

Deep, Blue, Heavenly Seas

...A RETREAT FOR YOUR SOUL

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*25 Hawaiian-Inspired Spiritual Practices
to Help You Live Your Life
and Leave Your Legacy*

MELISSA HECKMAN, MSW

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Contact Information:
Melissa Heckman
P.O. Box 733
Lafayette, CA 94549-0733
Visit: MelissaHeckman.com
Email: MLHECKMAN2003@YAHOO.COM

DEDICATION



It is with a heart full of appreciation that I dedicate this book to my spiritual teachers. They come in many forms, from beloved family and friends, to wise saints and sages, to tiny and winged creatures, to the tall, soaring Hawaiian coconut trees, to art, music, seashells, the ocean, and life's miracle moments. This book is ultimately dedicated to all of life.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



I will do my best to acknowledge the individuals who inspire me beyond measure.

As divine timing would have it, my first writing coach and editor, Linda Joy Myers, president of the National Association of Memoir Writers and author of four books, showed up at the perfect time. She helped me focus when I needed to most.

A lovely friend, Susan L'Heureaux, author of *California Stories*, also provided me with editing tips and writing guidance. I cannot express enough appreciation for her lessons and support.

Another lovely angel in human form appeared when I needed more editing help—Tricia Linden, international banker by day and spiritual romance author by night. She is the author of five books including *Dreaming in Moonlight*.

Two brilliant friends from my long standing San Francisco book club, Trisha O'Neil and Christine Owner, provided feedback, ideas, and crucial edits.

My wonderful mother, author, and teacher Pamela Hooper-Poland, has always encouraged me to express my creativity, to dance, to read out loud, to sing out loud, and to try new things. Her Southern sense of humor never ceases to crack me up. She touched my Southern heart recently when she gave me a book called *Butter My Butt and Call Me a Biscuit*. I flip through it laughing—and feel blessed to have a mother like her. I am proud to say that my mama-san, or mama-roo, has penned two children's novels. The greatest gift that she ever gave to me, beyond her immense love, was taking me to live in Hawaii as a young girl.

I also honor Dr. Reverend Patricia Keel. I appreciate her for praying powerfully with me, for opening Unity of Berkeley to me for speaking opportunities, and for reassuring me about teaching my life coaching workshops. She also encouraged creative expression and helped me to accept life as a prayer, always answered.

Author Wayne Dyer's teaching helped me establish the foundation I needed to accept myself as a spiritual being in the world. His words conveyed the messages I needed to hear to change my life—from the inner to the outer. Book after book, page by page, I would devour the lessons and inspirations. His work really motivated me to make concrete changes in my life. Mr. Dyer helped me shed anxiety and claim my goodness. He inspired me to row my own boat. He also provided the stable male voice of wisdom, confidence, and inspiration I had missed because of the early death of my father.

Authors Gerald Jampolsky, M.D., and Diane Cirincione, Ph.D., taught me about the power of forgiveness and how to move through loss and grief with the principles of Attitudinal Healing (derived from *A Course In Miracles*). I began applying Attitudinal Healing earnestly around 2005. I started off taking classes at the International Center for Attitudinal Healing—the center founded by Jerry in 1975. Shortly after starting the classes, I also became a volunteer. It was then that I began to understand and accept my tragic losses once and for all. As a result of my healing I became clear about the life I truly desired to be living. Soon thereafter I started teaching my life coaching workshops at the center as a guest speaker. I eventually became Director of Dr. Jampolsky's legendary healing programs. One of the things I am most proud of was enhancing the clinical therapy program and working with the clinical interns.

I will never forget the day I went to Jerry and Diane's home. I sat in the living room with these two New Thought spiritual icons, on their gorgeous houseboat in Sausalito, California. The expansive San Francisco Bay and a large breathtaking statue of Kuan Yin, the Chinese goddess of compassion, were in the background. Jerry and Diane led us in prayer. Then I told them about growing up in Hawaii and my desire to return there in the future to open a healing retreat center. I further explained that I wanted, in my first

book, to convey something of a retreat experience for readers. Diane said they spend about half of the year in the same city where I grew up, Kailua. I silently affirmed, “Miracles are everywhere. Thank you, God.” They patiently looked through every page of the first rough draft of my book. I kid you not—they looked through *every page* of the first rough draft even pausing to make nice comments, ask me questions, and make gentle suggestions. (We all know the first rough draft of anything should not be shared. I have since learned the value of re-writing the re-written, then re-writing more.) But their kindness in this instance tells you a lot about the loving presence of this wise and beautiful couple, successful authors who speak before audiences across the globe.

