

JUMP FALL

"A must read if you want
MORE for your kids!"

Sarah MacDonald

FLY

How one family abandoned traditional education, embraced the freedom of childhood, self-directed learning and play to better prepare their children for the rapidly changing future

LEHLA ELDRIDGE and
ANTHONY ELDRIDGE-ROGERS

Praise for JUMP, FALL, FLY

Every parent, teacher and educationalist should read this! This is a well-written book in a style that makes you connect with the authors immediately. This makes the content very accessible and trust worthy. This book is not about a theory but about personal experience(s) in parenting and education (unschooling is education - even if it sounds contradictory!). My life's career has been in education and reading this book rightly challenged some of my thoughts and views. This is a book well worth reading by parents and educationalists alike. It wakes you up to the obvious on the one hand and to educational challenges on the other.

- Ewout Van-Manen FRSA

Lehla is a brave experimenter in all things family and she inspires each of us to question why we do things the way we do them.

- Penelope Trunk

Lehla and Anthony are offering something so beautiful and necessary for the world, and I'm glad they are willing to do that. I'm loving this book. I've literally read the sections about Anthony's childhood/career three times over because there is so much resonance for me. Plus, I just love the way he explains and connects things.

- Akilah S Richards an intersectional feminist writer, radical self-expression advocate digital nomad and unschooling parent

A lovely book. Perfect for the transition from Home Education to unschooling, had tried Sandra Dodds - this one is much better

- Unschooling Parent

Jump, Fall, Fly

I read *Jump, Fall, Fly* and found it extremely interesting. Written with tremendous love, honesty and humour. It was a pleasure to read and certainly confronted my ideas of schooling and it has challenged my thinking about the institution of school. I thoroughly recommend this book to anyone who is looking to an alternative way of teaching their children.

- Ian Phillips

It couldn't have come at a better time for me. I have 2 girls of 3 and 6 years and have been interested in alternative education since my first was born. I have read countless books and articles on home schooling, and have recently been teetering on the edge of unschooling as it seems work for our family as a whole, but I had numerous fears and doubts as well as pressure to do the 'normal' thing from close family. I downloaded this book after Googling 'unschooling' and finding an article written by Lehla Eldridge. At page 79, I turned from a 'relaxed home schooler' into an unschooler! So much of this book is relevant to our family and I cannot recommend it highly enough for anyone who is interested in, or is already, unschooling.

- Nikki Newton - parent

Not a how-to manual . . . more of signpost, maybe a beacon . . . My daughter is currently happy in the school system but that hasn't always been the case. Since finishing this book I actually feel as if I might have some sort of clue as to how to 'go another way' if we find ourselves marooned again. Some interesting questions asked re mainstream education and its place in the world at this time . . . it's quite odd how little has changed in the last 100 years in terms of how we teach kids in school especially with all the advances and breakthroughs that have been made in technology in my lifetime. Maybe change is gonna come . . .

- Paula O'Grady - parent

Jump, Fall, Fly

A must read if you want MORE for your kids! “The uncorked child is one that has not been suppressed, oppressed, controlled and crushed. Yes, extreme words but let’s not beat around the bush. Children everywhere are getting crushed and coerced in so-called service of their future success. This oppression, often delivered under the banner of being in the child’s best interests can become a burden from under which they may never become free. Suppress a child at your peril for they may never get over it.” - Anthony Eldridge-Rogers. YES! Schooling damages children. Or at the very least, limits their potential. But making a change is SCARY. Especially if you don’t know anyone else doing it! That’s what this book is for. It will take you through a personal account of how one family began their unschooling journey, and the amazing life of freedom you can give your children. If you need a boost of confidence or courage to be able to take the leap, then this will help!!

- Sarah Macdonald blogger at *Happiness is Here*

A thought provoking read for parents. So many parents wonder about the type of education that is best for their children. Some children don’t flourish in traditional education although they are bright and able. Children are a precious gift and parents want to give their children the best start in life possible. This book comes from the heart from two people who faced just those challenges and found a way of educating their children, albeit in a non-traditional manner. It is an honest account of how they are facing those challenges, the ways in which education can become part of everyday life. It focuses on a child centred approach and I found it a thought-provoking read.

Even if parents decide to keep their children in traditional education, there is still much to commend this book in relation to parenting and helping children reach their full potential.

