

*The*  
**BOOK**  
*of*  
**EMOTIONS**

*Or — how it feels to feel*

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PUBLISHED 2017

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# A heart project and an invitation

Sometimes we shut down, turn off our emotions. It might be our way to make it through. Our way to stay sane and keep some parts of ourselves safe.

Almost everybody do it, but some of us have felt the need to tune out for long periods, months or even years.

For me, it became years. The chaos around and within me was too complex to cope with. Without really noticing I pushed my feelings down and away and emotion after emotion was shut off.

And then the day came when I felt safe and secure enough to want to smile and I noticed that I lost the ability to freely feel.

## THE BOOK OF EMOTIONS

My wish is to create a book on emotions and feelings. A guide to everybody or anybody who have shut down or lost their own system of navigation.

It would give me, personally, a greater knowledge and support in my journey and I hope it can be of help to others.

## THE INVITATION

Each month during 2017 the door to explore one emotion will be opened. I will do it with my craft – graphic art and book design. But a books is nothing without words and I am not a writer.

My invitation goes out to all heart leaders, highly sensitives, empaths and survivors that feel called to write and contribute with their perspective on feelings and emotions.

Coming together we can create a small encyclopedia on emotions for anybody and everybody who needs guidance.

If you feel called to contribute you will find information on the website for the project: [bookofemotions/annalinder.com](http://bookofemotions/annalinder.com)

**ANNA LINDER** is a Swedish based graphic artist supporting heart leaders and soulful women to craft beautiful brands, books and web designs that align their vision and story. The Book of Emotions is her heart project. Website: [annalinder.com](http://annalinder.com)



**HOPE**



# The Red Balloon

AIMEE DUFRESNE

A red balloon floats down to earth  
During times of your deepest despair  
When grief has claimed your heart  
Loss has visited your life  
Isolation has enveloped your soul

The red balloon floats freely by your side  
A small string hanging from it  
Inviting you to take hold  
With a tear-streaked face and trembling hand  
You reach out, feeling the flimsiness of it between your fingers

The weight of the world feels so heavy  
But the red balloon offers you weightlessness  
Leaving the aching burden behind,  
You feel lightness in body and mind  
Gently, effortlessly, you start to rise.



Above the fields of sorrow  
Past the pastures of pain  
Over the mountain of melancholy  
The red balloon glides you out of the darkness  
Your eyes adjust to the light.

Glittering gems of joy fill the fields  
Success is shooting up all around you  
Leaves on the trees of ease gently sway  
Laughter fills the air  
Love is blooming everywhere

The vibrant colors dazzle you  
Aromas so divine are inhaled  
Sweet music fills your ears  
You feel supported as you pass the sign  
That reads: This is what will be.

Closing your eyes, soaking it in  
You smile, you giggle, you laugh  
But once you open your eyes again  
You realize the red balloon has brought you back  
To the dark place where it met you.

Fear not, it whispers in your ear  
And please don't worry so  
Life looks grim now, yet it is just a phase  
I just showed you all the fun places you will go  
...my name is Hope if you didn't already know

Hope reassures you this darkness is just a phase  
Light awaits you right around the corner  
Hope reminds you to hold on to it  
So you can return to the place of peace you visited together  
Hope plants a seed in your heart so it can grow and be with you always

**AIMEE DUFRESNE** is a Joy Catalyst and soul-shifting creator, writer, and traveler. She is the proud author of *Keep Going: From Grief to Growth*, a memoir about love, loss, life's journey and the power of perseverance. Aimee is currently writing her next book, *52 Lessons I Learned From My Father*.  
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# When Hope Comes Home

TRACY STAMPER

I vividly recall the specific moment when Hope found its way back to me.

Decades ago, I spent a number of years in the trenches of severe clinical depression. Once finally diagnosed, additional years' worth of trial and error in finding the right medication followed. I felt hopeless. Whenever yet another antidepressant medication didn't work, I felt even more so.

