

'This book changed
the way I see
myself. It changed
the way I view
the world'
OPRAH

The Seat of The Soul

Gary Zukav



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*This book is dedicated to my parents,
Morris L. Zukav and Lorene Zukav,
with love, respect, and gratitude.*

I am grateful for the joyful love, continual support, and endless creativity of Linda Francis, my spiritual partner since 1993 and probably long before. I am amazed frequently—through our tendernesses and power struggles—that I not only love her, but I love loving her. This expanded, reenergized, and rededicated Edition carries within it the commitment that we share to creating authentic power and spiritual partnerships and to supporting people around the world to create them. Thank you, Beloved.

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Preface to *The Seat of the Soul* 25th Anniversary Edition by Oprah Winfrey

I FIRST READ *The Seat of the Soul* in 1989.

As with all books I'm excited about, I had also bought copies for my friends and colleagues so everybody could be reading it at the same time. I happened to be the first to finish, which meant I had no one to discuss the book with. So, I got my hands on the Mount Shasta, California, phone directory and called Gary Zukav.

"Mr. Zukav, hello, my name is Oprah. I just want to talk to you about your book and would love for you to come on my show and share your—"

"What did you say your name was?"

"Oprah."

"Could you spell that, please," he said.

I did. "O-p-r-a-h, and the 'h' is silent," I explained. And then I told him that I had a talk show, and had to explain what a talk show was, because Gary had been without a TV for several years. This, of course, made me even more eager to speak with him. I wanted to know how he knew what he knew. The things he'd written resonated so deeply with me, and felt so true, but how did he know for sure?

The Seat of the Soul changed the way I see myself. It changed the way I view the world. It caused a profound shift in the way I conduct all my relationships, business and personal.

The book came to me at the perfect time—at a moment in my life when I was ready for and open to more. More connection. More harmony. More peace. More joy. I could sense that there was more

to our existence than day-to-day experiences and the rituals of work and relationships, more to life than our five senses could hold.

The Seat of the Soul put into words what my own soul already knew and had been trying to tell me. It was such an exhilarating awakening to see affirmed in print what I hadn't discovered the language to articulate myself. When I first read the words "multisensory perception," I felt as though Gary had touched a nerve. In fact, the book felt like one great multisensory explosion. Everywhere I looked after reading it, I saw and experienced life in a new light.

Gary's book was one aha moment after another, all steering me in the direction of true north. My favorite insight: "When the personality comes fully to serve the energy of its soul, that is authentic empowerment."

It's no big secret that I have a big personality. I've been using it to my advantage since the third grade. But using that personality to serve my soul—and making sure the two were aligned—changed the way I did everything. I suddenly recognized all the times I'd gotten off track by letting my personality rule. I started to notice that the degree to which I ever felt unhappiness, discomfort, or despair was in direct proportion to how far I let myself stray from the seat of my soul.

The chapter that stirred me most was the one about intention. These words became my living creed: "Every action, thought, and feeling is motivated by an intention, and that intention is a cause that exists as one with an effect. If we participate in the cause, it is not possible for us not to participate in the effect. In this most profound way we are held responsible for our every action, thought, and feeling, which is to say, for our every intention." Those words changed my life.

Prior to reading *The Seat of the Soul*, I suffered from the disease to please. Like millions of people, most of them women, I was a slave to the needs, wants, and desires of others. I would say yes when I seriously wanted to say no. I would give precious time and energy, money, gifts—whatever was asked—simply to avoid the

possibility of upsetting someone. I once flew from Chicago to Spain, appeared onstage for less than forty-five seconds at a friend's charity benefit, then got back on a plane and flew straight to work to do my show—all because I didn't know how to say no. To this day, I couldn't even tell you what the charity event was for.

This sort of thing used to happen to me a lot. My life was a whirlwind of one event after another, nonstop speaking engagements, appearances for almost anyone who asked. I wanted people to like me. And as long as I gave them what they wanted, I suppose they did.

My breakthrough was recognizing that my intention to be liked was causing all the requests. Cause and effect. If your intention is to do what other people want, they will keep asking you to do exactly that. That was an aha moment! When I changed my intention to be about doing what I wanted, what I felt was worthy of my time, the effect automatically changed.