- G S McMahon author and executive coach

Jump, Fall, Fly

So why do we rely so heavily on programmed 'one-size-fits-all' education that is only in the best interests of a small handful of people that take advantage of this fantastical ideal, whilst blatantly persisting the gross inequality amongst those perceived to have an 'education' and those who 'don't'?

Jump, Fall, Fly breaks this down in a wonderful and readily absorbed way from the perspectives of those that have personally made the transition to true self-empowerment. It is especially pertinent to those requiring a bit more guidance through possibly one of the greatest paradigm shifts we as contemporary adults of a stagnant and lumbering industrialised system will (and for the sake of our children - must) face in our lifetime!

An inspiring and confidence boosting insight into not only what is wrong with the current state of affairs, but how we are literally built and hardwired to fix it for ourselves, from any age, if only we give ourselves the chance to try!

- *Duncan MacFarlane*

I liked some of the descriptors of the unschooling parent's role in nurturing the critical element of curiosity: to be a 'fellow traveller', a 'useful guide', a 'learning companion', a 'gofer' (bringing stuff into their world), an explicit teacher (at times), a quiet observer, or someone who 'nudges' things along or helps things get 'unstuck'.

As a case study of one family's process, what they have learned, and how it has worked for them I think the book will be useful for parents seeking to make or having just made their 'first jump'.

- *Susan Wills, Home Education Network, Australia*

. . . an interesting view into the minds of two parents working very consciously together to be good enough parents.

**- *Peter Gray Research Professor, Department of Psychology,
Boston College***

Jump, Fall, Fly

JUMP, FALL, FLY

From Schooling to Homeschooling to Unschooling

By Lehla Eldridge and Anthony Eldridge-Rogers

Illustrations Lehla Eldridge

FRC PRESS

Jump, Fall, Fly

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www.jumpfallyfly.com

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Jump, Fall, Fly

This book is lovingly dedicated to Olive, Amari and Jahli.

Inspired by you we have taken the road less travelled.

We thank you for making us all Jump, Fall and Fly.

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Introduction

This book started out as a book about schooling, or to be more precise our children's learning. Up until the around the time they were born we had expected that this would involve an on going relationship with what is commonly described as schooling, in a school or series of schools.

Very early in the writing process it became clear that to write about the subject of learning for our children meant to write about a wide variety of topics related to it. These turn out to cover all of life and with hindsight this was always going to be the case. Obvious in retrospect!

A life involved in raising children is not just about the ideas of formal education but to the entire idea of learning and living, which includes everything.

This is as much a book about raising and living with children as about learning and education. To be clear it's not a book about raising children to max their grades, or win at sport or get into the finest universities. In here you won't find a focus on how to get the kind of edge that is popular to sell in books about children's education. This is not a book about wealth as it is commonly meant, the kind in your bank account or investment portfolio, although we certainly do talk about money and prosperity. We are concerned with a wider look at 'wealth' that covers all those assets that are perhaps not as cherished in educational systems as those that can be seen materially and measured but are none the less as, if not more, important. We are talking about attributes such as emotional intelligence (now emerging as more significant to life wellbeing than IQ), creativity, self-actualisation, divergent and convergent thinking, self-directed learning, insight, intuition and so on.

At the core of this book is one of the most enduring of all questions asked by parents, carers and supporters of the young. How can we best equip them for the world that we will most likely never see or know, that we will probably never understand as well as they will and which will contain all kinds of unknowns? Both unknown risks and

unknown benefits. All parents have probably asked themselves how to do the best for their children. What is unique to parents living and having children now is that the future is changing faster than ever before. The question is the same but all the rules have changed. Evolution marches to unknown influences in unknown social contexts.

These contexts are changing rapidly and are global. A dozen years ago who would have predicted the sheer availability of knowledge on the Internet? That knowledge is now available to anyone with a computer and Internet connection. That you can study up to university level as a physicist without ever going to a school classroom or lecture theatre.

That some of the greatest entrepreneurial pioneers of our times (for instance, Elon Musk) are pulling their children from schooling systems because they too are eager to embrace the new emerging paradigms of learning.

Technology is changing contexts in ways no one expected. Did parents on the west coast of Africa know that in their lifetime they would be selling their fish in local markets using cell phone technology to get the best prices before they even had arrived back at port with their catch?

