

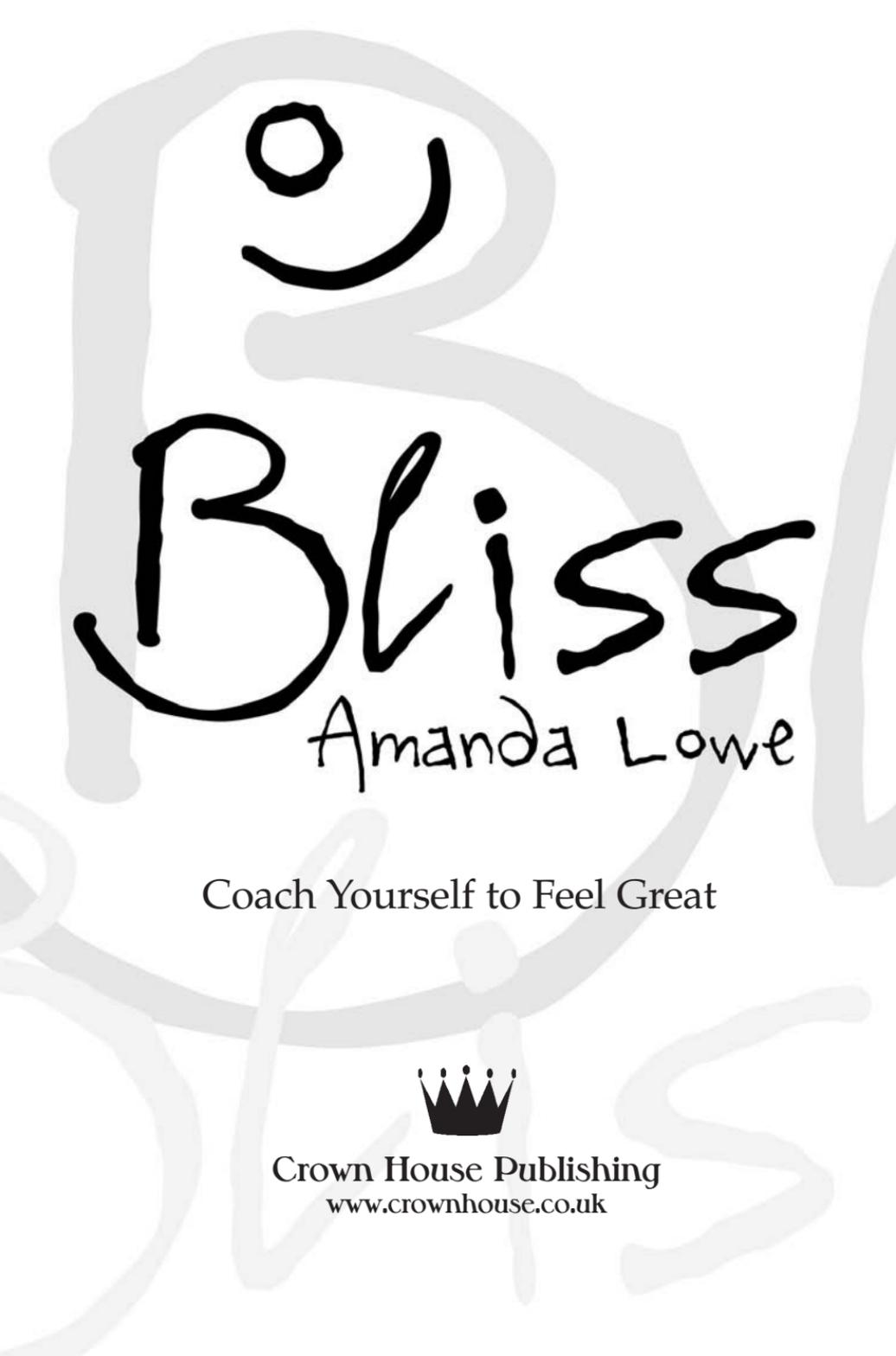


Bliss

Amanda
Lowe

"If there's one book to buy this year, this is it"

Prima Magazine



Bliss

Amanda Lowe

Coach Yourself to Feel Great



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Quick tests to find out how you are, what you are, who you are, why you think like you do, and where you need to go.

