

## INTRODUCTION

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The title of this book, *Front Porch View*, arrived unexpectedly, like a whispered message from within. One morning, as I lingered between waking and dreaming, the phrase came to me, clear and certain. It wasn't just a title; it was a calling.

Moments later, an inner nudge led me to my bedroom closet. Without hesitation, I opened the door, reached for a shoebox on the top shelf, and began sifting through its contents. My hands instinctively moved to the bottom of the box, where I discovered a photograph, I hadn't seen in decades.

It was a picture of me at eight years old, sitting on the front porch of the home where so much of my journey began. My heart swelled with recognition as if the title and the photograph were pieces of a puzzle clicking into place.

That front porch was the stage for one of the most defining moments of my life, a moment that shaped the essence of this book. The title, *Front Porch View*, was not merely a suggestion but a gift from my inner guidance, a symbolic reminder of the interconnectedness of past, present, and future.

It is from this vantage point, the front porch of my eight-year-old self, that I share this story. It is both a literal and metaphorical view: a place of stillness, reflection, and awakening. The title inspired me to embrace the courage it takes to look back, to honor the journey, and to invite others to join me in exploring the profound truths that lie within us all.

This book is my offering, born from the clarity and wisdom of that moment. It is my hope that *Front Porch View* will inspire readers to find their own moments of awakening and soul preservation, to reflect on their unique journeys, and to reconnect with the essence of who they truly are.

In today's fast-moving world, the front porch remains a symbol of stillness, a space where we are invited to pause, breathe, and simply be. It is in these pauses that soul preservation begins, as we reconnect with our true essence.

The theme of soul preservation weaves through every chapter of my life like an eternal thread, connecting the moments of my journey. Soul preservation, to me, is about safeguarding the essence of who we truly are, our most authentic, unconditioned selves. It is the process of returning to wholeness, of nurturing and honoring the connection to our soul amidst the noise, distractions, and trials of life.

This memoir is a testament to that journey, a story of falling and rising, of forgetting and remembering, of losing my way and finding my soul again.

Each of us is on our own path of soul preservation, seeking to live a life that is authentic, awake, and aligned with our true nature. Through sharing my story, I hope to inspire others to embark on their own journeys, to remember who they are at their core, and to preserve the precious, eternal essence of their soul.

The photo on the cover captures a moment of innocence and unfiltered connection to the soul, a time when the world felt vast yet somehow deeply familiar. In the photograph, my curious eyes seem to hold a sense of wonder and knowledge far beyond my years. There's a quiet presence in my expression as though I am listening to something unspoken, something only the soul could convey.

This photograph is more than an image; it's a portal to a time when my soul's voice was clear and the connection to the infinite was unbroken. It represents the foundation of a lifelong journey; a reminder of the truth that existed before the layers of life began to obscure it. It is a symbol of soul preservation in its purest form, a child who, even amidst the innocence of youth, carried the seed of understanding that would later grow into a deeper awareness of her true nature.

This image serves as a touchstone, a guidepost for the memoir, reminding both the writer and the reader of the sacred essence we all carry within.

THE VOW

The journey toward soul preservation doesn't begin in adulthood; it often starts in the quiet, seemingly insignificant moments of childhood, when our souls are still wide open and attuned to the world around us. In the first part of my story, I take you back to my early years, a time when I first noticed the quiet stirrings of something greater within me, an intuitive sense of my own soul, my purpose, and the deeper forces at work in my life.

As a child, I wasn't yet aware of the term "soul awareness," but looking back, I can see the markers of it. From the very beginning, I had an acute sensitivity to the world. I wasn't just a passive observer of life, I felt it deeply. I sensed the moods of the people around me, the energy of a room, the quiet pulse of the earth beneath my feet. These subtle signs would later come to form the foundation of my spiritual awakening, but at the time, they were simply part of my experience.

There were moments in my childhood that felt like glimpses into a world beyond the physical. Whether it was a sense of calm and connection in nature, an unspoken bond with animals, or fleeting moments of pure joy in simple acts of kindness, these experiences gave me a sense of something larger than myself. I remember moments of stillness where I felt a deep peace, as if my soul was quietly whispering to me that everything was exactly as it should be.

What struck me most in those moments was the purity of my perception. Children, in their innocence, often see the world through an unconditioned lens, unfiltered by the judgments and expectations that come with adulthood. This untainted perspective allowed me to experience the world without the weight of preconceived notions. I saw the beauty in small things, a flower opening in the morning sun, a bird soaring high in the sky, the laughter of a friend. There was an effortless awe in my awareness, a reverence for life simply as it was. In these early years, I experienced the world sacred and full of wonder. Everything felt alive, and everything seemed to speak to me, gently reminding me of the magic that exists beneath the surface of everyday life.