Context is everything. The idea that the river of development and change stops flowing, is somehow magically fixed at where we perceive it to be today, is not without consequence if you are adult. If you are the custodians for your own children (and also the custodian of others), resting on this idea of an unchanging or predictable world might be considered as unrealistic and irresponsible.

So, this book is about opportunity that we see open to us all. To embrace these extraordinarily positive human times creatively and intentionally as parents guided by recognition of the reality of the pace of change and emergence of opportunity. In several hundred years, historians will look back at this period and it will be seen as an astonishing time of change. We don't know where it is heading and what the impact will be for all of us. To be sure change often evokes anxiety but to pretend that this terrific change is not happening might

be easier on the anxiously inclined but does not make it so. Our expectations shaped by our culture, life experience and what we have been conditioned to believe and expect, shape our expectations as parents.

In the mainstream view, there is a story about the future that we expect to happen to us. After a graft to achieve a good education, we will grow up, explore the world, meet and have relationships, then find and decide to settle down with someone to have children. Somewhere, there is striving and achieving in a career, buying a home, and climbing up the property ladder. There are variations of this of course across cultures but broadly speaking this is what we expect.

In this narrative, children are educated by an educational system we either fund through our taxes or we pay for privately if we can afford it and want to. There are many exceptions but this is, we would maintain, the current mainstream view.

The idea that there is another way to live is not mainstream.

This book is not aimed at the fringe but at the mainstream and we know that to people in that mainstream, the way we live is both radical and anxiety provoking.

We are not typical fringe lifestyle people. Our personal backgrounds are pretty middle class and typical of the last 50 years of western lifestyles. We were not raised in communes or spiritual centres; we were not children of hard-core hippies.

We know that it is unrealistic to expect people to just chuck up their lives, abandon their carefully planned career, the house, the annual holidays and walk a different path. Or is it? The mainstream view has casualties. It is not a cost-free path. Stress, loneliness, difficult relationships, anxiety about job security, pressures of mortgages, anxious children are all factors in the experience of the mainstream life. We get used to them at the cost of our health. We accept them because they seem to be the trade-offs we expect as part of the benefits. And as long as an honest appraisal of that trade off leaves us firmly believing the price is worth paying then why would we consider something different? This is a highly personal choice.

Jump, Fall, Fly

Our unschooling life is a choice. It has costs for us, much lower income and so less money to spend, being the main casualty. But we deliberately swapped that for time: Time with our children and time with each other. We swapped reduction of choices for a life that is flexible, allows travel and movement and opportunity. Is it a bed of roses? On the whole yes. Does it get challenging? Yes, it does. Is it easy? No, not really easy.

Do we regret it? Not for an instant.

As this book shows we did it slowly. We evolved to where we are. You can too. You can start to think about and embrace the principles of unschooling even if your kids are in school. There is benefit to be found in the principles and approaches irrespective of whether you make great lifestyle changes or not.

Your children and ours have been born into this time of great change, creativity and opportunity. We plunge into it with them, as curious as they, looking for the emerging paths to human fulfilment that lie not only in the wisdom of the past but the creativity of the present and future.

This book is both our personal story and an investigation of the issues, challenges and contexts of being a parent raising children. The hard questions we asked before and the challenges of going off the beaten track. We share our 7 keys, what we have found to be key ingredients (actually, essential ingredients) to living with our children through their and our growing lives.

We have written it in our two voices. We share the same journey and questions but we are also different in how we engage with the journey and are drawn to different aspects of it. We talk about it differently. We hope this diversity will offer more perspectives and value for you.

This book is a book that we wished we had been able to read when we were starting out on the journey. We hope that you find something here to excite, illuminate and inspire.

Introductory definitions

We are asked many questions about unschooling and how we live. Many of them are driven by the need to understand how unschooling differs to home schooling and mainstream education.

To aid the reader we have set out below short definitions of both home schooling and unschooling.

Then we have shown where mainstream approaches to education and unschooling agree in terms of overall objectives.

After that, we have listed the 25 ways in which mainstream education and unschooling differ.

Home schooling

Home schooling is teaching school subjects and following a curriculum outside of a learning institution such as a school, usually at home. Home schooling parents may collaborate with other home-schooling families. A home-schooling family can have widely varying approaches to learning but the core principle is the teaching of children to a curriculum linked to examinations. Many home schooling families use a mixture of approaches to the process of learning some of which are shared with unschooling although they usually stop short at granting full self-direction to the children. Home schooling families are increasingly transitioning to unschooling as we have done.