I knew how fortunate I was in those glorious moments as I tried to be present to what was occurring. To put it mildly, it was a monumental spiritual experience to witness both the outpouring of love and the receptivity of my own heart. Diane said, “This is such a lovely and unique book. We love it. Jerry, we can see this book being sold in the Honolulu airport bookstores, can’t we?” Jerry agreed. They also suggested that their friend, Wayne Dyer (the one and only spiritual person I ever felt googly-eyed about) might be able to help support my book. I welcomed that gesture. As I had already felt my cup running over, I decided to let spirit hold that possibility for me. The generous support of Jerry and Diane gave me an even greater sense of purpose and mission.

After several repeat hugs and many thank-yous, I walked confidently out of their front door and strolled down the quaint boardwalk, noting the vast array of large teal and cobalt blue color flower pots. Like the abundant daisies, succulents, and lavender in those pots, I too was overflowing with life. I felt confident, thinking that no matter what it takes, I will finish this book to help others live out their life purpose—just as Jerry and Diane helped to hold that space for me. Everything was syncing up back then, and my life has felt very much in rhythm with the entire universe ever since. I acknowledge Jerry and Diane as my mentors and as role models.

I am grateful to the Unity New Thought teachings on positive practical spirituality and for Kailua Unity, Windward Unity, Unity of Berkeley, and Unity of Walnut Creek for all opportunities given to me to lead in those

respective spiritual centers. I have participated as a Sunday Services Guest Speaker, Workshop Teacher, Prayer Chaplain, Platform Leader, and Meditation Leader. Unity recognizes and accepts people from all faiths and non-faiths, all religions and non-religions. Unity affirms people as they are and helps people expand their consciousness for the greater good of humanity. Unity is not fear based; rather, it is love centered, and that is mainly why I am drawn to the teachings. I am immensely appreciative for all that I have gained through Unity.

I owe a great deal of gratitude to my beloved soul-sister friend Christine Snyder, who perished in 9-11. She introduced me to the fun side of Hawaii and to a deeper part of myself. She also enjoyed New Thought teachings. Her friendship, strength, energy—and her loss—motivate me to get moving for the greater good in the world. She had a way of saying, “Get going, girlfriend,” and her spirit continues to emanate this message as powerfully as ever.

The untimely death of my biological father, Thomas Willard Heckman, has been the most catastrophic event of my life. It caused me profound sadness and devastation deep within my being. The gifts from this loss, however, have included serious reflection, early personal deconstruction, and great appreciation for life.

My long time friend from Hawaii, a true yogi Goddess, Leana Levinsohn, has been a pillar of friendship and sisterhood. She embodies the “Aloha Spirit,” and I am immensely grateful for her depth of being and for knowing when to breathe with me.

Many wonderful friends have supported me along the way—Kim McGovern with her strong spirituality, humor, and love; the entire brilliant and lively San Francisco book club gals; über talented Susan Szabo with her art and enthusiasm for life; and Mary Gutierrez, with prayer and loving friendship. Roselle Nottage and her daughter, Makamae, thoughtfully donated their support with edits for the Hawaiian terminology.

Jenny Dyer and Tina Dyer also gave generously as well when I stayed with them in Hawaii, in their respective beautiful homes. Both Jenny and Tina first introduced me to Unity in the late 1980s and took me to my first Unity service where Wally Amos, the famous “cookie man,” was singing a song that went something like, “If the cookie man can, you can too...” I had

to greatly respect a “church” that held so much joy and humor. Yet it did not feel like any church I had ever attended in the South. The experience was lively, authentic, and warm. Back then my agnostic beliefs were not ready to be transformed, however. Years later I would come to know Unity as more of a creative spiritual center.

