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FOREWORD BY YVONNE AND RICH DUTRA-ST. JOHN, FOUNDERS OF THE CHALLENGE DAY

This book is a precious gift to anyone ready to be inspired and ignited by people's passions and Dreams. A role model for what's possible for us all, Marnix speaks from his heart and lives the visions he has captured in every page.

We are the founders of Challenge Day and the Be the Change Movement. In 1987, we were called "Crazy Dreamers" because many people thought our vision could never become a reality. Today, we are proud to say, our vision of creating a world where every child feels safe loved and celebrated is at the core of all the work we have done. Decades later, our work has literally touched the hearts and lives of millions of young people and adults around the world.

"The Book of Ideals", shines a light of hope and possibility for anyone with a dream. It serves as an inspiration to the hero that lives inside us all. It is an answer to the voice that dwells deep within. The voice that calls us all forth to something greater. We stand with and behind all the other "crazy dreamers" who hope to change the world for the better.

Marnix offers a genuinely inspiring story of his own journey towards impactful and powerful change. But his book is more than that, it is also a practical and accessible method to determine your own drive and guide book to turn your ideals into acts and positive change. A valuable book in times like these.

Our, Formula or Change, is **NOTICE – CHOOSE & ACT**. When we wake up to who we are and **NOTICE** what's arising in our hearts, we can then **CHOOSE** to reach out and seek the support we deserve, to then **ACT** by committing to the steps needed to make our vision's reality.

Trust your heart, follow your dreams and always remember you are here for a reason! You can BE THE CHANGE you wish to see created in this world!

Yvonne & Rich Dutra-St John MA MFT - Co-Authors, Founders of Challenge Day &
The Be the Change Movement

FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Pursuing your ideals has turned out to be a process from the inside out for me. A circling movement from waking up to learning to let go.

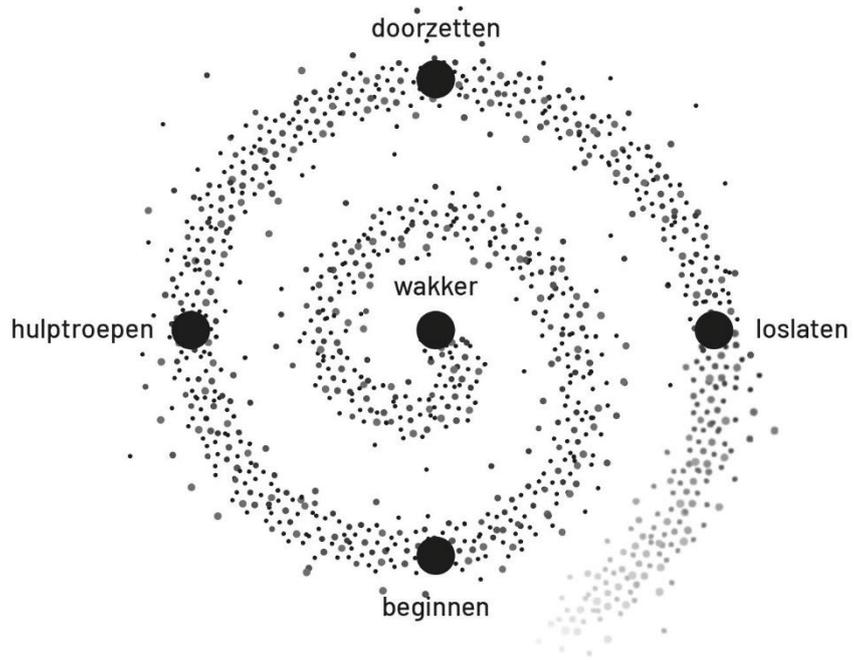
The Persian philosopher and poet Jalal ad-Din Rumi (1207-1273) said:

"Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise, so I am changing myself."

It's a quote that continues to haunt me. I'll come back to it at the end of the book.