Unschooling

Unschooling is an approach to life and learning that fully removes the line separating learning and education and daily living. Unschooling relies on the potential for learning across all daily living activities and contexts. Parents focus on children's innate natural curiosity, which is fostered and supported, leading to self-directed learning where the children learn by self-selecting what they interested in engaging with. Unschooling parents rely on the process of facilitating learning with children so as to leverage their natural curiosity. Teaching takes place only when required by the child and with their consent. Unschooling

seeks to maintain a collaborative approach with children where power is focussed in the relationships in the family rather than in the adults. Unschooling prioritises the child's overall wellbeing and positive natural growth over reaching predetermined learning objectives.

Mainstream education and unschooling agree on the following

- As wide as possible access to knowledge is desirable
- That learning matters
- Adults in the system are well meaning
- That contributing to community is relevant and important
- Reading is a vital skill for learning
- There is a role for teaching
- Creative and competent use of language(s) is important
- Proficiency in practical mathematics is desirable
- That a wide range of subjects is important
- That a main goal is to give as many children as possible a chance to thrive prosper
- That the world is changing fast and there are profound implications for children and young people
- That curiosity is significant in learning
- That parenting crucially impacts on life outcomes

There is naturally disagreement about the definitions of some words (e.g. prosper) and how the above desirable objectives can be best brought about. This book is in part about that discussion.

Mainstream education v unschooling

Here are the ways in which unschooling and mainstream education are not aligned or in agreement.

Mainstream Education	Unschooling
1 Learning is directed by the school and its organisational requirements	Supports self-directed learning pathways
2 Schools main objective is achievement of academic goals tested by examination	Unschooling's main objective is positive life experience with learning through self-direction
3 Relies on teaching with or without consent of the child / teenager	Relies on facilitation and teaching only with consent of the child / teenager
4 Day timetable decided by school	Day's activities discussed collaboratively but decided by child / teenager
5 Follows a curriculum set by school	No set curriculum, everything is potential for learning
6 Prioritise knowledge acquisition, retention and logic over curiosity, enthusiasm and divergent thinking	Prioritise on going curiosity, enthusiasm, and divergent thinking over specific knowledge acquisition

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7	Exams at set intervals are a requirement of successful progress	Exams are only integrated if required to support a child's / teenager goal(s)
8	Supports curiosity within subject learning objectives	Supports, nurtures and prioritises curiosity over any given learning objective
9	Encourages inter-student competition as part of its motivational strategy	Encourages awareness of the use and outcomes of both collaboration and competition
10	Is based on hierarchy with power pooled at the top in teachers	Is based on flat level collaboration and power sharing except where safety requires adult decision making
11	Sees play and playfulness as separate to and sometimes an interference in learning	Sees play and playfulness as integral to learning and wellbeing
12	Prioritises acceptance of facts as opposed to challenge of facts	Supports facts based learning but welcomes challenge
13	Schools are slow to adapt to changing social, technological and economic realities	Unschooling is highly responsive and adaptive

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|----|--|---|
| 14 | Requires students to conform to and integrate into educational system | Supports a self-directed system of learning when desired by child / teenager |
| 15 | Sees student questioning of and resistance to the school system as fundamentally threatening | Sees questioning and resistance generally as a necessary part of the learning process and welcomes it across all contexts |
| 16 | Is biased towards thinking processes as opposed to feeling experiences | Sees feeling and thinking as integrated and necessary and holds no bias |
| 17 | Prioritises control and disciplining of the child and rewards conformity (e.g. rules, uniforms, punishments) | Focuses on self-management as a skill for living and supports children to explore and develop their own abilities |
| 18 | Sees creativity and the arts as of secondary importance in the education process | Sees creativity and artistic expression as foundational to life across all contexts including the sciences |
| 19 | Children's learning difficulties are seen mostly as a problem with the child and not a problem with the system | Is a child responsive system that adapts to their learning needs and challenges |

