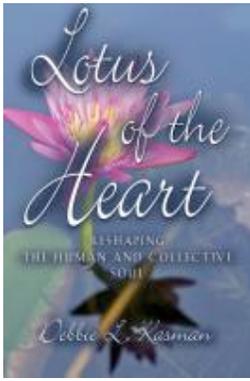


*Lotus  
of the  
Heart*

RESHAPING  
THE HUMAN AND COLLECTIVE  
SOUL

*Debbie L. Kasman*



*We are all capable of more than we assume. We have an innate potential for wisdom, creativity, innovation, and compassion. Yet most of us don't fully access that potential. These qualities don't come from our brains, as most of us think, but rather from a special place in our hearts. Lotus of the Heart teaches us how to recognize and utilize our full potential, in order to find solutions to what ails our world today.*

## **Lotus of the Heart**

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# **Lotus of the Heart**

**Reshaping the Human and  
Collective Soul**

**Debbie L. Kasman**

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*We do not receive wisdom, we must discover it for ourselves, after a journey through the wilderness which no one else can make for us, which no one can spare us, for our wisdom is the point of view from which we come at last to regard the world.*

Marcel Proust

## Introduction

Every once in a while, my son, who is now a young adult, would ask me how the world got to be so messed up. I would just shrug my shoulders and tell him I didn't know. Then he'd ask why people, especially those of my generation and older, were so complacent about our mess. I'd shrug my shoulders again and typically remain silent. And then he'd want to know why I never did anything to fix our world. And I would continue to remain silent because, for the longest time, I didn't know what to say or do. But now when my son asks me why I'm not doing anything to attempt to fix our world, I can honestly tell him that I'm trying.

This book is my contribution to the cause. It's about human potential, and it's an acknowledgment of, and an homage to, the deep respect and reverence I have for our potential as humans. We all have a powerful potential buried deep inside. If we each take the time to discover and learn how to fully use our potential, we'll have the ability to improve our world. But most of us don't know our potential, much less access it and utilize it.

I experienced my potential in action a few years ago through a rather mysterious occurrence. Some might actually call it a mystical experience. Little did I know that this experience would amount to the opening of a new destiny, causing giant ripples on the surface of my life.

When my son Sam was in his third year of university, living and studying in Boston, I had a dream that he was wrestling with his roommates. While the wrestling was playful at first, it quickly escalated to something more serious. I heard him cry out in pain, and

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then he started to cough up blood. He looked like he had been beaten up pretty badly. He was bruised and sore and gasping for air. Just before I woke up, I heard the words, “Everything will be fine.”

A few weeks later, Sam called to say he wasn’t feeling well. What started out as a bad cold had progressed to what seemed like a nasty flu. He went to a walk-in clinic, was prescribed antibiotics and a cough suppressant, and was told to take the medication and return in two days.

I spoke to him on the phone after he had returned from the clinic. He was going to take his first dose of medication and go to bed. Because he was under a doctor’s care and on medication, I trusted that he would soon be back to his old, healthy self.

A few hours later, I decided to do something I’d never done before. I felt an urge to meditate and send some “healing energy” to my son. This was really foreign to me. I had never done anything like it before, and didn’t know where the thought came from. While I had been dabbling with meditation, I had never attempted to use it to send energy to anyone. It sounded rather silly. But there the idea was, sitting in my head (at least I thought it was in my head—I found out later that the idea actually came from my heart). Strange as it seemed, I decided to listen to this natural urge.

I did a quick meditation and started to visualize Sam standing before me, facing me. In my mind, I put my hands on his head and started to massage his scalp. I was hoping these efforts would help him to sleep really well so he would wake up feeling better in the morning. I did this visualization somewhere between 8:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. In the visualization, he leaned into me and placed his head on my shoulder. I kept massaging his head and his back, returning him to an upright position because it was easier to massage him that way. But Sam kept leaning into me and putting his head on my shoulder. This happened quite a few times in the meditation, so I eventually gave up and continued to massage his head and back from this position. After about 20 minutes of visualizing this I grew tired and fell asleep, hoping that he would also have a restful and restorative sleep.

Later that night, the phone jarred me awake from a very deep sleep. It was my ex-husband, Sam’s father, who asked me if I knew

what was happening. His news that an ambulance had rushed Sam to the hospital shocked me! He explained that Sam had felt dizzy after taking the first round of antibiotics. His world began to tilt and flash and he started vomiting blood. Now he was in the emergency ward of a Boston hospital waiting to see a doctor.

My fear and alarm were enormous and I was awake for the rest of the night. Waiting for news was excruciating. After a few hours, Sam called to say that he was okay. He had suffered a severe allergic reaction to the antibiotic; the doctors also diagnosed him with pneumonia. Once they had the allergic reaction under control, they treated him intravenously for the pneumonia and released him when they were sure he was tolerating the new drug.