The circular movement forms the structure of the book, along five themes. I asked the publisher if we couldn't press the book into a ball so we could read it in the round, but it turned out not to be ideal for him, my wallet, or your bookshelves. They are not built for that.

The movement symbolizes the process of the ideal journey and is also the symbol of the famous 'ripple effect'. The dots represent all the actions by you and others that cause movement. Positive change. The dots that cynics often call the drops in the ocean, but they don't see the big picture. We do, right?



“The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose is to give it away.”

Pablo Picasso, changemaker

AN IDEAL START TO THE JOURNEY

Heaven wept profusely but people celebrated life. His life. Madiba was no more, but Madiba would always be. At the heart of the nation. In the heart of the world. Real heroes never die.

We were pressed against the door of a steaming and stomping full van with a singing and jumping mob. A pretty young girl pressed a Mandela flag into my hand and yelled “Where are you guys from?” in my ear. As the only white people with apparently also an unmistakable tourist appearance, we were quite out of tune. “Amsterdam” I yelled back into her ear. “That's awesome!” she exclaimed even more enthusiastically, assuming that we had flown in especially for the occasion. I lied with my smile. There was no point in explaining; it would ruin the magic moment. Besides, I wouldn't be able to make myself heard.

In a way, we had definitely specially come for the occasion in south-west township. Actually, we should have been in our rental car heading east from our carefully planned nine-day trip to Kruger Park followed by a domestic flight to Cape Town. The front desk employee of the hotel had warned us this morning: it is a long winding road through the mountains full of 'potholes' so you better drive on time, especially with this dreadful weather. So it cost me some strength to persuade my love to stay. Wasn't this a godsend? Who exactly is in Johannesburg when the Nelson Mandela memorial service takes place? In the presence of more than a hundred world leaders, together in the FNB stadium of Soweto? I had to be there. Or at least make an effort. This man is in line with Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa and Martin Luther King.

They couldn't tell us at our hotel whether you needed a ticket. We actually didn't know anything about Johannesburg ourselves because we hadn't intended to stay there. There was only one way to find out if we could be there.

We left by taxi from the hotel in the direction of Soweto, where we were then dropped off at a bus stop because the driver was unable to continue. A halved van

with double the number of people took us to the foot of the stadium and there we, to our great surprise, walked straight into the gates of the arena with the music-making crowd, without any form of control or visible security. In the pouring rain, but with butterflies in the stomach. Mandela is dead. Long live Mandela.

That evening as we meandered our route through the mountains in the dark with clammy hands and eight hours delay, we could still feel the adrenaline and intense satisfaction coursing through our bodies. We were with Madiba. And he was with us. In the rain. In the music. In the movement of the people.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, a new word has emerged for people who are committed to 'a better world': we call them changemakers. Mandela, for example, was such a changemaker. A very big one. He was also initially an activist, a fighter, someone who did not shy away from violence. We now know him mainly as the epitome of forgiveness, reconciliation and love.

I wrote this book for everyone who, like Mandela, is or would like to become a changemaker, in order to create a more equal and sustainable world. It will appeal to you when you feel the time is right. For you personally, but certainly for the world as a whole. If you're looking for more guidance, encouragement or just inspiration, this is the book for you.

"The meaning of life, is to give life meaning."

Victor Frankl

When I talk about changemakers, the first thing that comes to mind is the people who are at the forefront of driving positive change. These people are of course of all times. They may sometimes be called do-gooders or prophets. Idealists or activists. Volunteers or leaders. You will find them in healthcare and education. In politics and in houses of worship. And just as easily in business or in the pub.

In fact, it's about all of us. Because almost everyone wants to meaningfully contribute or at least have the feeling that life has meaning. 'The meaning of life, is to give life meaning,' said psychologist and concentration camp survivor Victor Frankl.

People who work in organizations know this too. You've even seen it reflected in new job titles in recent years. The 'happiness officer' has emerged, because more happiness in the workplace turns out not only to be good for the people themselves, but also good for the results. In so-called social enterprises you see the

'brand activist' emerging. They ensure that the brand or organization continues to pursue the social mission and is not tempted to run after profit only.

