother, helped me recognize the turmoil I was in – and this was the key to growing beyond the pain and into myself. It was right around this time that I found myself in a “first love” relationship that though it was very unhealthy, we depended on one another to survive – while at the same time, holding each other back from moving in with ourselves.

At nineteen I went back to school and eventually received a university level of grade twelve (meaning the highest available courses in math, science, etc). Eventually I took several other college courses that lead to a career in the field of hospitality management in my mid-twenties. On the side, I helped run my mother’s market garden and my husbands drum teaching business. To say I was an over-achiever is not an exaggeration. I had this drive in me to not let the past be forever torturing me and holding me back.

When I was growing up, teachers often commented on my writing ability - and honestly, English was one of the few classes that kept me going to school when I was first on my own. I used poetry as a healing tool, a way to get the pain out where I could examine it. Eventually, prodding from friends lead me to enter a contest and then another and another... I never did win a grand prize, but my work did appear in five hardcover anthology books and several publications throughout North America. I also had the honour of attaining "Editor's Choice Award for outstanding Achievement in Poetry", not once – but twice. These small achievements and praises gave me some confidence in the quality of my work.

But what prompted me to write as a career began with a bad car accident – a three-car pile-up and I was in the middle. After a year of full-time physiotherapy, followed by a year of trying to get back to operating my business and continuing therapy, I realized I was never going to be able to continue that work full-time.

At that point Dave and I were feeling like our lives were going the wrong direction. I knew that with the injuries received from the car accident, I was not able to continue to run my business and having a full-time job elsewhere was not looking like a possibility due to chronic pain issues. I mean, we worked hard for our careers and to have it just taken away like that was really shocking – of course, I’m grateful for it now. At the time, however, I looked back at my life in disgust because I felt all my efforts, work, pain... it was all for nothing. No one would notice and no lasting benefit was left behind. I questioned why I survived the life I had only to have these things happen – and I questioned the value of my life. This was the trigger that helped me realize that I just couldn’t live like that any longer. Dave and I had several heart-to-heart discussions about the meaning of our lives, what was important to us and how we mean to use the time we are given.

Right around this time, my husband was taking a writing course and I began taking it alongside of him. Soon, our article submissions were accepted and a free-lance career began, which later developed into our career as authors and hosts of two online radio shows.

We embarked on a freelance writing career in 1998, and began publishing our column “Trash Talk” in 1999. Although we stopped writing this column at the end of 2006, it continues to be picked up by publications around the world. This column was developed into our first paperback book Trash Talk (2004), which we soon followed up with a collection of my poetry in the book Towards Understanding (paperback, 2005). In 2007 we produced the e-book Purple Snowflake Marketing, which is a guide for authors looking to stand out in a snowstorm like a purple snowflake. All of these books have gone into

2nd editions, with revisions and additions, and are available in many different formats.

We also write articles dealing with gardening, yard, pets and outdoor adventures. Dave is the editor, proofreader, photographer, graphic designer, diagram and image creator and website managing half of our co-writing relationship. While I do the research, data entry (typing), office work, handle most of the marketing and interacting with publishers and media. We work very well as a team for live marketing endeavours from interviews to book events – with Dave being the speaker while I am the assistant, events go quite smoothly.

Find radio and publication interviews, articles and links for conscious living and more at: www.brummet.ca

The Poetry...

Poetry was one of the tools that I used to crawl out of hell. Never intending it to be read by others, it was my way of dealing with things. You will see me battle past demons, raise my voice in anger, discover self-awareness and recover from an intense relationship. You will witness the healing as I become aware of the value of my life. Finally, I begin to see beyond myself and start to question society and to understand others. I also discover a love for, and a dedication to, the health of the Earth.

This book has been organized in chronological order according to the year in which the work was written, beginning in 1987, when I was seventeen, and ending in 2002, when I was thirty-two – a period of fifteen years. I began writing poetry about the age of sixteen, but that work does not appear in this book as it was too blue and angry for the public – in fact I completely deleted those files some time ago. Most of the poems in this book have been published multiple times by numerous publications across the globe including Whisper Poetry (Africa), Grand Forks Gazette (Canada) and Writers in the Sky (US). Several of these have been in hardcover anthology collections and a few have won awards.

I hope that you will enjoy the journey as much as I have had fun in experimenting with different writing styles and creating different rhythms with words.

A poetic journey to understanding one's purpose & value in life.

Towards Understanding - revised edition

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