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New writer is aiming to inspire us to be heroes

FEATURE

A piece of graffiti on Bedford's suspension bridge helped change the life of an author whose first book is receiving glowing reviews. GARRICK ALDER talks to the writer whose imaginary talks with flowers show people how to become more fulfilled.



Lynn Serafinn next to Bedford's suspension bridge

In 2006 Lynn Serafinn – then 52 – was following a stable career as assistant director of performing arts at Bedford College when she found an enigmatic phrase written on a town centre bridge.

What that graffiti said is something that she shares with readers in the book it helped to inspire.

As Lynn crossed the bridge every day to get to work, she found the words echoing in her mind.

She said: "Despite being reasonably prosperous, I really wasn't living the fulfilling life that I wanted. Eventually, I decided that I ought to quit my job and start writing.

"I had always been the sort of person who only wrote when inspiration struck, but I figured that if you write that way you won't get very much done. I decided that I had to approach writing as though it were my job and that means writing every single day."

Lynn initially sat down to write short stories but soon realised that her stories had an overarching theme.

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She said: "This wasn't just a collection of short stories; it had structure and a deeper meaning. I wasn't quite sure what that deeper meaning was, but it was my job to look for it."

What she discovered she was writing was a set of metaphors, based around four types of symbolic flower. The four flowers are the rose (symbolising 'giving'), the iris (symbolising 'receiving'), the daffodil (symbolising 'becoming') and the lily (symbolising 'being'). The result was a book called *The Garden of the Soul: Lessons from Four Flowers that Unearth the Self*.

Lynn said: "I believe that all people are heroes in their own lives and that we are all always hearing the call to that heroism that is uniquely ours.

"My job is to inspire people to be the heroes of their own lives. We fear the judgements of others so we don't act on what we want. I heard a quote from Bill Cosby that summed it up: 'I don't know the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everybody'. We also imagine that we are the only people in that situation so sometimes we forget to ask for help. I don't like to use the word 'mistake' but I think that the greatest gift that we can give ourselves is self-acceptance.

"To me the ultimate tragedy would be for someone to reach the end of their life and never have been the person they were meant to be. It sounds simple because it's true. The truth is always simple."

These are principles that Lynn puts into practice as a certified professional 'transformation coach' and qualified teacher. She aims to help people find and express their 'authentic voice' in their life, work, and relationships. While she works with all kinds of people, she specialises in working with holistic practitioners, creative artists and others who are trying to live slightly unconventional lifestyles.

She also hosts a weekly Talk Radio show in which a panel discusses 'personal empowerment, life purpose, balance of mind, body and spirit'. And she administers a Bedford Wellness Circle, the next meeting of which is on Monday at Park Road West Methodist Church. The aim of this circle is to mix members of the public with holistic practitioners, to spread awareness of transformational methods.

And what next? Lynn is already well advanced in work on her second book: *The Path of Least Resistance to the Self*. This promises to be more prosaic than *The Garden of the Soul* and is to be published later this year.

Lynn's personal journey promises to be one worth watching.

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