My partner, Paul Kohut, has been my saving grace through so much during the writing of this book. He is a brilliant engineer and musician. He has been supportive, patient, and my technical “Mr. Fix It.” He also cooked many gourmet meals as I typed away. I am grateful for his understanding, kindness, and his love.

The talented team at 1106 Design, led by Michele DeFilippo, held my hand and guided me through the last and most critical edits and the final stages of the book writing and design process. For their high level of professionalism and sincere desire to help me create a great book, I am appreciative. A very special kudos goes to my editor Doran Hunter who I cannot thank enough.

I have also been fueled by the master teaching, authorship, and wisdom energies of Marianne Williamson, Oprah Winfrey, Gloria Steinem, Louise Hay, Deepak Chopra, Eckhart Tolle, Thich Nhat Hanh, Jon Kabat-Zinn, Eknath Easwaran, Eric Butterworth, Louise Hay, Esther and Jerry Hicks, Maya Angelou, and Madam Pele (The Hawaiian Fire Goddess).

There are innumerable clients, patients, colleagues, students, interns, and volunteers who I have had the opportunity to work with and serve as a Life Coach and as a Clinical and Medical Social Worker. They have gifted me with their upsets, stories, healings, successes, losses, laughter, and dreams. There have been insights and sharing which have moved me deeply and helped me to heal and grow. Holding sacred court with them on our respective journeys has been awesome. They all inspire me to continue to evolve myself for the planet.

Lastly, I owe much to Hawaii ‘aina (land of Hawaii) for my healing and life inspiration. Mahalo (thank you) for the sacred time I have spent being held by the perfect crystalline healing waters, whispered to by the wise bamboo and playful coconut trees, and being sung to by the delightful early morning birdsongs of doves cooing. Mahalo for the soul-stirring energy of the Fire Goddess Pele, for being lovingly embraced by the spectacular sunrise, and

gently hugged by the warm tropical breezes. Mahalo for the honu (Hawaiian sea turtles), the abundant flora and fauna, the ancient Hawaiian lava tubes, succulent Haden mangos, and perfectly timed passing rain showers. Mahalo for the towns I love most: Lanikai, Kailua, Waialua, Haleiwa, Makawao, Kula, Paia, Hana, and Lahaina. Mahalo for the marvelous Monkey Pod trees, for the secret seashell beaches, for the glorious swimming with dolphins adventure, for the magical whale sightings, and the continued anticipation of new discoveries.

The mana (energy) of Hawaii 'aina has been my main medicine—the prescription that led me to my healing. I honor and respect all that is Hawaii.

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION



In the early 1980s, around the age of eleven, I attended intermediate school on the island of Oahu in a town called Aiea. The name, like most Hawaiian words, has many vowels in it. From the very beginning, I had fun getting to know this new vocabulary as my family drove from the Honolulu airport up to the Aiea hillside for the first time. As we went, I enjoyed trying to pronounce the names of local streets and exotic words on random signs, but it was obvious that my Southern accent was mangling what I suspected were beautifully musical sounds. We hooted and howled together at my silly antics. I had a lot to learn about the Hawaiian language and local culture.

My step-grandfather, the late Marine Corps Colonel James A. Poland, was stationed at the Camp Smith military installation in Aiea. His title “Commander of the Pacific Fleet” commanded immediate respect. When with his family, he was kind, funny, and easy-going. Within a few weeks of attending Aiea Intermediate School, someone had stolen my book bag out of the girl’s locker room. I was shocked, crushed, and very much disturbed. While my grandfather helped me in his usual joking manner, he also had a serious message, as he usually did. This time the message was, “Get rid of that Southern accent and get a tan. You need to befriend the locals, then they will take care of you—and they won’t kill you on the last day of school which is called, by the way, ‘Kill Haole Day.’” After a pause, I heard him chuckle as he walked out of the living room. I knew what he meant about acquiring new friends, but I was worried, very worried, about getting the crap kicked out of me just for trying. The term “Haole” stands for “outsider”

or “non-local.” That was the first of my life lessons about assimilating into one of the most beautiful and colorful melting pots in the world. Thankfully, I was allowed to skip the last day of school that year, for my whole family feared I might not have learned the local mentality well enough to keep from getting my scrawny okole (butt) punted off Halawa Heights all the way to the Haleakala summit on Maui. The “killing” was a bit of hype, but the fear of a ruckus ensuing remained in the back of my mind nonetheless.