Twenty-five years later, today, for me, moving with intentional purpose is like breathing, but I had to learn the practice from the pages of *The Seat of the Soul*. Gary Zukav's principle of intention fundamentally altered my every action. It even changed the consciousness of *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. When we first started, producers would present their ideas in a weekly pitch session, but after encountering Gary's ideas from *The Seat of the Soul*, I created a new policy. For all the producers, I would say: State your intention for the show first. Why do you want to do it? What do you want the outcome to be?

Sometimes producers—who had to fill two hundred show slots a year—would make up an intention just to appease me, and I would say, “Nope, not a good enough reason.” Even if the intention had no redeeming value other than, “We just want to entertain people and get a high rating,” I encouraged all of us to be clear about it. State your case with intention and purpose, and the result will follow suit.

On Gary Zukav's first appearance on my show, in 1998, we discussed the nature of the soul. That interview set my career on a

new course. Bringing spirituality to daytime television was uncharted territory. Having a conversation about consciousness, responsibility, intention, and the Law of Cause and Effect was not exactly ratings-busting TV, but I told myself, If not now, when? To be honest, had I not owned and controlled the show, Gary's thirty-six appearances over the years would never have happened. My producers were convinced in the beginning that television wasn't ready for a conversation about the soul.

But the course I took has served me well. And I continue to explore the spiritual side of life on my OWN cable network. Quite frankly, I don't believe I would ever have dreamed of creating such a network had I not read *The Seat of the Soul*.

I've taught leadership classes at the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls with the help of *The Seat of the Soul*. I've used its principles to teach elementary school students, high school students, even MBAs at the Kellogg School of Management. I get a surge of delight every single time someone reads this book and feels the amazement I felt twenty-five years ago. If you're ready to see the world in a new way, if you're ready for your life to open up and change, if you're ready for an exhilarating awakening, I think you'll feel it, too.

Preface to *The Seat of the Soul* 25th Anniversary Edition by Dr. Maya Angelou

COURAGE IS THE most important of all the virtues because without courage one cannot practice any virtue consistently. We can be kind, generous, just, courteous, and merciful sporadically, but to display those virtues, consistently, calls for an enormous display of courage. From childhood on we have been taught that the heart, the mind, and the personality, the spirit and the soul have come to life together occupying the same space and then they will go together into death.

The intrepid, daring Gary Zukav, in his book *The Seat of the Soul*, introduces a brand-new concept to my mind, or rather a concept which I found in my youthful years in the Negro Spirituals which confused me because the lyrics suggested that pain and joy, weeping and laughing were all together when death came and that they left together to go into death.

The song, however, which often calls God the Soul, informs the listener that the Soul never dies but will continue and bring into life another mind and personality as well as other troubles and joys. They would bear the experience of living until death would relieve them of their responsibility. Then as they died, Soul or God would continue as it could not die.

Zukav, a respectful thinker, is able in his book *The Seat of the Soul* to show the reader how human evolution is achieved by the continuity of the Soul and the ability of a personality to die and another to be born a little better, a little stronger, and a little more daring.

I don't know if the poet in Zukav took his hand and bid him tell the hard truths as easily as willow trees bow gracefully

along a brook side. There are some readers who choose books for summer reading and others for vacation entertainment. The reader who chooses *The Seat of the Soul* should put the book on a shelf, near the bed, or on a lamp table which boasts a good strong bulb.

I keep my second copy of the book covered in plastic at the kitchen table, so it will be protected from years of use and so that the olive oil from a just-made salad will not smudge the cover.

After reading Zukav's book for the tenth time, I still found it outrageous. I remembered a play I wrote, called *And Still I Rise*. The two characters in the play (male and female) have died and found themselves in what they think is a waiting room. A ghoulish creature appears. The male character, named Zebediah, says, "I know who you are. You are the gatekeeper. You will take us to the place we are supposed to go—heaven or hell."

The female character, Annabel, adds, "I didn't make it, but I truly tried to live a good life, clean, kind, fair."

The eerie creature starts a little laugh which turns into huge laughter. He gazes at the two piteous-looking characters and says, "I am always amazed, even startled at the condition of human imagination. You think there is only a heaven or hell. Zebediah and Annabel, in your futures alone, there are possibly eight hundred destinations."