There was purity in the way I interacted with the world. I wasn't yet burdened by the judgments of society or the opinions of others. I had not yet learned to doubt, to fear, or to limit myself based on the expectations placed on me. I could simply be. I didn't question the beauty in a sunset or the joy in the simplicity of a warm summer evening. In fact, I often felt that life, in its most basic form, held the answers to everything I needed to know. This innocence and unconditioned way of seeing was a precious gift, one that I unknowingly carried with me into adulthood.

But like all children, I was also shaped by the world around me, the pressures to conform, to fit into societal expectations, and the sometimes-conflicting messages from family, school, and society. At times, my intuitive awareness of soul and spirit felt out of place in a world that often

valued logic and reason over intuition and feeling. Yet, these early experiences remained a guiding force in my life, tucked away in my heart, waiting for the right time to fully emerge.

I was particularly drawn to the small, quiet corners of the world, sitting on the porch at dusk, watching the sun dip below the horizon, or walking in the woods with a sense of reverence for the life around me. There was something sacred about those times, a gentle invitation from the universe to connect with a deeper rhythm of life. In these moments, I didn't have words for it, but I knew there was something beyond the surface of daily life. It was a whisper, a gentle knowing that my soul was aware of something more.

Yet, the world would inevitably intervene. As I grew older, the noise of society and the weight of its expectations began to cloud the pure, unconditioned lens through which I once viewed the world. The innocence I once carried slowly began to fade, replaced by the complexity and challenges of growing up. And yet, even as I navigated these changes, those early moments of clarity and connection remained with me, reminding me of the purity I once saw, and could still reclaim.

As I moved through childhood, I noticed how this early soul awareness set me apart from some of my peers. While others were caught up in the hustle and bustle of daily life, I often found solace in solitude, in the stillness that allowed me to reconnect with that deeper sense of self. I would often retreat into my own world of thoughts, dreams, and reflections, where I felt more connected to my true essence than I did to the external world around me.

These formative years laid the foundation for my soul's journey, a journey that would eventually lead me to deeper self-awareness, to a stronger connection with the spiritual realm, and ultimately to a profound understanding of soul preservation. Looking back, it is clear to me now that my early experiences were not random or insignificant. They were the first whispers of a soulful life, guiding me toward the path I would one day walk with intention and purpose.

In this first chapter of my memoir, I invite you to walk with me through those early years of soul awakening. We'll explore the subtle moments of connection, the pure, unconditioned lens through which I viewed the world, and the quiet knowing that shaped my understanding of the world, and myself, long before I had the language or the wisdom to fully grasp the depth of those experiences. This chapter is a reflection on how the seeds of soul awareness are often planted early in life, even if we don't fully recognize them until later.

As we journey through my childhood, I hope to inspire you to reflect on your own early experiences, those moments of soul awareness that may have quietly shaped who you are today. You may find that your own story holds similar threads of connection, awakening, and preservation, waiting for you to rediscover them.

There are moments in life when the veil that separates the conscious from the unconscious, the known from the unknown, is lifted, and we are gifted with a sudden, profound awareness. I call this moment the *awakening moment*, a moment when the soul remembers itself, its true essence,

and its connection to something greater. It is as though a light has been switched on, illuminating parts of us that were previously hidden in the dark corners of our subconscious. This "second birth," as I have come to understand it, is the moment when we wake up to who we truly are, no longer living in a dreamlike state but fully present to the essence of our being.

In many ways, I had been living in a hypnagogic state before my awakening, half-asleep, drifting through life on autopilot, lulled by the familiarity of routine, expectations, and social conditioning. The hypnagogic state is the in-between space, the thin veil between sleep and wakefulness. In this space, we're neither fully asleep nor fully awake, existing in a sort of limbo, where we're not entirely conscious of our true nature but are also not fully unconscious. In this state, I floated through life, caught between what I had been taught and what my soul was quietly trying to tell me.

I was aware of a yearning deep inside me, but I didn't have the words for it, and I didn't know how to awaken myself fully. I had a sense that there was more to life than the daily grind, more to my own being than what I had been taught to believe, but the busyness of the world and the pull of its noise kept me in a slumber. I thought I was living, but in many ways, I was simply existing. I was like a puppet in a play, moving through life without the understanding or the awareness of the deeper story unfolding beneath the surface.

### **Then Came the Awakening**

It was the spring of 1962, and I was eight years old. Barefoot in a simple cotton dress, I sat on the worn linoleum floor of our house, gazing up at the ceiling. Suddenly, I became aware of something extraordinary: I was both in my body and somehow above it, looking down. I saw myself sitting there, motionless, and wondered, *how can I be here and there? Which one am I?*

The strangeness of the moment didn't frighten me. Instead, I felt an overwhelming sense of peace and safety, as if I were being cradled by a presence that filled the room. This presence, though unseen, was as real as the air I breathed. It spoke to me, not in words, but in a knowing that reverberated through my being.

*"Put on your shoes,"* it instructed. *"Go outside and sit on the front porch."*

Without question or hesitation, I stood, found my shoes, and slipped them on, not even bothering to tie the laces. Something deep inside me knew to trust and follow. I walked to the front door, opened it, and stepped outside.