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Bliss

and Existence

Bliss exists – no question about it. Why would anyone want bliss in their lives? Why would anyone not want bliss in their lives? It's here, it's available and anyone can have it. You can have as much or as little as you want, you can give yourself a moment of bliss, a series of moments, or a lifetime. Bliss is completely self-regulated, readily obtainable, it needs no equipment, no financial investment, has no bad side effects, and it is all around us and within us. It's not illegal, you can't get arrested for being in possession of it, and it doesn't cost you a penny to have it.

People may try, but nobody can actually give bliss to you. You can't see bliss; you can't wrap it up in a box and present it to anyone.

There are people who believe that it would be impossible for them to ever achieve bliss because in order to be completely blissful, they would have to meditate for years, or they would have to commune with nature on a regular basis, or give all their worldly possessions away. Some people feel as if they need to martyr themselves before they can give permission for bliss to enter their lives.

Bliss isn't an ambition, a vocation or a direction, and neither is it age or sex dependent. It has nothing to do with education, philosophy or religion. Bliss is a state – a state of mind, a personal state. You can alter your state any time you want to at the drop of a hat, consciously or subconsciously.

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There are many roads to bliss. However there isn't a map in the world that will give you directions on how to get to bliss. You will recognise the unmistakable features of bliss when you get there; but you and I will both arrive there from different directions, and will experience it in very different ways.

Why is this? Remember Jack Spratt and his wife? How does that old nursery rhyme go?:

Jack Spratt would eat no fat, his wife would eat no lean,
and so between them both you see, they licked the platter
clean.

Jack Spratt and his wife liked completely different things. I used to think that they were a weird couple, one eating only the meat, and one eating nothing but the fat. But they both got what they wanted, they both ate what made them happy, and nothing was ever wasted. Pure simple bliss, arrived at from completely different directions, but simultaneously across a table.

Whatever bliss may or may not be, there is one thing for certain – bliss is subjective. A subjective state such as anger, happiness, fear, peace, boredom, or bliss, is entirely dependent on the individual. Something that might make me angry for instance, may have absolutely no effect on you emotionally. Similarly, I may be bored to tears by something that makes my best friend extremely happy and a situation that gives me unbounded happiness may paralyse her with fear.

This is the paradox of bliss – it is everywhere and nowhere, you can have it in an instant if you know where to look, or it could take years to materialise if you would prefer it that way. Bliss is not the result of external situations, and although you

can connect a feeling of bliss with any situation, person, place you wish, don't expect anyone else to make the same connection. They might make that connection, but you can't force or persuade anyone to feel blissful. The only rule for achieving bliss is that there are no rules.

Allowing yourself to feel bliss doesn't mean that you have to sit still for hours, burn joss sticks or get all esoteric – by all means do it if it's your thing – it's not important *how* you get to Heaven, or enlightenment, Nirvana, bliss, peace, or whatever you wish to call it. There's absolutely nothing to stop you ordering a big parade to march you in through the front door, but the ultimate destination is the same place whether you dance in through the garden, or you have sneaked in through the back door when nobody was looking.

Once you enter the house that is bliss, enlightenment, Nirvana, peace, you can become a permanent resident, or just nip in and out as the mood takes you. Entering a state of bliss can be a normal everyday occurrence for you, or it can be a major spiritual experience. Having easy access to bliss won't necessarily change your life, although it can be life changing.

There is an old Buddhist saying:

Before enlightenment, chop wood, carry water.
After enlightenment, chop wood, carry water.