Hope seemed to be out of reach to me at that time. It wasn't even something I could access as a vision for which to aim. Now, I have knowledge and tools to maintain and enhance mental health and well-being. At that time, however, I simply wasn't inwardly resourced enough to even know how to explore how to heal. So I was relying solely on medical intervention.

When the pharmaceutical intervention clicked, it felt like a light switch was turned on. It was sudden. Deliciously and sweetly sudden!

Today, decades later, I can still feel exactly where I was on that curve in the road in front of the Spanish style house. Open windows and sunroof brought sunrays to my skin and wind through my hair. I was driving far too fabulously fast for the first time in eons.

Within several seconds, I felt as though I was hearing a spiritual alarm clock chiming. Birdsongs landed with flutters of lightness, whimsy and joy in my heart. My heart was smiling! I was alive with feeling. This felt foreign to me after years of depression.

My God! I felt my heart!

I looked upwards at the birds. Titling my head up opened the front of my chest and my heartspace. Things had not been looking up for me for some time. Literally, I had not physically been looking up. The act of lifting my gaze shifted my posture, flooding my heart with another rush of streaming aliveness.

Next thing I knew, and much to my delight and surprise, I heard myself laughing! Laughter was a language in which I had lost fluency for a long time. The cliché absurdity of the moment elicited laughter which spilled out of me in sounds that made me laugh even deeper into my belly. The hilariousness of finding Hope against the backdrop of a soundtrack of birdsongs was so ridiculously cliché that it tickled my giggle muscles. How I laughed!

Laughter. What a welcome sign of life. The birds had awakened my heart's wings. And my sense of humor. That little flutter in my heart telling me I'm alive was back. The fluttering stretched my ribcage open from the inside out. More space opened for full, deep, nourishing, soulful breaths.

With the aid of medication, my body chemistry was shifting back into a place where I was able to experience feeling good again. After so long in the dark, this was exhilarating. The boost of medication lifted me up to a level on which I could then tap into my inner resources and a desire to help myself.

Hope had returned home to nest, feathered by birdsongs.

Ever since that cliché day, birdsongs beckon my eyes and heart upwards.

There is much wisdom in looking up. Physically looking up creates more room for our heartspace.

*Laughter. What a welcome sign of life. The birds had awakened my heart's wings. And my sense of humor. That little flutter in my heart telling me I'm alive was back.*

The body wisdom of connecting to sensation as a promising path back into aliveness accompanies me everywhere now. It is a given, with me at all times. At that time, however, feeling alive in my own body marked a stark contrast to where I had been.

This very moment - right here, right now - is an invitation to take your eyes up to the skies. Sense your chest expand as your heart blossoms open. Raise your gaze to create more room for breath. Breath is life. Expanding our gaze from the immediate into the distance physically opens the portal to emotionally transporting ourselves from boxed-in stuckness to expanded horizons.

*"I often catch myself playing loops in my mind, some tired old story of hurt or misunderstanding. I've noticed when I am doing it the focus of my eyes is tight to my immediate vicinity, and that by simply raising my head and looking at the sky or horizon, it 'breaks' the spell of the story and returns me to the present. It's getting so much easier it's almost laughable to see what I do to myself, and fills me with joy to move on."*

~ Gil Hedley, Ph.D., Founder of Integral  
Anatomy Productions & Somanautics Workshops

(‘Somanaut’ is a word that Gil Hedley created “to describe those who explore the inner space of the body, and discover there the rich terrain of themselves.”)

From birdsongs to buttercups, heartspace to horizon, I now sense the power of the two words so often uttered to those feeling hopeless and down: “Chin up.”

Chin up, Buttercup. Lift eyes to the skies. Seek Beauty. Engage senses. Look all around. Look for the inspiration in the beauty of a buttercup. Listen for the birdsongs. Seek shapes dancing in clouds. Look up, and your precious energy will respond.

Our bodies respond because they don’t just reveal our moods; they literally help shape them. Engaging our bodies as partners in the dance of emotions is profoundly empowering.