In my play, Annabel and Zebediah, who had been sitting separately, move to each other without seeming to notice. Suddenly they are close enough to embrace. And they do.

The lyrics of the nineteenth-century Negro Spiritual are

*Soon, I will be done with the troubles of the world,
The troubles of the world,
The troubles of the world,
I'm going home to meet my God.
No more weeping and wailing,
No more laughing and dancing,
No more moaning and crying,
I'm going home to meet my God.*

Obviously the poet decided a minutiae of daily life occupies one space and that the true Soul of the poet lives in another space which the poet calls God.

I suggest to the new Zukav reader to draw close to share this book with someone who has firm nerve and a wonderful sense of humor, because when Zukav's ideas stop challenging you, you will laugh with the wonderful laughter of the discoverer who has found a new continent.

*No more weeping and wailing.
No more weeping and wailing.
I'm going home to meet my Soul.*

Foreword to *The Seat of the Soul* 25th Anniversary Edition

THIS 25TH ANNIVERSARY Edition of *The Seat of the Soul* fills me with gratitude and joy. After I finished the manuscript twenty-five years ago, I sat with it wondering whether anyone would read it, and if anyone read it, whether anyone would understand it. In the midst of these thoughts, another thought appeared, louder and clearer. It said, “Do not be concerned. This arrow will find its mark.” *The Seat of the Soul* has now found its way to millions of hearts, and the arrow is still in flight.

While writing my first book, *The Dancing Wu Li Masters: An Overview of the New Physics*, I discovered—to my complete surprise—inspiration that came from beyond my mind, nonphysical intelligences that I could not articulate, and the electricity of creating consciously with constructive intent. I had never experienced anything like this. I loved these experiences, but, for the most part, I forgot about them after the book was finished.

The Dancing Wu Li Masters—which won the American Book Award for Science—established me as a popularizer of modern science. Many people expected me to follow it with a sequel, a *Son-of-Wu-Li-Masters*, that would explain more cutting-edge science. Instead, my next book was about evolution, reincarnation, karma, and the soul. It was about emotional awareness, responsible choice, and intuition. It was about an unprecedented transformation of human consciousness and the emergence of a new power—authentic power. In short, the new book was about a new human species, its new capabilities, and its new potential.

This book was *The Seat of the Soul*. It surprised me more than anyone. Everything remarkable that touched me briefly while I

was writing *The Dancing Wu Li Masters* returned undeniably, unmistakably, irrevocably into my awareness. I discovered non-physical reality. I am still growing into that discovery. All creative people—which is everyone—require commitment and time and courage to grow into their insights. Inspiration is one thing. Applying it to your life is another. My friend Maya Angelou tells me that when people tell her, “I am a Christian,” she replies, “Really? Already? I am in my eighties, and I am still trying.” Like Maya, I am still learning, still striving to apply the most meaningful insights of my life, and still changing for the better.

Reading *The Seat of the Soul* twenty-five years after it was written was a completely surprising and deeply fulfilling experience. The book seemed perfect. Every sentence carried meaning for me. Soon, almost the entire book was underlined. I was thirsty for the words. They sank into me like water into dry sand. They nurtured and soothed me. The blessing that I felt when I was writing this book returned to me amplified many times. I basked in it. I thought I knew it all. After all, I typed it, edited it, and talked about it for years. But rereading the book showed me that I had things to remember, more to learn, and much more to practice.

The Seat of the Soul brought remarkable people into my life. Two of them in particular touched me more deeply than I could have imagined and continue to support me in ways that thrill and surprise me.

The first is Linda Francis. I do not remember the first time we met, although she does. We met again a year later at a small retreat where I was speaking. I remember everything about that meeting. I was surrounded by loving people, and I found myself pushing one of them away—Linda. I wanted none of the hugs she gave so freely. This was my first clue that parts of me were threatened by her, but I was not aware enough to recognize it. I could not escape her at the event—for example, a friend saved a seat for me at a concert, a different friend saved a seat for Linda, and the saved seats were together. I began to share my curiosity with her. Why was I pushing only her away? I shared my intention not to be controlled by this unusual repulsion. “I will not refuse your

love,” I told her—not romantic love, but the love that she so obviously felt with her friends at the retreat and that she held out to me as well. At the end of the event, friends invited me to join them for a cold splash in a waterfall. When they suggested that I invite Linda, I became irritated.

