

# PREFACE



## Why This Book—Why Now? by Mary Hulnick

The moment Ron introduced himself to me, I became flustered, as I immediately knew he was going to be an extremely important person in my life . . . although I had no idea how. He was standing at the doorway to my classroom, waiting to ask if he could observe my class. He explained that he was an incoming doctoral student whose intention was to sit in on each of his upcoming professors' classes to get a sense of what he would be involved in throughout his three-year course of study. Quickly regaining my composure, I agreed.

Since the Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology at New Mexico State University was relatively small, it was certain that he would be in at least one of my classes each quarter, so I was not surprised to see him again at the start of the next term.

During the following three years, we gradually got to know each other. The bulk of our interaction was in the classroom, with an occasional office meeting to discuss a particular subject from a lecture. Of particular interest to me was the quality of Ron's consciousness. He raised thoughtful and evocative questions that required careful consideration before I answered. I eventually learned that he was a student of a spiritual teacher who had a small center some 65 miles away, to which he traveled each weekend to participate in the activities occurring there.

My weekends, on the other hand, were largely taken up by my rose garden. Although I was married, my husband and I had different interests, and mine involved visiting various nurseries and

tending to my flowers. It was becoming clear that we'd probably go our separate ways before too long.

Three years came and went, and when Ron graduated in May of 1978, the department offered him a two-year position as a visiting assistant professor, which he accepted. They gave him the only available office in our department, which happened to be right next to mine. Naturally, Ron and I became friends.

By this time, my husband and I had decided to divorce. For some unknown reason, the completion of the divorce proceedings went on for several months longer than anticipated, even though everything was agreeable to both parties.

Then one day I received two phone calls within ten minutes of each other. The first was from my attorney, advising me that the paperwork was complete and all I had to do was come by his office and sign the documents. The second was from Ron, telling me that his spiritual teacher had just made her transition to the other side. The two calls seemed connected by fate; one chapter of my life was closing, as a new one was immediately opening.

In July of 1978, Ron and I attended a seminar in Los Angeles where we met spiritual teacher John-Roger. We recognized him as a person of extraordinary consciousness and found ourselves meeting with him shortly after the presentation. We spoke of many things, including the possibility that Ron and I might marry. He thought that this was an excellent idea since, as he put it, "your energies match and you could do a great deal of good work together."

We were married in January of 1979, which unexpectedly resulted in our leaving the university. I was being groomed to be the chair of the department, and it was simply not possible for a chair to have a spouse as a faculty member in the same department. Our intention was to work together, so the prospect of Ron accepting a research position or a staff position at the counseling center (both of which he had in fact been offered) was unappealing. Having no idea what we were going to do, I resigned.

The good news was that this resulted in a yearlong honeymoon, during which we enjoyed our two dogs and two cats, read a lot, delighted in magnificent southwestern sunsets, and developed

many of the skills that would find their way into the programs we would eventually create.

At a certain point that year, we felt a need to meet with John-Roger, and it was then that he shared with us that several years earlier, he'd founded a university called Koh-E-Nor, which means "mountain of light." We didn't give this information much thought, as neither of us had any aspirations to start a school, nor any experience along those lines.

Several months later, I awoke quite early one day, having had a dream that Ron and I were to breathe life into the school John-Roger had mentioned to us. I shared my dream with Ron, and as soon as the clock struck 9 A.M., we called to request a meeting with John-Roger. That very next morning, we found ourselves driving to the El Paso airport, on our way to California to meet with him. We saw a beautiful double rainbow in the eastern sky that lasted for a long time, and took this as a portent of good things to come.

At the meeting, I shared my dream with John-Roger, and Ron and I both expressed our willingness to participate in Koh-E-Nor. He advised us that even though no classes had been taught, the school had been incorporated as a not-for-profit institution with the state of California. Similar to that famous line in *The Godfather*, he made us an offer we couldn't refuse: "If you've ever had a dream of starting your own school, and doing it the way you always wished it could be, here is the opportunity."

It didn't take very long to put our home in New Mexico on the market and move to California to embark on an amazing educational adventure. The first class graduated in 1982, 11 strong. Some 15 years ago, the name was changed to the University of Santa Monica (USM) and, as they say, the rest is history. Today, between 450 and 550 students participate in monthly classes in Spiritual Psychology.



During these 30 years, thoughts of authoring a book came up from time to time. We had decided not to write one since we couldn't conceive of how to effectively put into words what is essentially an experiential process. Then one night Ron had a vivid

dream in which John-Roger handed him a book with the word *Loyalties* written on the cover. The implication was clear. When we spoke with John-Roger, he simply said, “That wasn’t a dream.”

It’s been about 12 years since that “dream,” and *Loyalty to Your Soul* is the result. It contains many of the principles and some of the practices currently found in the two-year Master’s degree Program in Spiritual Psychology at the University of Santa Monica, where I serve as Chief Academic Officer and Ron is President.

This book is co-authored by the two of us. However, since many of the stories are derived from Ron’s experience, when the personal pronoun “I” is used, it’s Ron’s voice. When “we” is used, it is both of us speaking.

Regardless, all of the principles and skills presented are a compilation of co-created materials that we’ve spent the last 30 years developing.

And speaking of the word *we*, when this word is generally used, it may refer to humankind at large. We’ve done our best to distinguish between this meaning and when we’re talking about ourselves, and hope you’ll be able to discern which sense is intended in any given instance.

There’s one more piece of information you may find useful: the stories sprinkled throughout the text are there to illustrate a particular point, and there are several that function more like *koans* (paradoxes to be meditated upon that spark intuition and enlightenment). These tend to be longer; and their aim is to draw you, the reader, in so that the story itself works to bring about a change of heart to assist you in shifting your consciousness.