So it is with bliss. You will always have to do the twenty-first century version of chopping wood and carrying water – life goes on and you are a vital part of it. It is up to you whether you quietly appreciate the existence of bliss and the fact that you can experience it as and when you wish, or whether you celebrate your easy access to the state of bliss, and let

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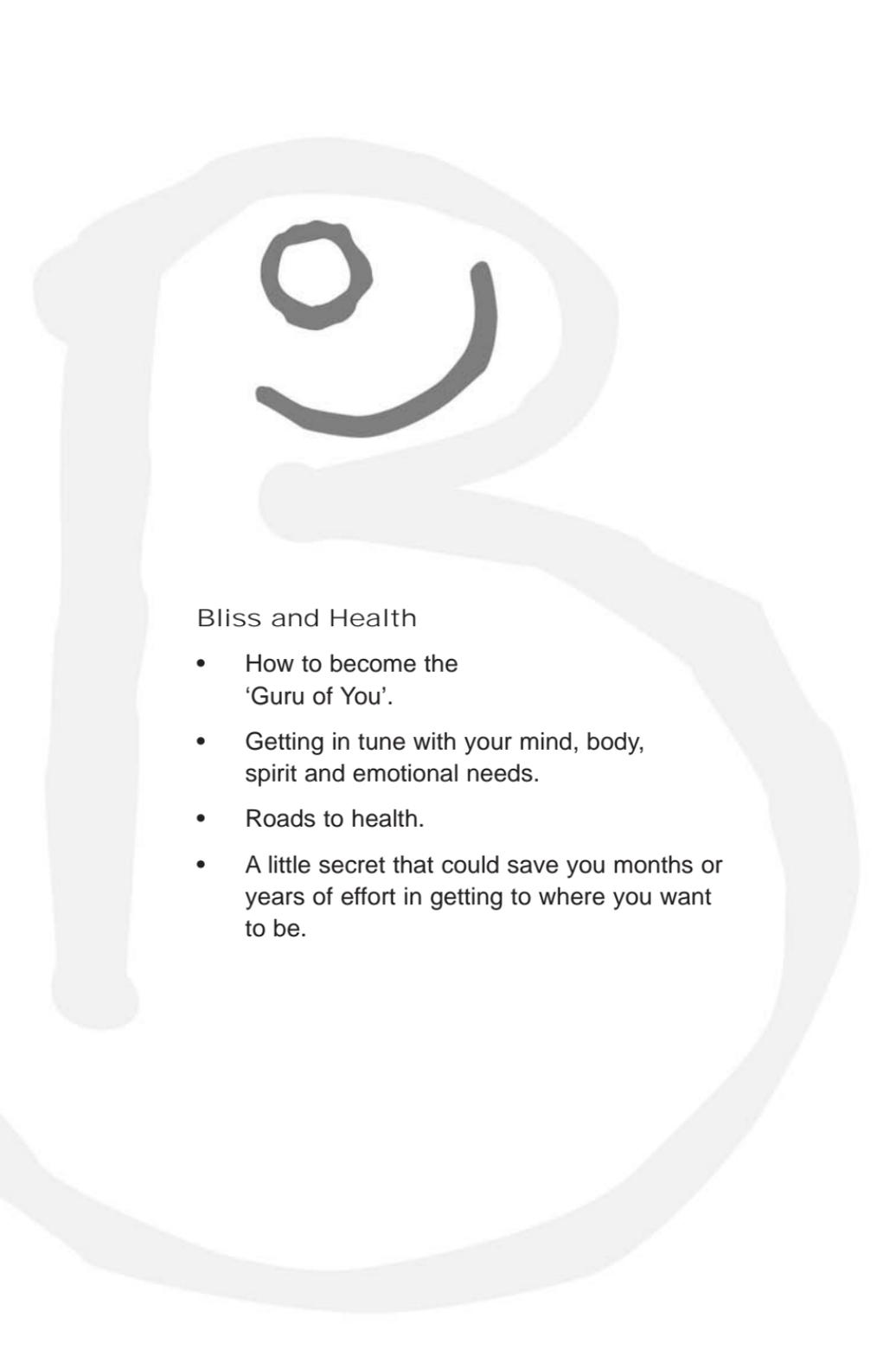
everyone know about it. I warn you though, people will get bored with hearing about it if you go on about it all the time.

In fact, once you have discovered your own personal key that will let you into the state of bliss anytime any place, anywhere, you may find it incredible, amazing or even frustrating that no-one else gives a hoot about it. Nobody else needs to be in the least bit interested about you and bliss, although everyone will notice the difference. If they are genuinely curious about the fact that you seem to be different in some way, tell them about this book, let me do all the leg work for you, and you can get on with chopping wood and carrying water. There are no rules, in fact you make your own rules, if you feel you need them, and you break them and change them as often as you need to.

