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ANNE VAN GESSEL

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WRITTEN AND EDITED IN COLLABORATION WITH LYNSAY STANLEY, DEVELOPMENTAL EDITOR AND WRITING COACH,
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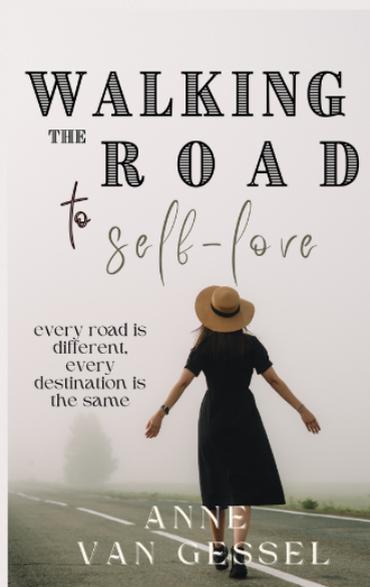
"VAN GESSEL'S book dives into the loneliness of neurodiversity and finding the path to understanding and accepting yourself for how your differences give you strength."



WALKING

THE ROAD TO

Self-love



WALKING THE ROAD to self-love

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PURCHASING DETAILS

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Check out her [author website](#) and successful blog, [Authentically Anne](#)

In life, we all crash our cars at least once, figuratively or literally. We make mistakes, we run after things we shouldn't. We take chances when we should have played it safe. But why? Why do we do these things that when we think of them in hindsight, make our cheeks go rosy with shame at best, and make our stomach queasy with regret at worst?

I'll tell you. It's because we all want to be loved. We as humans yearn to be loved; to be accepted and we tell ourselves that that is where we will find joy.

But, through getting lost, and having several car break-downs along the way I've learned that our first destination before we try to get anywhere else, should be to SELF-LOVE. We should all be on the road to self-love but not all of us are.

Come along for a ride with me as I recount my unique version of the car crash that caused me to realize all of this. And let me help you not make the same mistakes, as we both journey along the road to SELF-LOVE.



EXAMPLE QUESTIONS



ANNE VAN GESSEL

*"I want to color outside of the lines. I want to take up space. I want to feel the discomfort and realize that I'm ok, I'll be ok, I was always ok."
-ANNE VAN GESSEL*

1. I imagine that writing a book that gives such a genuine and real account of your struggle with dyslexia was hard. Can you tell me about that journey?

Yes, there are a lot of my personal experiences and thoughts in this book, which of course, were difficult to be open about. But as I began writing I found that the process was actually very freeing for me. In my book I talk a lot about the process of finding self-acceptance, but actually, the process of writing about self-acceptance has helped me to sustain and renew my own self-acceptance. Does that make sense?

2. You mention the words 'self-acceptance' a lot in your book, a complex term that can have different meanings for different people. What is your meaning?

My definition of "self-acceptance" is embracing the person you are. It is the ability to take a good look at yourself, and not look away or hide your perceived flaws. It is about feeling grounded; that no matter what happens, you have a feeling of peace that you can come back to. That peace comes from this knowledge of knowing yourself and trusting that you are enough, just the way you are. In a nutshell, it's a mix of confidence and humility.

3. If this book was a present, who would the card be made out to?

I would make the card out to anyone who has struggled with or is currently struggling with their dyslexia diagnosis (or any other type of learning disability).

4. When did you first call yourself a writer? What made you want to write?

I enjoyed writing, doodling, poem-writing and making bullet point lists (they were "phrases" back then) as a child. I love allowing my imagination to run free, the freedom to be creative and let the pen flow. I find sometimes I express myself better while writing than speaking. I think it's more recently that I am considering myself a writer (Year 2021).

5. Can you tell me why you wrote this book in particular? I imagine there were many ways that you could have written about your experiences with dyslexia.

My aspiration for this book was to further what I see as one of my purposes in life: to bring more equity into the world.

WALKING THE ROAD to self-love

every road is
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Equity is the idea that everyone can succeed, and one person's success doesn't take away from someone else's. I believe that when one person doesn't get the one thing they are wanting, it's just a matter of realignment. It's about the best fit, the highest good for all, and not what we think is "right" for the moment.

6. As a person who has dyslexia, have you ever been told that you would never write a book?

I haven't been told that before. However, what I have been told as an older kid/ young adult is how crappy my writing is. Perhaps that's similar to being told that I would never write a book?

7. What would you say was the most challenging part of actually writing the book? What kept you on track in your writing process?

Creating length and depth. My neuroly diverse mind wants to summarize the high-level points and move on to the next point, and then connect the dots of all the high-level points to make a grand picture. Getting into the details and recalling past stories was a challenge. I started my book with roughly twenty pages, and my editor was able to expand that through brainstorming and asking questions.