Remembering grandpa’s unequivocal remarks, the next day I changed one of my classes and signed up for a Hawaiian studies class. It saved me. I also worked on my tan and befriended the locals by ordering my lunch from the local food trucks. The food truck drivers were affectionately known as “The Manapua Men” because they sold the delicious sweet filled pork buns (manapua) that the kids went crazy (pupule) for. From my Southern roots, I knew that food has its way of connecting people. At the trucks I devoured Asian noodles, candy, and pickled mango. Hanging out by the food trucks, plus equal parts naivety and boldness, brought me closer to the local population indeed. There I could overhear conversations and interpret how to hang out and be cool, local style. I learned how to correctly pronounce street names and towns. I listened acutely. I learned to adapt the local dialect known as “Hawaiian Pidgin,” a type of Hawaiian Creole English. People shared their food with me and offered me opportunities to try new things like salty plum seeds. I loved the immersion and adopted all of it without reservation. My understanding and respect for the island culture grew. The locals became protective of me as I became a little more like them—just as Gramps said they would.

I also enjoyed learning about the basics of the Hawaiian language in my Hawaiian studies class. I loved the way all of those vowels rolled off my tongue. Hawaiian grammar is rather complex despite the fact that there are only eight consonants, five short vowels, and five long vowels.

As the years passed, I fully assimilated into the local culture and gained many friends despite remaining a sun-burned, freckle-faced, bony Haole. My friends grew to be a glorious mix of Haole, Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Samoan, Fijian, and Hapa (of mixed ethnic heritage). After I completed the school year in Aiea, we moved to the Windward side of Oahu, first

to Kaneohe then to Kailua. All of that was the beginning of my eternal love affair with Hawaii.

I have decided to share simple Hawaiian terms with you in my writing because I want to show my regard to the Hawaiian culture, and in a small way help to preserve a wonderful language and way of life.

Hawaii is incredibly stunning. Yet it is more than physical beauty, much more. It is more than what television has shown us—the Brady Bunch's visit to the Big Island, *The Skipper*, *Gilligan*, *The Professor*, *Mary Ann*, *Ginger*, and *Mr. and Mrs. Thurston Howell III*. It is even so much more than *Hawaii Five-0* and *Magnum, P.I.* It is more than the quintessential *Mai Tai*. More than plane loads of tourists flocking to fancy hotels. It is more than the ultimate destination wedding. It is more than a tropical golden tanned Hapa-Haole face, flower in her hair, gracing the cover of a glossy brochure. The essence of what I think of as “real Hawaii” is rich with spirit, that which we cannot see with the naked eye. It is a feeling, to be experienced within one's heart and soul. It is profound, humble, uncomplicated, forgiving, fresh, loving, neighborly, leisurely, and lively.

The twenty five chapters in this book are infused with Hawaiian terms (either the English or Hawaiian will be in parentheses). You will also find highlighted terms (not Hawaiian) that help to make important points. These are called out by using **bold**. Like a perfect Hawaiian sunrise or sunset sparkling on the ocean, beyond the visual—I hope the **intensity and magnification** helps the spiritual lessons and life practices **soak into your soul**.

Within each chapter I offer you resources that I playfully call “prescriptions,” indicated with the “Rx” mark. They compliment the exercises and suggested practices. I strongly suggest that you **at least try the exercises** even if they seem challenging. Use them as ways to feel better and manage daily life. They are designed to ignite your learning, to help you grow, expand, and evolve. I have seen people experience a profound progression of growth and insight when they “fill the prescriptions” by practicing the exercises. As you work on your own, you will reap great rewards and become the **master artist** of your life, co-creating with the entire universe.

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FOREWORD



Let's face it: Sometimes what is preached in spiritual self-help books comes across as inauthentic, leaving many readers turned off. As a result, even excellent spiritual advice is ignored. We think you'll find this book to be different. If you are spiritually aware or spiritually curious, this book can help tune you into, and turn you onto, powerful ways of thinking, acting, and being in the world.

