

Companion Guide to

*The* **ART** *of*  
**COMING HOME**

Common-sense self-development exercises  
to educate, inspire and empower you

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# USING THIS GUIDE

I've written this workbook with questions on each chapter, to help you consider key concepts and what they mean to you, to help you get the most out of this book.

This is not a test on your comprehension of the material in the book, but an opportunity to reflect on what you feel and think at a deep level. As far as possible try to give honest answers, which you feel are true deep down, rather than being overly intellectual. Also take the questions at face value, they are open and do not have a specific agenda or "correct" answer. As I mentioned just now, the most valuable way to answer will be from as deep and honest a place as possible. Try not to edit your answers.

Take your time, feel free to skip questions that do not speak to you or even modify them so they are relevant to you, but do try to answer any questions that feel hard, blocked or charged. You can also come back to these later.

I recommend working through them one chapter at a time, alongside reading the book so that the topics are fresh in your mind.

You can work through this by yourself, with friends or with a book group (if you don't have one, why not set one up?).

Through using this guide, you will likely discover some insightful and useful things about yourself, find that there are areas you prefer and some you resist, and develop your own unique relationship to the material I have laid out. Take your time, be kind and respectful to yourself, be curious and as much as possible enjoy the journey!

## Introduction

1. The concept behind the title of the book is that although pushing ourselves out of our comfort zone can feel very uncomfortable, if it is authentic to us then we are actually *coming home* to ourselves. Right now, what do you feel you want to do, feel or express in order to come home to yourself more? Try to write the first things that come to mind without judgement.

2. Is there a time you felt like you should move out of your comfort zone and you didn't because of fear? Write about your feelings and also what happened as a result.

2.1 What, if anything, would you have rather done differently?

3. Conversely, can you think of a time when you did push yourself out of your comfort zone because it felt right to do that? How did you feel and what was the result?

4. What are the main differences in your state and your life between when you pushed beyond your comfort zone because it felt right, and when you held back out of fear? This might include results, feelings, impact on the way you were living, how much you were able to express yourself and more.

5. Call to mind someone you admire who seems to be able to act in the way that is right for them in spite of risk, fear or adversity. What qualities seem special about them?

## **1. A Healthy Attitude to Self-Development Work**

1. There are ways that self-development work can help us and ways that it can actually be a problem and this may be due to our attitude and/or the method we are using. Have you ever tried a technique that was meant to help but it made you feel worse or had a negative impact in another way? Write down what it was and why you think it had the impact that it did.

1.2 What, if anything, do you think might have helped it to be beneficial instead of unhelpful?

2. There are different ways we can bring what we learn from introspection and self-expression into our “whole” life so it does not remain just theoretical, including introducing it into different aspects of our life (i.e. our work persona), having meaningful conversations, allowing it to be reflected in a slightly different way of behaving and more. Thinking about it, do you currently have anything you instinctively like to do to integrate your self-development work and keep life balanced, and do you know roughly how it helps you?

3. Although teachers can be a great help, all the real work happens within us. Have you ever found yourself in a position where you looked for answers from a teacher or someone you looked up to, too much? What do you think a good balance between learning from others and finding your own truth looks like?

## **2. Key Skills for Self-Development**

1. It is important to balance self-awareness with self-kindness. Are there any areas of your life where you feel you could be more self-aware or kinder to yourself? Write them down as well as what that would look like ideally for each one.

2. Being able to let feelings, thoughts and information arise without judging them straight away is an important skill for deeper self-development work. Do you ever feel uneasy holding off from making a judgement about things and if so, what is the emotion this space or pause causes? .

2.1 If you do feel resistance to not judging new information right away, this is really common – none of us likes to feel uncertain. But allowing this feeling of uncertainty is the key to creating the space for new insights. What do you think would make you feel more comfortable with doing this?

3. Doing the right amount of self-development work is very important for letting the work be meaningful. Too much and we can try to force something that cannot be forced, too little and we may find it hard to grow into the life and person we feel we are inside. Do you tend to go one way or the other, and how does this manifest?

