

Lock Down, Rise Up

WING
#FAN
ANTHET

An Exploration of Human Potential
in the Back of Beyond

JB HOLLOWES

WING
#F AN
ANTH#L

An Exploration of Human Potential
in the Back of Beyond

JB HOLLOWS



Out Beyond Ideas

by Rumi

Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and right-doing,
there is a field. I'll meet you there.

When the soul lies down in that grass,
the world is too full to talk about.
Ideas, language, even the phrase 'each other'
doesn't make any sense.

(translated by Coleman Barks)

To Angel, I'll meet you there.

Prologue

I never thought I'd come to much. That's what my dad told me anyway.

The story of me was based on negativity, abuse, neglect, and a belief that I was stupid.

It was all so wrong! Who'd a thunk it?

In my life, I've achieved. I've just never thought of it that way.

I dropped out of college at sixteen to care for my mum and sister when our father left us. A mum in hospital with a smashed-up leg from a car crash. A sister at fifteen, who'd turned into a wild child. A heap of debt. And a cat with fleas.

Even then, I was resilient. I blagged my way into a job in a bar. I sat on the hard plastic chair at a housing association until they provided us with a home. I discovered disability benefits for my mum and moved us lock, stock and barrel for a fresh start.

It wasn't a fairy tale ending, but that is a story for another time.

For thirty-nine years, I thought I was a failure, a fake, and not worth loving. In that time, I'd achieved two degrees,

climbed mountains, won awards, been a loving mum, and succeeded in my career. And yet nothing filled the gap that ached inside me.

Not therapy, not sex, not booze, not chocolate, not certificates, not love, not work. And I tried them all. Jeez, did I try.

One day I woke up. Just like that. I didn't know I was waking up. I just knew that something clicked inside of me. I realised I'd lived my life under the shadow of someone who couldn't stand me: my father. He'd never wanted the kid that forced him to marry my mum. He'd used all of us, me, my sister and my mum, to satiate his anger, lust, and emptiness. He never found his dad gene.

I was standing in the freshly decorated living room of the two up, two down I'd struggled to buy. I was about to have a hysterectomy, and a phone call with my dad showed me the light. "I love you, you bastard," he said. Those words messed with my head. He'd just told me he wouldn't come to see me because he didn't want to upset his wife. I stared at myself in the black-rimmed mirror above the fireplace. I could hear the birds in the garden. My sweaty hand held the phone tight. "Goodbye," I said.

And in that moment, everything was different. Overnight, I lost my shadow. The world changed when I saw myself anew. I found a diamond beneath the layers of crap that had stuck to me all my life.

For real!

I'd been playing the part of a woman who had to pretend to be good, who had to work harder than everyone else to achieve, who had to self-medicate to cover the cracks. Beneath the movie I'd been living in was a bright, vibrant,

warm, loving, creative human being. One that deserved love and was love.

I went on a mission. To discover my true self and help others find their true selves.

I re-trained as a life coach. I soaked up everything I could find about what makes people tick—and devoted the next two decades of my life to helping others. Many of the teachings I discovered would fix a particular problem or solve an issue, but I never felt that they were the complete answer. I researched addiction and found that the existing paradigm was based on the premise that people have a disease that does not account for the innate health within all people.

When I discovered The Three Principles uncovered by a man called Sydney Banks, I didn't need to look any further. The Three Principles explains how the human experience works. One hundred percent of the time. It showed me what everyone is looking for, but no one talks about. Who we are at our core, and how we get so lost.

It's simple because it already exists from when we are born.

It's profound because everything changes once we glimpse our true nature.

It's holistic because we don't have to solve each problem separately.

It took a minute, but eventually, I ditched my career in IT and set up a social enterprise, Beyond Recovery. With a mission to radically review the way we view and treat addiction, mental health, and offending behaviour. And to end the stigma associated with these issues.

My goal was to share the understanding of The Three

Principles with people in prison and the community. I went on to create a curriculum, write research papers, and train others, but in the beginning, I just had hope in my heart and eyes that saw innocence.

I feel blessed to have found this path.

Don't get me wrong; prisons are brutal. Racism and sexism are alive and kicking. It is a dog-eat-dog environment. Cruelty is the order of the day.

And yet. I met amazing people. Creative people. Resilient people. I've seen that anything is possible regardless of the circumstances in which we live. I've discovered that human potential is infinite. And each time I found these aspects in another, I uncovered them more in myself.

I found out that love is the answer.

Always.

I met Angel, a gangster who scared the bejesus out of everyone. I met Derrick, who believed he was a career criminal. I met Wilson, who thought he had to be tough to protect his family. I met Chris, who just wanted quiet time.

And in the murky world of addiction, I met Pete, who tried to end his life of trauma by jumping off a bridge.

I met many men and women who'd followed a path of misguided thinking which led them to do wrong deeds and hurt others. I realised they were hurt. And hurt people hurt people.

I saw over and over again that people's true nature is loving, compassionate and kind. It just gets clouded by stinking thinking and a misunderstanding of how our experience of life is created.

I've written this book to honour the people I met and the transformations I saw. It tells of my journey of getting into

this work and conquering my demons because that gives the context of why I think the problem we face as a society is not restricted to one cohort of people.

I worked with many outstanding individuals along the way who were all part of our great work in Beyond Recovery. I've simplified the story, so they are not always mentioned for the significant contribution in which they worked.

Many of the incidents are so personal, I've had to disguise them to protect people from being identified. I've also amalgamated some of the characters to preserve identification further. However, all the words used, and the stories told, are things I've seen or heard on the wings of the prisons I've worked in.

There is the thorny question of what term to use for the people in our prisons. The terms inmates, residents, prisoners, and offenders are used in various ways. The guys I've asked don't feel what word is used makes a difference because it doesn't change how they are treated. I've chosen to use residents in most places in this book. I hope that this does not offend anyone.

This story is about me and what led me to work within the UK criminal justice system. It's about the people I met along the way. It is a story of redemption and hope. I sincerely hope you find redemption and hope for yourself and your loved ones within these pages.

Enjoyed this chapter from Wing of an Angel?

If you'd like an advanced copy of the book plus other juicy incentives head over to my [Kickstarter page](#) and support the campaign.

Take Inspired Action - EMAIL me

If you'd like to join the FREE Inspired Action programme drop me a line on jacqueline@jbhollows.co.uk

– you'll receive a reflections workbook and daily inspiration to help you get out of your head and into your life; uncover your own emotional resilience and take inspired action to embrace your full potential.

Discovery Call

If you'd like to create your own Inspired Action plan book a free [discovery call](#) with me.