What kept me on course was a combination of my vision, the aspiration of my book, the message I am wanting to deliver, my magical editor, Lyndsay. From the beginning, I knew that I would deeply regret not finishing my book. I realize I have been playing it safe for most of my life. I have feared upsetting people and hurting peoples' feelings- which caused me to stay unheard and unseen. However, given the magnitude of impact, I want to make, being invisible and quiet no longer serves me or anyone else for that matter. I am thankful to the Universe for guiding me and to my Editor, Lyndsay for all her wisdom and dedication to my projects!

8. What books would you recommend on the topic of dyslexia and or neural diversity?

I would love to speak, train and coach more on empowering people to be their authentic self. Everyone has different strengths. We just need to figure out what they are. Everyone has a different definition of success, and to reach that success requires different skills.

9. What is next for you? Do you have any other writing projects on the go?

Right now, my furry companion, Pascal is teaching me many life lessons. I may be writing a book of what I've learned through my experiences with him. I also would like to write for the corporate audience, as there are some structures and systems in place, which I can see are not serving the highest good for all.

excerpt

Anne van Gessel



From a very early age, I've always been uneasy with who I am.

And anyone could have seen that walking into my college dorm room. From the edge of the floor to the rim of the ceiling, my dorm room walls were full of magazine cut-outs, pictures of women that I wish I looked like.

They were often displayed wearing revealing clothes at best and very little at worst. Deep down, I knew that I didn't want to wear clothes like that or portray myself in that way; nonetheless, they were pinned to my wall like statues of goddesses. They represented what I could never be.

I can remember one spring day. The trees outside my window had just begun to bud, and the birds were singing. Despite the beautiful weather and the soft comfort of birdsong, I remember spring as a stressful time in college. Spring meant the end of the year, which meant intensive studying and hours and hours of struggling to write just one paragraph of an essay.

Instead of writing or reading, I was just lying there on my soft homemade quilt and staring up at those pictures, dreaming of becoming something or someone else.

Then suddenly, I heard a very familiar rattle on my door. A friendly male face popped in. It was Charles, my best friend, whom I had met in my freshman year at college.

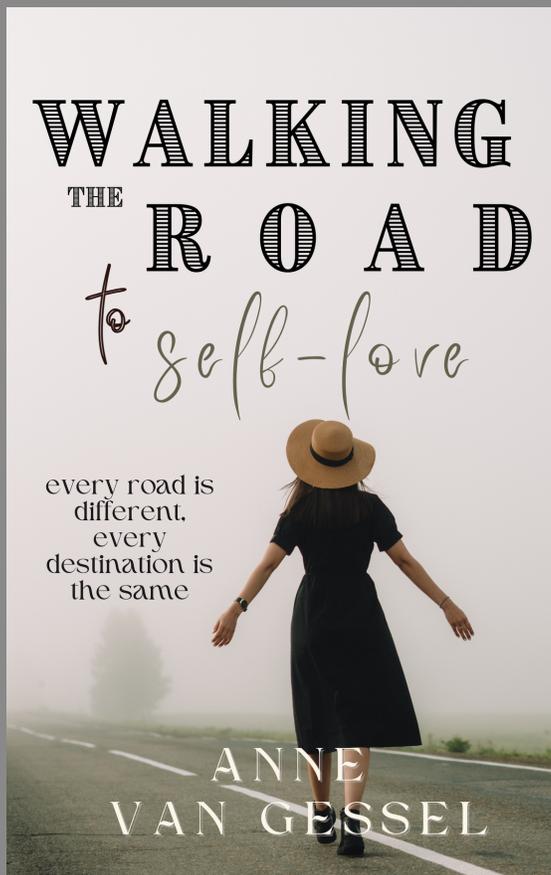
"Anne! Let's get out of here! It's beautiful outside!" I looked out the window and couldn't disagree.

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ANNE
VAN GESSEL



“Don’t you have some studying to do?”

“Meh, I’ll study later! Come on!” He talks like studying is so easy....

“Alright. But, only for a few hours.”

A few hours flew by with Charles. His light-hearted and easy-going manner turned everyday experiences into adventures and could make me forget my gloomy self-loathing air in just minutes.

“So, what are we going to do?” I asked as we made our way down an open-air corridor that leads to the college green.

“I think we should go shopping.”

“Shopping?” I’m not much of a shopper, Charles!

“Yes, shopping! Look at you!” I looked down at my outfit and was immediately confused. What’s wrong with it? I was wearing what I almost always wore: sweatpants, a workout tank top and a matching sweater. I was confused, and it showed.