### **3. Our State**

1. Having completed the questionnaires in this section, which areas of your self do you feel are doing the best and which need more help?

2. Can you see a connection between areas that are having a hard time, or a connection between the areas that are doing well? And why do you think that might be?

3. If there is an area of yourself that you think about way less (whether that is emotional, physical, spiritual or mental) or feel a lack of connection to, think about why that might be.

3.1 And now, allow yourself to imagine what it would look like if that part of you were fully expressed. Be as creative, colourful and imaginative as you like because giving your imagination full rein can help you to understand how this would affect your inner world, as well as how it might look from the outside.

## **4. Grounding and Centring**

1. Do you find yourself often feeling spaced-out, disconnected or foggy, or know someone that does? What does this state make it harder to do?

1.1 If this does happen to you, how do you get back to feeling present and “in the room”?

2. Spending time in nature is an excellent way of grounding ourselves in our bodies and the moment. Do you feel resistant to spending time in nature (bearing in mind this can also be hanging out with a pot plant or in a garden)? If so, what part of you is resistant and why do you think that is?

3. After trying a centring exercise, did you feel different and if so, how?

3.1 How would feeling this way more often impact your life?

## **5. Acceptance and Self-Acceptance**

1. When you contemplate the concept of acceptance, what is your gut reaction? Write whatever comes up without censoring or judging it (just trying to accept it!).

1.1 Now call to mind a person, situation or aspect of yourself that you find challenging or even unpleasant. Go with the first thing that comes to mind, and now visualize yourself accepting it – how does that feel? Again, try to accept your reaction without changing it.

### **Self-Acceptance**

2. In this section, I write about the connection between the feminine principle and self-acceptance. What do you think about this connection, does it feel true for you?

2.1 If you feel the concept mentioned above is true, how has this connection impacted you in your life?

3. A connection between lack of self-acceptance and motivation is also mentioned. Do you ever feel motivated by not feeling that you are enough, or worried that self-acceptance will affect your motivation? Explain what this feels like as well as how it looks from the outside.

4. Although many disciplines encourage us to only focus on working with and towards positive attributes, it is vital that we see and accept our darker and uglier parts. Do you feel that there are any parts of you, which if you accepted, would make your life worse?

4.1 If there is a part of you that you feel scared to accept, do you feel that there is an underlying need which needs to be addressed, or a part of you that needs to be heard and how might you make that happen? Of course, you should always get support when you need it and only tackle difficult self-development work when you feel strong.

## **Accepting Other People**

5. It can feel so good to judge people or to see some types of people as fundamentally different to us because it can bolster our sense of importance or identity. When you think of an individual or particular group that you have trouble accepting, what first comes to mind?

5.1 Now, with an open mind, wonder what it would look like if you accepted that person or group as they are (without accepting bad behaviour, just the person/ people as they are).

5.2 Now that you have an idea of what accepting them would look like, write down how it affects you. For example, if you judged someone and felt more important as well as more tense and isolated, acceptance may result in you feeling more confident and connected, while more interested in other things. So by accepting the person as they are, they have less of a hold on you. This is just an example – try and find the answer that fits you, including positive and negative aspects. It is a tricky question so try not to get hung up on any intellectual ideas, but go with your gut reaction, and remember that acceptance does not have to feel better necessarily – we are always getting something out of a behaviour and sometimes we don't like to lose it!

## **Accepting Situations and Accepting Things Being Difficult**

6. Has your difficulty in accepting the reality of a situation ever held you back, made you suffer or had other negative effects? In what ways did this impact you?

6.1 If you have ever found yourself in this situation and managed to move beyond it, how did you do that and what resources helped you?

7. Have you ever judged yourself harshly for not achieving a goal or version of success and then decided it is just not an option for you? If you feel that that decision was based in fear, do you feel like you would ever want to revisit that aspiration, and what would you need in order to do that?