It wasn't until Sam was feeling much better that I remembered the dream about him getting beaten up, gasping for air, and coughing blood. And when I made that connection, I realized that my dream was prophetic, in an odd sort of way. This realization delivered a good swift kick to my gut. Along with the physical sensation of the "gut kick" came an enormous epiphany, an "aha moment" so strong and so clear, I knew with total clarity that *I needed to start paying closer attention to my dreams!*

When Sam came home for Christmas break two weeks after his trip to the hospital, he and I were eating dinner and talking about what happened. I remembered the visualization and I was curious about the timing of events. I didn't mention the visualization until he had explained the timeline of his ordeal. I was dumbfounded when he told me that he was in the ambulance heading to the hospital somewhere between 8:00 pm and 9:00 pm. This was the *exact time* I felt the need to visualize the healing massage. It was the *exact time* he kept leaning into me and putting his head on my shoulder as I tried to massage him!

What powerful force had acted within me to *know without knowing* what was happening to my son? Was this "mother's instinct"? Or was it something else? My dreams and thoughts were communicating with me in a way that I didn't understand. They seemed to be coming from a place other than my brain, because my brain didn't know what was happening with Sam. Whatever this place

was, I was beginning to realize it was actually smarter and a whole lot wiser than me.

“How can this be?” I wondered. “What hidden force is at work here? How on earth can it be more intelligent than me? And where on earth do these dreams, words, and thoughts come from?”

This experience tested my understanding about life. It was outside of what I understood to be the natural way of things and beyond what I had been taught could happen. I seemed to have tapped into something very special, something beyond my brain and much greater than myself.

I concluded that there *must* be an inner wisdom, an inner knowing, a greater intelligence beyond the mind, inside each of us. The experience demonstrated to me that this intelligence, this inherent ability within us to *know*, doesn’t come from our minds. Our minds can’t fathom it. It must come from a different place within us.

It took me a while to realize that I was experiencing the power of my own hidden potential—the innate, natural, and organic wisdom I had inside of me. And it took me even longer to realize that this hidden potential was buried in my heart.

The discovery of my hidden potential launched me on a new path of personal inquiry. I had always realized that there is more to life than what meets the eye, and that much eludes me in my understanding of how the universe works. I used to have many questions, such as “Why am I here?” or “What is my purpose?” or “Is this all there is?” But now my list of questions multiplied. I began to wonder who and what I really was, and I wanted to know more about my hidden potential. How is it that I hadn’t discovered this potential until my forties? And how exactly did it work? Could I develop it? Could I turn it off and on like a light switch? What did my potential look like? And where was it located in my body? Were there others who had discovered their potential and, if so, who were they and what had they come to know about it? Armed with a natural curiosity and many questions, I began to do some serious thinking—the kind that makes your head hurt.

Somewhere between 354 A.D. and 430 A.D. (around the time when the Western Roman Empire was disintegrating and Western Christianity was being developed), St. Augustine said, “Seek not

abroad, turn back into thyself, for in the inner man dwells the truth.” I forgave St. Augustine for his male-centric language (they didn’t know any better at the time) and took these words to heart, did some serious inner exploration, and went searching for my hidden potential.

Just as Jacques Cousteau explored the depths of the oceans, I explored the depths of *me*. I became an explorer of myself. We are “bolted” to the earth because we carry the weight of gravity on our shoulders from birth, but Cousteau discovered that we only have to dive beneath the surface of the sea to be free.

I made a similar emancipating discovery when I dove beneath the surface of me; in so doing, I too became free.

Armed with my big questions, plenty more little ones, and my trusty laptop, I did what every new student does before the first day of school. I bought myself a handful of new pens, a bunch of pretty notebooks, and some colourful highlighters. I took a deep breath and threw myself down the rabbit hole, twisting, turning, and tumbling the entire way, looking for my hidden potential, searching for some non-traditional answers to my esoteric experience.

Okay, so I didn’t *literally* twist, turn, and tumble down the hole. But my *thinking* sure did! Feeling a bit like Elizabeth Gilbert in *Eat, Pray, Love*, the author who journeyed across Italy, India, and Indonesia searching for “everything,” I journeyed across the far reaches of my psyche searching for my hidden potential. But my adventure was not quite as glamorous as Gilbert’s. Her search took her across several continents; I conducted mine from the terribly exotic and perilous location of my living room couch.

During my inner journey I made an emancipating discovery and—mirabile visu!—found the lotus of my heart—my hidden, human potential. The surprising thing was I had to travel a mere 18 inches to find it. (That’s the approximate distance from our heads to our hearts. Spiritual writer Gregg Braden calls it “making the 18-inch journey.”)

