



*To C 31*

*Gestalt Process Writing to Connect*

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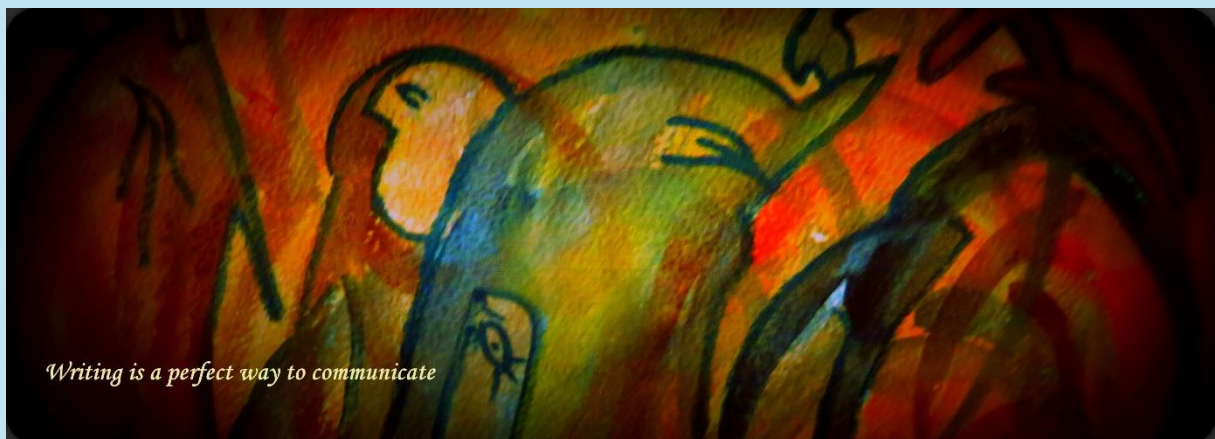
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## *Content of To C 31: Gestalt Process Writing to C*



*This issue of To C is dedicated to promoting my book 'Gestalt Process Writing to C'. This book is not only about Gestalt Process Writing, it also is Gestalt Process Writing. Please receive it as an stimulance to start or continue your own Gestalt Process Writing, to create your own lifestory, communicate and connect with colleagues, friends, lovers and family members . See it as a possibility to connect with your soul and open up your creative power that can reach out to the world. You don't have to worry about your writing abilities. If you are able to speak, you will discover you are able to process write and experience the adventures of living on a deeper level that will connect you with your self and the Other.*

*Painting on the cover: Veroordeeld = Convicted*

*1.Dear Reader – 2.Life is a gift -3.A quest to connect with the soul  
4.Elephant in porcelain cabinet – 5.Cut flower ethics - 6.It is a serious thing  
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Back cover: book Gestalt Process Writing to C*

## 1. Dear Reader,



*If you want to know who you really are, please keep reading. It is true, at first sight this book is about me, about my journey, my questions, my longings, my anxieties, my needs, my passions, my excitements. It is also true that I wrote it for me. I wrote it because writing keeps me sane. Writing is for me a way to concentrate on and connect with my inner wisdom. But what I have written is more than just about me, it is about life and therefore also about you. As I am a therapist/teacher who needs to connect with her colleagues, clients and students, big parts of this book were written in groups. I discovered that by focusing together on a theme of interest, everyone can write his/her own answers and can connect with his/her core and with each other. We did it to get to know ourselves better, not to publish. But blood is thicker than water. Processes cannot be stopped, it's why I have to share and publish. It is a natural way of developing. By writing I became a rich woman, not materially. But I feel rich as a woman who knows she is part of a Bigger Plan and connected with a Bigger Whole. What I did without realizing is exploring my spirituality, as I understand that :*





*'Spirituality is a broad concept with room for many perspectives. In general, it includes a sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves, and it typically involves a search for meaning in life. As such, it is a universal human experience—something that touches us all. People may describe a spiritual experience as sacred or transcendent or simply a deep sense of aliveness and interconnectedness.'* University of Minnesota.

*And once on the way journeys cannot be stopped, as there is no end. Of course writing without reading others would be an empty shell. My search was also about connecting with masters, I could only connect with because they took time to write and share their wisdom. Share their gifts from life. And now I am old and wise enough to dare opening myself, because what I have received is too precious to be kept just for me. The mystery is that I cannot just hand you what I have to offer. I can lead the way, I can be your guide, but the real gift is in your own willingness to join me in this adventure of becoming a better human being by knowing who you really are. If you say Yes to this suggestion, you will find there is a lot of exciting Work to do. In this book you are invited to write your own stories or experiment with paint, colors and clay. Or you can give the words you have written their true significance by performing, singing or dancing. It is a matter of daring to play. Don't worry about having to create art. It will kill your spontaneity.*

*2. Life is a gift, let's unwrap it.*

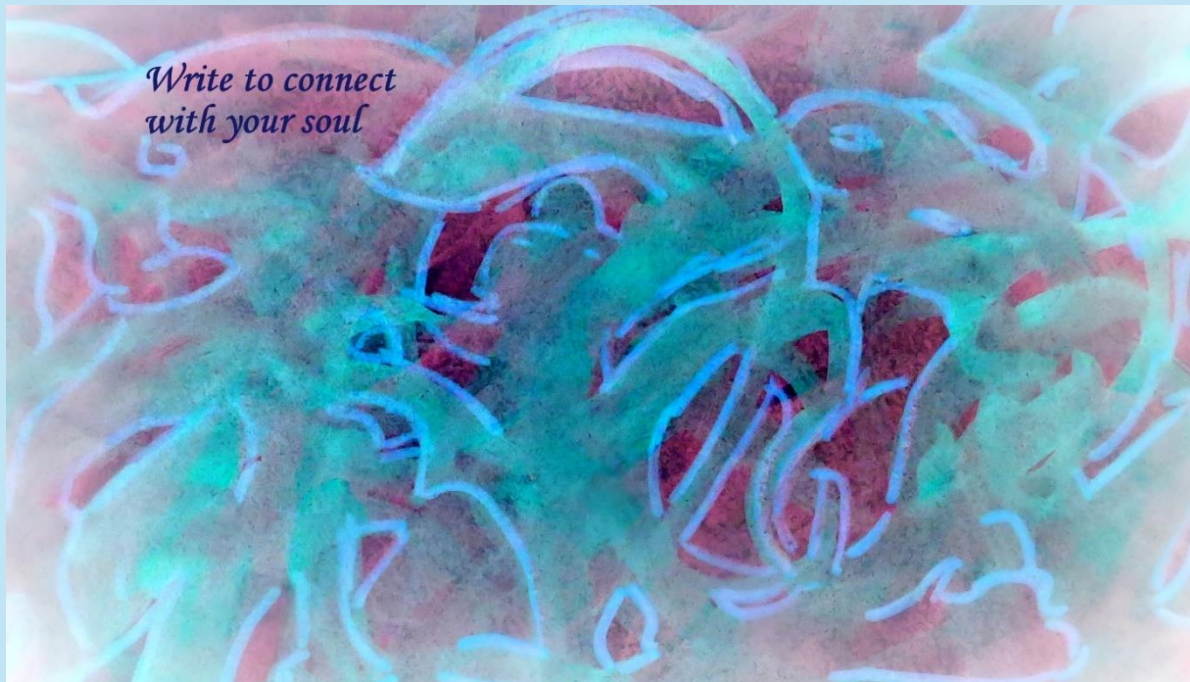


*Whenever I have felt in love and disconnected, or excited and misunderstood, or curious and ignored, or creative and not heard and not seen, or angry, frustrated and sad, I start writing. For when there is no one to talk to or no one able to listen, we still have our self as a partner, a cocreator. All we have to do is, sit down with a pen and a note book, take time to focus on a question or a problem and write without stopping for at least ten minutes. When we are ready we will need the courage to read out loud what we have written. And when we do, we will be relieved, for our hand knows and our hand cocreating with our heart is very efficient and wise. To our surprise we will find we have written the perfect answer to our question or the perfect next step concerning our problem.*

