



DURANGO HERALD BOOK REVIEW

10 life-changing powers and a path to peace

Local author pens uplifting new book

By Leslie Doran

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Article Last Updated: Monday, October 06, 2014 7:01 Local therapist, teacher and author Carolyn Hobbs has penned her second book, *Free Yourself: Ten Life Changing Powers of Your Wise Heart*. She draws from her personal experience, her role as teacher and her 30 years as a therapist to invite readers to make changes that can vastly improve their lives.

Hobbs uses teachings derived from Buddha to help readers employ her practical tools regardless of their personal-belief systems. Buddha's First Noble Truth is "Suffering is woven into the fabric of life," and the book focuses largely on ways to overcome that inevitable suffering. Hobbs also writes that "unconscious ego habits" derive from expectations put on people by gender, family and society and hinder an individual's ability to achieve personal joy.

Free Yourself is written in two parts and 10 chapters that address the powers that Hobbs claims will ultimately result in inner peace. The first section is called "Freedom From Sabotaging Ego Habits," and the second is "Bringing Freedom and Inner Peace into the World."

Hobbs proceeds to share the 10 "heart choices" that she argues will improve one's life and relationships. These choices include trust, presence, curiosity, awareness, resourcefulness, compassion, kindness, gratitude, forgiveness, truthfulness and peacefulness. At the end of each chapter, she lists four heart tools to practice before moving on to the next chapter. These tools include practices like meditation and daily intentions.

Hobbs' heart choices are illustrated with episodes from her own experiences as well as her clients. She also uses examples from her couples' therapy sessions. It is fascinating to hear the types of issues that can cause unhappiness and impinge on finding a meaningful life for others.

One of the most important lessons that can be learned from *Free Yourself* is to love and respect yourself. After accepting yourself, Hobbs explains, you can share and help others. Challenges are thrown into everyone's lives, she writes, but fear, loss and illness can be better dealt with by using the tools she offers. Hobbs also shares her deep appreciation of the living world around her. The natural setting, weather and wildlife in the Durango area bring her peace, and she invites others to take part in the healing aspect of nature.

Hobbs encourages readers to follow the simple steps she's developed and use her well-organized tools to live in the present, be aware of their bodies, minds and especially, their hearts. A kind, compassionate person who can accept his or herself will be able to share and enrich the lives of others.

It is clear that Hobbs is passionate about her life's work and that she sometimes struggles with keeping herself on the "wise heart" road. By sharing her experiences and, sometimes, her roadblocks, she gives readers the special gift of knowing that everyone's life is a work in progress, and it is a daily choice to live fully in the moment. Hobbs' writing style is warm and friendly, and her tools can be used by anyone with an interest in living more fully.

Hobbs' closing words are uplifting and wise.

"Freedom is the truth of life, including who we are in our heart.

Freedom is everywhere every moment, alive in all living things.

Freedom is the gift of this moment. Unwrap it now."

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