When we’re feeling hopeless, sad, or stuck, our gaze lowers, narrows, and draws in tighter and closer. Shifting our gaze immediately shifts our physiology. Every breath we take, every move, every expression, every

*Look for the inspiration in  
the beauty of a buttercup.  
Listen for the birdsongs.  
Seek shapes dancing in clouds.  
Look up, and your precious  
energy will respond.*

thought changes the physiology of the body. Our bodies hold far more power to navigate our emotional terrain than most of us realize or utilize.

When hopeless, look up. Look. See. Seek anything that returns that flutter of life to the heart. Seek something to look forward to, as looking forward engages the body in looking up. Looking up floods our senses with stimulation and life.

Hope is that sensation of ‘Chin up, Buttercup.’

Hope is the buttercup blossom.

Hope is your heartspace blossoming.

Hope is the flow of breath.

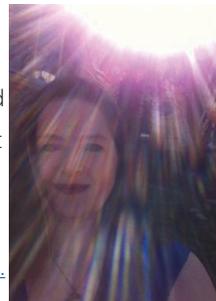
Hope is that inner spark reminding you: You can do this. Keep going.

When Hope seems out of reach, seek the horizon.

Look.

Look with your chin up, Buttercup.

**TRACY STAMPER** is a dancer at heart, in mind, of body, and with words. Her writing has been featured in *Rebelle Society* and *Elephant Journal*. Her current favorite colors are purple, orange and glitter. She likes her chocolate dark, her inspiration flowing and her car dances to be uninhibited. Website: [facebook.com/DancingPenTracyStamper/](https://www.facebook.com/DancingPenTracyStamper/)



*Hope is the light  
shining  
through a cloud  
making  
the clear water  
sparkle.*

ANNA



# Hope floats

BRETTON KEATING

Hope floats until it drowns  
Sometimes it takes just one  
They tell me I did it wrong again  
I messed up.  
It's not right.  
Better luck next time  
Is it luck?  
Or is it just me?

“The world is a terrible place,”  
She says to me.  
War  
Rape  
Violence  
To varying degrees her  
Story sounds the same  
Day after day

And then she tells me  
everything I'm doing wrong.

Young girls wither away  
Dogs grow angry.  
A frothing mouth and  
Eyes too far gone to save.  
“Why did you do it?”  
We're obsessed with why  
Without comprehending  
How to listen.

We hope for the more  
But the more is what  
Terrifies  
Destructs  
Inflicts pain  
And the pedestal  
Of my life  
My story  
My worth  
Being greater than yours.

More love?  
Check.  
More power?  
Check.  
More money?  
Check again.

Misplaced hope carries more danger than its counter.

I sit beside the one who saves ants.  
Even those who bite  
Fiercely  
Refusing to let go.  
Vengeance perhaps,  
Or unfiltered despair  
As sand wears thin  
One misconstrued lifeline.

Pain recycles itself in raging torrents.  
And more is never enough.

Maybe living for hope is blind  
Maybe living to hope is delusional  
Or perhaps living with hope  
is a colour we cannot (yet) see.

**BRETTON KEATING** is a yoga instructor for adults and children, barre instructor, Reiki healer, writer, and artist. For her heart-centered writings, please visit her blog ([brettonkeating.com](http://brettonkeating.com)). For creative work, including poetry and your fairy tale within, here is her website ([whitecottonrose.com](http://whitecottonrose.com)).





WHAT IS THE COLOR OF HOPE?

*I'm unclear as to whether  
it has a color... but I DO  
know it has sparkles!*

**TRACY**

*Hope is blue with sprinkles of  
orange. Hope has no limit, trust  
is the mother of hope. Faith and  
hope embraces you. Is within  
reach and whispers quietly to  
surrender yourself.*

**KIRAN**

*Hope is blue, like  
the sky and the sea*

**MOUNA**

*H.O.P.E.*

*Hang On ~ Peace Emerges*

*Healing Our Precious Energy*

*Horizons Open Possibilities Endlessly*

*Heart Opening Portal Enlivens*

*Hearts Outpouring ~ Possibilities Expanding*

Tracy Stamper

**SHAME**



# Shame doesn't need to change

BRETTON KEATING

Shame is the emotion about which I do not wish to write.