*What you will discover by writing is that you are the one who has to take yourself seriously, for if you don't, no one else can do it. By process writing, even if you don't publish, you create understanding and respect for who you really are. You can also use process writing as a daily meditation. Every morning you can wonder about the questions What? How? and Why?. What are the today-facts? How does that feel for me? And why is it as it is, what is the meaning? When you do, you will discover that pressure will leave your chest and you will be able to freely breathe. Process writing, like singing or painting or dancing or sculpting gives you the chance to be seen and heard as you really are. Joseph Zinker, one of my guides in this creative process wrote: 'The person who dares to create, to break boundaries, not only partakes of a miracle, but also comes to realize that in his/her process of being s/he is a miracle.'*



### *3. A quest to connect with your soul*



*Without a group we cannot function. We are born into the group of our family, we live, learn and work in groups, no matter how. A group is a unique system, a conglomeration of energies exuded by individual members and interrelated in a systematic pattern. We need it to let the growth take place. If you are longing to connect with your inner wisdom, you can start by exploring the questions What, How and Why.*

*Content: WHAT are the facts?*

*Process: HOW is it for you? What do you feel?*

*Meaning: WHY do you need this experience? What is the meaning?*

*This kind of writing connects us with our undercurrent: our feelings, intuition, dreams, wisdom, longings, fears and crazy ideas that are not easy to express in a rational way. Hot Fires:*

*To become porcelain a pot made of clay needs the hot fire of the oven. Just to stand in the sun is not enough. It is the same for people. We need the hot fires of groups to become better human beings. To stoke the fires we create groups like families, schools, universities, academies, businesses, parties, festivals, theatre companies, orchestra's, sport teams and so on. In this book we concentrate on Gestalt and other groups dedicated to becoming more conscious. Process writing is a tool we can use for our purpose. Which means that process writing is not the goal, but the path. Our goal is to connect and realize we belong to a Bigger Whole. In other words to realize that we all are One.*

#### *4. Elephant in Porcelain Cabinet*



*Feeling an elephant in a porcelain cabinet  
Being big, being present, having a memory  
Remembering the pain, the rejections  
When it is about love  
About being tender, gentle,  
Getting the fear out of the closet  
Not only the fear also the anger  
The cold that has to protect  
As a wall built to keep the enemy out  
Here I come with my love  
And with my mistrust  
That has to protect my soul  
From getting hurt and wounded  
Still if I am an elephant  
I do know how to take care of me  
And of my loved ones!*



## *5. Cut flower ethics*



*David Wolpe in 'Why be Jewish':*

*"The Jewish philosopher Will Herberg once spoke of 'cut-flower ethics.' He argued that Jewish ethical norms will last for a brief while, even apart from Jewish teachings. Just as flowers uprooted from the soil stay in bloom for a short time after cutting. But soon the flowers fade.*

*Behaviors, too, disintegrate if cut from the soil in which they are nourished. All those teachers and scientists and musicians and artists are the bloom of Jewish spirituality; given time, without the soil, that bloom will fade."*

*Although I do not think flowers are Jewish, it is a beautiful metaphor. If I identify with a flower I do not need the word Jewish to know what this is about. Still I cannot deny that most of my wisdom comes from Jewish sources.*

*Which means even when we are not born in a Jewish family, our ancestors can have been drinking from Jewish sources and can have nourished us with their inner wisdom that was not cut off after all...*

## *6. It is a serious thing to be alive*

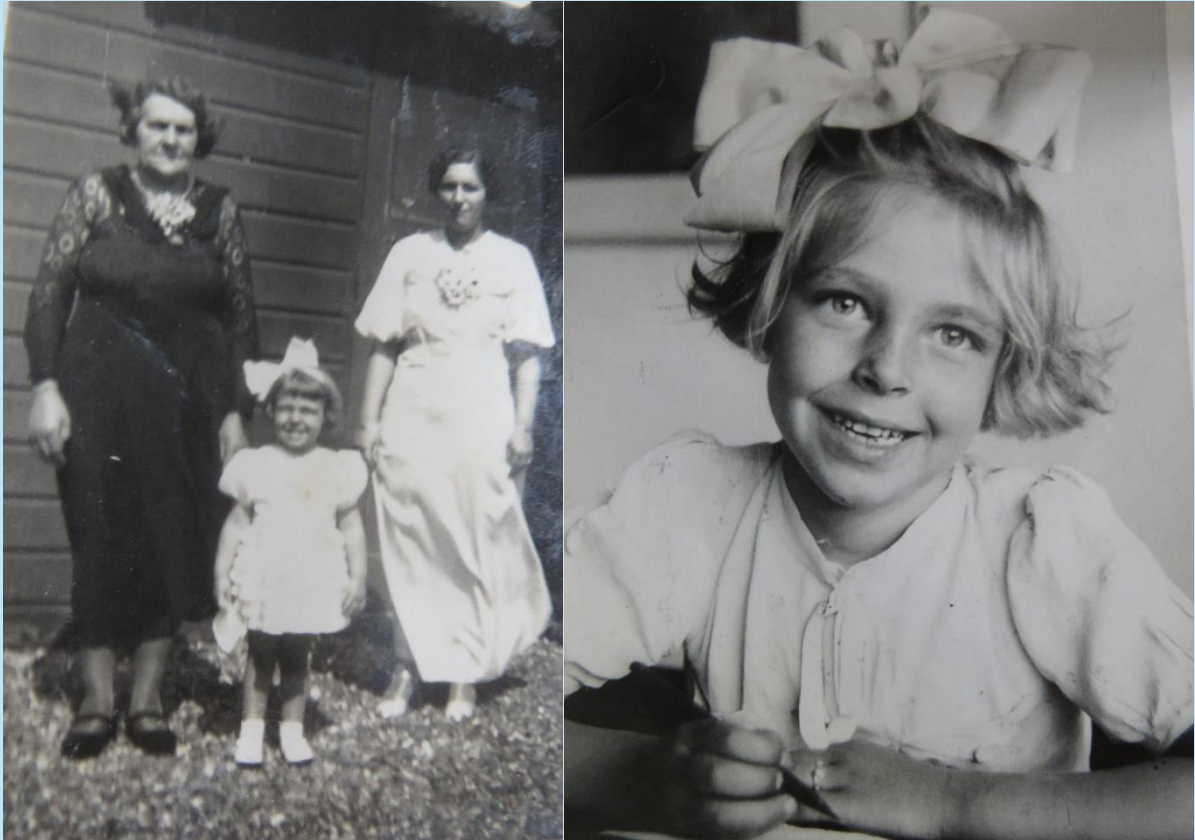


*Floreren in Factor IJ*

*It is a serious thing to be alive, having to deal with my own first generation war trauma's. And with the war trauma's of my father, my mother, my sister, my brother, my grandmother and grandfather and the war trauma's of my lovers, of my husband, my friends, all of them!*