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20	Schooling systems promote the idea that learning mainly happens within the school day	Learning has no time frame, it is happening all the time
21	Prioritises IQ over other types of intelligence	Includes all aspects of intelligences (i.e. EQ, IQ, Visual-Spatial, Music - Rhythmic & Harmonic etc.) and is adaptive to child's preferences and capacity
22	Leans towards passive learning	Supports both active and passive learning as chosen by the learner
23	Prioritises teaching and attainment of academic goals over learner's emotional wellbeing	Prioritises emotional well-being over any child / teenager chosen learning objective
24	Often generates unhealthy stress for both teachers and students required to reach school quotas and goals	Supports and generates healthy stress within the context of self-directed learning
25	Expects parents to comply with the schools' agenda and its treatment of children	No separation between child and parents' agenda. Everyone is enrolled to the same collaborative life journey

26	Fundamentally functions as if the world will stay pretty much as it is by the time the child is an adult	Realises that the future world of a child is unpredictable and unlikely to be like the one they are currently in (e.g. climate change, automation, technology)
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How this book is laid out

This book is aimed at being useful to anyone thinking of, or involved in the road away from mainstream education through home schooling to unschooling. Our longer story may not be of primary interest to you the reader yet. Why would it be? We just met and we have done nothing to earn your interest. But in anticipation that you might want to have more detail of our story we have concluded this book with it. First of all we are jumping right into the heart of the matter looking at why we did it, what the implications were and still are, what made and makes it work and what is important. Then we will have a short question and answer section, the full question and answers section can be found on our website.

What will help we think, is a quick summary of the chronology of events referred to in the book that we hope will make it even more accessible.

Quick chronology

South Africa

2003 Aug	Twin daughters born to in Cape Town South Africa
2006 Sept	First playschool for twins
2006 Feb	Our son is born
2006	All three children in preschool
2007	Attend local small Synergy school, which collapses
2008	Join with group parents to set up a primary school

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(Closes after parents can't agree on how to run it)

2009 Sept Twins attending local Afrikaans primary school
Jahli attends primary school for 3 months

UK

2010 Aug Family moves to UK

2010 Sept All 3 children in UK primary school first in Devon
and then in Suffolk

Italy

2012 June We all move to Italy, and children at home for 5
months, first go at unschooling

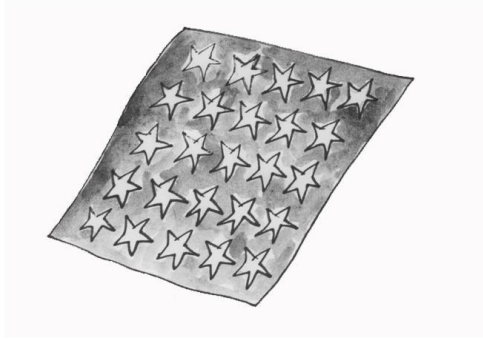
2012 Nov We get involved in setting up a democratic school

2013 May School collapses after parents cannot agree
on what the school should actually be doing!

2013 June Permanent Unschooling Life incorporating
World Schooling
(i.e. living lightly in different places and countries)



PART ONE
GETTING
READY TO
JUMP



1

THE CENTRAL QUESTIONS ABOUT BEING A PARENT AND RAISING CHILDREN

Anthony

In August 2003, I was standing in the maternity theatre of a hospital in Cape Town, South Africa, in the early morning, around 6.00 a.m. I think, looking at two of the tiniest babies I had ever seen. They had just been delivered by caesarean section and they were premature: Our twin daughters, Olive and Amari.

We had read all the books, prepared the room for the onslaught that was, (as we were told by all the books) going to be the most stressful time of our lives. As I gazed at the babies then and again over the next hours and days, there was the slow dawning of a realisation that became more and more present in my mind. I was now responsible for the very existence of these two tiny human beings. Of course, I already knew this rationally as, duh, it's obvious; I am a par-

ent, right? But now I had a whole emotional head and heart experience. Perhaps it was this that caused me to eat most of the sweetie and chocolate supplies I had kindly arranged for Lehla to have while we were staying in the hospital.

This realisation formed questions in my mind; questions that have remained the same but which, as the children have grown, demand ever-changing responses.

The questions were:

How can I equip these children to live in the world and in our human society so that they may have the greatest chance of fulfilling whatever destiny is theirs? What do they need to be able to do? What are the skill sets? And how might they best acquire them? What are the qualities that will serve them best and which we can help them grow and use? What can I do to ensure that they experience more joy than fear, excitement than indifference, hope and possibility than hopelessness, passion for a purpose than pointlessness?

This might sound very male. Some of my friends laugh and tell me so. But then, last time I looked, I am male.

