



RECONNECTING  
HEARTS:  
OVERCOMING  
RELATIONSHIP  
CRISES



HOW TO REORGANIZE YOUR MIND  
AND  
BUILD TOGETHER THE WAY TO HAPPINESS

MELISSA HERNÁNDEZ-JACZEWSKA

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# FROM THE AUTHOR'S NOTEBOOK

*Life consists of stages – January 2023*

*Stages have different durations.*

*Sometimes they seem endless, other times they slip out of our hands.*

*Some stages are difficult and tedious, other can be magical. They all come to an end sometime. All of them.*

*The end of one heralds the beginning of a new one. That means change. Sometimes almost imperceptible, and sometimes radical.*

*In the twists and turns we face in life, we can choose to suffer for what we have left behind. However, we have the ability to keep positive experiences in our mind and soul, and to think back to those events as many times as we need to.*

*We have the ability to open the door to what is coming.*

*We can live in the past or learn to let go.*

*As I write this, I relive in my mind all the cravings I fulfilled during my last days in Mexico. I am thankful for them. I thank all the people who made these wonderful days possible. But they are over for now.*

*Half asleep and awake, sitting in a large hall at the airport in Paris, waiting for my flight to Warsaw. I still have my head in the clouds. Watching people pass by. What stories have just ended and which are about to begin? What or who did they say goodbye to?*

*What or who will they find again? Everything is in constant motion.*

*I review the 46 years I left behind.*

*The turns of my life. All the hard times and adversities. Sincere smiles that fill the afternoons. Various landscapes. Deafening fatigue. Concerns, achievements.*

*Love.*

*I immerse myself in memories, think about the trips I took, lazy mornings. About all those sunny days with music. About those when it rained causing floods.*

*I am thinking about the range of colors, their intensity. From A to Z.*

*I take a deep breath, smile and thank God for another year of my life and for the fact that he still makes me come across valuable people with whom I can share what I have and whom I can trust. I have someone to learn from and someone to teach.*

*They say that the most important thing is not the road, but who you walk along it with.*

*I feel thankful to life for teaching me to let go. Reorganize. To be like water that adapts to the shape of a glass. And when I have no limits, no barriers, I reinvent myself.*

*And when I forget what I've learned, I learn again. I keep in mind that life consists of episodes, stages and constant changes. I have the impression that then a person enjoys everything – with even greater intensity.*

*This segment has ended.*

*I brought the sun with me in a suitcase, lots of hugs and love. I took all I could from the interesting conversations with my parents and celebrations with friends. I brought with me living by*

*the beach, palm trees and all those delicious meals eaten with people close to me.*

*I don't know what left those I met with, but I still recall the positive energy generated during these meetings.*

*I'm going back home.*

*To build new stories. Live in the present. To spread the beauty, I acquired there.*

*I feel that this year will bring new, magical surprises! Let it be that way!*

# INTRODUCTION

This book was written with the intention of motivating you, dear readers, to break free from the passivity of everyday life. See who you really are, what is the purpose of your life – both personal and professional. With the intention that you become aware of your actions, your attitudes and your emotions, which you use without reason every day, obtaining results that are sometimes unsatisfactory for yourself. By getting used to observing our behavior and emotions we can make the conscious decision to continue using these patterns that we have been acquiring sometimes from a very early age and we repeat automatically as if it were the only way to function. Live your life to its fullest potential.

**On the way to create a relationship that will give you full love, happiness and satisfaction.**

You will find some of the most common issues that I attend to in my work as a psychologist, both in individual and couple therapy, as well as questions and exercises that will help you make the decision to sufficient changes to have a better relationship with yourself and with your loved one. To have a more harmonious, balanced and happy life.

In this book you will find excerpts from my personal notebook. I chose to include them to illustrate the different nuances

of certain emotional states that I experienced myself. These are very deep chapters of my life that I would like to share with you. I wonder with which of them you will identify yourself!

I would like this book, despite the fact that the direct content is addressed to heterosexual people, to be intended for all those who love – the whole, beautiful LGBTQ+ rainbow.

## **Love is love**

The relationships, mechanisms and stereotypes from which we come from, by which we were involuntarily formed, they are part of your past, they represent years of your life, childhood and adolescence. For some reason you learned to behave that way, but it is time to step away from some of those patterns, make a decision and embrace the present as an adult. I hope that this publication will become a driving force to start a dialogue with yourself. It will make you autonomous, aware, which will translate into an increase of your self-esteem.