## **6. Self-Love and Self-Esteem**

1. How are your levels of self-love and self-esteem impacting you right now?

### **Self-Love**

2. Thinking about self-love, is there someone you know who seems to be able to do this quite easily?

2.1 If so, what impact does this have on them and their habits?

2.2 How does their high level of self-love make you feel about this person and why do you think that is?

3. If you had a higher level of self-love, what would that look and feel like?

## **Self-Esteem**

4. Do you feel that your level of self-esteem is related to how well you are doing in your life and how do you notice this?

4.1 If so, what would it look and feel like if your self-esteem was not dependent on anything outside of yourself?

5. Do you ever try to boost your self-esteem through external means, i.e. “humble brags” or selfies on social media, or a successful project at work, for example?

5.1 If so, how long does the benefit usually last, and what is your initial impulse for action when that feeling runs out?

6. Are your current environment and relationships conducive to good levels of self-esteem? If there are any obstacles, which ones stand out to you and what would it look like to challenge, change or remove these?

## **7. Compassion and Self-Compassion**

1. Do you know anyone who seems to lack compassion (it is fine that this is just from our own point of view) and if so, how do you imagine that it affects their: mood, relationships, reputation, career, health and quality of life?

1.1 If you answered yes to the previous question, why do you think their lack of compassion affects them in this way?

2. Compassion can be more difficult in certain situations and is impacted by a variety of issues and states. Do you feel that there is room for you to feel more compassion for others at the moment, and what would it look and feel like if you did?

## **Self-Compassion**

3. How do you think good levels of self-compassion manifest in people's lives? You may want to include; health, mood, relationship with themselves and others, habits, success or other.

4. Do you feel there is anything blocking your ability to have compassion for yourself?

4.1 How could you remove these blocks and what impact would that have?

## 8. Recognising Our Emotions

1. We all have some emotions we like feeling and others we would rather not feel at all. Which ones do you prefer and seek out, and which do you push away? If it helps, you can look at the different emotions listed in the table in *Exercise 8.2: Increasing Our Emotional Vocabulary*.

1.1 If there are any emotions you find it unpleasant to feel or difficult to connect to, why not have a relaxed wonder about where these attitudes first came from? This is not about blame, but creating a fuller understanding of your relationship with your feelings.

2. In this chapter we look at common ways we may avoid feeling our feelings. Did you identify with any of them? If so, can you think where you may have learned this behaviour?

2.1 If you answered yes to the question above, or you know that you avoid feeling your feelings in other ways, imagine what it would look like and how would you feel if you were able to feel and work through all your emotions, not avoiding them? You can write, draw or just imagine your answer.

## 9. Processing Our Emotions

1. Do you have a particular emotion that you find it hard to feel and express healthily?

1.1 If you answered yes, how does this affect you, the people around you, the atmosphere in the room and your relationships with others? Answer as deeply and truthfully as you can.

2. In this chapter we look at ways we might be expressing emotion indirectly, probably because this is the best we could do in the past. Do you identify with any of these, or notice any other ways you express emotion that may not reflect you at your best or most self-expressed?

3. Having read through and/or tried the exercises for processing emotions, did you find that a certain way was much easier for you?

3.1 If you answered yes to the question above, it might be interesting to wonder what that means, especially in terms of the method that was hardest for you. For example if moving to express emotion was very hard, does this mean there is space for more connection with your body? The aim of this question is not to be self-critical, but interested so do take it easy on yourself as you answer this question.

## 10. Getting in Touch With Our Inner Child

1. If starting to consider your inner child is a new concept for you, what is your gut reaction to the thought that *yourself as a child* is still a living part of you?

2. And if this is not a new concept, describe your current relationship to your inner child (preferably focusing on your feelings more than being intellectual in your answer).

3. Having learned more about your inner child through reading this chapter and using one or several of the exercises, what is the one big takeaway that you'd like to remember or incorporate into your life?

## 11. Our Connection to Our Body

1. Having read through the beginning of this chapter, what would you say are the main requirements and expectations you put on your body? This may include; being healthy all the time, being strong, looking good, performing in sports, being able to stay awake for long periods, recover quickly, heal quickly, feel energetic (in spite of our habits in terms of sleeping, exercise and eating), or other. Just be as honest and clear as you can, do not worry about the origin or correctness of any of these expectations.