*We, all of us, were there when it happened and we, all of us – when the war was over – were relieved and thought it really was over. How naïve can anyone be? We, all of us, had to go on living to experience how wounded we were in our souls. How we needed healing that was not there yet. We, all of us, walked a path of optimism. A path paved with trust – we thought – in the future, that would be bright and bring light.*



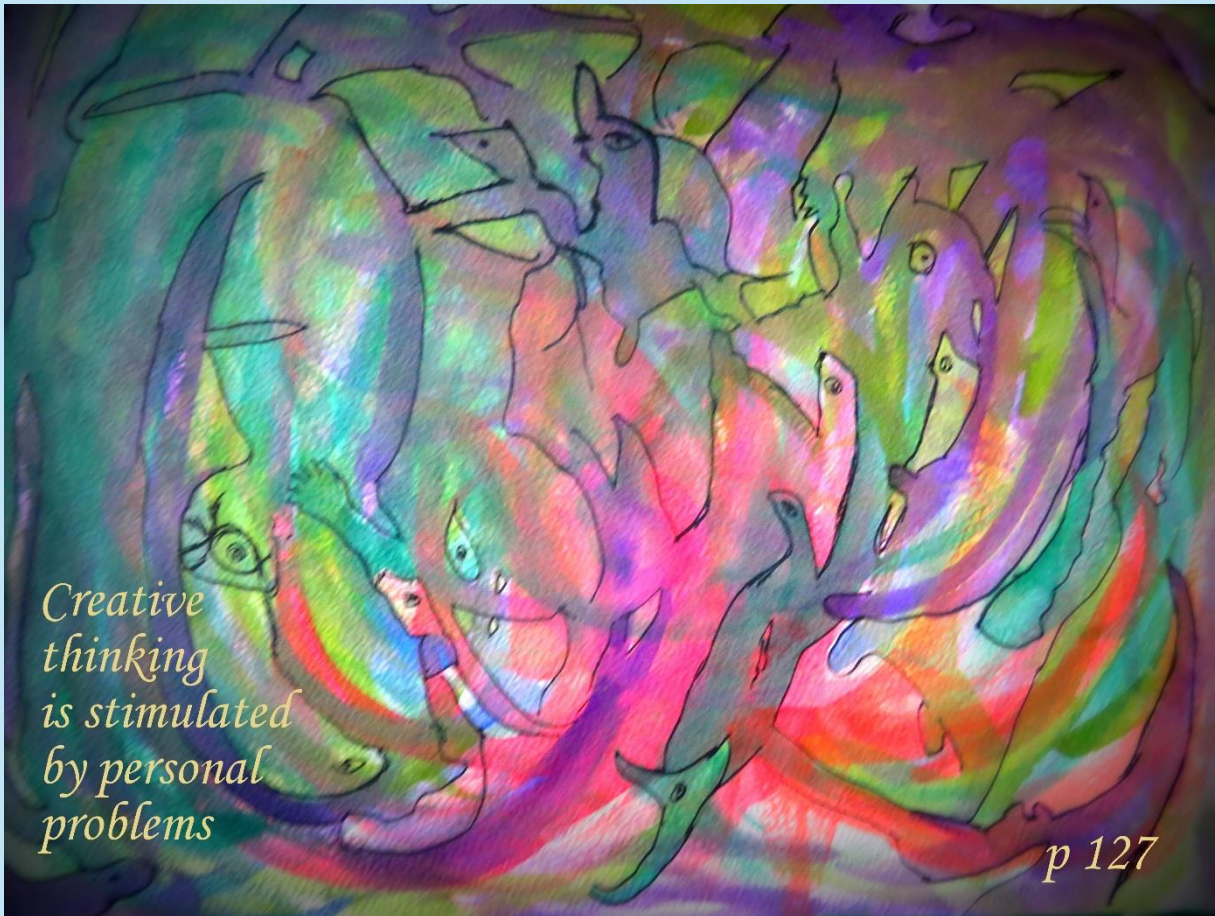


*Er is veel gebeurd sinds ik bruidsmisje was en met mijn oma en moeder op de foto mocht en sinds ik een onschuldige schoolmeisje was*

*Now I am living in the bright light of this promised future I have to admit we were right, if faith, trust were with us to support overcoming our enemies like alcohol, always present to seduce us and promise a joyful evening and night... Yes, the evening could be, yes the night could be...but the next morning hardly ever was.*

*Indeed it is a serious thing waking up the next morning being confronted with the grey of the day waiting for us to go on living our lives that could bring love, could bring all kind of things, we were – not – ready for. Nevertheless there was love, always, love for all of us until the losses and grief told us: now it is time to use your love also for you. You deserve it, you need it, and you are worth it! Amen*

## *7. Creative thinking*



*My hair keeps falling out; I struggle with a cough  
Nevertheless I want to go to a concert; I feel vulnerable  
Don't want to look in the mirror; have to sleep more  
Need to take the garbage out; the sun is shining  
I better start painting; I like to eat  
The colors of the painting are touching  
I have a coffee with cake;  
I keep painting and see the beings in the colors  
I see the movement; I see life  
I forget about my hair, about my cough  
There is a flame in me warming my soul  
Just keep breathing  
It is not the end yet; it is the beginning*



## *8. Bow your head*



*Okay, bow your head, welcome the longing  
Get off your ass, stop being afraid you are too old  
Or thinking he is too young...  
Stop putting doom onto this story  
He or she who will be seen, shall grow  
This is a place where you are seen  
Also because you are different  
Anyway he saw you and sees you  
He has the same hands as your big love  
The same look, the same beard  
The skin of his hands has the pores  
As the hands of your father  
He needs a therapist; you need a rabbi  
We have something to offer to each other  
Meeting is a gift of life*



## 9.Today



*Today I am facing tired eyes, looking sad, longing for love, longing for laugh.  
My breathing is going heavily. There is a weight on my chest.  
I feel a stone in my heart. I feel attacked. I feel tears. This is a deep wound.  
The attack comes from those who do not feel, cannot feel, don't want to feel.  
Those who live from the head, not knowing that wisdom is to be found  
in the heart, in the soul. We all have a heart filled with love. We all have a soul  
filled with understanding. We all are a soul, are a heart. We all know about  
pain. Life is an enormous challenge. Believing that you and I too are worth to be  
loved, you and I too are spiritual beings, able to fly, able to heal, able to connect  
with each other and with the world as a whole, is an everyday challenge!*



## *10. Meetings with nature*



*Is a sheep family allowed to stay together here in Hungary?*

*What touched me deeply was the father and mother going to each other*

*Licking each other's faces, while their child was in between them*

*The goat that was also there came to me and licked my fingers*

*I dared to stick out to her. Magical? Mystical moments?*

*Connecting with nature.*

*In the wood*

*This afternoon I walked in the wood on a carpet of snowdrops*

*I saw a deer running away. I only saw her behind. Jumping up and down.*

*Brown and white like a square. Again: magical, mystical, given moments.*

*Connecting with a Bigger Whole! (*

*(Written at the Gestalt Leaders Conference in Hungary)*

## 11.Hair



*As long as your hair looks okay, you are, is a Dutch expression , that can keep you going. At least it kept me going, even when I did not look okay, I knew I could go to the hairdresser... But now I am facing the loss, facing old age, facing being more vulnerable than I thought.*