Few authors are able to write from a place of deep heart connection that demonstrates a combination of creativity and a desire to sincerely serve the reader. As she serves as your guide through her mind expanding and heart opening process, you will find Melissa's writing to be kind and genuine. She gives you inspiring questions and exercises with a unique "trip to Hawaii." You are encouraged to be introspective with questions and exercises, along with her interwoven personal stories, the carefully placed and perfectly themed quotes, and relevant tidbits of Hawaiian culture.

Hawaii is home to a diverse population representing the melting pot of the world. The spiritual landscapes of Hawaii, along with the essence of the "Aloha Spirit" found in the pages of this book, will resonate with most people. In these pages, Melissa has found a unique way to combine her eighteen years' experience as a clinical social worker helping people from all walks of life, her expanded spirituality, and her obvious love of Hawaii. She carefully integrates her

own stories of tragedy, triumph, and healing as if she is sitting next to you on a white, sandy beach having a heart-to-heart talk with you.

Deep, Blue Heavenly Seas contains spiritual practices in each chapter where you will find clearly defined mental steps and exercises. Melissa's gentle voice and nudging creates a space for you to feel guided every step of the way. She serves as your partner on your own unique journey. Together these are more than "prescriptions." The lessons are more like an advanced course on wise living. The subject moves from death and dying to life and living, with key spiritual concepts throughout the book: Embrace your fears of dying so that you can truly live that which you plan to leave in the world.

One memorable chapter on the process of forgiveness includes exceptional journaling assignments to help you accelerate your personal growth. This challenging subject is delivered in such a way that most anyone can be motivated to complete the exercises. We especially appreciate how Melissa weaves in the principles of Attitudinal Healing, the practices which we have spent our life dedicated to teaching.

This book is a retreat for your soul, practical and instructive. What better way to open our hearts and our minds than to be on a "vacation" while doing so. As we read segments and shared these stories together, we found ourselves feeling "lit up" with renewed zest for living our legacy. Since we spend significant time in Hawaii, we know the deep feeling of "aloha" that has been captured in these pages—a feeling that should be spread far and wide. Get ready to take a transformational trip of a lifetime!

Gerald Jampolsky, M.D., Diane Cirincione, Ph.D.

Co-authors of *A Mini Course for Life*

RX: PREPARING



Act I: Preparing to Dive

CHAPTER 1: WELCOME

Aloha (welcome) to a retreat for your soul. This experience can be a unique journey, and much like the rest of your life, you have a few options—**you can play it deep or play it shallow.** As my mom used to say, “You don’t have time to dilly dally” and “the world is your oyster.” With that in mind, I invite you to take the plunge chapter by chapter to discover the stunning, shiny pearls of your greatest self. Although I believe it is important to be playful in life, I also feel it’s essential to dive into your soul (‘uhane) on very deep, intimate levels and authentically live your life from that place. “That place” can also be viewed as your consciousness or spirituality. Spiritual unfolding is a compelling and delightful evolution of your true self—when you desire it and allow it to be the guiding force of your life. **It is an inner adventure, your own “inside job,” grounded on insights and awareness.** It is a shift in your mindset and in the way you live your life every day of the week—even moment to moment.

One of the most remarkable things I’ve ever done is to sort out who I AM—my inner world could be a rather confusing place until I opened myself up to spiritual living. My purpose and passion has been to help others create more peace and to live out their life purpose. I hold an enormous space for knowing that you can rise to your full potential and live a beautifully successful life. I will help you envision that, define that, and create that.

Life teaches the value of learning, unlearning, opening, and surrendering, and this practice will parallel that process. It is divided into three acts and 25 chapters. Each Act is written to help you build your consciousness, release negative energies, and change unhealthy thought patterns to enable you to claim your highest self in your own spiritual terms. I encourage you to give

your own names to the concepts discussed in this book, to invent your own spiritual vocabulary if you wish. If the use of the term “spirituality” is uncomfortable for you I encourage you to view spiritual experience as a process of gaining life mastery. Each chapter will help you see yourself from different perspectives and guide you to return to an innate sense of who you are—so you can free yourself to live your ultimate life.



Act I: Preparing to Dive provides background information, inspiration, and motivation for you to set the stage for your own success. Each chapter progressively helps you prepare for the next. The instructive exercises will help you to identify your legacy (the blessings you wish to leave behind after you die) and begin drafting your life purpose. Act I will also help you release old stories and patterns that impede living your life purpose. In addition you will be asked to let some ideas percolate within. Then you will be invited to begin some pre-contemplative exercises that you will return to in later chapters.