1.1 Having identified some of the expectations you put on your body, how do you feel emotionally when they are not met? If there are several then ask this question for each separately, one at a time.

2. What is great about your body? Name the first thing that comes to mind.

3. Having read the whole chapter and hopefully tried one or several of the exercises, is there one thing you feel you want to change in your life or attitude that will strengthen your connection with your body? Include how you want to make this happen in your answer.

## 12. Thinking Consciously

1. Without overthinking it (no pun intended) what do you feel is the general state of your mind usually? Try to give the answer you feel is true, rather than being analytical or trying to be exact, and use whatever language you feel is relevant (even if others might struggle to understand what “like a bowl of spaghetti on a boat” means). If words fail you, feel free to do an abstract drawing.

2. To what extent do you feel your cultural conditioning (from your family, society, nationality etc) influences the way you think and your attitudes?

3. As a little experiment I would like you to imagine yourself as a person of another gender, nationality or race (only change one thing) and wonder with an open mind how your attitudes, thoughts and feelings might be different.

## **Ways of Thinking**

4. Having read through this section, which styles of thinking would you say are your strongest, and how does this translate into your life?

5. Which style of thought was the most foreign to you and how does this affect your life?

5.1 Do you feel that you would like to work to improve your ability to think in this way and if so, how would you like to do that?

### **13. Expressing Our Spiritual Side**

1. Have you ever been in a situation that you felt diminished your spirit and/ or your energy? Describe all the effects that you can think of.

2. Describe a situation that nourished your spirit and energy, and include all of the effects it had on you.

3. Compare these two situations in order to determine what it was exactly about each that was bad or good for your spirit.

3.1 How can you bring more of the positive influences from the situation you mentioned in Question 2., into your life now or in the near future?

4. In Exercise 13.2 we look at your core values. Now I want you to think of someone you dislike or who annoys you and, as honestly as you can, write out what you think their core values are (it is fine that this is a best-guess).

4.1 Knowing these, does it change how you feel about them at all? And why do you think that is?

## 14. Continuing Home

1. In this section we look at ways of integrating what we have learned about ourselves into our lives, to make them stick more. We do not need to do this with every realisation, emotion, aspect of ourselves or unmet need we have discovered - just those we feel are ready to be incorporated or explored further. Bearing this in mind, what do you feel you would like to bring into your life more fully or understand more?

1.1 Consider how you would like to achieve this for each one of your answers above, remembering that each may prefer a different approach.

2. Out of everything we explored in this book, what did you have the greatest resistance to and why do you think that might be?

3. Out of everything you have learned by reading this book, what had the greatest impact on you, and why do you think that is?

## **This is The End of The Companion Guide**

I would like to thank you for reading my book and I hope you found something worthwhile in its pages!

It took me about a year and a half to write, but really about 15 years to gain the experience to know what to put in it. As I wrote this companion guide I found I actually felt proud of my achievement, which represents some of my own self-development work, because I used to find that pretty hard to do. The book must have had a good effect on me :D

You probably can't see the wrangling of my mind that went on while trying to distil sometimes complex concepts into easily-digestible ones, which had me staring glassy-eyed instead of typing more often than not. The intuitive sprite in me didn't want to be forced into one point of view by the data analyst, the data analyst did not really want to do anything that might be associated with unicorns in any way. It is hard to give the full meaning of anything without considering different angles - but the angles do not always see eye-to-eye!

I wonder if you found that different parts of yourself were engaged in different ways throughout the book?

If you feel like letting me know how you got on with reading my book why not connect with me on Facebook @WyldeSuzanne or Instagram @suzanne\_wylde, and also leaving a review is always very much appreciated!

And finally, it is my sincere wish that this book will help to support someone having a hard time or who needs some of the information or tools in it. So, if you could take the time to recommend it to a friend, family member or colleague who might benefit, I would be extremely grateful.

Take care!

Suzanne