

# CHOOSING LOVE

Living Our Lives to  
Nourish Our Hearts



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Hardie Grant

BOOKS

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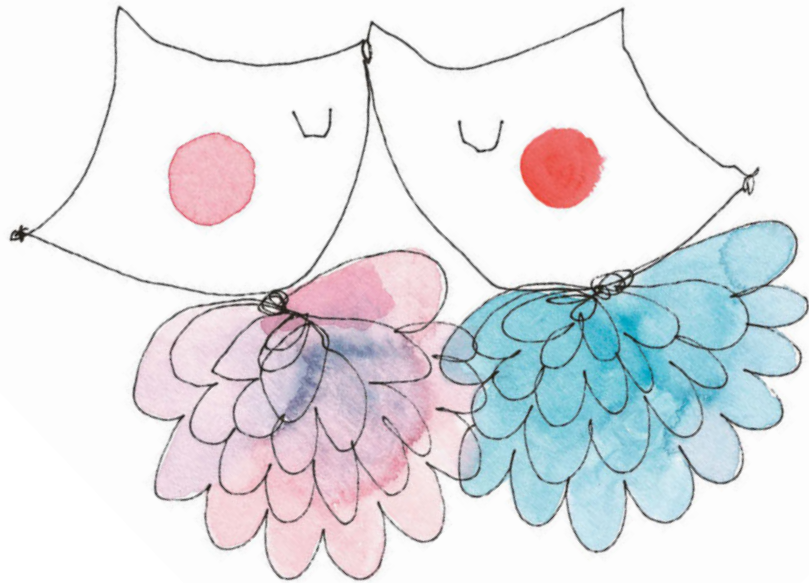


## Dearest You

Between us there exists a tremendous force: an all-encompassing energy that quietly but surely embraces us and all things. It is our natural instinct, our point and purpose; it is profound and light all at once and has the power to achieve great things. It propels us forward at every turn, offering nourishment and inspiration. This energetic force – love – nurtures and connects, supports and defines us. Nothing can create quite the same joy and bliss, the same pain and grief, the same delight and pleasure, nor inspire the same degree of reverence, as love.

More than a feeling, love is an active and miraculous force. Love is the thread uniting the mysterious and resplendent patchwork of our shared lives and works in nuanced, serendipitous ways. As renewable energy, love transcends time and space. It motivates, comforts, heals and frees us. It connects us and allows us to feel a sense of belonging – to feel and know that we are part of something deeper, greater and more sacred than we could ever fully capture with words. Almost as if by nature, love defies snappy definition. Instead it dances with us – whispering through the portals of all our senses, infusing our imaginations and igniting our dreams.

Love encompasses so many things, from tenderness, compassion and courage, to warmth, grace and joy. Love is understanding, open and attentive. It is love that teaches, enlivens, challenges and nurtures us more profoundly than any other force on earth possibly could. And we love courageously and brilliantly, even in the face of so much mystery and uncertainty, because it is our natural instinct to do so. Because our hearts, minds and spirits are completely dynamic, interpreting and responding to life in every moment. We love because we are compelled to love, just as plants are compelled to grow into the light. We love because we are moved by beauty and the promise of joy. We love intuitively because connection is crucial for our wellbeing and survival, and because loving is unto itself a lifelong virtue – a reason for being. We love because, beyond all reason, logic and division, we are all sentient, emotional beings sharing an interwoven past, present and future.



All kinds of love exist between us. Family love and love within friendships. Romantic love, self-love, even great love: the blissful, ecstatic kind of love we feel in heightened moments of aliveness, in which we sense love for all life and creation. We can love our children, our pets, our favourite hobbies, or particular pieces of art. We can love certain places, songs or people that touch our hearts. We can feel moved by poems and stories that awaken our senses. Indeed, what we love, who and how we love are indicative of our deepest, innermost values and desires. Our different ways of feeling, giving and receiving love demonstrate who we are and guide us as we create meaningful lives expressive of our natures and dreams.

When we tune into the energy of love, as if dipping into a particular pool of thought and feeling, we are the recipients of infinite vital energy.