Increasingly, people at work are discussing what more they could do as an organization. The sustainable development goals, or SDGs for short, of the United Nations provide guidance in this regard. When looking for work, potential employers are also increasingly challenged by consciously aware high potentials. Employers would do well to take this very seriously. Some are now taking it so seriously that they have themselves screened by B Lab, an international group that tests organizations for their contribution to people and the environment after which they may or may not call themselves a 'B Corp'. These developments offer hope.

Raising the bar ever higher

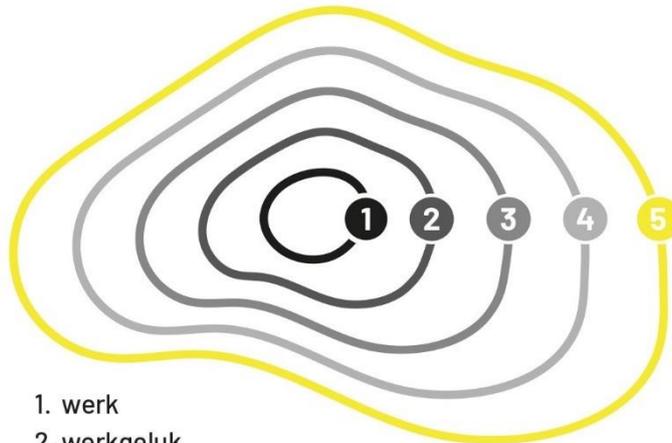
I don't think it's strange that more and more people want to change the world. Because let's face it, nobody gets out of bed to contribute to the gross domestic product. You want to have fun in what you do. You want to develop yourself and others.

You do not want, with what you do, to cause harm to others or the world. Ideally, you would like to actively contribute to a more beautiful society with your work. Wouldn't you?

Maybe you dream that the whole raison d'être of your being, your work, your life, is essentially about 'doing good'? With The Book of Ideals I want to inspire as many people as possible to keep raising the bar. I want to show that you can start a huge movement on your own and not only with an entire organization around you.

With the help of the model below you can discover in which phase you are and where you want to be in the near future. From here you can have powerful conversations with colleagues, managers and clients .

CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE



1. werk
2. werkgeluk
3. omgevingsbewustzijn
4. actief bijdragen
5. maatschappelijke winst als missie

In Appendix 1, 'Raise that bar' at the back of the book, I explain the model further. But essentially I want to show that we can look at entrepreneurship purely as work, a way to make money, to make a profit. But if you set the bar a little higher and really care about people, then entrepreneurship is about contributing to happiness at work. But are we only talking about the happiness of the team or do we also have an eye for our environment? This is followed by the question: how can we actively contribute to a more beautiful world from our entrepreneurship? In its ultimate form the role of entrepreneurship is primarily to realize social profit, 'business as a force for good'. As far as I'm concerned, that is the entrepreneurship of and for the future.

I wrote the book of ideals for you: the dreamer who takes action, the socially engaged entrepreneur, the leader with ideals. But it's just as much for our supporters. After all, without them there is no movement. People who would like to join but don't know how to do it yet. Or find it a little scary. Because if you call yourself a changemaker, you stand where most people are still sitting. Perhaps you are still afraid that people will think you are a poser or a moralist. Whatever phase

you are in, with this book you can develop yourself step by step into the changemaker you want to become.

What can you expect as you read on?

Part one of this book is about the fact that more and more people are waking up. Woke, that's what it's called these days. You have become aware of the abuses and problems in society. That increased awareness may have been caused by problems that happened to you, such as an accident, illness, loss, or burnout. Perhaps your growing awareness is the result of becoming a parent and the fact that faced with their future you want to expand your horizons. Or simply because you know full well that we urgently need to act. The first part of this book is about this waking up and wanting to change.