I thought maybe I would skip the topic. I don't have much to say.

But then resistance may shine light on an emotion so deeply rooted that writing about it just may begin to heal something.

We are all conditioned and taught to carry shame.

I was too fat; then I was too thin.

Nobody said anything about the latter.

The other day a man approached me on a covered bridge, asking about my puppy. I've grown accustomed to attention, travelling around Asia with the small dog that rescued me from the streets of India. We're a strange anomaly, the blue-eyed American girl with her puppy on a leash.

The man told me my dog was "Slim, not like you. You're fat." His remark led to a 48-hour spiral through my insecurities, ones I thought I had overcome but it seems I really hadn't. Healing comes in circles; it's not a linear path. I awoke the next morning hating myself.

As girls growing up, we're told that we're pretty. Hardly a person out there reads the things that I write, yet I post a photo where I have a bit of a tan, and I get hundreds of 'likes'. What is it about the 'likes'? I couldn't

*Like a monster pulsing through  
our veins, the black blood of  
being too much and not enough  
in the exact same breath  
circulates, weaving its web until  
we're too far gone to come  
back from here.*

care less about 'likes', but then the entire concept does make me question whether anything artistic I contribute to the world has any kind of value. So I guess, yes, then, as shameful as I feel to admit it aloud, I do care.

We're even taught to carry shame around the caring.

And the caring, it doesn't just disappear. I can tear my way through the self-help section, buying into all the pseudo-spirituality there is out there, or I can just accept that I am a human being, and I care. I care when someone on a covered bridge tells me I am fat. I care when I work diligently, for weeks, obsessing over each and every word, on a two-page article that nobody reads. I care when it's been weeks and you still haven't returned my call. I care when the random stranger passing on the street tells me I'm raising my puppy entirely wrong.

I care.

Just maybe, the caring so deeply, so fully, the caring at all, is not something for which I need be ashamed.

We're taught to apologize for everything. The apologies outgrow the social subtleties of niceness. The apologies become us. Like a monster pulsing through our veins, the black blood of being too much and not enough in the exact same breath circulates, weaving its web until we're too far gone to come back from here.

We spend centuries in the unweaving.

I was a witch in a past life, I am certain.

I feel myself burnt at the stake, each and every day.

It doesn't have to be like this. We do not have to succumb to circumstance. There are people who teach love, not hate or even vague dislike. People who look at me in the skin I wear, and help me to see that it does not need to be changed. That *I*, in the deepest essence of existing, do not need to be changed. Yes, I can always work on my actions... but these

*There are people who live  
by love, rather than social  
subtleties and niceness.  
Being nice isn't so nice when  
doing so causes detriment.*

people, they recognize and understand, deeply, that actions and words and ideas are all separate from *me*, in my true form.

There are people who live by love, rather than social subtleties and niceness. Being nice isn't so nice when doing so causes detriment. When the words drip like sugar from a spoilt tongue. And there's a difference between kindness and niceness.

My hips are bruised from all the niceness, and so I think I'd rather be kind. Beginning with kindness toward myself, by acknowledging that the shame I carry is a learnt trait. It means I've paid attention, even as I daydream my way through day-to-day life. Shame is just a small piece of my story, it doesn't need to be changed, and it in no way defines who I am as a person.

**BRETTON KEATING** is a yoga instructor for adults and children, barre instructor, Reiki healer, writer, and artist. For her heart-centered writings, please visit her blog ([brettonkeating.com](http://brettonkeating.com)). For creative work, including poetry and your fairy tale within, here is her website ([whitecottonrose.com](http://whitecottonrose.com)).





WHAT IS THE OPPOSITE TO SHAME?

