

the
KNOWING

*Eleven Lessons to Understand
the Quiet Urges of Your Soul*

**SAJE DYER &
SERENA DYER PISONI**

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INTRODUCTION

Returning to the Knowing

“The principal goal of parenting is to teach children to become their own parents . . . You are to be their guide for a while, and then, you will enjoy watching them take off on their own.”

DR. WAYNE W. DYER,
*WHAT DO YOU REALLY WANT
FOR YOUR CHILDREN?*

We had tears in our eyes, overcome with the thrill of seeing our two infant boys meet each other for the first time. When Forrest and Julian spontaneously locked arms, we captured the moment in about two hundred photographs in less than a minute. With that pure joy came a deep sense of Knowing—all we had been through in our lives and especially the past four years had led us to this glorious, perfect, bittersweet moment—bittersweet because we both wished our father could see this—the little brother-cousins together.

Now that our dad was gone, for the first time ever, we wanted to learn and apply what he had spent his entire life teaching, and he was no longer here to talk

to about it. We experienced an acute sense of pain upon realizing that now that we had really challenging things happening in our lives and needed his message more than ever, he wasn't going to be here to supply it. We were suddenly aware that it was up to us. If we wanted to become committed to remembering the principles Dad taught, committed to remembering who we were inside, despite our worlds falling apart and transforming around us, we had to do it alone.

In this book, we share how the heartbreaking catalyst of our dad's death helped us awaken from what Jung termed the "morning" of our lives—focused on personal, physical, and material accomplishments—progress into the afternoon, and move toward evening as we make an inward shift of intention toward a higher spiritual understanding and connection within ourselves and with the world.

When we were children, everything was easy. As teenagers, we hit choppy waters but were able to learn to adjust the sails and keep going. The lessons our dad spent his life teaching millions of people seemed like teachings we could apply to our own obstacles, mostly because, unbeknownst to us at the time, compared to so many, our lives had been pretty easy. Learning to apply his work when it felt like life shit the bed? And having to do it without Dad a phone call away? That felt like drowning.

Each of us is born with the Knowing—the ability to connect to our divine, best self—and when we do, our lives align, things make sense, and we realize our purposes both small and enormous.

We didn't discover our Knowing; we returned to it.

Dr. Wayne Dyer was beloved by millions of fans around the world. Oprah called him the Father of Motivation, and strangers regularly stopped him on the street and openly wept as they told him how he'd transformed their lives, but to us, the youngest daughters of Wayne and Marcelene Dyer, he was the person we relied on for advice and gas money—our profound yet goofy dad. When he died suddenly in 2015, we were all blindsided by grief and felt unprepared to navigate life's challenges and conflicts without his guidance.

The experience launched us on an adventure from loss to understanding. Like anyone who finds themselves at a personal crossroads, we had the choice of being broken or transformed by the experience of our father's death. He'd always been there for us when we needed him, and we came to discover he still was, just in a different way. We recommitted to the teachings our dad raised us with, and our mom, too, learning to trust what we'd been rooted in from birth while branching higher and higher toward faith.

As we came to realize and metabolize our father's teachings with a new urgency, intimacy, and power and applied them to our lives—the ups and downs of relationships, young motherhood, family, careers, and crises—we ultimately found Dad's wisdom—the Knowing—was embedded in our DNA.

When Christian Nestell Bovee wrote, "Kindness is a language the dumb can speak and the deaf can hear and understand,"¹ he was speaking of the Knowing. When Albert Einstein said, "I believe in intuitions and inspirations. I sometimes feel that I am right. I do not know that I am,"² he was speaking of the Knowing. In the final

volume of Baird Thomas Spalding's *Life and Teaching of the Masters of the Far East*, a series of books our dad was devouring right before he passed away, he underlined, "There is a light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. That light is eternal, All-Powerful and Imperishable. Only that which is subject to birth is subject to death. The Light is the extension of God into man. It is not born nor can it die."³ *That* is the Knowing.

Dad often told Saje he knew she had a big dharma or purpose to fulfill. "You're not quite ready yet; you still have a tendency to want to be right rather than kind. But I know that in ten years, you will be ready to start doing what I'm doing. Just place it in your imagination." It took our dad leaving his physical body as a catalyst for this to start to happen for both of us. Not that we feel like we can even come close to filling his shoes, but we are beginning to trust that it's possible to serve others through books and connecting with groups. We're starting to see the "how" and the path.

A few years ago, when Serena and Dad came up with the idea to write a book together, a book about how we were raised and what it was like to grow up in the Dyer household, Serena felt daunted yet thrilled. She wasn't sure she could adequately express what it was like to have him and Mom as parents in only ten chapters, but he was so encouraging, so loving. He worked with her, often saying, "Serena, you have a gift for telling stories. Just tell your stories, and it will be perfect." Serena felt his love and pride in her.

Dad and Serena agreed to name the book they wrote *Don't Die With Your Music Still in You* because for her,

it was the most important lesson he taught. Dad came here with music to play, and he played it so loudly that it changed the world. One man, with some really big ideas, transformed the lives of millions of people for the better. Our dad, with his love of teaching, sharing, and storytelling, helped millions improve their circumstances. It is now our promise to Dad that we will not die with our music still in us. We carry on—it is our Knowing—and will do everything we can to further his message, as he asked each of his children to do in their own way.

This book is our song for him and for everyone, because we're all born with a Knowing—an inner compass, the quiet urgings of our soul that guide us as if randomly, but in truth, by the spoken whisper of God, the Universe, divine energy, whatever you want to call it. No matter how far removed we might become from heeding the guidance we were born to receive, it is still there, for every single one of us. Returning to our Knowing is only a matter of giving love, offering kindness, and paying attention.