*Strangely enough sharing my pain with you, makes me feel better.*

*I can connect with you when it is about hair and my history with it.*

*I also feel losing hair has power.*

*Yesterday I was in the Concertgebouw, feeling loved by the music. And when I went to the toilet and looked in the mirrors at all those women with more or less hair than me, I could feel one of them. My struggle is their struggle and our struggle. The best we can do, is say 'Hello sisters' I recognize you and feel connected without knowing who you are...*

*Written in the Being Present group 4.11.24*



## *12. Searching the Truth*



*Who am I?*

*p 133*

*Search the Truth and find it in yourself...*

*Being responsible, always...*

*Responsible for what you think*

*Responsible for what you create*

*Responsible for what you fantasize*

*But are you I?*

*Isn't it so that things are also*

*presented to us from outside*

*Also? Inside and outside are one...*

### 13. The Point



*The paradoxical theory of change: Change occurs when one becomes what s/he is, not when s/he tries to become what s/he is not. Change does not take place through a coercive attempt by the individual or by another person to change her/him, but it does take place if one takes the time and effort to be what s/he is: to be fully invested in her/his current positions. By rejecting the role of change agent, we make meaningful and orderly change possible. Arnold Beisser*

*My own change: 'Today is my wedding day and also the day I left my marriage. Just because it was our wedding day we landed into a fight, that for me was the drop to overflow the bucket. My self-image was during the ten years of my marriage so wounded, that I knew I could not take any more. At first I felt guilty because it became clear, that I could not make my husband happy. I thought my love for him would change us both. But no way. I was not the loving wife he expected and he was not the caring husband I needed. I had to free myself to become the loving woman I am now. Love not just for one man, but love for life!'*



## 14. The Core of Things



*If I go to the core of things, all we do all day long is working to get our rightful shot of attention, so we will be able to go on living instead of dying and be forgotten in a neglected corner. One of my big misunderstandings I realize now, was expecting to get attention once I became a therapist. During my training period I was so obsessed with my teachers, trainers, therapists that I thought I would get the same kind of attention from my clients. In some way that is true of course, but only in some way. Attention for me for who I am I have to find elsewhere. And that is good, it keeps me going, searching, exploring and becoming aware attention starts with me giving it to me. Only I can give me the attention I need and the same is true for you. Of course if we know what we need and from whom we need it, we can ask for it. Probably we will get it, for by asking we also give attention to the other. When giving and receiving are in balance, we can experience real contact. It is worth practising, again and again and again. It is no use thinking I already did it yesterday, when you long for contact today.*

## 15. Learn to pray



*Before I go outside I open at random rabbi Nachman of Breslov and read:  
Most of all, prayer is the gate through which we can enter to God.  
Learn to pray and you'll come to know and be attached to the Holy One.  
Yesterday while davening (chanting prayers) two big tears ran down my cheeks.  
This was about needing healing and receiving it.  
If there is one thing I need it is to be healed.  
If I cannot experience the healing, my anger can arise  
because - again - I won't feel seen, not seen by a or the 'papa' I mean.*

*Today I have to face a world with figures as Trump and Wilders...  
They act like they think they are the Messiah, they will save us  
with their big words and promises they cannot keep.  
Disaster will follow when people believe they are the ones  
who will save them. Apparently to wake up we need to go down first!  
The best we can do I think is take responsibility for our own lives,  
knowing we are our own saviours, are own prosecutors and our own victims.  
Praying can support us to connect with Divine power.  
It is what we need, if we want peace inside!*





## 16. 'The Undercurrent'

*Jewish mysticism had been hidden for thousands of years from Jews and non-Jews alike. It is time to open this rich world for all to appreciate. May we be blessed to grow together in increasing awareness, to bring a new consciousness to the world, and to experience true peace in our times.' Rabbi David A. Cooper in God is a verb (page 19)*

*6 AM, dark and cold outside. In my room in the Isabella Freedman Centre, Connecticut. I am not supposed to write in this silent retreat. But here I am a writer who has to write. Here I am a non-Jew in a Jewish centre, who has to write and meditate and plug into the undercurrent. I don't have to write a lot, but I DO HAVE to write no matter what David Cooper thinks. Of course he has a reason, I will never know because I will not experience it. But I am who I am and I have to listen to my inner voice helped by a card that told me: 'Yes, it will bring the best up in you. Strange, from the undercurrent it has to come up indeed. Time to go to the main building and meditate. It is now 6 AM, dark and cold outside, but the snow makes it light.'*

## *17. What about the Soul?*



*10 PM. Time for bed. It was a heavy day, except for the dancing of the 5 Rhythms. But the sitting is heavy, not the walking though. The most heavy is the discovery that there are times I cannot follow the rabbi. Is he in another realm or is he doing with his head, what one can only experience with the whole Body and Soul? Oh, yes, the Soul what about her? The fear of being told by any authority that my attitude is infantile, is still remotely with me. I needed a rabbi to accept that it is my fear reigning me and not his 'Knowing Better', for his Knowing Better is not the same as my Knowing Better.*

*Now back home I am wondering about needing a sacred place to create sacred feelings. Is it just an idea? No, I did have more sacred feelings when I was in the retreat with David Cooper. Being there did make me feel differently. In the first place more connected. The presence of the rabbi made me more happy inside. Nothing could go wrong. His way of being connected to the sacred by singing, moving, talking, laughing gave me permission to do the same thing. All I had to do was tune in to what was offered to come closer to my inner truth.*



## *18. What keeps you awake at night?*



*If I say Trump I would be lying. If I say Netanyahu I would be lying too. If I say Putin it is the same answer. No those dictators blowing themselves up to conquer the world can't keep me awake. Of course I am deeply concerned with the suffering they are causing. But to be honest it does not keep me awake. I feel the pain, yes, the pain of having to live in a loveless world. At least that is what it looks like. Now what does keep me awake is what can I do to make my direct world a better place. I live in a city where goodwill still is reigning, I thought, till 'we' met with an Israeli football team and hell opened itself, giving space to pro Palestine Protesters to molest the Israeli players. Netanyahu calls it a pogrom. Compares what happened to the Kristallnacht. He seems to believe it is all about antisemitism. But is it? I stopped lying awake wondering how I/we can make Jewish people aware that being pro-Palestine does not mean I am anti-Jews, not even anti-Israel. Loving people is not connected with people being Russian, Jewish, Palestinians or whatever. I love people because they have a heart and a soul. Even when they do their utmost to hide it. Compassion is needed. Not easy when it is about your enemies.*



## 19. Can you tell right from wrong?



No you cannot, said a man who walked into my exposition space. Apparently – in his view – I create the wrong kind of art and he knows what is right, according to his critical view of the paintings that are exposed on the wall. He is allowed to judge and say 'No, this is not good, this is wrong, this is not art. Why don't you take lessons? Okay, that painting with the butterflies is nice, it has a composition and that one with the whale, looks like something because of the background colours; something... the others don't have.' Agreed, I took the risk to let my experiments be seen by the world. Not because I thought what I created is good or right, but because what I made is interesting, intriguing. Up to now few people are impressed or touched. Few people long to look twice. Does this mean what I paint is wrong? Should I be ashamed of what I created? Right or wrong is not the question, when it is about those paintings. It is the judgement in itself that feels wrong. Why does he have to destroy the joy of creating, instead of taking time to experience what is presented? And why did I let it happen?