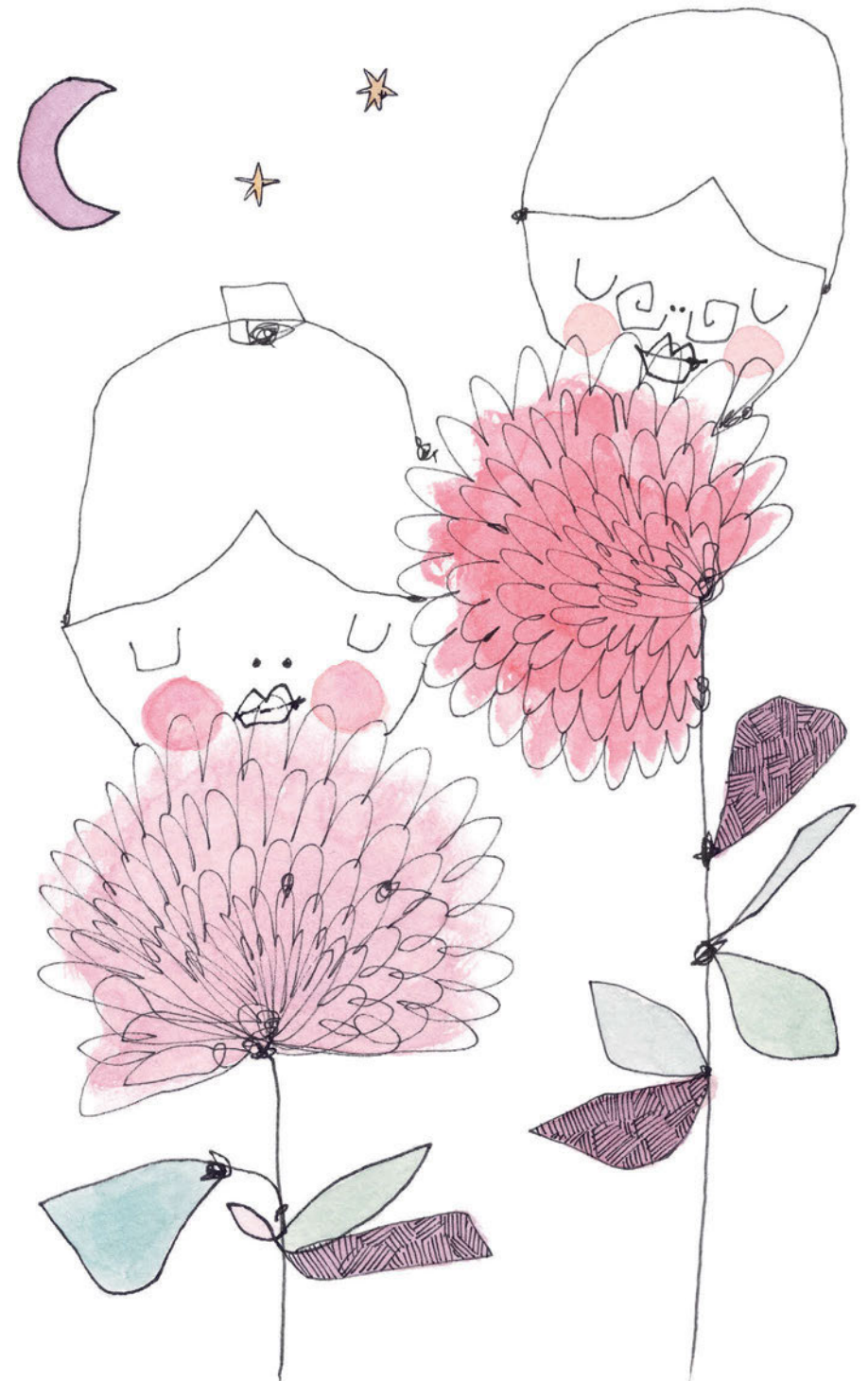
With this loving energy, we can shift our perspective, transform ourselves personally, and change our shared world in the most magnificent and positive ways. Tuning into love, we may transform our fears into challenges to meet and triumphantly overcome. We can learn to flourish through good times and hard times, forgive and let go, even thrive amid change and uncertainty. We all contend with moments of light- and heavy-heartedness as we navigate our busy, nuanced daily lives. All the while, and even in our trickiest, most trying moments, love exists and pulsates as healing, fortifying energy. Cultivating love brings bliss and meaning to our lives. As we attune ourselves to love, we feel its constant magic working within and around us. We need only see and choose love for it to reveal itself as our most faithful, constant companion – our brightest guiding light.



Choosing love is becoming increasingly important in our rapidly changing world. So much has shifted all around us, and our lives are vastly accelerated and more overstimulating than ever before. All the while, our essential human design remains the same. Our nervous systems are constantly striving to adjust to navigate the demands of modern daily life. It is no wonder that we can often feel anxious, separate, unloving or unloved. That we can feel worn out, hurried, suspicious, confused and lonely. That we are more connected yet feel so disconnected. That we don't know when to let go and when to hold on. Amid much noise we often can't quite hear our hearts and, as a result, can stand in our very own way when it comes to love. It is no surprise that the state of our hearts warrants our special attention, time and care right now.

*Life is calling us to live more lovingly, harmoniously  
and compassionately than ever before.*

Choosing love, we can return to community- and kin-centred living. We can identify that separateness, competition and loneliness are detrimental to our health and happiness, and we can open our hearts to connection and togetherness. While we are all individuals and our individuality is essential, we cannot survive and flourish with our personal interests at the heart of our thinking. While the concerns we face are complex and varied, the answer for all of us is one and the same. Quite simply, we must choose the way of love: a way of unity, peace and joy.



Love brings out the best in each and every one of us. Love is ours to feel, grow and share, if we wish to enjoy our lives and change the world. Love is ours for today, not tomorrow or some time yet to come. If we wish to live fully and embrace our aliveness with passion, we must open our hearts and minds. We must choose love.

Let us recognise love as the lifelong beacon for which we are searching. Let us notice that love is, and has always been, all around us, and that love dwells in our very own hearts and hands. When so many things can be chosen in this life, let us see and choose love.

Imagine our world rotating on an axis of love, each one of us choosing love for ourselves and one another. If such a peaceful, rich and kind world seems unrealistic, impossible, or even like a dream, philosopher and poet Henry David Thoreau can readily remind us that 'Our truest lives are when we are in dreams awake'. If anything can make the impossible possible, it is love. We must continue to dream, and nurture genuinely loving intentions for ourselves, each other and our earth.



Let us explore love now. Let us take the time to replenish our hearts and listen to them very carefully. Let us discover greater balance and meaningful purpose through living lovingly, letting love light us up and guide our way.

May this book encourage us all to nurture and open our hearts.

Meredith x







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