*The opposite of shame - life! Shame force us into the corner of death.*

*The opposite, a permission, a trust to be. At the foundation of it all - love vibrates.*

**KIRAN**

*pride*

*atonement*

*self-worth*

*self-esteem*

*trust*

*life*

*Shame is wordless and exceptionally hard to describe. The opposite is trust, openness and the ability to feel safe in relationships.*

**ELISABETH**

# Shame's Secret

TRACY STAMPER

*'What is the color of Anger?'*

*'Where in the body does Freedom live?'*

*'How does Support feel for you?'*

*'Does Vulnerability have a companion?'*

*'What words, colors, sounds do you associate with Trust?'*

*'How do you express Hope?'*

The Book of Emotions' writing prompts opened doorways. Anger dared me to dance with him. Freedom took me soaring. Support carried me down memory lane through lessons learned the hard way. Vulnerability cracked me wide open in a wondrous way. Trust received a love letter from me. Hope brought my eyes to the horizon.

*'How do you experience Shame?'*

Simply seeing the word Shame felt like a sucker punch. Immediately, I became aware of how I experience Shame, as the mere thought of writing on this topic elicited a visceral response of tightness in my belly and a sensation of contracting into myself.

I became smaller.

The brilliant barometer of my body reminded me that my healing journey with Shame is a work in progress.

Thankfully, I had three months to sit with this topic and find a palatable way to write about it.

Soon, there were two months left. Zero ideas.

With just over one month left, my healing journey asked me to keep the tenderness of this topic close. In so many ways and with so many topics, I am an open book when it comes to writing. I share deeply personal parts of myself on the page. Shame, however, nudged me to further empower self by holding boundaries of privacy around this topic. Empowerment is blossoming, yet not fully blossomed.

Less than one month left. The conundrum of how to write about Shame kept rattling around in my brain. Still, zero inspiration.

I was determined to wrap up this writing before my family trip to the beach so that this persistent and now annoying issue of how to write about Shame wouldn't tag along on my vacation. Writing went on the top of my list of things to do before our trip. I whittled everything off of that list... except for writing about Shame.

Shame crashed the party of our beach vacation.

Some anxiety bubbled up around the looming deadline and around the fact that I feared facing Shame. Tucked in my purse was a notebook ready to capture any inspiration that arose. All that arose was anxiety.

Then, I went underwater.

My family and I visited the magical Monterey Aquarium. The structure that houses the aquarium is built into the bay. Sometimes it was impossible to tell if the water and creatures were part of the natural world or within the walls and glass partitions of the aquarium.

Ringo Starr's lyrics were painted onto the Aquarium wall:

*"I'd like to be under the sea in an octopus' garden in the shade."*

I was under the sea in this mesmerizing architectural miracle where

fantasy met reality and merged into one fantastical experience. Thousands of jellyfish opening and closing so slowly, often in unison, hypnotized me. I dove into a meditative state; my heart rate and breath slowing down in resonance with the fluid slow-motion expansion and contraction of the jellyfish.

Marine life that looked like science fiction characters swam within inches of the glass I had my face pressed into. Anchovies created a light show, reflecting silver glints when one caught the light just right for a brief moment. Puffins played on the faux rocks in their area. Sea otters playfully tumbled into and around one another, putting on a water gymnastics show in the ocean that cradled the aquarium.

Amazed by the interplay of the outside world with the sea world within the aquarium, I glanced from the jetty-like rock exhibits housing the puffins to the jetties outside.

That is the exact moment when I met Shame.

My imagination saw Shame emerge from behind the jetties in the bay. She was a sea monster who looked like the most wicked of wicked witches. She lives in the sea just beyond the reach of reason.

*Shame rules through terror,  
keeping humans hostage to her  
by keeping us small.*

Shame revealed herself as an old, sinewy, bent and crooked sharp hag draped in tattered gray, brown and crimson robes of burlap. Her screech of a voice is known to send shivers down spines long after utterances of her ugliness have faded.

Shame rules through terror, keeping humans hostage to her by keeping us small. She squeezes us into the grip of her ten finger talons: guilt, embarrassment, fear, unworthiness, insecurity, isolation, anxiety, resignation, silence and secrecy. Though gnarled and arthritic, her finger talons manage to hold humans in her grip of fear. When wrapped around us, Shame squeezes the vibrancy of life from us.