## 20. Keeping yourself with labour



*'In keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving life. And to love life through labour, is to be intimate with life's inmost secrets.'* Kahlil Gibran

*Is painting, writing, singing, dancing doing the Work that is meant in this quote? Or is Gibran only talking about hard labour we have to accomplish to survive? For me working is the best way to become intimate with the secrets of life. When I am unhappy with my private life I start writing. But first I had to learn more about the Spiritual Foundation of life.*

*Before I found Gestalt I practised Zen and other forms of Buddhist meditations. I learned about awareness and being in the Here and Now, by sitting for days on pillows, by getting up at six in the morning to meditate and sing mantra's. I have been trained by the Flemish/Dutch School for Gestalt & Psychosynthesis, where Gestalt was connected to a spirituality, that asks for an awareness I had already experienced. I was elated to find a way of living that taught people you have to be aware and in the Here and Now to communicate and make contact with people, for making contact with people is what I missed in the meditation schools I went to.*

*After more than forty years of practicing by working with groups I know from experience that the Work we all have to do is 'love our neighbour as we love ourselves'. The trap is that we have to start apparently with loving ourselves. For if we can't how can we give love to the other?*

## 21. Safety of playing roles



*Written in the week with the Jewish Art Institute*

*I spent the afternoon with M., the rabbi, who happens to be human. After that there was the singing and the poetry. M. can set something into motion in me.*

*My alter ego writes: Please face the fact that he has energy you have met before. Energy that is already setting your body on fire. Your body or your soul.*

*Okay, you keep safe borders by getting immediately into your therapist role.*

*You do it beautifully. Of course, why should you not, if it opens a possibility to connect with him. But... and but, yes but, why not enjoy it. You know one*

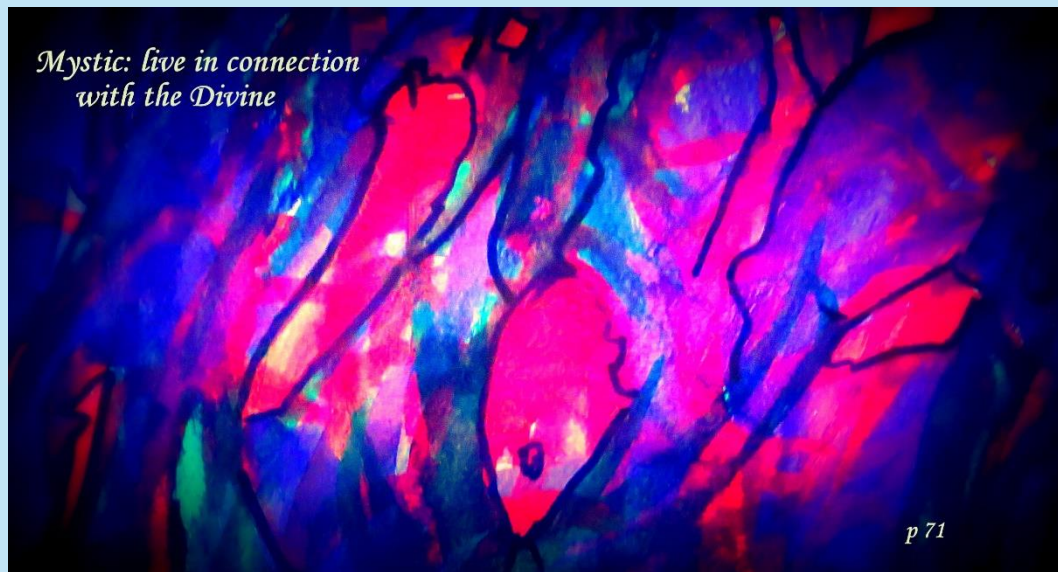
*thing...? Do you? Yes, you feel your body, more precise: after quite some years of calmness the longing is back! This morning in the session it was about connecting even with your lust, even with the longing part of your body.*

*It is so funny, you thought you met a rabbi, but next week he will quit his job here and become a salesman or something like that. Other part of the same man, but he will be in the same body. His question: 'If I marry someone Dutch, will I as second generation victim get money from the Government?'*

*Apparently he needs money at the moment.*



## 22. Mystic



*Here I am after one week with the Jewish Arts Institute and the singing teacher. Will I ever connect with him, although I think I did this morning, while saying goodbye. Thanks to his fire in the singing, in the sound, in the longing, in the pain and the joy, I could feel my own fire and open up to M. when we were together in the yurt last night. Sounds romantic and it was, both knowing it would be our last meeting. The pieces are falling into place. All I had to do is go to the right place and be there. Do I indeed need a rabbi, or is it a man I love I need to become more happy? Should I confess the longing serpent in my belly is awakened again and cannot be deceived when one eye is open?*

*One more message of the cards: My personality is radiant with love  
Is that why people tell me I look so nice in pink, white or whatever? Whatever is the matter I still taste his spontaneous farewell kiss, nobody can take that away from me.*

*It was not the first time I fell in love with a man who cannot be reached, because there is not a chance of living happily together for ever after. Not a chance because our worlds are too far apart, literally or religiously or for whatever other reason. Nevertheless the feeling is there, one cannot deny it. The feeling makes you shine, you know you are special, you are beautiful, you have the world a lot to offer. Then what? Main thing is believing that your own love is not dependent on the other once it is awakened. Love is there, it is about you and it is up to you to keep the flame going. Message of the cards: mystic: live in connection with the Divine*

## 23. Oral Tradition



*Back to the Mystical Kabbalah of rabbi David A. Cooper and his oral tradition, that teaches us we must work on the vessel, to be able to let in the Light: 'From the perspective of human beings our bodies, minds and emotions are the vessels for the Light of the soul. Too often students of spirituality attempt to go for the Light, without considering the vessel. The secret of spiritual development according to the Kabbalah mystics is to mend, repair and refine our bodies, minds and emotions and the soul will automatically benefit with the greater Light.'*

*To work on the vessel and tune into the Mystical Perspective we can go outside and walk in our neighbourhood, in the woods, on the beach and become aware of every step we do by feeling the ground beneath our feet, becoming aware that we are part of the Bigger Whole by using our senses. Just looking, just listening, just smelling, just tasting, just feeling. To do this we have to step out of our judging self. Only when we are free and in the here and now we will be able to experience the mystical dimension. Question to answer while writing afterwards: where am I? (GPW to C page 87/88)*



## 24. Being love



*Reading about Presence and Charisma in Sketches by Joseph Zinker set me thinking. Charisma asks for attention, presence is there for the other. Presence so the other is safe enough to express her/his fears, longings and loves. Zinker: 'Presence comes easier when one has already received approval and affirmation - when ones cup is full and one no longer needs it from anyone.'*

*Question of the day: am I afraid of me? Yes, I used to be afraid that I behaved in a way, that made me unlovable. Not worth to be loved because people, including my family, were afraid of me and my provocations. Although my provocations were meant to make the world better, I do realize that most provoked people did not immediately feel my love in it and therefore felt threatened. Still what I wanted was to make them aware of their own beauty and strength! And now I am brave enough to state that I am here on earth to love and be loved!*

*There was a time I allowed myself solely to show my love when I was present for my clients. I needed courage to show my family, friends, neighbours, colleagues and enemies that they and I are made of love, although there is fear in us and anger and pain that are waiting to be transformed to strength.*

## *25. Dance with the Dancers*



*Dancing to the core of our being*

*p 278*

*A top experience at the Gestalt leaders conference was being able to dance with born dancers. It gave me the right to exist and to be there. Dancing for me goes to the core of my being. It gives me the energy to go on all night and live the song:*