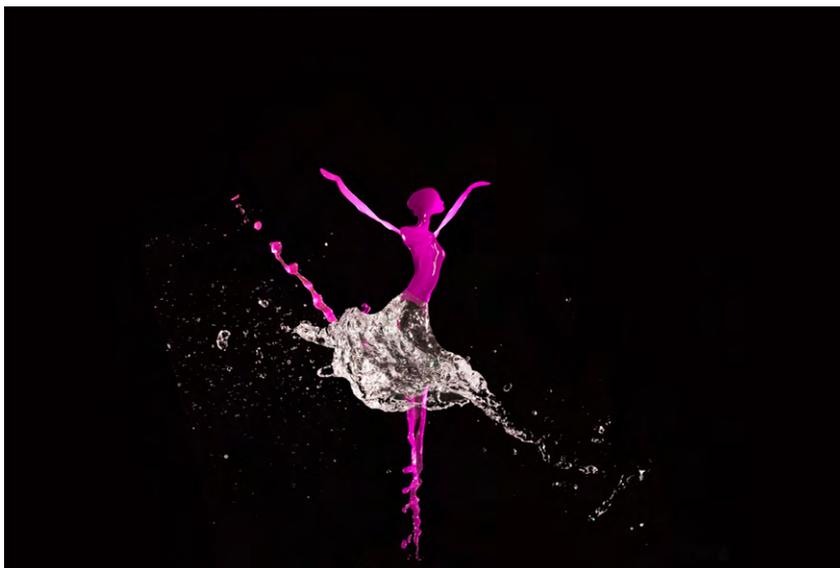
Travel through these pages to allow yourself to know your partner, where you will once again immerse yourself in their needs and dreams with greater attention. Create your destiny on your own terms, respecting yourself, your surroundings and your own values.

Treat this reading as a journey into the depths of a stormy ocean. Don't be afraid to lose yourself in its great blue, but remember to emerge from time to time, lay your back on its surface and look at the sky. Breathe.

Compare the content you find here to your experience over the years. Create goals, change existing standards. Go with the flow, but don't treat it as a task you have to finish as soon as possible, tick off and throw into the abyss.

Allow yourself to take a slow intellectual and emotional walk, as in the case of your new favorite TV series, which surprises you every now and then, tying you to it permanently.

It is a great honor for me that you are reaching for this book. From now on, we will not run away from the rain, we will start dancing together in it.



*Don't wait for the storm to pass, learn to dance in the rain*

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



I come from the rich in history and culture, Mexico. There I graduated with honors from the Faculty of Psychology at the Universidad de Las Americas in Puebla.

I have been living in Poland since 2001, where I nostrified my diploma at the University of Warsaw.

I specialize in short and long-term therapies, in which I address the problems of civilization diseases that generate anxiety, stress, and low self-esteem, often defined as depression.

I derive the greatest successes and professional satisfaction from working with couples, often from different countries and backgrounds. More than 15 years of practice in solving problems of everyday life in relationships resulted in writing this book. The solutions developed over the years now have a chance to reach the general public, often also those who have limited access to a psychologist or do not have the resources for full-time therapy in a clinic.

Our first teachers are our parents, we observe their experiences in the husband-wife relationship, and how a relationship should and should not look like. This is knowledge that is worth collecting and using in your own emotional life.

I was lucky enough to grow up in a loving home where my parents have been inextricably connected for fifty years. Their relationship, although stable, went through many crises. However, both mom and dad taught me to get up from every fall and become stronger and wiser for the future.

Privately, I am a warm, open person who loves people and dancing.

None of us should claim to be an expert when it comes to relationships. Every theory needs to be reflected in practice. In my case, marriage to a Pole, which required and will require us to work due to differences in characters, cultural identity and the fact that we come from different worlds, gives me a wealth of experience that I use in my work with patients.

Ultimately, it is thanks to our own knowledge and intuition that we build with my husband a common path to happiness.

**That is what I wish for you, dear readers!**

Melissa Hernández-Jaczevska

# PART I

## *“ME”*



# A FEW WORDS ABOUT LOVE

It is safe to say that our life is incomplete without love. Love makes us feel happy, lets us accept ourselves fully, as we get to understand the behaviors and needs of others. Love is a bright and pure energy. However, without working on self-love, returning to one's own "ME ", taking care of and accepting one's flaws, because we all have them, even the most promising relationship has no chance of development, let alone full happiness.