I can't write you a prescription or offer you a step-by-step guide. All I can do is loosen the hold of some of your values, beliefs and attitudes that have, in the past prevented you from noticing bliss in your life. And then let you get on with it, whatever that 'it' is that you get on with.

This book isn't about motivating you into being a walking breathing powerhouse. I won't be telling you that after you have read this book your life will change in amazing positive ways. I'm not going to slap a fantastic rags-to-riches life story on the table, and promise that you too will become a resounding success in life if you do what I did. This book won't be brainwashing you into getting hyped up for success by *doing whatever it takes*.

I would hate you to be expecting one thing and getting something completely different, so if you are looking for a *Go for it, get motivated and conquer the world, Gung Ho!* read, then any



Bliss and Health

- How to become the 'Guru of You'.
- Getting in tune with your mind, body, spirit and emotional needs.
- Roads to health.
- A little secret that could save you months or years of effort in getting to where you want to be.

Bliss

and Health

Every now and then, my friend and I go on these lose weight, get fit campaigns – we've done all sorts, with various levels of success, we get fat, we get fit, we get pregnant, have babies, then it starts all over again. One particular morning my friend rings me up and says:

'I've just read this article that says if you have sex four times a week, not only will you get fit, but you are guaranteed to lose weight. How perfect is that? Only trouble is, I'll have to persuade my husband that I need three more shags a week to bring it up to four'.

I was trying to work out whether my man would settle for three less so that I could get it down to four times a week.

And what has this got to do with bliss and health?

We each maintain or abuse our health in different ways. What works for one person won't necessarily work for someone else. We all are aware of the basic rules for a healthy life – eat the right sort of foods, exercise, don't drink too much, don't smoke – but don't we all know someone who eats like a horse and is as thin as a rake? Don't we also know someone who eats all the right things, exercises, doesn't drink or smoke but still looks unhealthy? And there are also those people who never get ill, and their opposites, who seem to be ill all the time and practically live at the doctor's.

So, what about those diet books? I've read about all kinds of different diets, all claiming to be 'The Answer To Your Problems', all rhapsodising about how much weight you can lose and how good you will feel, and is it just me, or have you noticed how they all seem to contradict each other? – low fat, fat and proteins, no carbohydrates, carbohydrate rich, vegetables only, fruit only, juices only, cabbages!

These diets all carry scientific evidence proving why and how they work. So how is it that they work for some people and not for others? When my friend and I tried a high protein diet, she got on fine with it, lost weight and felt great. I, on the other hand felt more energetic, but this was completely counterbalanced by my newly developed astoundingly bad breath and painful shits like large hard boulders. Sorry about that, way too much information there. But we both followed exactly the same rules and got very different results.

I suppose it all boils down to the fact that we are all living, breathing human beings, not machines. It isn't simply a case of putting good fuel in, oiling the squeaky bits and regular check ups. These are all important, don't get me wrong, but it goes far, far deeper than that.

Let's consider machines for a moment. Every year I take my car for its MOT. I don't even know what MOT stands for, but I know when I pay my mechanic for getting everything fixed, fettled and running smoothly and get the car back from the garage, I will feel safe driving it. I feel confident that my car won't let me down, and what's more, I have the certificate to prove it. However, this certificate only proves that my car is in full working order. This is not a guarantee that nothing will happen to the car. It doesn't take into consideration other cars on the road, other drivers, driving conditions, or any other

