



I AM MORE THAN MY TRAUMA, PAIN AND LOSS

Dr Jeannie Higgins

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Our gift to you

Trauma can and does destroy connection to life. The “windows” in this book are to remind you, even for a moment, that you are more than your experience of trauma, pain and loss.

These photographs and words do not try to provide a coherent story - that is not the nature of raw trauma. Instead, they are here for you to dip in and out of as it serves you. Nonetheless, the progression encourages you to move towards connection, presence and empowerment.

I invite you to consider connecting with your innocence, your unconditional worth, your vulnerability, your laughter, your embodied wisdom, your personal power and your ethics. I encourage you to allow your feelings and to have healthy boundaries with other people. I remind you to experience your compassion for you and for other beings, to open your senses to beauty, vulnerability, healing, spontaneity and courage. I want you to consider trusting in your own creativity, your authentic power, your deeper intentions and to learn to speak for peace, evolution and joy. Please open to exquisite moments and colour, cry and smile a lot, glimpse potential everywhere, care for your little bit of our world and give when you can without expectation.

Love, grace, beauty and hope are everywhere. Allow the time to reflect and process all that you have experienced. Challenge unhelpful generational patterns including stepping away from them. We can create exquisite art out of the pieces of ourselves. We can insist on safety even if it is only on the inside for now and we can learn to let go of the re-enactment of fear. I would like you to take up the opportunity to build a bridge to a life on new solid foundations and remember that you are whole, in essence, just as you are!

Please continue to contribute to our growth as living beings. We need you and your efforts. You are unique. There can never be another you. You have survived - even if barely - and you have the capacity to listen, to learn and to teach. Please do not be afraid to be all that you are!

Dr Jeannie Higgins (Clinical Psychology), Yoga & Meditation Teacher

Donations

All collaborators have kindly donated their time, energy and expertise to the creation of this inspirational and beautiful book.

I ask you from the bottom of my heart to consider making a donation that you can afford to Bush Heritage Australia as your way of saying thank you.

<https://www.bushheritage.org.au/donate>

Feelings as honoured and unruly guests

I have feelings of despair, terror, horror, rage, disgust, delight, joy and love. They can be unpredictable and unruly. I can honour and be tender with all of them.

Photo © 2017 Greg Primmer – Light in clouds, NSW



Art from broken pieces

*If I just look at the bits, I cannot see the artistry in the whole.
I am part of the whole and I am exquisite.*

Photo © 2017 Paul Burnett - Kangaroo Island, SA



Reverence

*I can learn to revere and honour my own
life as I look at trees.*

Photo © 2017 Craig Allen - Fan Palm Reserve, QLD



Being enough

I am enough no matter how small. I have the right to be safe, protected and nurtured. I can learn to do that for myself. I can advocate for those whose very existence is incredibly tenuous.

Photo © 2017 Annette Ruzicka – Honey Possum



Vulnerability and healing

*I do not know what is around the next bend.
I do know that I can find replenishment in the moment,
wherever I am - in a tree, in water, in clouds and in what lies
deeply within me.*

Photo © 2017 Annette Ruzicka – Naree Sunrise, NSW



Courage

*I am tiny in the scheme of things.
Sometimes I am frightened
and I can find my courage.*

Photo © 2017 Annette Ruzicka – Stripe-faced Dunnart



Potential

*When I ground and rest quietly, I have potential to
soar high above the trauma below. I can glide with the
wind currents and I can direct my senses with precision.*

Photo © 2017 Jenny Robb – Young sea eagle, Kiah River, NSW



Awakening

*I, like these tiny buds, am awakening in a
breathtaking and beautiful way.*

Photo © 2017 Greg Primmer - Grevillea



Stay with self

*I am very comfortable in my own skin. I love
sitting in the sun. I do not give my power away.
I am complete.*

**Photo © 2017 Jenny Robb - Gippsland Water
Dragon, Kiah River, NSW**



Process

I am an essential and critical part of an amazing and infinite process of creation that encompasses my own trauma, pain and loss.

Photo © 2017 Paul Burnett - The Witsunday's, QLD



Uncover intention

*I can be still and create an intention for me on
this new day.*

Photo © 2017 Annette Ruzicka – Naree Sunrise, NSW



Bridges

*I can learn to create bridges between my body,
thoughts, feelings, behaviour and relating.*

*The space, time and rhythm of nature allow
perspective.*

**Photo © 2017 Jeannie Higgins – Rock Bridge, Northern Ben
Boyd National Park , NSW**



Taking agency

I can take agency by steadily wearing away the legacy of my experiences of violation and create a new present and a new future.

The ocean takes agency by steadily carving out the softer rocks and re-creating the coastline over millennia.

**Photo © 2017 Jenny Robb – Ocean and cliffs -
Lighthouse to Lighthouse Walk, Eden, NSW**



Authentic power

I can learn to recognise, discern, harness and use my power for profound healing. Then, I had no say or control. Now, I can light up the sky.

Photo © 2017 Greg Primmer - Lightning, NSW



Safe touch

I deserve to be touched safely.

**Photo © 2017 Brett Clifton - Eagle Valley animal
sanctuary, NSW**



Positive mirroring

*I am awesome, even when I see that by
complete accident!*

**Photo © 2017 Gerald O'Neill - Major Mitchell
Cockatoos**



Strength

*We are very strong when we stand
together in deep connection.*

Photo © 2017 Brett Clifton - Eagle Valley animal sanctuary, NSW



Healthy boundaries

I will protect myself in any way that is necessary. Underneath all the armouring and camouflage, I am gorgeous.