*'When the singers are the song and the dancers are the dance.'*

*Again and again and again and again... This is it.  
Being able to dance gives me the opportunity  
to step out of having to Know Better,  
as it is about Doing and Feeling and Being Better.  
It took me a long time to allow myself to have pleasure  
while there was still somebody around sulking.  
Then I realized, I did not make anyone more happy  
that way, on the contrary.*



## *26. The Pink Dress – A fairy tale*

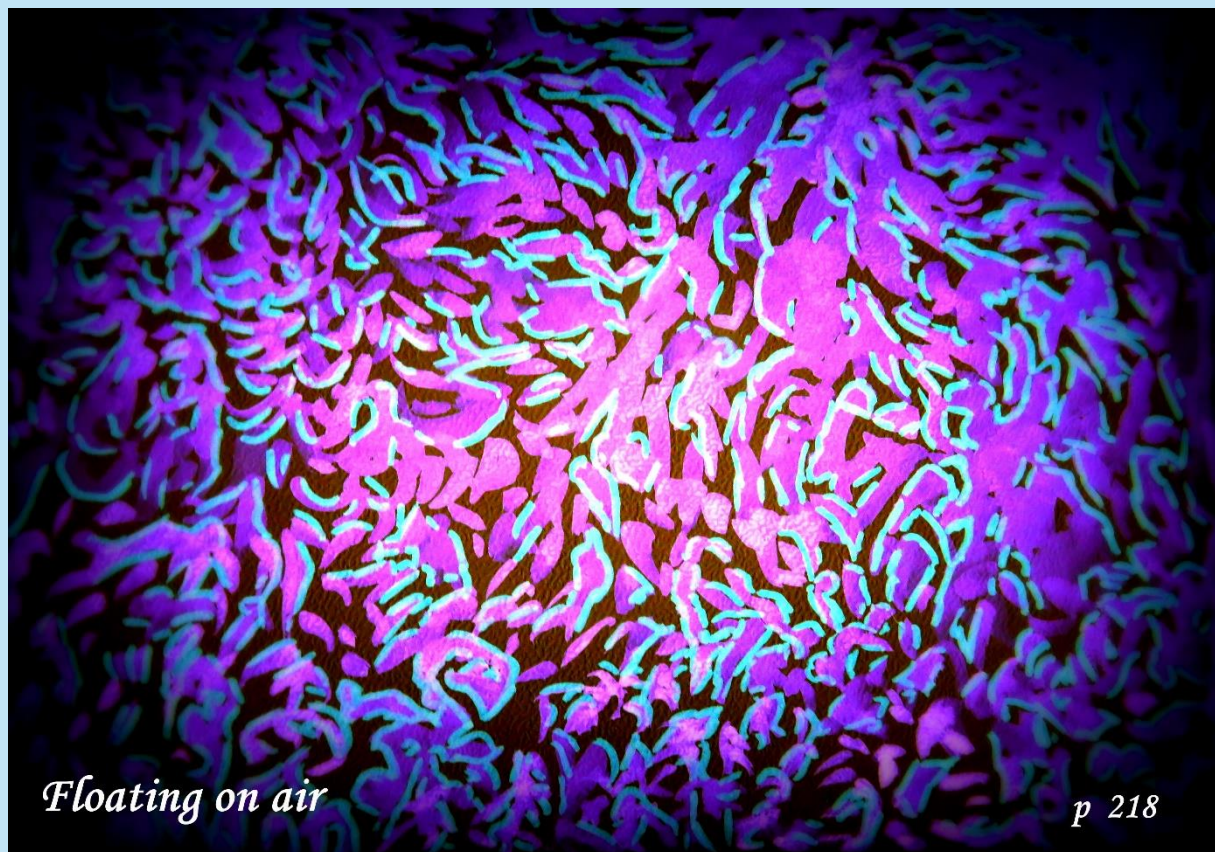


*The limelight in the writing group is on attention. After a meditation we write fairy tales: 'Once upon a time there was this little princess that loved to dance. Often she asked her mother if she could put on one of those beautiful dresses, she had worn only one day as bridesmaid on the weddings of her uncles or her aunt. The dress she is thinking of now is pink with lots of tulle. In her curled hair there is a garland with little pink and white flowers. On the wedding day she had felt like she was the queen herself, everybody looked at her when she threw little flowers from her basket before the feet of the bridegroom and the bride. She was the youngest of all the people present. Was it because of this that everybody was nice to her, that everybody talked to her, touched her, stroked her cheeks and hair. She does not know but she does know she liked it a lot.'*

*Floating on air*

*'When the day was over and life went its boring way, she missed being in the sunshine, in the limelight of attention of the grown-ups. That is why she was*





*looking for ways to get attention after all. Putting on the pink dress with tulle, her garland in her hair, white socks and patent leather shoes on her feet helped her to get this feeling back of being a princess. One day when her mother agreed to putting the dress on, she decided to give a dance performance. She asked her mother and grandmother to watch her. Their answers did not surprise her. They were sorry, but they were too busy. They had to shop, cook, go to the hospital, clean the house, make visits, they had to do a lot of things and did not have time to look at her in her pink dress dancing. The only one willing to sit and look at her was her little sister. She was so small that she could hardly walk the stairs by herself. That is why the princess gave her a hand and helped her to go up and sit on the bed, because the only place to perform on this moment was their bedroom. Alas, there was not much space. But that did not matter. When the little princess felt the dress prickle on her skin, and looked in the mirror standing on her toes to see the flowers in her hair, she felt a huge power entering her body. She could not stand still anymore, but had to turn, jump, bow, whirl, while her head became more and more empty. Her sister stayed on the edge of the bed, finger in her mouth she watched her with her big eyes. That gave the princess more and more the feeling of floating on air.*





*Public or no public  
go on dancing*

*p 218*

*Look what her sister saw, she saw her dancing, feel what her sister felt, her head became bigger and bigger and then so big that it did burst.'*

*Au, Au*

*'This was the moment her sister began to cry and scream for her mother. Mama, mama, au, au, au. Their mother opened the door of the stairway and yelled : now what! What did you do to hurt her! Stop it now immediately. The princess collapsed, it was like someone had put a needle in her head, and all the air and all the knowledge just poured out and streamed away. She looked at her mother who had mounted the stairs and had taken her sister in her arms. Princess felt her anger rise, how stupid, how dishonest, but she did not say a word. Her mother would not be interested in what she had to say. Left alone she looked at her pink dress and decided to get up and dance anyway, public or no public. Same thing is still the matter now she has become old. Pink dress or no pink dress, success or no success, she goes on dancing her dance.'*

## 27. Happy Few



*'Go into the outside here and now and connect with your colleagues in the big group,' I wrote, when I had given the Creative Gestalt workshop during the Leaders conference, 'apparently having their doubts about what we are doing here, otherwise more people would have joined us. Are we the happy few and the bringers of the Good News, that the world is full of wonders one can abide in or not? We have a free will and therefore the Freedom of Choice, again and again and again. Every day, every hour, every minute, every second of our life.'*

