

“Sell your cleverness and buy bewilderment” - Rumi

Concept Note:

Gentle Like Water: a path for the selfful soul – a reflection process

Gentle Like Water: A path for the selfful soul was launched on South Africa’s Women’s Day, August 2023. This book begins with the personal and takes readers through a process of reflection towards deep soul growth and healing. It also looks at the political and the collective and reminds us to begin with ourselves so that we bring more wholeness into our relationships, experiences and work.

Gentle Like Water guides people through this inner journey with discussions on themes followed by questions to reflect on. It comes with a companion journal to help people work through the issues. It is designed for personal growth and development as well as for supporting process work.

Bringing Gentle Like Water to organisations

“And I guess this is precisely where the selfful soul stems from – my own need to find more balance, to understand the duality in me, to integrate my beast nature and my lamb – because I can be oh so sweet and oh so light, but there is a devil in me that can unleash fury on others without my even realising it in the moment. I wonder how many lightworkers, empathes, softies, givers, protectors or kind-hearted souls experience this”. Excerpt from the Introduction.

Organisations, whether in political and human rights work or corporates, tend to focus on the end product, albeit in different ways. Activists or community workers, for example, tend to give to others, helping others in many different ways. Often, they neglect to take care of themselves. But people are coming to realise the importance of building the self in order to make their commitment to change more impactful, more real, more soulful and healing. Even in formal business, people who are more self-aware are likely to contribute to a better, more fruitful work culture.

I am committed to helping people see, feel and be the best versions of themselves, even while looking at and confronting those aspects that they might find difficult to “own”. My work challenges the idea of sound-bite self-awareness and care, and confronts people to begin with knowing themselves – so that they understand their needs, wants, triggers, likes, dislikes; and so that they can bring a more whole person into whatever situation they are in.

Gentle Like Water starts with the personal, moves to the general and then reflects on the political. It offers tools for personal growth and spiritual (personal) development.

A retreat process

I would love to work with organisations to offer retreats and reflections for staff or partner organisations to engage in this potentially life altering work. *Gentle Like Water* covers over 40 themes, from the personal to the political, so the processes can be tailored to suit the organisation and the individuals.

About process, politics and methodology

My experience is grounded in the ethics and principles of adult education and popular education, with a focus on experiential learning and always beginning with where participants are and honouring their experiences. While the content might appear esoteric, the principles shared in *Gentle Like Water* are extremely practical and participants will be given the opportunity to make personal meaning of all those covered during the process. Exercises will be grounded in participants' lived experiences with the idea to help them uncover their greatest potential and unlock the ability to truly see themselves and own their potential in whatever they do. The themes in *Gentle Like Water* fall under the following:

- 1. Trust is the Creator** Where people are encouraged to focus on themselves, to uncover where they are and what they can do to grow in this moment and to learn and share ways to listen to their inner knowing and take responsibility for their journeys.
- 2. To be ego or not to be ego** This section builds on the above and looks at how we interact with the world. We talk about ideas such as ego and what that means for the participants; finding flow and harmony; and at learning to find more balanced views, even while still being true to ourselves and our beliefs.
- 3. The Spiritual is Political** Selfful Soul's byline, this section talks about our accountability to ourselves; our need to question what is presented as truth and reminds us that the path to change is to learn from the past and to act from our own truths.
- 4. The Selfful Soul** Reminds us that the journey of self-awareness and personal growth is an ongoing one and that it can be beautiful and fulfilling, even with the twists and turns. It is both the journey and the destination.
- 5. Tools for the Journey** These help demystify the self-growth journey and look at simple ways of using what is around us to heal, to challenge ourselves and to grow.

The process will **include a pre-assessment** which will feed into a **post assessment**, thus allowing for each process to suit the organisation and individual needs, and likewise give participants and the organisation a chance to reflect on what was gained in the process.

Two of my grounding tools, which I mention in my book, and I always advocate in the writing skills work I do, are **journals (for work and for personal) and free or stream-of-consciousness writing**. I constantly give participants exercises where they get to experience the power of these tools. I also show them how they can use these in other situations, such as planning and day-to-day work.

Different audiences

The themes in *Gentle Like Water* can be adapted to suit any audience – they can be used for mixed groups or specific groups, for students, NGOs, CBOs, women's groups or men's groups, young people or older, depending on the need of the funder or organisation.

If this piques your interest, please contact me and we can talk through the possibilities to suit your organisational/collective needs.