Linda! Linda! What is this thing with Linda? Can I not do anything at this event without Linda? When Linda called me a month later to tell me that she was moving to Mount Shasta, California, where I lived—a decision that predated the retreat—I felt frightened and, again, curious. When our friends and I welcomed her to her new home, I was surprised to realize how much I had been looking forward to her arrival! I was relaxed, comfortable, happy, and open. We began to visit each other. Some of our talks I enjoyed, and others I did not, but I found myself looking forward to each one. Several months later the thought occurred to me, “I think I am in a relationship!” Without the sexual interactions that had begun my previous “relationships,” new and different kinds of interactions began to occur. These were my first experiences of a substantive and deep relationship for the purpose of spiritual growth—a spiritual partnership. A half year later, about twenty years ago, she moved into my cabin, and our journey together continues today.

In our years together, I have marveled not only that I love Linda—something I did not think myself capable of when we met—but that I *love loving her!* This is the experience that intrigues me. It is as strong in me now as it was when I discovered it. Where does *that* come from?

The second person is Oprah Winfrey. She is the instrument that the Universe chose to explode me out of the back-country and into the larger world. I suspect that nothing less than that explosion could have done it. She took me into her heart, her creativity, and her famous *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. First, I was a recluse on a mountain, and then, a few months later, I was speaking to ten million people monthly. New friends appeared wherever I went in the world, thanking me for a show, smiling at me from a distance. It took me a long time to acknowledge that my life of isolation was over and even longer to welcome it.

During each show Oprah and I sat before an eager audience and the company of fellow souls around the world. She introduced a theme, asked me some questions, and then, with a gesture of her hand or movement of her face, turned the attention of millions of people toward me. It was terrifying and awesome. “Sacred” and “holy” are better words. When a national magazine pursued me for an article, she counseled, “It’s only cotton candy, Gary. Only cotton candy.” What could have described external power better? My adopted Sioux Uncle, Phil Lane, Sr., once told me after watching one of our shows, “Nephew, you are talking like the old people.” That memory fills me with strength and gratitude. I am grateful for Oprah and to the Universe for all of these experiences and more.

In the years following my shows with Oprah, Linda and I cofounded the Seat of the Soul Institute, gave many events, wrote books, and developed long-term, in-depth programs for small groups. Now our passion for supporting people and spiritual partnerships has grown stronger than ever, but traveling has become taxing for us, so we have created new digital tools and innovative ways to use the Internet, such as an ongoing support program, eCourse, eNewsletters, an online Spiritual Partnership Community, live videos, and the Web addresses at the end of the Chapter Study Guides in this book. (Tap them in your eBook or type them into your browser and they will take you to Web pages that will help you further explore, integrate, and apply what you are studying.) You will find all of these and more at SeatoftheSoul.com. Linda and I still enjoy giving live events when possible, including our favorite, the annual *The Journey to the Soul* summer retreat. I hope that I will meet you personally at one of them.

The Internet is a reflection in the domain of the five senses of our emerging awareness of our connectedness. It does not create, or even increase, our connectedness. It is not possible for us to be more or less connected than we are with one another and Life. Can a flower be more or less connected to its color? Let us enjoy this beautiful reflection together and also what it reflects.

The most difficult, gratifying, and thrilling experiences I

have had since publishing *The Seat of the Soul* have been my experiences of authentic power and creating authentic power. Spiritual partnerships, richness of cocreation, and awe of Life have slowly replaced my experiences of people as things and my tormenting journeys through anger, jealousy, despair, and unworthiness. I still encounter parts of my personality that are angry, frightened, jealous, superior, and inferior, but now I see them as opportunities to create authentic power, to choose anew. If I can do this, you can, too. I know that eventually you will. The transformation of consciousness that is expanding our perception beyond the five senses, redefining power, and showing us the potential of a Universal Humanity is proceeding in full force.

Each choice of fear—anger, jealousy, vengefulness—is a choice to evolve unconsciously through the painful, destructive consequences that fear creates. Each choice of love—gratitude, patience, appreciation—is a choice to evolve consciously through the healthy, constructive consequences that love creates.

Why not choose the conscious path, the path of joy? Why not journey consciously to the seat of your soul—that place where you transform energy into matter with your intentions—infuse your world with love and live there?