Once the twins were born, we were concerned with the trauma of their being in intensive care for a few weeks and all that this meant for them. When they came home, we were absorbed into the world of baby feeding, weird sleep patterns, and the regular, anxiety-provoking bleep of their breathing monitors.

The BIG questions were not so urgent but hummed along in the background. I knew what I wanted to give them at this stage in their lives. Love, love and oh some more love. Lots of cuddles, play. Great stuff. No problem. Our house was full of love and playfulness. But, as they grew, so did the presence and urgency of the questions, and more questions that brought on even more questions. When they were nearly four years old, approaching school age (as determined by prevailing social expectations), I began to focus on the meaning of education and learning – and ran smack into my own schooling experience. I realised that school had left an imprint on me that, though already explored exhaustively with a long line of expensive therapists,

was now asking to come out for a look around in the new context of having my own kids.

I disliked school. But then I disliked my life as a child because of the suffering our family went through. School compounded some suffering, but softened other parts of it. So we are not pursuing this different way of living and learning because I disliked school. I have talked much to Lehla about this. She was not wild about school either but neither one of us is profoundly motivated to follow this new route because of this.

We were driven by the questions. What will our world be like when our children are adults in 2020 and onwards? And what will they need? What needs to be in their kitbag? And what is the most exciting, enjoyable, life affirming way to respond to these questions? How do we live a life and raise our children to give them the best chance of being fulfilled, potent, self-actualized, spiritually free, emotionally congruent humans?

My answer today is that, what we are currently calling ‘Unschooling’, is the best response we have found so far to the central questions posed above. We would adapt and change our minds tomorrow if we found that our children would be better served by something else. Our understanding of what it means to be parents at this time is a work in progress and while I am fairly sure that we are unlikely to change some positions about being adult custodians of small developing humans – for instance, that we will never advocate beating so called ‘naughty’ children with a stick – it is possible that we will shift some ideas and perspectives as we learn and grow. The priority here is responding to the central idea without getting attached to a framework. Attachment to out-dated ways of doing things, in the face of evidence that there is a better or different way within the context of new information and social development, is what gets us humans in so much trouble much of the time. In asking these questions we are no different, I believe, to most adults who become parents. When we become parents, are we not all motivated by the same hopes? We want our kids to prosper, be safe, successful, have a good time, to

enjoy peace and companionship. (Okay so there are some belief systems that don't place much of a high premium on enjoyment and peace).

Where we may differ is how we believe this can be brought about. Some people frame their children's education entirely within faith systems. They raise their children to be Christian, Islamic, Jewish and so on. Inside those faiths are cultural contexts that the parents believe will make the outcome for their children most likely to be the ones that they wish for them. Others raise their children within political frameworks: Republican, Democrat, Liberal or Conservative. All come with beliefs that prescribe how the children will be raised and experience education.

Thinking about the world we imagine we are creating for our children to live in in their future, we are bound to ask a wider question. Are we collectively making our societies more likely, overall, to benefit our own children in particular?

The systems we have been developing over the last 100 years have produced astonishing results for millions of people. However, we seem to be simultaneously freer and yet more restricted than before. It is a paradox. Not too long ago a university degree was a passport to prosperity. Now it is not, as millions of young people with degrees can testify. Education as we have been practising it has finally run out of road as it now fails to deliver the promise and keep pace with the human world. There are plenty of books out there that continue to provide the pathway of competition as the best way to get your children set up in life. One response from the current system has been to up the ante. So the degree must be first class. You need to now add all sorts of other things onto the degree to stand out against others. It appears to me we are trying to revision a defunct system by intensifying its core principles, even though these same principles no longer apply or provide benefit for the greatest number of people. In the process, there are school children with all kinds of anxiety and mental health problems that are being created by the stress of the system.

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It is essential to have a view on these topics at a community level, precisely because these ideas and the way we are developing (or not) a positive new set of approaches has a direct bearing on the world that we will live in and which our children will inherit.

Lehla

Whilst sending our children to school, I had a nagging feeling that I wasn't telling the truth, to them or to myself. That I was lying, that I was dumbing down my kids and myself in order to fit into a system. Nothing seemed to me to have changed from when I was at school many many moons ago, we are talking 30 years ago! I couldn't understand why there was not a bigger shift. It felt like I was looking for a change that wasn't there, yes there were more computers, more technology, but that was not what I was looking for. For me it was like time had stood still, I was about to repeat history with my own children. They were stepping into a space where the child must learn as much as possible, as quickly as possible, as efficiently as possible, the child is like a box to be filled, a chart to be ticked. Within this system I will have to coerce, check, support (whether I agree or not), collude, concur, accept that this is it, this is the way our kids are going to learn and I will have to do that for years and years.