It is important to be aware that the most important person in your life is not your partner, child or mother, but you. Meanwhile, it is normal in our everyday life that we are our own greatest censors and critics.

Doesn't that sound terrifying?

When was the last time you did something for yourself that was an impulse of pleasure?

When was the last time you took care of yourself to such an extent that you silenced intrusive thoughts and focused only on what is here and now?

Remember to appreciate yourselves not only on holidays, allow ourselves to make mistakes. Do not criticize ourselves at every step! Mistakes happen – what's more – they have to happen to us. Every day we struggle with a huge number of tasks and responsibilities, which are often accompanied by stress and anxiety about the thought of tomorrow. Several times a day we are exposed to bad news, outbursts of anger from loved ones and strangers, often unjustified.

Work on not dwelling on them, don't worry about them.

Start appreciating the little things – the beautiful weather, the smile of a stranger in the elevator, a good dinner prepared by a friend or partner. By appreciating the individual elements of life, we build happiness in all its aspects.

Because life consists of little moments, and ultimately it is them and the emotions associated with them that we remember and reminisce for years. Try to apply this principle to thinking about yourself. Look at yourself more often through the perspective of advantages.

### **Love is one of the most desirable feelings on the map of emotions.**

Interestingly, according to medical terminology, there is no single, correct definition of love. Usually, we feel love for another person with whom we have a strong bond, and it is complemented by desire that we feel for them. Most often it wakes up unexpectedly and suddenly.

True love between two people is equal to mutual acceptance, support, trust, security and understanding. Its foundation is overcoming obstacles together along the way, which, as in life, requires many sacrifices, compromises, difficult conversations and forgiveness.

Love is a positive feeling that motivates you to change for the better. It gives energy for action, in which we develop, take on new challenges, and overcome depression, problems and even addictions. Its power gives us wings, thanks to which we look positively into the future.

American psychiatrist and one of the world's most popular researchers of love, Robert Stenberg\*, in his many years of scientific work, has identified three components that love consists of;

## 1. Intimacy

It appears between people who become close and like to spend time together. In addition, they share and exchange information that allows them to meet their partner's needs. Understanding and tolerance for the shortcomings of both sides allows you to build a solid foundation for the relationship. Many theorists in the field of psychology and psychiatry recognize intimacy as the most important component of a relationship.

## 2. Passion

It is the feeling of excitement and strong sexual arousal that another person causes in us. It is associated with the absolute adoration of the object of desire and its idealization. Interestingly, passion also manifests itself in the mental sphere when we desire the presence of a partner. We miss them; we want to be with them.

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\* **Robert J. Sternberg** (born December 8, 1949). An American psychologist and psychometrician, Professor of Human Development at Cornell University.

### 3. Commitment

A component of the most rational part of love. It is what makes us fight for the relationship when the first cracks and problems appear. Depending on the degree of closeness and intimacy, being aware of communication gaps and troubles, we decide to work on the relationship. Moreover, we redefine our boundaries.

The ability to determine and guard them is a task that we may not necessarily like but we must upkeep. We are connected with them as with a partner – for life.

With different pressures or sometimes a single influence of the components on the partner, intimacy, passion and commitment – accompany us from the beginning throughout the development of the relationship and its whole duration. We can call a relationship complete only when the strongest phase – desire – is in its expiration. Then the intimacy and commitment between the partners are strengthened. Such love is preferred and most strived for all their lives by many people.

Most conscious partners undertake hard work to succeed in a long-term relationship while maintaining mutual desire. Knowing and meeting the needs of the other half protects the relationship from experimenting outside of it.

For most couples on earth, fidelity is still the most important thing, which in recent times has experienced a renaissance of importance.

The durability of the relationship is influenced by a strong intellectual bond and the implementation of the same or complementary passions. This fact was additionally strengthened in us by the recent COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. Common

interests and healthy competition make the partnership a challenge for us, which ultimately affects their attractiveness.

Most of us are aware that true love is not easy to achieve, but also ... to feel.