All roads lead to home.

Gary Zukav

Foreword to the First Edition

DURING THE YEARS that I was writing *The Dancing Wu Li Masters* and after, I was drawn again and again to the writings of William James, Carl Jung, Benjamin Lee Whorf, Niels Bohr, and Albert Einstein. I returned to them repeatedly. I found in them something special, although it was not until later that I was able to understand that specialness: These fellow humans reached for something greater than they were able to express directly through their work. They saw more than they could express in the language of psychology or linguistics or physics, and they sought to share what they saw. It is what they sought to share through the medium of their work that drew me to them.

They were mystics. That is my word. They would not use such language, but they knew it. They feared that their careers might become contaminated by association with those who did not work within the scientific model, but in the depths of their own thoughts they each saw much too much to be limited by the five senses, and they were not. Their works contribute not only to the evolution of psychology, linguistics, and physics but also to the evolution of those who read them. They have the capability to change those who touch them in ways that also cannot be expressed directly in the terms of psychology, or linguistics, or physics.

As I came to understand, in retrospect, the magnetic quality that these works held for me, I came to understand that what motivated these men was not Earthly prizes or the respect of colleagues, but that they put their souls and minds on something and reached the extraordinary place where the mind could no longer produce data of the type that they wanted, and they were in the territory of inspiration, where their intuitions accelerated and they knew that there was something more than the realm of time

and space and matter, something more than physical life. They knew it. They could not necessarily articulate this clearly, because they were not equipped to talk about such things, but they felt it and their writings reflected it.

In other words, I came to understand that what motivated these men, and many others, was in fact something of great vision that comes from beyond the personality. Each of us is now being drawn, in one way or another, to that same great vision. It is more than a vision. It is an emerging force. It is the next step in our evolutionary journey. Humanity, the human species, is longing now to touch that force, to shed that which interferes with clear contact. Much of the difficulty in doing this lies in the fact that the vocabulary with which to address this new force, which is indeed the eternal force, is not yet born.

In this moment and in this hour of human evolution, this proper vocabulary and means of addressing that which longs to transcend religiosity and spirituality and assume the position of authentic power is longing to be born. We need to give that which we as a species are now touching consciously for the first time a vocabulary that is not clouded, so that it can be identified clearly in the acts and judgments of the human race, so that it can be seen clearly, and not through veils of mystery or mysticism, but simply as the authentic power that moves the force fields of this Earth of ours.

As a way of talking about what we are and what we are becoming, I have used the terms “five-sensory” and “multisensory.” Multisensory is not better than five-sensory. It is simply more appropriate now. As one system of human experience winds down and another, more advanced system emerges, the older system may appear by comparison to be lacking, but from the perspective of the Universe, the language of comparison is not the language of lesser and better, but of limitation and opportunity.

The experiences of the multisensory human are less limited than the experiences of the five-sensory human. They provide more opportunities for growth and development and more opportunities to avoid unnecessary difficulties. I have contrasted the

experiences of the five-sensory human with the experiences of the multisensory human in each instance to make their differences as clear as possible, but this does not mean that the five-sensory phase of our evolution, the phase from which we are emerging, is negative in comparison to the phase of our evolution that we are entering, the multisensory phase. It is simply that it is now no longer appropriate, just as there came a time when the use of candles became inappropriate because of electricity, but the advent of electricity did not make candle power negative.

Who among us is an expert on the human experience? We have only the gift of sharing perceptions that hopefully can help those on their journey. There is no such thing as an expert on the human experience. The human experience is an experience in movement and thought and form and, in some cases, an experiment in movement and thought and form. The most that we can do is comment on the movement, the thought, and the form, but those comments are of great value if they can help people to learn to move gracefully, to think clearly, to form—like artists—the matter of their lives.

We are in a time of deep change. We will move through this change more easily if we are able to see the road upon which we are traveling, our destination, and what it is that is in motion. I offer what is in this book as a window through which I have come to see life. I offer this window to you, but I do not say that it is necessary that you accept it. There are so many ways to wisdom and to the heart. This is our greatest richness, and the one that gives me the most joy.

We have much to do together.

Let us do it in wisdom and love and joy.

Let us make this the human experience.

Gary Zukav

INTRODUCTION