“You’re always in sweats, Anne! You need to branch out!”

“Alright, what did you have in mind, Mr. Fashionista?”

“You’ll see!” He answered with a glistening smirk on his face. What could that mean?

I asked myself as he led the way to his car parked in the parking lot. I hopped into his car, and we headed to our typical stores – Ross and Nordstrom Rack.

“Here’s our first stop!” Charles announced as he held open the door to a women’s fashion store. The outside window had three very thin women-mannequins wearing low-cut belly tops and short shorts. Even though, of course, they weren’t real, everything about them said, “Look at me! I’m desirable.” I can remember looking at them, still confused by what I wanted to be.

“Charles, I don’t know about....”

“Oh, come on! It will be fun.” He easily persuaded me with a rough shove into the store.

Normally, I would have gone right to the athletic wear section but, Charles had other plans.

He led me straight to the women's fashion section. You know, the section with all of the short shorts and belly tops. I bet those women in the pictures skip the athletic section and go for the belly tops! Did I want to be like them or not? It was hard to say. All I knew was that I didn't want to be like me. Charles was right, and I needed a new look. He immediately started to walk up and down the two aisles and sort through clothes. He lifted top after top to show me what he liked.

I can say I was honestly very surprised by what he picked out: tight and stretchy belly tops with buttons running down the middle and a short jean skirt that barely attempted to cover the intended body parts. The most surprising find was a pair of what can only be called ,‘booty boots- knee-high black leather boots with an obnoxious heel that I knew would kill me if I wore them.

By the end of our visit in that store, I had tried on about four tight and short revealing dresses, two short shorts and three or four tops that, in my mind, didn't do the work that a shirt was meant to, i.e., cover body-parts.

As I was trying on these clothes, I continued to think about who I am and who I want to be. I thought about who I want other people to think I am. I know, complicated, right? I couldn't just look at these clothes and not wonder at my identity. I walked into that store not wanting to be me and not accepting my strengths and weaknesses. I came into that store hoping for a change.

“Alright, Anne, what are you getting?” Charles asked after I had finished my fashion show.

“I think I’m going to get this purple belly top and these shorts....” I said, holding up an outfit that reminded me of those beautiful and sexy women I wanted to emulate.

“You look amazing in those boots and that jean skirt!” Really? Wow, maybe I do!

“Ok, so I should get those too? What about this top?” I asked, holding up a mostly see-through flower pattern blouse.

“Yeah!That will totally show off your figure!”Charles looked excited at my transformation, and I was starting to be excited too. I could finally try on another image of myself. One that I might like. I went back into the change room and put on the entire ensemble for Charles, including the cripplingly high-heeled leather boots and studied myself in the mirror.

I didn’t see myself anymore; I just saw those women in the magazines that I had idolized.

Charles and I spent the rest of the day searching for more ensembles that would change my look. By the time I hobbled back onto campus wearing those leather boots and that revealing outfit, I had transformed into something else. I thought that transformation would excite me and make me happy. But as I felt the painful pulse in my feet and sensed the attention that the clothes were getting, I realized that I was just trying to be something that I could never be.

Just like I wanted to be beautiful, thin, and sexy, just like those women in the magazines, I also wanted to be outwardly intelligent.I wanted to be able to read out loud in class without hyperventilating. I wanted to be a straight-A student at the top of my class.But not everyone should wear short skirts and high heels.

My journey with dyslexia has taught me many things, one of which is the importance of finding self-acceptance. Finding the ability to accept yourself for exactly who you are and what you are achieving today is essential to any healing journey.It was essential for coming to grips with how dyslexia made me different from everyone else.

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ANNE VAN GESSEL is a published author of children's books and non-fiction books which focus on empowering people with dyslexia into living a more authentic life full of purpose, holistic wellness, and joy. Anne has been a guest speaker for the podcast 'The Spiritual Awakener' and frequently shares her wisdom on blog, *Authentically Anne*.





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100%

Women Lead
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Loyal subscribers
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Anne*

MY MISSION

When I look around I see a hurt and damaged world full of hurt and damaged people. My mission is to encourage others to promote healing and authenticity through my published works, through my self-help blog, *Authentically Anne*, and through speaking engagements. I want people to know that there are no barriers to success and self-love, only the ones that we place in our own way.

Qualifications

I have 7+ experience as a Corporate Trainer and a MBA with a specialization in Leadership. I am an ICF Certified Life Coach and have my own practice, Authentic Coaching, LLC. Published author of children's book "Cruz Finds His Way" & self-help book, "Walking the Road to Self-Love"

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