Act II: Diving In will focus on strategies to get you in touch with your spiritual core however you define it for yourself. This will help you deepen your awareness of your inner self. These chapters are designed to help you immerse yourself in understanding and tame the ego, so you can live more from your true essence and heed your soul calling. Several of these chapters submerge you even deeper, helping you traverse the abyss of ego.



Act III: Riding the Wave to the Shore helps you solidify your legacy so you can become crystal clear on your life purpose and begin to consciously live it and celebrate it. You are then provided additional tools for fully embracing and living out your life goals and aspirations.

I am here to support you as you open yourself up to inspirational ideas that I have gleaned from my coaching, clinical, and spiritual practices, as well as from my personal life lessons—the good, the bad, even the catastrophic. I will also demonstrate what I learned from living in Hawaii and from the wisdom of the beautiful Hawaiian culture; throughout, I have made use of relevant Hawaiian terminology where I thought it conveyed something essential. Everything has been carefully integrated to help serve your greatest needs. At times you will find that I have reiterated points from earlier sections. All

of this serves to help you establish essential life practices to last well beyond your reading of the book.

MY EVOLVEMENT

This process began at a point in my life when I knew I needed to make a serious shift mainly in my career but also with relationships. It happened after I quit a job where I felt miserable, followed by a dramatic breakup. I responded to a thundering call from deep within me saying, “Hey, darling, go in and find your true self. No more playing small.” Clinical Social Work alone was not fulfilling me, and I knew that obtaining a psychotherapy license and opening a private practice would not satisfy me either. I had a great desire to express more of my creativity and to unleash my greatest gifts, and I wanted to help others do the same. I started to read and study spiritual masters in addition to researching this new thing called Life Coaching. I started to distance myself from negative, condescending, and competitive people. I nurtured my self-esteem in new ways. I learned to love being alone. I started to really listen to the inner voice of my true self. I fell in love with prayer and meditation. I dabbled more with art. I trained for my first marathon and completed it. I started to dream bigger and take the necessary steps to live from a completely different mindset once and for all.

I started to embrace Life Coaching principles which resonated with the strengths-based aspects of my clinical work. That’s when so many wonderful things began unfolding with my work and personal relationships. Life began to feel more fluid and gentle, and I began to feel naturally radiant. I learned so much when I began to open up and see how others were achieving authentic happiness. I began to think from a plenteous frame of mind which forced me to choose differently in all areas of my life. I learned how to apply my unique

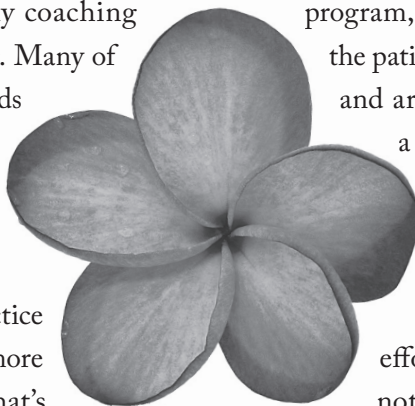
EXERCISE



If you don’t have one yet, buy yourself a new journal solely dedicated to this work. Put your name in your journal and keep it in a sacred place. You may want to buy one that fits into your purse or backpack so you can have it readily available. Decorate it as you see fit and write yourself a little love note dedicating the journal as a treasured gift to yourself. Draw and play along with your responses to the exercises as well. And by all means, use color to express yourself too! Maybe having a tin of colorful markers or pencils would be inspiring next to your journal. You know yourself best, so set yourself up for a profound and playful experience.

skills and talents and creativity to help others. I created a life coaching program and a life coaching workbook. I honored my clinical background for giving me the foundation to become a good coach. I also began connecting with people and places that were in alignment with my true values, which allowed me to gain more opportunities to teach and coach from the workbook. It felt like tectonic shifts were taking place in all areas of my life. I was achieving significant results, and I was so excited I knew I had to share it. Over the years the workbook has evolved into the spiritual practices described in this book—a retreat for your soul. Each chapter helps you flow through the process much as if you were in one of my intensive coaching workshops.