Part two of this book is about making a start, a first step to make the world a little bit more beautiful. This often starts with identifying a problem or development that worries you. The closer that problem is to your heart, the more likely it will get you moving. That movement only really comes into being if you actually believe that things can be done differently, that things can be done better. And that you can personally influence this. Then you are not only awake but also able to stand up and take that first step.

The third part is about the practical implementation of your ideal. That has everything to do with more and different people. It's about mobilizing reinforcements and supporters. Ideals are beautiful, but it's mostly about the things you actually do that affect the community you're part of. And the healthier that community becomes, the healthier the country that community is part of. And the healthier that country acts on the world stage, the greater the chance of a just world. In short: you can change the world. As long as you take action and be a source of inspiration to others, supporters will appear, people will gather around you.

But if people don't know what you're doing, they can't help you either. So you have to dare to beat the drum (not your chest). When you get beyond being shy or embarrassed, you are no longer alone. Suddenly you are working together on an ideal. What started as your ideal has become our ideal.

The fourth part is about the 'gloomy days'. Change often doesn't feel like the easy way. Especially if you get the feeling that everyone else is still busy with completely different things. Then you can feel very alone. It's all the more important that you don't give up. You know what they say: anything beautiful is worth hurting for. If you want to change the world as an independent entrepreneur, you often pay a price. As a change agent in a large organization, your critical questions are not appreciated by everyone. You sometimes feel like a voice crying in the wilderness. When you change, you face resistance. Sometimes it takes a lot of you. Meditating for an hour a day is recommended, unless you are extremely busy of course. "Then two hours is necessary," is the monk's joke. Still, that's one of the things that gets you through it when things go wrong and you don't know what you're doing it all for. That's why I called the fourth part 'Persevering in the dark days'. And that has everything to do with practicing joy.

The fifth and final part of this book is about letting go. Really letting go. Trusting that life will help you with your ideals. Life is change. Change is part of how the cosmos works. So the question is how do we deal with this, how do we learn to move with what is out there. That doesn't mean you can't do anything by yourself. You have a choice every moment how you fill that moment.

In each chapter I get help from a co-author, for a deeper reflection on the theme. They have become the most beautiful pieces for me. Waking up through the eyes of Halima Neffakh: "The only way is in". Also researcher Martijn Lampert

shone his light on this, in what we have collectively called 'data for change'. The start that Jacqueline Way made together with her three-year-old son led to an international giving movement. The help that Alaeddin Janid managed to mobilize for his schools for refugee children. Jeena Earthiva who managed to give light to

the darkest days of her life and a voice to her ideals. Literally. Finally, the art of learning to let go, learning to dance with life in freedom is beautifully expressed by Fionnuala Herder-Wynne.

Each and every one of these stories is moving, recognizable, surprising and sometimes really challenges our thinking. At the end of each chapter you have two more examples of changemakers who are so diverse in their approach that it's hard not to identify with at least one of them and think: I can do this too! We owe that inspiration to Michiel de Gooijer, founder of Brightvibes.

Well, who am I and why should you read my story? I think because it is everyone's story. Recognizable and accessible. I'm not sharing it to pat myself on the back, I'm using it as a vehicle for you to step on to, in your own way. My story is only one way, I hope you will go your own way and I heartily recommend that. Hopefully my story will show you that everyone can do this. That you do not necessarily have to have a large international network or a large bag of money at the start. I am also just an entrepreneur from Amsterdam who tries to make the best of it with his wife and four children. A person who sees everything happening in his city and beyond, that could be improved. What should be better. I'm the last person to tell you how. I just started somewhere. And I'm far from done.

"The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now."

You undergo change, but you can also actively bring it about, fed by your visions and ideals. Why wait when you can start today? The best and only possible time is always now, as the above Chinese proverb makes clear. It takes nothing more than an ideal, a push in the right direction every day, a little help here and there, keep your spirits up and trust that the entire universe is conspiring to make your ideals fall on the right foot.

Enjoy the ride!