

The Thought Finder: "Who Am I?"

Mark Harrison

Jenny Grant

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The Thought Finder is the result of a collaborative effort between two extraordinary people. Mark Harrison, who is severely dyslexic, believes that he might have autistic traits—conditions that have left him unable to write in a way that others can understand. Harrison claims that due to an abusive childhood, he developed a rich inner world and a sensitivity that allows him to perceive people's emotions, read their thoughts, and know in advance who will enter his life. Coauthor Jenny Grant is one such person. Harrison writes that he had dreams of her many years before the two met.

Trained as an osteopath, Grant has had a lifelong interest in health and well-being, the mind-body connection, and what she calls the nature of the human soul. She believes that a silent retreat brought her both a deeper self-knowledge and the recognition that Harrison had been her dreamworld companion for many years.

Harrison makes it clear that without Grant's collaboration, his book would have been completely unintelligible. Casting himself as a "thought finder," Harrison, together with Grant, explores topics that include self-knowledge and self-esteem, physical and emotional abuse, the loss of a child, the pain of always being seen as different, loneliness, suicidal ideation, and the absolute necessity of bonding through loving human touch.

The Thought Finder, designed to demonstrate the manner in which the mind perceives and attempts to make sense of the world, is filled with questions and answers, stories, puzzles, poems, and other devices meant to lead readers to deeper self-awareness. Directions are given so that readers can follow number-based codes, fonts and colors, and other clues to make fragmentary thoughts complete.

Approached in the conventional manner, the book makes for confusing and chaotic reading, but the authors give ample warning that their work must be approached in a different way. "This is not a book that you read," they warn. "It's a book that you feel with your heart, and when you do, it will talk to you with a truth that connects us all."

Unfortunately, the book's complexity might turn readers away, as will its enigmatic and sometimes confusing writing style. This sentence about the number ten is an example: "Ten is the first step in practicing what one has not learned in the understanding of the knowing knowledge, standing in the stillness of the nothingness." And many errors in grammar and syntax add to the confusion, as in this sentence: "It is not until you walk in the footsteps of whoever do you understand why."

In spite of these issues, the book is visually pleasing. Its gorgeous front cover art, layout, and overall design make for an enticing visual trip through its pages.

KRISTINE MORRIS (March 28, 2013)

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