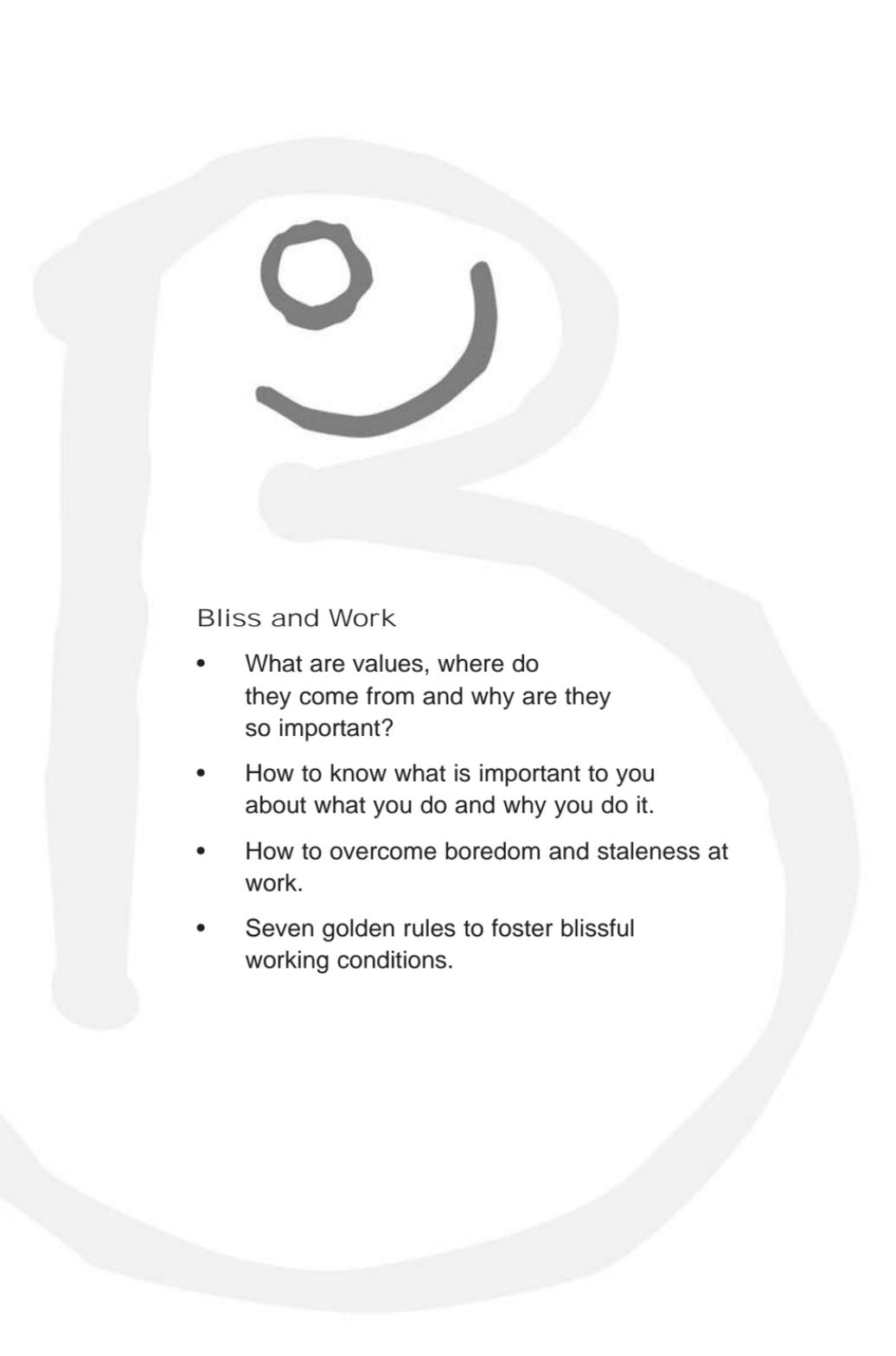
unforeseen obstacles. Even the fact that I am driving will not promise a risk-free drive. I may be the world's best driver, but even I can be distracted by an attack from a wasp, or a particularly insistent sneeze.

The fact that a car is in tip-top working order has nothing to do with its chances of breaking down. It can only lessen the probability somewhat.

You know how it is when you are in a car and sometimes you may hear a sound that is not supposed to be there. Perhaps your car just feels different or strange to drive. Maybe there is a light flashing on the dashboard and you have no idea what it is indicating, you try to ignore it, but you know deep in your heart of hearts that it shouldn't be flashing like that. I have been in these sort of situations more times than I care to admit to. So, as an unqualified expert in such matters I will run by you what my reactions tend to be.