It comes in different types and on many levels. Like most people, you can say that you are loved because your family, parents or grandparents show concern for you. The word – **“Love”** – is short but one of the most powerful words in our emotional vocabulary. It protects, but also exposes to suffering, brings people closer and frees them to start their own journey. In some marginal cases, throwing you into the abyss of pain and suffering. Love is the only higher emotion which power is able to manipulate an individual, regardless of their experience and strength of character. There are no strong ones when it comes to love, when it starts its work in our body, you can give in to it or fight a senseless fight with it. Regardless of your age, every moment is good to rebuild or build a new relationship based on understanding, mutual care and a sense of security.

**For love it's worth it, always.**

# THE PERFECT RELATIONSHIP. IS THERE ONE?



This is a question that we all ask ourselves. By carefully observing the couples around us, we are rarely able to say for sure – yes, they are perfect for each other. Because being perfect is not about being happy all the time in a relationship. Thinking about mankind, we exclude this idealistic image.

Let's forget once and for all that anything in life can be perfect and remember everything and everyone has flaws.

Let's focus on ourselves, what makes us believe that a relationship is perfect when we think about it? No problems, no

arguments, stable financial situation? Or maybe gifts from a loved one or invitations to exotic trips? Mistake.

A relationship is a complicated matter, which is built by two independent individuals, putting a lot of energy into it – work, sacrifices, negotiations and emotions. When entering any relationship, we should think about building it from the start. This includes an element of effort and pushing the boundaries of comfort. That is why it is so important to enter into relationships consciously, with the energy of action and the desire to change for the better.

There are cases in which numerous failures in finding a partner for us make our expectations towards the next ones grow exponentially. Our attitude towards the world and people is also changing. By looking for the ideal, we become difficult and demanding in the unattractive sense of the word:

- *“I will never meet someone perfect for me”.*
- *“This relationship will end in a fiasco again”.*
- *“I’m not fit to be in a relationship”.*

Often, knowing that your search does not bring results, you look for an alternative, making the mistake of getting involved with the wrong person.

**Think about what kind of a partner will give you love,  
a sense of security and you will be happy with.**

Humans evolve throughout life; we must be cautious of the changes that occur in and around us. Approach relationships logically and pragmatically, save your heart and pelvic impulses for romance. Be mindful when entering a relationship.

Frequent conversations, a sober look at your partner – forget about rose-colored glasses – a comparison of your values, goals and ambitions will show if you are made for each other. Matching is extremely important to the happiness and success of a relationship.

It is important that you bond with a person, and not with the image of your idealized expectations. This will give the feeling that you are in the right place for your future.

# NO SELF-LOVE



Just reading this phrase makes me sad.

This is one of the most common issues I encounter in my practice. How do I want to distribute love to others if I have not learned to love myself? To respect myself. To take into account my own needs. To talk to myself in a kind manner.

More and more of us have a problem with self-acceptance, liking ourselves, let alone loving ourselves. This fact most often results from all kinds of problems and difficulties as well as routines that accumulated in childhood and adolescence, penetrate

into our current life. If as a child you suffered harm, lack of acceptance, you had to fight for attention – the natural state of affairs is a problem with the interpretation of love and its mechanisms. This translates into the harmony and balance in your future relationships, not only romantic ones.

Low self-esteem makes us doubt our partner's good intentions, the quality and intensity of their feelings. Such thinking is a trap we have built for ourselves over the years. A wounded psyche that we have not worked on and are not currently working on can make us close ourselves from the outside world and others, falling into a spiral of negative thoughts and actions.

Nowadays, when life is speeding faster and faster, and we are overwhelmed with a huge number of tasks, duties, restrictions and information, we escape into time fillers to relax. Giving in to them leads to automatic, thoughtless actions. We have little time left to think about ourselves, to respond to our needs, thoughts and desires.

We often forget to slow down from the daily rush and ask ourselves important questions:

- *“Wait a minute, is this what I really want?”*
- *“What do I like to do for myself?”*
- *“Am I taking good care of myself?”*

Pay attention to how you answer these questions, they will tell you if you are meeting your main need – *“self-love”*.

These types of questions should give you an idea of how much attention you pay to yourself on a daily basis. Have you started treating yourself as the most important person in the

whole world? Is that the case with you? Stop for a moment, what is your self-image?

How often do we think and talk badly about ourselves? In many cases, we believe ourselves to be weak, pathetic, not smart enough or not attractive enough.