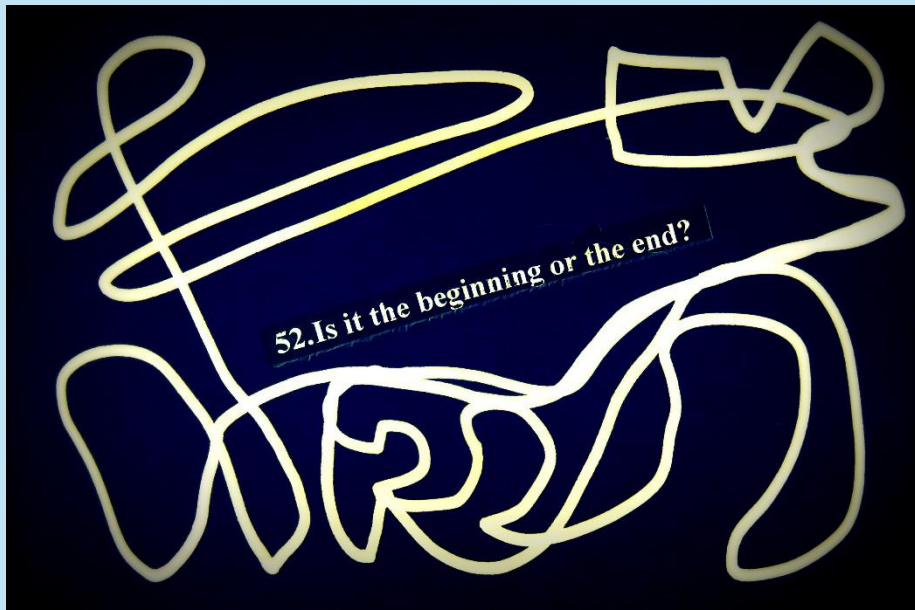
*Being part of a creative Gestalt group is not an easy thing to do.:*

- stepping out of control and out of the well-known into an adventure*
- doing instead of thinking and talking about doing*
- believing in creative talent beside knowledge*
- having the courage to make a fool of yourself*
- not being bothered by right or wrong*
- believing in your hand that is writing or drawing*
- trusting your voice that is speaking or singing*
- feeling your feet who are dancing or walking*
- letting it happen without correcting*
- taking the work that will emerge seriously*

*Without a group it is impossible to experiment.*



## *28. Is it the beginning or the end?*



*Feeling responsible for the ongoing process of the Being Present group makes me wonder, think, feel uneasy, frustrated...*

*How can I inspire/stimulate the members to listen to their inner voice by taking time, by sitting down, by listening to the silence, by writing, by being creative to discover, explore, learn who they are.*

*It is an adventure, a journey, a quest I have been in ever since Gestalt touched me and taught me to take responsibility for the way I live my life. I understood it is up to me if I follow the creative, spiritual path or not. By experimenting with awareness every day my life adventure became richer and more exciting.*

*Once I knew that the chance to change is in the frustration, I relaxed.*

*In the Being Present group I want to share with you how I did and do IT.*

*Hoping that you feel inspired to walk your own creative Gestalt path.*

*What I long for and need is to also be inspired and stimulated by you.*

*I need to be seen and heard as much as I need to see and hear you.*

*It is how you and I can grow individually and as a group.*

*Here I am ready to give to you and to receive from you!*

*All we need is time to do IT. I know we can, no problem!*

*Inspiration from Jean Houston in Search for the Beloved: 'Odysseus, like other modern humans, has somewhat ignored his own deeper nature. Necessarily, then, his learning must come out the deeps, which he has mishandled. From these deeps will come most of his adventures and a larger experience of reality.'*

## 29. Cut off from sexuality



*I am happy, I am at an Gestalt conference and so many colleagues I like to see came in and so many of them like to see me. Feels like being a queen. I am a queen if I choose to be a queen. Can I be a queen or am I still waiting for the king or the prince to give me permission before I am ready to show my radiance. The princes and kings coming here are nice men, good willing, good therapists, they probably are good for their families and friends, but they seem to be more or less cut off from their sexual energy at conferences like this.*

*The end of the evening I spent with five women in the bar, complaining about the lack of sex in the men, who came to the conference. Then I told them about my recent experience with the Jewish singing teacher, I followed because he set me on fire by just singing and being his masculine self. At first they thought what I told was awful. Didn't I want to be with him forever? No and Yes. I did and do not. I am not made to be his partner. nor his wife nor his lover. Of course I secretly do long to make love with men, who set me on fire and approach me in a way that awakens my sexuality, but I know it is a playful game and the moment we would surrender the magic would be gone.*



### 30. Fundamental Anger

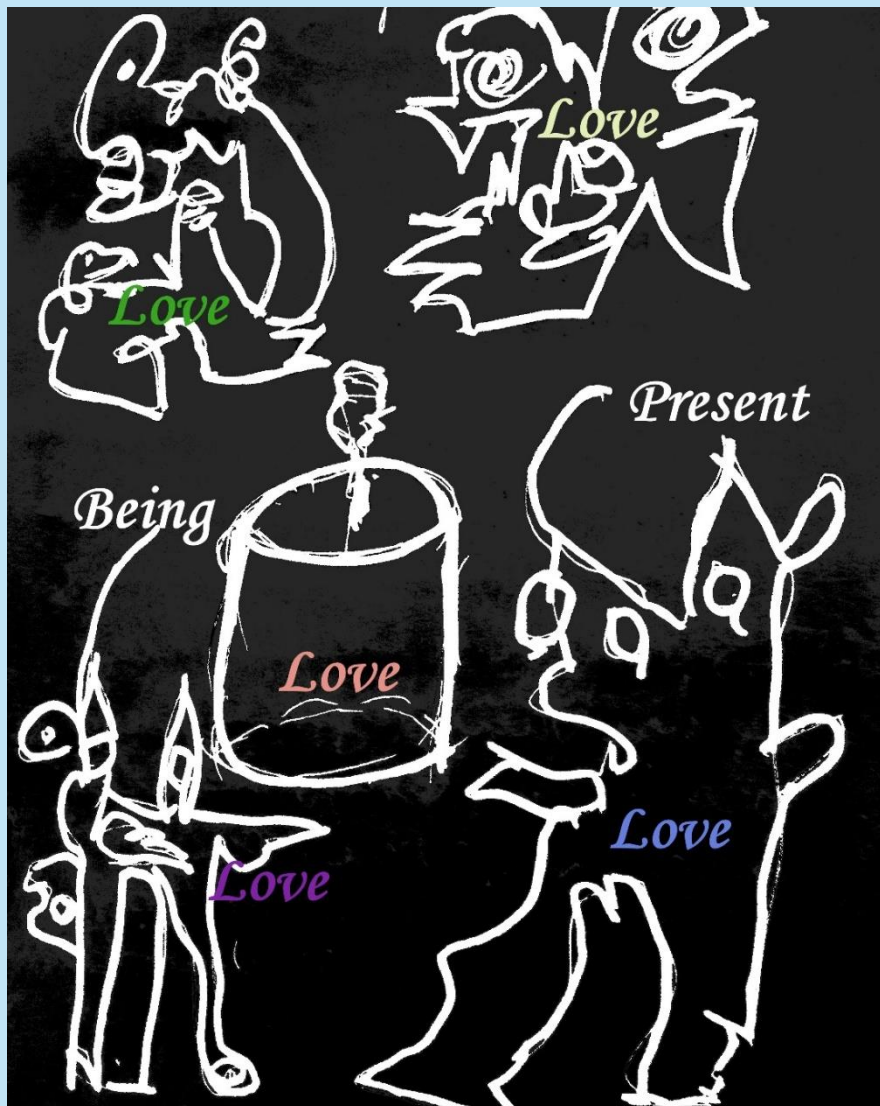


*Still at the Gestalt conference: Yesterday evening I was out with a colleague, surrendering to magical jazz music. My colleague told me how deeply wounded she is by the abuse of her father. By listening to her, I realized how wounded I am myself. My fundamental anger with men comes out, when they behave like resentful boys in grown up bodies, thinking they can force me into the role of a 'mother'. While at the same time I am longing for that one man to love me and to make me feel like a complete woman. My anger probably keeps those men away from me.*