Through my journey and subsequent discoveries, I learned to look at my life in a vastly different way. (As Marcel Proust once said, the real voyage of discovery lies not in seeking new landscapes, but in seeing with new eyes.) I began to see my life and the world with fresh eyes.

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As humans, we are capable of so much more than we assume. We have a tremendous innate potential for wisdom, creativity, innovation, imagination, intuition, compassion, empathy, and selflessness. All of these qualities come from the same place inside us. They don't come from our brains, like most of us think. Rather, they come from a special place in our hearts, the lotus of our hearts, and they flow *through* our brain. And the lotus of our hearts—our hidden human potential—is what this book is all about.

The first goal of this book is to introduce you to the lotus of your heart and its full potential, while orienting you to the complex problems facing our world today and how we might address them. A second goal is to involve you in a process of self-discovery, so that you see yourself and your purpose in the world with new eyes. A third goal is to show you how our conditioning on an individual basis affects us on a collective basis. And a final goal, albeit a daunting one, is to help you to make the 18-inch journey from your head to your heart, so that you too may discover your lotus, in order to transform yourself and your world.

We've known for a long time that to be human is to have the gifts of language, reasoning, and emotion. Now, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we need to wake up to the fact that we have a fourth, long forgotten gift. We are born with this powerful potential (or type of intelligence), but we are disconnected from it. When we discover and reconnect with the lotus of the heart, we unlock the mystery of who we are and what it truly means to be human. And this could be one of the most pivotal discoveries we will ever make!

This book will help you to find the lotus of your heart. It will show you why you don't know you have this special place, and it will explain how this heart intelligence works. It will help you to embrace a new moral purpose, and to face the challenges of actually living this purpose. You'll benefit from learning who you really are, and you'll begin to see yourself and the world differently. You'll begin to think differently and experience a renewed sense of urgency, compelling you to work collectively toward solving many of the complex issues facing our world today. In doing so, you'll learn not only how to change yourself, but also how to jointly change the world and the course of

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history for all of humankind. We all have access to this tremendous potential. And once we reconnect to it, the implications for our human evolution are staggering.

The ideal reader of this book is anyone who is deeply curious about the mysteries of life, who is open-minded and inquiring, a seeker of new information, and who enjoys pushing the boundaries and limits of traditional thinking. This book is for those who know there is more to life and the human experience than meets the eye.

I hope that by reading this book, you will begin to understand the deep source of potential you have inside, creating new expectations for what life could be like, not only for yourself but for all humans on this planet. When each of us has access to the lotus of the heart, we'll each blossom into beautiful, whole, and complete humans. And when enough of us blossom in that way, together we'll reshape the human and collective soul, and transform the world.

This book is divided into three parts. In Part One, Warp and Woof, we'll establish some important foundational information, including why we need to access our fullest potential and what's involved in accessing it. Chapter One takes a look at the Human Potential Movement from its roots in the 1960s to its more modern interpretations today. In Chapter Two, we'll discover how Einstein reached his full potential and shook the world with his theory of relativity. In Chapter Three, we'll take a look at our current conditioned world, and examine the problems we face both on an individual and a collective basis. In Chapter Four, we'll look at the pre-modern world to see what these societies were like, how they were more integrated than us, and what we can learn from them. In Chapters Five, Six, Seven, and Eight, we'll take a look at what we can learn from science, physics, myth, religion, and philosophy in reaching our fullest potential.

In Part Two, Toward an Integral Self, we'll focus on *the how*. In Chapter Nine, we'll look at different ways people name potential. In Chapter Ten, we'll look at different ways people connect to their potential, particularly artists and athletes. In Chapter Eleven, we'll examine a framework we can use for enhancing and balancing the sensory, psychological, mythic and spiritual levels of ourselves, and

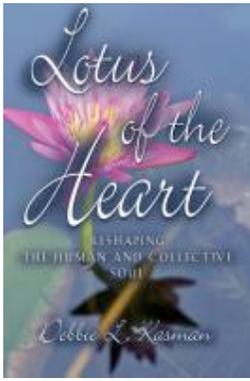
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we'll learn specific ways we can enhance each of those levels. In Chapter Twelve, we'll take a look at a few examples of people, famous and not so famous, who have created a more integral self.

In Part Three, *Toward an Integral Society*, we'll focus on the collective—how we can grow up and wake up together as one global community. In Chapter Thirteen, we'll look at how society did this during the Age of Enlightenment. In Chapters Fourteen, Fifteen, and Sixteen, we'll point ourselves toward solutions for what ails our world today by looking at ways we can transform our economic, corporate, religious, and educational structures in order to achieve an enlightened global community. In Chapter Seventeen, we'll look at female leadership as a way of birthing this integrated new world.

I hope the book transforms your life so that we, together, can transform the world.

Debbie L. Kasman  
Pickering, Canada  
April 1, 2013



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