As I enhance my coaching program, I remain a clinician in a medical setting. Many of the patients I work with have complex medical needs and are nearing the end of life, and I serve as a guide for them. I help them cope with stress, change, and loss, as well as to face the inevitable. I love my work and it seems the coaching and clinical practice are a perfect match. The days are now more effortless and effervescent for me—yet that’s not to say I don’t have bad days. I do. The great thing is that I don’t have nearly as many of them as I had in the past. I am not going to pretend that I am any better than you or set myself in a separate class than you just because of a few college degrees or having become an author. We are equals. I have something to share in the form of this teaching, and you have something to share of significant value to others as well. For now I get to share my revelations, prescriptions, and program with you so you can learn to live your best life and then perhaps launch your unique vision to share with others also.



LANIKAI

Lanikai is a pristine beach on the island of Oahu in the Hawaiian Islands and a place I find very special. In the Hawaiian language Lanikai Uli means “Deep Blue Heavenly Seas.” I was born in North Carolina, but it was on the

beaches of Oahu, mainly Lanikai, where I grew up. I've enjoyed intimate beach walks, joyous and profound beach talks, spectacular full moons, beach dances, snorkeling with turtles, sunrise meditation, sunrise yoga, prayer, kayaking, surfing, Smash ball, boat rides, a sinking boat adventure, sailing on catamarans, picnics, hikes, journaling, and many miracle moments around Lanikai. There were times when I stood on Lanikai beach feeling like I was in heaven. The deep blue-green and crystal clear healing waters hold the essence of spiritual wisdom from the earth and sea and help me know the deep truth of who I am and my purpose for being. I believe that everyone's soul resonates with certain places. Do you have a place like this?

LEGACY

I offer you the opportunity to explore these exercises and principles to **reveal parts of yourself that are dying to live**. I want to help you fully embrace the life you dream about, the life you deserve to be living. You will be asked to examine your legacy (the blessings you want to leave behind when you die) as an essential deep inquiry to help you live your life focused, with passion and on purpose.

STATE OF MIND

Deep, Blue, Heavenly Seas has become a state of mind for me, a paradise I can return to over and over again in my head and hold in my heart even when the waters of life get rough. The practices I've used are outlined for you in the chapters ahead—they keep me centered and they can do the same for you. This experience is intended to give you a levity boost, inner tremors, and an “ecstatic uplift.” I invite you to flow...allow your entire essence to free itself and boldly **dream your life**, the way you really want to be living it, **alive!**

You are the expert on you. Although I share my insights, stories, reference others, cite, and suggest, the most important element of the teaching is about helping you manage your mind and connect with your intuition. I propose that you tap into your life inspirations and define your own paradise as well. Be daring and fearless with this, and allow your visions to move across the movie screen of your mind in vivid Technicolor.



“The only courage you ever need is the courage to fulfill the dreams of your own life.”

—*Oprah*

The practices offered are designed to help you open your mind in order to live a more authentically powerful life. Have you given thought to how you might claim your authentic power, your truth for being, and heed your soul-calling? What kind of things do you think could help you with areas in your life where you feel you have lost your purpose?

SETTING

Although Hawaii is my go-to spiritual backdrop, you can choose your own special place that inspires you as you reflect and complete the exercises. You will benefit by having a comfortable setting where you can reflect, write, and contemplate your life. So feel free to define your physical space and let your **imagination** traipse the globe, or consider visiting a local lake, or park, or even your own backyard.

SPIRITUALITY

You don't need to be "spiritual" or have a particular religious belief to benefit from the practices. The practices are **steeped in love**, and love crosses all belief systems, borders, nationalities, and cultures. As I've lead in group meditations, "Love does not discriminate, so allow your love to flow from the center of your being and envision sending it out to those around you, your community, and the entire world. Imagine loving, healing energy reaching anyone who might be suffering." If you are an agnostic, searching, have no need for defining a "God," call yourself a Jew, Muslim, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, or other, all is well. Just come with an **open mind and heart**, and explore these teachings by whatever term you wish. I do not come from a fundamentalist perspective. There is no priggishness in this book. Nor is there any room for stiff-necked preaching in my teaching. I highly value love, peace, and partnership. This is not a top-down model. I want to co-create with you, for the greater good of humanity. Humanity leaves no one out. I have gathered together my teaching with the intention that it convey the energy of love and authentic power in every syllable of every word that I have written.