How can she hold us with her old, fumbling and weak fingers? Through her words, which we echo: *'Shame on you'* and *'You should be ashamed of yourself'* are among the most damaging statements we can utter. With these words, we cast Shame's spells on ourselves and others. These dark

*Shame is a bully.  
She is a bully hiding behind a  
façade.  
Her magic is that she has us  
under our spell.  
Our magic is that she needs  
us to survive.*

curses are hers, but we are the ones who perpetuate her hate. We repeat her ugly stories, damning one another into Shame's grip.

When my mind's eye dared to look her in the eye, I saw her shake. I saw weakness in her hands and heard dark curses sputtering and spewing from her foul, foaming mouth. In that moment of bravery, I was able to see straight through her.

Like the schoolyard bully... like those hiding behind bravado... like the man behind the emerald curtain of Oz... she is scared. Scaring others makes her feel powerful, and power appeals to her fear-based way of walking through the world.

Shame is a bully.

She is a bully hiding behind a façade.

Her magic is that she has us under our spell.

Our magic is that she needs us to survive.

Shame needs us to buy into her lies in order to survive. Her backbone is brittle so she usurps ours. Shame's arrival is an invitation for us to sense our spine, ground into our heels, and inhabit our backbone by standing tall.

Freeing ourselves from her spell takes climbing out onto the rocky crags overlooking the wildness of the sea where she hides behind rocks and under lies.

So we rise.

Though human knees may wobble, voices may tremble, and tears fueled by fears may pour back into the saltwater of the sea, we answer her to be free.

*"No!"*

'No' is all she needs to know for her false magic emerald curtain to dissolve into the sea.

*"No"* casts a magical spell of the freeing Truth we tell.

Our courage is her kryptonite.

Anger. Freedom. Support. Vulnerability. Trust. Hope. And Shame.

The invitation of *The Book of Emotions* to travel deeper into our emotional landscape emboldened me to acquaint myself with Shame. Once she appeared out of the sea, she ceased to be the larger-than-life entity that had me in her grip. Meeting her allowed me to see that she is like me: scared.

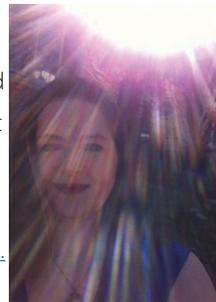
I am scared. And I am courageous. My courage is her kryptonite.

My message to Shame: *'No. This weight of Shame is not mine to carry. What happened to me is not my fault. This Shame does not belong to me. It has left me weary, and I will not carry it any longer.'*

Mother Nature knows how to recycle energy. I return Shame to the sea. I dedicate all the saltwater tears I've ever cried in Shame back to the ocean, where life begins and where the life of this shame ends.

I no longer fear the undertow.

**TRACY STAMPER** is a dancer at heart, in mind, of body, and with words. Her writing has been featured in *Rebelle Society* and *Elephant Journal*. Her current favorite colors are purple, orange and glitter. She likes her chocolate dark, her inspiration flowing and her car dances to be uninhibited. Website: [facebook.com/DancingPenTracyStamper/](https://www.facebook.com/DancingPenTracyStamper/)



# Next chapter

The Book of Emotions is an ongoing project and every month will be focused around one feeling and become one chapter in the upcoming book. Each month a digital sneak peak of each chapter will be released – free for everyone to share with the world.

## UPCOMING EMOTIONS

Anger and freedom was the focus for January and February. March was about Support and April gave us Vulnerability and this chapter is about Trust. The feelings for the upcoming months are:

*August: Peace*

*September: Fear*

*October: Joy*

## CONTRIBUTE

If you feel called to contribute you will find information on the website for the project: [bookofemotions/annalinder.com](http://bookofemotions/annalinder.com)

# The Authors

**AIMEE DUFRESNE** is a Joy Catalyst and soul-shifting creator, writer, and traveler. She is the proud author of *Keep Going: From Grief to Growth*, a memoir about love, loss, life's journey and the power of perseverance. Aimee is currently writing her next book, *52 Lessons I Learned From My Father*.

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