The first thing I do is swear. Sometimes a lot, sometimes a little, depending on who is in the car with me and what I think may be happening to my car. Then I ignore the situation and hope it will go away. Except that I'm not ignoring it, I am intensely scrutinising every possibility that could point to it having nothing to do with the car itself – Is it the driving conditions? Too hot? Cold? Road surface noise? Snow? Rain? Leaves? Is it someone else's car pumping all that smoke out? Will it just go away?

When I run out of possibilities and reluctantly concluded that it has nothing to do with any outside influences, then I deduce that there must be something wrong with my car. At this point in the proceedings I know that I am faced with several choices:



Bliss and Work

- What are values, where do they come from and why are they so important?
- How to know what is important to you about what you do and why you do it.
- How to overcome boredom and staleness at work.
- Seven golden rules to foster blissful working conditions.

Bliss

and Work

My concept of what work was all about began in childhood. My father would go out to 'work' whatever that was, and he would come home and read the newspaper. He would have longer holidays than we had, and once a year, he would mark papers. Through the eyes of a five-year-old, that was 'work'.

Remember the time at school when you have to write about your family?:

'What does your daddy do, Amanda?'

'My daddy is a Psychologist.'

I had no idea what he actually did, just what he was, and nobody at the school could spell Psychologist.

'Where does your daddy work?'

'At the university.'

Another big word, and I had even less idea what the university was.

'Yes, but what does he do?'

All I knew about what he did was that whenever we went to visit him at work, he never seemed to do anything. He would show us wonderful things, like the model of a brain he kept

on his desk and the box of tiny wooden bricks that he kept under it. Sometimes he would let us play with writing our names in ticker tape from the computer. Do you remember those old computers, and the little trays that collected the hole punches? I used to love stirring those tiny dots with my finger, being very careful not to get them everywhere.

My father's office was at the top of an old building, up three or four flights of stairs and there was a sort of ancient wooden circular map of the world about half way up the stairs that you could spin. When you spun it, it would make a peculiar grinding noise. Every time I went up those stairs, I spun that wooden map. Even going up to his office was exciting – all those stairs, the strange map, and the smell of beeswax. One time, the geography department on the floor down from where my father's office was had an exhibition of stones brought from the moon. We were taken to have a look at these amazing stones that nobody else in my school even knew existed. I remember looking at them and thinking:

'Either the moon isn't really made of cheese, or somebody has dug these up from a quarry'.

But how fantastic, looking at stones from the moon. Those stones in front of me, higgledy-piggledy in their glass cabinet had once stood higgledy-piggledy on the surface of the moon. I looked at the moon that night, and looked for the gaps where those stones had come from.

Another thing about my dad's office was that he had put pictures that we had drawn or painted on the walls. His office also had a blackboard that we could scribble on, or make chalk clouds with the eraser, because nothing that he had written on the board was ever important. And there were

At last, *Bliss*! A direct, funny, engaging and colourful book on a subject that is dear to all our hearts—happiness and fulfilment. Bliss is a state of perfect joy and this book offers many tools to help you achieve it, presented in a down-to-earth, pragmatic and accessible way.

Life isn't about how far you can go, how high you can jump and how much money you can earn. It is about recognising joyous feelings that happen to real people in the real world every day. It is about tapping into those feelings and enhancing them to bring bliss into every part of your life.

Bliss doesn't make wild promises but through its humour and practical, step-by-step guidance it challenges and enables you to experience a higher state of enjoyment. It lets you be whatever you want to be.



Amanda Lowe has a blissful life. She should do, she's spent the last twenty years discovering how to experience it, legally. Her expertise is encapsulated in her first book so you can now experience bliss in your communications, family, relationships, workplace and many other aspects of life.

"For anyone who feels stuck in the proverbial rut, *Bliss* is a hilarious, interactive journey towards happiness and fulfilment. ... *Bliss* is a joy to read."

Future Perfect Magazine

"A very interesting 'inside out' way of looking at the bigger picture. A good read."

Executive Woman Magazine

"*Bliss* is brilliant—when you're feeling a bit down in the dumps, it lifts your spirits and most important of all, it really makes you giggle."

B Magazine

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