These are my truths. I also believe they are universal truths connected like a molecule chain from a common global emotion. At times, I may use the terms "Soul," "Spirit," "Spirituality," "God," "Goddess," "Higher Power," "Divinity,"

“Buddha,” “Christ,” “Divine Mind,” “Nature,” “Consciousness,” “Mana,” “Energy,” “Life,” and “Love.” In essence, each refers to the mysterious Source of “all that is.” Take a moment and go back and put each of those terms in this sentence and see how it feels to you: “We are all one ____.” Can you think of how we might all be innately associated? Try not to let language trip you up. Go beyond the name. Often two different words mean the same thing, such as mountain (in English) and mauka (in Hawaiian). But it is clear that the object is the same even though it can have different names. Whether one is Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Jew, Muslim, or ____ (you name it), we are after one thing—the ultimate dimension. It is beyond a name.

SOMETHING LARGER

I used to consider myself to be a spiritual skeptic. However, I began to realize that “religion” and “spirituality” are very different. Once I was clued into this, I freed myself to design my own sense of spirituality and to connect with the God of my understanding. In Hawaii, I felt connected to nature. There was something

EXERCISE



Go ahead and create a sacred space for you to reflect and to write. This can be as simple as claiming a corner of a room, with a comfortable chair and an end table, or desk space for yourself.

in the elements that felt like home after I had stripped the rigid dogmas of my youth from my psyche. Back then, like many people, I was taught that I was bad by nature. I thought “God” was a white-bearded man seated among the clouds in the sky whom no one could see. I felt I needed to prove myself to Him, but I eventually began to open up to the many possibilities of what the term “God” could mean. . . thanks to my time in Hawaii and as I opened myself up to new ways of thinking and believing. I am no longer a skeptic about

spirituality, but I still do not consider myself to be religious. There is nothing wrong with this spiritual-but-not-religious perspective. I know many people who have made this shift from religious to spiritual. The main idea here is for you to connect with, or re-connect with, the **essential YOU** and feel part of Something Larger, however you define it. Spirituality can also be viewed as having a sense of grace—an energy or higher power greater than yourself. Once you get in touch with it, and stay in touch with it, it moves in through—and *as*—you.



“Spirituality helps us regain
our mental equipoise,
self-confidence and a positive
attitude to move forward.”

—*Amma*

THE JOURNAL

Much like a diary, keeping a journal is a writing tool that can be therapeutic and help ignite a creative process. It can help you express emotion, reduce stress, formulate ideas, and be a source of comfort. In a way, I think it can also serve as an unconditional friend whom you can tell anything to. Try to honor your journal and the moments you have with it.

THE SPACE

It will benefit you to declare your own physical space, giving yourself a type of **sanctuary** for the work you will be doing. This is where you **plug in and connect** with your innermost desires.

EXERCISE



Freely journal your thoughts on the following questions:

1. How do I currently define “God” or “spirituality” in my life?
2. What gives me meaning in my life?
3. Am I open to explore my own wounds and scars, so I can live the life I truly want to be living? If not, what gets in my way?
4. How much do I truly want to live an authentically powerful and magnificent life and what could that look like for me?

Also, you might want to follow sequentially each part and chapter since I’ve designed them to be gradual and progressive; but there is no right or wrong way to take in the teaching. You could also allow a slow six month experience if you map out the chapters giving approximately one week per chapter so you can take in the exercises slowly and allow yourself sufficient time for reflection and application. No matter your method or pace, I hope you will become saturated with creative energy unfolding miracles in **your luminous life**.

For your space, I encourage you to use simple decorations and elements from nature such as seashells, pinecones, dried leaves, flowers, or whatever you are called to gather. The idea is to create a place you can retreat to and call your own. If possible it should be private and without distractions (such as no television, computer, or phone). You really want to have this time to go inside and to be free

of outside influences while you are doing the work. Try this next exercise to help you explore your readiness:



“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn’t do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Explore. Dream. Discover.”

—*Mark Twain*