We are grateful to have parents who shared things like that. We are grateful they taught all eight of their children to go within and find God. Grateful that they taught us to be open to other people's ideas and ways of living. They taught us to leave the judgment to someone else and, instead, to treat others with compassion, understanding that everyone is doing the best they can. Most important, we are grateful they taught us that even in death, we are shedding one coat and putting on another. Our dad told us he would never leave us, even when he departed this earthly realm, and we know this is true. He always

reminded us that when the day came and he was gone and our hearts ached for him, we should think of him as though he is just in the next room, the very room from which we all originate and will one day return.

CHAPTER I

What Is This Teaching Me?

“We live knowing that our true being is deathless. This is a great comfort, as we can leave sorrow behind and be inspired.”

DR. WAYNE W. DYER,
LIVING AN INSPIRED LIFE

THE CALL

The most difficult year of our lives didn't make or break us—it revealed us.

Serena was the one to get that first awful phone call. It was August 30, 2015, and much of our family was at Mom's in Boca Raton, celebrating the birthdays of our sisters Sommer and Skye. Serena noticed that she'd received a voicemail from Dee, our dad's friend, coauthor, and assistant on Maui, where he lived most of the time and where our family spent summers. Dee followed the message with a text asking Serena when she had last talked to Dad. And then another. It was starting to feel urgent, so in the middle of the celebration, Serena called Dee back.

When she answered, Dee said she was standing in the hallway at the Westin Hotel in Kaanapali, where our dad had been staying while his condo was being renovated. Dee sounded frightened and anxious as she waited for the security guard to unlock Dad's door. This was weird, because Dee had a key, but for some reason, the deadbolt had been flipped (something Dad never did), and she couldn't get in.

As Serena waited for Dee to tell her they had opened the door, she knew in her heart something was wrong. Very wrong. It was like being in the climax of a movie, but the image was out of focus, the sound was blurry, and she couldn't fully grasp what was happening. Dee came on the phone to say they'd gotten the door unlocked, there was a shuffle on the other end of the line, and then she screamed, "*Wayne!* He's on the floor! He's on the floor!"

Serena didn't want to accept what came next, yet at the same time, the only thing she could do was press that phone to her ear so she could hear it and hear it and hear it, as if that would somehow force things to make sense as Dee repeated, "Oh my God, Serena . . . oh my God . . . *oh my God.*"

"Dee, do CPR!"

Serena heard Dee take a steadying breath before she said, "If you want me to do CPR, I will do it for you. But if you were seeing what I am seeing, you would understand . . ."

In that moment, Serena knew she would love Dee for the rest of her life, because she had heard Serena's pain and would have acted on her behalf to give her comfort, even though it was a lost cause.

As they figured out what was happening, our mom, Marcelene, our sisters, Stephanie, Skye, and Sommer, and our brother Shane, and everyone who was at the birthday party in the Florida house began sobbing—everyone was devastated, yet nobody was ready to accept what was unfolding. In the next instant, Serena was on the phone with a police officer.

“What is your relationship to the deceased, Ms. Dyer?” he asked.

“Who is deceased?”

“Oh, I thought you knew . . . I am sorry to tell you that this man is deceased, and we need to collect information.”

Serena handed the phone to our mom. She couldn’t talk while simultaneously processing that our dad, who we’d each been in touch with via text or phone or email just the day before, was no longer breathing. Serena pulled herself together enough to call Saje.

Saje had returned home to New York City two days earlier after a trip through Australia and New Zealand with our dad, Skye, and Skye’s husband, Mo. She was a bit jet-lagged but nonetheless excited to be back and to start her next semester studying for a master’s degree in psychology at New York University. She was sitting on the couch with Anthony (her then-boyfriend, now husband), who was engrossed in a preseason football game on TV, when the phone rang. She remembers thinking it was strange that Serena would call during the family celebration.

As soon as Saje answered the phone, she could tell something was horribly wrong. Serena’s tone of voice and energy sent terror through her. Serena asked Saje if she

was alone, and when she told her she was with Anthony, Serena said to sit down. Saje was confused but did as she asked. That was when Serena spoke the words that have resounded in our minds more times than we can count: “Dad doesn’t have a pulse.”

Saje didn’t understand what Serena was saying; she panicked, screaming, “What do you mean? What do you mean? *What do you mean, he doesn’t have a pulse?* Are they trying to give him a pulse? Are they giving him a pulse?” (Later, when Saje asked Serena why she had phrased it “Dad doesn’t have a pulse,” Serena said it was because she could not utter “Dad is dead.” Those words were impossible for her to say aloud or even comprehend, and she simply couldn’t bring herself to do it.)

Anthony turned off the television and rushed to Saje. At this point, she had dropped the phone and stopped speaking. She could not understand what was going on, and could no longer formulate cohesive thoughts. She was hyperventilating as the life she knew evaporated. Serena screamed through the speaker, asking, “Are you okay? Are you still there?” but Saje couldn’t make her arms move to pick up the phone.

Anthony comforted Saje while simultaneously retrieving the phone. He asked Serena what was going on. At this point, Saje still thought that Dad was going to be okay; he must be in an ambulance or being resuscitated. She got ahold of herself and asked Anthony what Serena was telling him. He looked at her, tears streaming down his face, and said, “Saje, I’m so sorry. Your dad died.”

It’s impossible for Saje to fully convey what that moment was like. It is difficult not only because she