After the glorious years of freedom, where we spent time nurturing their creativity, enjoying their toddlerhood, relishing in their newness to life, what happened? What was going on? Why were we tying neckties around their throats? Making sure their nails were short, their hair didn't touch their collar? Making them read at such a young age when they were clearly uninterested? Why was I accepting everything that was being given to me? Was I prepared to say yes to all this when at a gut level sending them to school did not feel right? Well, obviously, I wasn't prepared to say yes and due to how it played out with their behaviour neither were they. So, I am here to share with you why, how and what we are doing on this incredible, often challenging, fun, magical, sometimes exhausting, loving, colourful unschooling journey.

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TO BE CONTINUED.....

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About the authors

Lebla

Where to start? I want you to get a sense of who I am, perhaps by first telling you all the things I have done in the past. I have been an actress, restaurant owner, cookery book writer, painter, illustrator, I have worked in the art department in the film industry, been a waitress, I have had many jobs.

I went to drama school when I was seventeen, then followed an acting career for ten years. I had my own theatre company and took a show to India. I sometimes think that even though my acting career these days is very minimal perhaps it has mutated into other things. I think it is all part of one big creative process and that everyone is creative in one way or another.

The biggest and most creative job I have done so far is raising three children, Olive, Amari and Jahli, who are all asleep as I write this. Who I really am now is the person made up of my years of being alive and here are my current roles: illustrator, writer, blogger, kitchen dweller, car singer, digital nomad, wife and mother of our three children, who are so precious to me. I wrote this book for you, and my hope it has given you some insight as to how we have travelled this journey and I hope it will help you on your path whatever that may be.

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(Books written and illustrated by Lehla; *The South African Illustrated Cookbook* published by Penguin Random House, *The Lovely Book for Wonderful Women* published by Pinter and Martin, she has illustrated *Excuse Me I'm Trying to Read* by Mary Jo Amani which won the NAESP best illustrated picture book 2011 published by Charlesbridge publishing and has recently illustrated *I am Me, You, Us and We* and *Shooting Star* by Caroline Trowbridge. She also has written for The Guardian and Life Learning Magazine and has illustrated for various magazines)

Anthony

I am a UK citizen, born near London. I went to about a dozen schools including a British public school of not very great reputation (if that kind of thing matters). I left school at 17 and have never been back, at least not officially.

As an adult I have been involved in a wide variety of activities, both business and creative. In roughly this order: House builder, photographer, music video director, film producer, film director, writer, TV producer, commercials director and producer, marketing and PR Executive, restaurateur, fruit farmer, business mentor, executive coach, and now recovery and wellness coach trainer, creator of Meaning Centred Coaching (MCC) model, and author of this book and others coming out in the near future. Above all I consider myself a creative person.

Core values: compassion, hope, courage, resilience, commitment, flexibility, awareness, and creativity.

I spent 15 years in South Africa, which changed me forever, and brought me to meet Lehla.

I don't like vinegar to the point of running for the hills. Used to hunt, shoot and fish but stopped in my twenties, when the excitement turned to shame. I'm vegetarian, as don't expect others to kill things I choose not to kill myself and it's kinder to the environment. Don't drink alcohol or take drugs but used to. (I am not a don't drink or take drugs fanatic, it's a complex subject) I love all kinds of music but

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struggle with country. Love creating new things from nothing. Will have a go at anything. Pretty much everything I have done I taught myself or learned from wonderful examples. Have made tons of what seemed like bad decisions but which, over time, turned into good ones. Then good and bad decisions morphed into neither good nor bad, but just choices with consequences.

I feel I am having the privilege to live in extraordinary times of human history. Am amazed at what has happened since I got here. Am excited at what will happen in the next few decades, and after I am gone. Thank the fates every day for the privilege of being able to live with my wife, Lehla, and the three children sent into this world through us.

I am CEO of an organisation I set up to train Recovery, Wellness and Executive coaches which you can find out more about here www.frcint.net

I blog about coaching here www.recoveryandwellnessblog.com

I also run these coaching resource pages here www.privatepracticehub.co.uk/coaches



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