

On the Wings of Inspiration: Exploring Our Inner Life through Interpretive Symbols

Cheryl Metrick

Jeree Wade

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The balance between two authors brings accessibility to this guide to creativity and spiritual growth.

This inspirational workbook provides a model for using creative expression as a tool for personal and spiritual growth. The authors of *On the Wings of Inspiration* succeed in offering a readable and congenial template for self-exploration through creativity.

The authors balance each other well. Cheryl Metrick's intuitive drawings, poems, personal essays, and affirmations show how a sensitive person can tap into her own world of symbols and use them to enhance self-understanding. Jeree Wade's contribution to the book extends the process from the personal to the universal through her understanding of Jungian psychology and its teachings on the power and universality of symbols, archetypes, and the collective unconscious. Her thoughtful commentaries, contemplative questions, and workbook exercises help the reader see how dreams and fantasies partake in a universal human symbology that spans time and cultures to link the conscious and unconscious realms.

Metrick's drawings are expressive and colorful; that they are not those of a trained artist may serve to encourage others without formal art education to take up the pencil or brush and explore intuitive drawing. The written entries that follow are highly personal, engaging, and conversational and give non-drawing readers the option of a verbal template for self-exploration.

Metrick's work would benefit from editing to eliminate redundancies, such as "but instead to look *inside* myself—within me." The prose also has a tendency to ramble: "Therefore, since I am continually looking for answers, I do spend a lot of time looking within these days—also looking around the house, in my purse, and in the car for whatever, but I digress." Cliché terms and phrases, such as "don't get me wrong," do little to enhance the message, and the text exhibits awkward sentences, like, "I've so far made two other professional recordings since."

Wade's commentaries, contemplative questions, and workbook-type exercises are sensitive and well thought out; they are intended to lead readers to a deeper awareness of their own dreams and fantasies and understand how they connect to those of other minds throughout history. These contributions would also benefit from thorough editing. While the writing is generally clear and conversational, it is marred by awkward sentences, including this one: "To the point of *greatness in evil*, we know of the infamous notoriety of many who consciously intended and focused on evil goals." Fragmentary sentences and grammatical errors ("Again from Siegel, he addressed...") as well as unattributed quotes ("As long as the Flame burns, Being exists" should be remedied. Also, Jung's "collective unconscious" connotes something far removed from "collective unconsciousness," which is used in error.

A dove in full flight would make a more meaningful, and certainly more appealing, front cover image than the disembodied wings that are used, and the table of contents could be streamlined to eliminate redundancy. The back cover copy, while informative, is awkwardly written, and the layout would be improved by the addition of brief author

biographies and photos.

Overall, the deep respect and admiration between the two authors brings an element of sweetness and light to their collaboration; their book will provide a comforting and encouraging space for readers who may be in crisis or are embarking on their first explorations into their inner world and seeking wise companionship for the journey.

KRISTINE MORRIS (January 30, 2014)

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