*I did not realize men could be afraid of me until I found out in a conflict with men I was working with. Women can also be afraid of me, but that is a different matter, or is it?*

*As women we have power over men because we are sexual. It is difficult to admit that we are not only sexual but also angry. I feel and experience it at conferences like this. And I wonder if the men who are present here are not only afraid of my aggression, but also of the sexuality I am radiating. It is all in the Power Game we play with one another. Who will take care of whom? If I give you what you need, what will I get?*

### *31. I am*



*I am vulnerable  
I am shaky  
My soul is right awake  
Telling me you are  
In the right space  
With the right people  
To show your love  
Don't worry about being received  
You will be seen and heard  
When you take the responsibility  
For what you long to offer!*



## 32. The purpose in life



*'People ask themselves the deepest questions,' says rabbi David A. Cooper in his six cd's course The Mystical Kabbalah, I found when I was in Elat Chayyim. Back in Amsterdam it turned out to be the most precious present, I could have given to myself. Listening helps me to celebrate Sabbath my way. Not only on Friday nights and Saturday's I sit down to learn from the rabbi. Often I end my day by taking a bath, while Cooper tells me about the Jewish mystical oral tradition, that has been existing for thousands of years, because people always have asked themselves questions like: 'Who created this world? Is there a God? What is the purpose in life? What am I doing here? Is there something after this life? Out of those questions the great religious traditions have risen.'*

*Translating his wisdom into my own words: today we are still wondering about the same questions. Today we have all the information from every culture in the world, all we have to do is open our pc and go to internet. But never ever will we find the exact answers, because just the written words, cannot answer questions like: do I have a meaning in life? What is my purpose?*

### 33. The Mystical Approach



*The mystical approach to these essential questions, is quite different from the normal way of learning things. According to the mystics we need special awareness in the way we live our lives. To begin with we have to learn to be present at all times, and be in a state of constant awareness. Only by spiritual discipline and practise the truth will reveal itself. The word Kabbalah means to receive. It means that there is a constant transmission available in the universe, if we learn how to tune into its frequency.*

*And if we do we will see everything from a new perspective. The view we gain will change our relationship with the world. The early Kabbalists were tuned into this infinite awareness. How did they get it? They gained their insight through constant practice; they discovered that gaining the wisdom of mystical insight, could be accomplished only through guidance and advice, but could never be communicated directly.*



### 34. Writing about Religion



*Written in the Power of Writing group: So I was sent to the God school, where my girlfriend also was. I don't know how long it took, but God and the stories of the Bible became my main interest. I became the only member of the family, who wanted to pray before eating and before going to sleep. I wanted to hear and read the Bible stories, because I felt more safe with the idea that God was seeing me. In the same year I went to kinder garden, World War II started. My world became so unsafe, that I was constantly prepared for death. At least that is what I think now. Of course I was a little older, when I started talking to God every evening. Told him my thoughts, worries, told him about my father, who had to go to hospital often, because his nerves were wrecked, when he came back from the fighting with the Germans, that started the occupation.*

*My parents did not like my being so religious, but they did not say anything about it. They just let me pray and kept silent before we started eating. I have been rather alone as a child with my feelings for God. I wonder now, what I wanted from God. What did believing in God really mean for me? Later I have often thought, that God replaced my father as a safety source. God was someone who knows. My father and even my wise grandfather did not seem to know, how to make me feel safe in dangerous times. Is religion about safety, about not getting lost? It looks like it for me.*

### 35.Chosen



*On a terrace in New York, not out in the street but in Bryant park close to Times Square. I am tired and digesting the week I had in Elat Chayyim. I met the rabbi of the Mystical Kabbalah, I often enjoy listening to on Friday night. I wonder about him. I told him how important listening to his course is for me, and felt he looked at me with impatience. Am I in his eyes another of those demanding or worshipping women, who want to touch him or come in some way into contact with him?*

*Or was he busy with something else, nothing to do with me? I felt disappointed, irritated. Looking at him helps me to dismantle my projections on the holy or sacred or spiritual rabbi, that has found the right way and cannot be beaten, but is difficult to communicate with on a human level. It also confronts me with my being a fan, a groupie, a follower, a worshipper?*

*Am I stupid? Isn't it time to give up staring with open mouth at icons, who cannot be reached, but do something, that evokes my admiration?*





*Wanting to be special*

*p 145*

*The best example is the singing teacher, who is of course the man who set me on fire, when I listened to his concerts in Amsterdam. He gave me the energy and the courage to follow him, so I could learn from him and be with him.*

*I must say I can congratulate myself, because I did it and yet did not fall into the trap of expecting he would think me more special. It is not clear for me though how important he is in the story of my life.*

*I think pretty important, for he forces me to step out of the personal stuff and move into more sacred areas. It is his singing that does it, his being - what I call – tuned into the big Whole.*

*If I ever solve my Jewish quest, it will be also thanks to his radiance and support. I just have to face the fact, that I needed him to step out of the little girl still longing for a father, who knows and who can protect me, into the grown up woman who has her own comforting mother and strong father inside her.*

### *36. Having to take care of yourself*



*Having to take care of myself is like having to breathe, to eat, to pee, to poop. It is all about the same urge: you are alive in a world that is not peaceful, although it is also a world where being there to support each other is normal. Being alive not just for me but also for my parents and other loved ones feels like a responsibility that is number one in my life. I am here because I am meant to be here. Here where my people are, my city is and I am. Here is my biotope. Here I can do what I have to do: be there for the people who need a listening ear. People who just like me have to live their life in an unsafe world, having to deal with needing money, needing care, needing love.*

*Some needs can be solved by having enough money. And there are also needs – the deepest ones – money cannot solve. Those needs need an ear that listens in the first place. My own ear is there to listen to me to begin with. And if I do, I will be able to hear the calls from my loved ones, who also have ears that can listen and who have hearts that need to give to feel that they are human.*

*And I . what have I to do? I need to give a listening ear and I have a heart that needs to be received in its loving radiance...*



## 37. Group Tension



*Here-and-Now-writing can be used to connect in a neutral way with the group members. By listening to our sounds we acknowledge being present and part of the bigger whole. Every sound that is uttered, every move that is made is part of the group tension of the moment. It takes a longtime to realize we are witnesses and participants at the same time. Every group member takes part in creating the tension and the excitement in the group. Also the silent ones.*

*The moment contact will have to be made with the power, the anger, the aggression in me as the facilitator and in the other participants as colleagues, we can easily decide to avoid it. We are anything but angry, we think, but are we... I know when I feel my irritation rise, I have to give words to my feelings, if possible in a gentle way. If I wait too long I can become so fed up that I explode. But this only happens when I am in the group instead of before it. This is why I have been afraid to participate in groups when I am not leading. Knowing that I can upset the whole group when I feel irritation makes me feel uneasy. It is all about not trusting authorities. According to one of my teachers I have an authority complex. And another teacher told me this only happens when you are an authority yourself.*



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