As I sat down on the porch, the world seemed utterly transformed. A breeze brushed across my skin, soft and alive, carrying with it a sense of timelessness. The sky above me, the trees swaying gently, even the weathered wood of the porch, all of it pulsed with a vividness I had never seen before. Everything seemed more alive, as though the universe itself had come awake.

I remember sitting on the porch, feeling pulled between two realities. I could not have articulated it back then, but in reflection, that was my experience. I remember feeling the sense of myself, the

girl my family calls Irma, and something else, something more. *What did that even mean?* I vaguely remember looking up at the sky and asking, *"Who am I?"*

And then, I felt it: an electric current coursing through me. It began at the top of my head and flowed down to my toes, then back up again in a steady rhythm. This energy was unlike anything I'd ever felt, a pulsing connection that extended beyond my body. I could sense it tying me to everything around me.

The world became a projection, not just of light, but of *The Light*, a backdrop of infinite brilliance that connected every leaf, every cloud, every atom. I could see the threads of this connection, feel their hum within me.

As I sat there, transfixed, the energy flowing through me began to speak in its own way. It wasn't language as we know it; it was a direct transmission, a series of truths embedded into the fabric of my being. Download after download, my soul absorbed this sacred knowledge, each revelation expanding my understanding of existence. Time ceased to matter. The light and the energy became everything.

When I reflect on those moments, it was as if I had a kind of *soul infusion*, a DNA upload. Every cell of my being had been filled with light, love, and universal understandings.

Finally, as the intensity began to subside, I felt the presence return. It spoke again, gently but with undeniable gravity.

*"You are being given a choice at this moment, between how the world will try to define you and what you already know to be the true you. If you choose the worldly definition, you will forget this connection, this knowing. You will believe in the limits of the physical world and let them shape you. But if you choose the true you, you will carry this remembrance with you always. Neither choice is wrong, but the path you choose now will define your destiny in this lifetime."*

The weight of this decision pressed upon me, but it wasn't a burden; it was clarity. I knew what the choice meant: to forget would be to embrace a life defined by roles, labels, and illusions. It would mean locking away this moment, this light, and perhaps never finding it again.

But to remember? That meant surrendering to the soul within me, to the boundless connection I now felt to all of life. It meant trusting in a truth that could never be fully explained but only lived.

I closed my eyes, breathing deeply as the final threads of light receded into the heavens.

*"I choose my soul,"* I whispered. *"I choose my soul."*

From that moment on, the vow was made. I vowed never to forget my true self, my soul. That vow, that commitment, remains today.

This was my awakening. The moment when the dormant soul within me came alive, when I remembered the connection, I had to the universe and to the deepest parts of myself. It was as if I had been born again, not in a physical sense, but in a spiritual one. This "second birth" was the moment when I stepped into my true essence, the soul that had always been with me, waiting for me to remember.

The contrast between living in a hypnagogic state and becoming awake was clear in that moment. Before my awakening, I had been adrift, half-conscious of my surroundings, moving through life without a true understanding of who I was or the power I held within. But in that instant on the front porch, I felt a shift, a deep, profound awakening. The light I experienced was not just external; it was a mirror of the light within me, awakening my soul to its fullest potential.

This awakening was a form of becoming real, a theme I have often reflected on in my journey. It is like the story of Pinocchio, the beloved wooden puppet who yearns to be a real boy. For so long, Pinocchio lived in a state of pretense, a creation of his maker, Geppetto, without true life or consciousness. But the moment he becomes real, he steps into full awareness. He becomes a living, breathing being, able to experience life with a depth and richness that was not available to him in his former state.

In many ways, this is what my awakening felt like, a shedding of the old, inauthentic version of myself, and a stepping into something more genuine and true. I could feel my soul waking up, shedding the layers of illusion and false identity that had been built over the years.

From that moment forward, I made a vow to myself that I would never forget this remembrance. I would live from this place of awakened truth, choosing to honor the soul over the surface distractions of life. And so began my journey, one that continues to unfold in the light of this profound awakening.

There are moments in life when the veil that separates the conscious from the unconscious, the known from the unknown, is lifted, and we are gifted with a sudden, profound awareness. I call this moment the awakening moment, a moment when the soul remembers itself, its true essence, and its connection to something greater. It is as though a light has been switched on, illuminating parts of us that were previously hidden in the dark corners of our subconscious.

This "second birth," as I have come to understand it, is the moment when we finally wake up to who we truly are, not living in a dreamlike state, but fully present to the essence of our being.

I invite you to reflect on your own moments of awakening. Perhaps you've experienced a "second birth," a moment when you stepped into greater awareness of your own soul's purpose. Or maybe you've felt the quiet stirring of something within you, waiting to awaken. This chapter is a celebration of that shift, from the in-between space of sleepwalking through life to the clarity and presence of being fully awake. Just like Pinocchio, we all have the potential to become real, to step into our fullest, most authentic selves. It's a journey that begins with the simple act of remembering.