Photo © 2017 Doug Humman - Craven Peak Thorny Devil



Intimacy

*I now have the freedom to selectively
nurture, grow and earn trust.*

**Photo © 2017 Brett Clifton - Eagle Valley animal
sanctuary, NSW**



Create my own life

I will look outside at the movement, the contrasts and the vibrancy. I have frequently felt like I had no choices because of generational learning. In this moment I can begin to create my own life.

Photo © 2017 Paul Burnett – Admiral's Arch, SA



Beauty

*I can claim and own my untouchable
beauty no matter what happened to me.*

**Photo © 2017 Jenny Robb - Azure Kingfisher, Kiah
River, NSW**



Gratitude

*I find my growing gratitude for my life
contains and holds me.*

Photo © 2017 Paul Burnett - Pambula Beach, NSW.



Listen to children

I am not the shameful ways I was treated.

*When I am safe, I can hold eye contact, stand tall,
listen to guidance and lead with my own growth.*

**Photo © 2017 Brett Clifton - Eagle Valley animal
sanctuary, NSW**



Simple gifts

I have lived through a lot. My life is not simple or easy. The form, shape and contours of flowers are simple gifts to me.

Photo © 2017 Kate Cranney - Satiny Bluebush



Love

*If I hold my own hand, settle my body, calm
my mind, lift my head and discerningly open
my heart, love is everywhere.*

**Photo © 2017 Paul Burnett - 'Heart' Island,
Whitsundays, QLD.**



Compassion

*I can respectfully enter the reality of another with
deep tenderness.*

I can also learn to do that with me!

**Photo © 2017 Brett Clifton - Eagle Valley animal
sanctuary, NSW**



Spontaneity

*I follow my own very long seasonal journey
encountering many obstacles and opportunities
along the way.*

Occasionally, I show my true spontaneous nature.

Photo © 2017 Rosalind Butt, Whale breaching, Eden, NSW



Colour

*I experienced my world as very unsafe. It was black,
white or grey. Now, my world has colour.*

Photo © 2017 Jenny Robb - Kiah River, NSW



Exquisite moments

*I can sometimes be very dark!
Exquisite moments let in my light.*

Photo © 2017 Greg Primmer - Light in clouds



Laughter

When I truly laugh, I find internal space.

**Photo © 2017 Paul Burnett - Kookaburra, Lake
Crackenback, NSW.**



Play

I can be present to fun, delight and play.

**Photo © 2017 Paul Burnett - Dolphins,
Kangaroo Island.**



Let go

I will allow myself to just let go.

Photo © 2017 Greg Primmer - Blue pool



Giving without expectation

*I can stand in dignity in the light.
I can give to myself and to others without
expectation.*

Photo © 2017 Greg Primmer - Trees bathed in light



Be all that you are

I have a right to be.

*I can love. I can grow. I will explore and I will
jump right into my life!*

**Photo © 2017 Brett Clifton - Eagle Valley animal
sanctuary, NSW**



Hope, grace and
dignity

*I am dignified, graceful and free,
allowing hope.*

**Photo © 2017 Jenny Robb - Water bird in
flight, Kiah River, NSW.**



Wholeness

*I have the chance to create my own
perspective and my own pathways to
wholeness, when I can see myself as
deeper, larger and wider than my trauma,
pain and loss.*

Photo © 2017 Annette Stewart, Naree night.



Speaking for joy, peace and evolution

I am allowing my living one second, one minute, one day at a time. Many have died. Many have no voice. Many just exist.

I can speak for joy, peace and evolution despite what might seem like insurmountable obstacles. I stabilise my base, look very directly with my peripheral vision and I just open my mouth.

Photo © 2017 Glen Norris, Rainbow Bee-eater.



Building helpful generational patterns

I can choose how I respond to the story of lives and relationships through the generations, including the experiences of suffering that shatter to the core. I can create my own plot, characters, themes and narrative that includes tragedy, healing and triumph.

**Photo © 2017 Paul Burnett, Northern Ben
Boyd National Park, Eden, NSW**



Caring for our world

I am astounded by these fascinating mammals who have their own devastating journey with trauma, pain and loss. In them, I see hope in caring for our world.

Photo © 2017 Rosalind Butt, Whale breaching, Eden, NSW



Awe

*I am speechless.
I am in awe!*

Photo © 2017 Paul Burnett, Pambula Beach, NSW.



Dr Jeannie Higgins

I have been privileged to work in personal, social and environmental advocacy and transformation for over 37 years. This picture captures some of my own joy in being in stunning natural surroundings.

The foundation for my part of this gift to you, lies in my theory, research, writing and clinical practice into complex trauma. I humbly send you deep tenderness, lightness and laughter from my heart to your heart.

www.evolvewithtrauma.com
www.higginspsych.com.au
www.higginspsych.com
www.facebook.com/evolvewithtrauma/

Photo © 2017 Jenny Robb, Kiah River, Eden.



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<http://www.bushheritage.org.au/about/about-us>

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Brett Clifton

<http://brettclifton.com/wordpress>

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<http://www.catbalou.com.au>

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"This book is a focused collection of beautiful images that are enriched by a reflective set of poetic words. These miscellany of philosophical moments shows the orientating nature of what language can offer to those who are traumatised. While these statements demand the effort of consideration, they can provide a path to transcendence which is a critical challenge of people who have been captured by the horror and fear that life can meter out. It is something that provokes and should be not be put down and forgotten."

Professor AC (Sandy) McFarlane

Director of the Centre for Traumatic Stress Studies, Professor of Psychiatry The University of Adelaide, Senior Psychiatric Adviser Phoenix, Australia, Past President International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies.

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