- *It seems impossible to love us.*
- *We don't deserve a better tomorrow.*
- *We are not attractive or thin enough.*

**Such a negative image of ourselves, which we pass on to others, will not make the world love us more than ourselves...**

If you have at least half of the negative self-image I have presented to you, it's high time for a change!

Don't treat yourself worse than others. Look for virtues in yourself, think of yourself only through their perspective. When you think of yourself in the wrong context, you project that kind of feeling onto those around you, who may therefore treat you in ways you don't deserve.

**Example:** When Monika was 14, her mother directly, in what she considered a joking tone, said: *"First your nose comes in the room, then you"*: From that moment, Monika hears the mocking comment from her mother, it comes back to her, which is why she cannot get rid of the complex weighing on her.

Today Monika is a successful adult who in her field has accomplished her goals, one after another. However, she still has a complex and asks everyone if she has a big nose. Despite the negative answers to her question, which logically should eliminate her complex, this does not happen. She doesn't believe

their answers, and the first she sees in the mirror is still her nose and then the rest.

**One of the reasons why we cannot release the opinions of others is because we concentrate on wanting to decipher other's intentions. Monica doesn't know if her mom wanted her to accept her nose using a constant joke, if she wanted to criticize her or if she had not any particular intention. The crucial matter is that such comments – “*you have legs like sticks*”, “*you look like an elephant*” or “*short comings*” can hurt and remind you of themselves all your life. It is interesting that no matter that we listen to different kind of comments and opinions about our person, very often we decide to keep in mind those which are hurtful. Those comments get stuck into our physique and determinate what we think about ourselves for years and look at ourselves through that prism. The task for us is to shake ourselves out of similar, erroneous thinking and realize that we have left being hurt too much already from those comments and that it's time to start reorganizing what we think about ourselves today.**

**Example:** Reflect on the last time you went to the supermarket. The shelves were full of items, but you only bought some of them, those that were needed. Perhaps looked at some items for a few minutes, sometimes had them in your hand but made the decision if you want to take them home, store them in the fridge and make them part of a meal.

So, if you are able to be selective about the products you buy, don't you think selecting the words that you usually use to describe yourself would also be a good idea? And those which you don't need just leave them at the “*store*”?

## Exercise



Repeat this reflection every time you go to the supermarket and become aware that you are the one who decides what to take home and what not. Begin to observe what you keep in your mind, what opinions about yourself you have been carrying, how you have rated yourself.

Negative opinions and adjectives have impaired your definition of yourself for years or decades, hindered your development and hurt you already enough. On many occasions you no longer hear them in your present life, however you have kept them in your mental shopping cart, you have bought them and constantly carry them with you. Wake up and go to sleep with them, and next day you take them to your table and eat breakfast with them and the worst thing – you believed them!

As if every time you go to the supermarket you buy rotten fruit that you know is going to be bad for you, but you buy it anyway and eat it every day. It's like having a permanent tattoo on your skin.

So, do you think you're ready to stop buying that rotten fruit?  
To find how to remove those mental tattoos?

## Exercise



Choose how to rate yourself. First choose 5 qualities that describe you. Then another 5. Maybe at first, it's hard for you because you're not used to seeing your positive and bright side. But reflect and write these positive aspects about yourself. Stick this paper in a place where you will see it constantly and start saving this new image of you in your mental shopping cart.

**Life is like a sine wave. We have good times  
and bad times during its course.**

We alternately feel happy, satisfied, full of energy, so that times can come for nostalgia, melancholy or troubles. Accepting these states, agreeing to this balance, we gain a new, refreshed approach to life. The line of our existence is not flat, it resembles one from vitals monitors that show the beat of the heart.

**Give yourself time to laugh, relax, walk in the clouds, lie down without much sense, but also scream, regret and cry.** Humans are a highly complex being, charged, and mostly overloaded with stimuli, bad information, moods of the surrounding environment – such a complicated machine must have a chance to relieve, regenerate and renew.

## Exercise



Think about how you react to a mistake or mishap made by a loved one. Is it normal for you to be more understanding of your partner, friend or family than you are of yourself?

**If so, start treating yourself like your best friend. Take comfort and, most importantly, forgive yourself.**

**In case you fail at something, you “*slip up*” talk to yourself the way you communicate with a friend. Soon you will see how your own healthy approach to yourself will translate into happiness!**