



JAN DESAI'S  
**COMPASS ROSE**

A Roadmap to an Authentic Life

Get Your Bearings and Stay on Course to the Life of Your Dreams



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ISSUE

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## Welcoming Authentic Change

We all have deep woundings that can result in perceived failures when, in fact, no failure really exists. In this Compass Rose, learn how to move past failure into a life of true freedom!

## "The worm in the dream is always the past, the impediment to all renewal."

Philip Roth

This past Thursday was an early start to a long and lovely weekend. With a glass of red wine in my hands, I greeted our dear friends at the front door for an intimate dinner. The weather was balmy and beautiful. The tropical humidity has yet to set in, so the doors and windows were open, wafting the scents of salt air mixed with the sensual aroma of blooming gardenias into the house.

I had taken the time to do my hair and makeup. (A real treat when I'm always balancing the needs of my four mini-munchkins). I must say, I looked good. I felt great. I was anticipating a wonderful grown-up evening punctuated by stimulating conversation and a long overdue catch-up with everyone's lives. My heart was open and I could feel the joy emanating from my being.



As we gathered around our rustic farm table in the kitchen, we toasted our deep gratitude for one another and for the synchronicity of life that calls like-minded individuals together to amplify the love within ourselves, for our families, and for the greater world. I had carefully planned the menu and the main course looked amazing - thin slices of perfectly seared, marbled Kobe beef fanned over caramelized onions. *I couldn't wait to dig in.*

With my first taste, my heart contracted. The meat was cold. I quickly glanced around the table. No one seemed to notice. Everyone was gracious, but **I was absolutely mortified.** I didn't realize it at the time, but my reaction to this relatively minor faux pas was far from appropriate. I went from being on top of the world to finding myself *instantly lost in self-recrimination*, the should-haves and could-haves running through my monkey mind just like the ticker that runs non-stop under the newscasters at CNN. *I should have* cooked the meat as we were sitting down, not 30 minutes before. *I should have* served an easier dinner that didn't require last-minute heating. *I should have* stayed in my torn and dirty blue jeans and just had another typical evening with my kids.

For me, those should-haves colored the entire evening. Everyone else had a wonderful time (after all, the point of the dinner was not the meal, per se, but **the friends** who had gathered to share it.) Try as I might, all I could think about was the cold beef and the feeling that I'd failed miserably as a host.

By the following morning, I had regained my bearings and my perspective. I love my early mornings. I get up at 5 AM to enjoy my morning rituals and quietly prepare healthy breakfasts for my mini-tribe. To keep chaos at a minimum, I prefer to have everything prepared, plus school lunches completed, before I hear the pitter-patter of four pairs of feet rushing towards me. In that way, I'm always able to give my **present-moment attention** to them all.



I dashed up the stairs two at a time, ready to corral the hungry horde. As I walked into the three-year-old's nursery, I was hit by a foul smell hanging heavy in the air. My daughter Celeste's twice-daily immune suppressing medication causes severe gastrointestinal issues. During the night, *she had fallen prey to it once again..*

I went to her bed and dropped to my knees. She was laying on her tummy literally covered in the mess. My heart contracted, and

moaning inwardly to myself I thought, "Oh no, not again." I **didn't** want her to have to deal with being placed in a shower and scrubbed like a prisoner being deloused. I **didn't** want her to cry. I **didn't** want the other children to run around with their noses pinched shut and eyes squinted yelling, "Cici is stinky, Cici is stinky." But, I knew what had to be done.

As I cleaned my daughter, the room, and the shower, my case of "*should-haves*" returned with a vengeance. I *should have* known better than to try to entertain. I **should have** put Celeste first. If I had, she wouldn't be suffering right now. I have a child who needs me and where was I? I was too busy flagellating myself with strips of cold beef, more worried about appearances than my poor little girl.

My God! Could anyone be a worse mother? Again, even though I didn't know it at the time, my response to the the situation was *completely out-of-proportion to what was happening.*

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Once again, by the following morning I had talked myself down from the roof and had regained perspective. It's been a **long** winter in the Desai house. Our entire family has *battled illness after illness* since last November. Throughout the entire season, I've been blessed to have my husband, Panache, by my side. He helped minister to the children, run the errands for the medicine, drive us to the pediatrician, and share the middle-of-the-night check-ups, all while constantly holding the knowledge and certainty that *all of this is simply a temporary set-back*.



This is a man who **never** gets sick. His constitution is legendary. But on Sunday morning, all that changed. He began clearing his throat constantly and by late in the day he was coughing non-stop. A deep throaty, wet cough that kept the both of us up most of the night. By Monday morning, he was feverish, continually racked with bouts of coughing, and his nose was running like a leaking faucet.

The mighty had fallen and I was **incredulous** that now, at a point where everyone else was practically out of the woods, he was going to need nursing and loving care. I felt like a deflated balloon. I was struggling, and lost myself temporarily in a prima donna bout of frustration. *How was I going to juggle one more sick person? Why had one more sickness befallen us now?* My wonderful husband and supportive partner had contracted flu-like symptoms, yet my being didn't want to deal with it. Inside, I was practically screaming "**Just take this away!**"

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*I fell into deep resistance.* But this time a familiar inner anger also simmered. This is an alchemical reaction that changes my gold into dross. It has me showing up bitchy and short to my staff, my family, and the greater world and, from their point of view, for **no apparent reason**. Yet again, I was experiencing an over-the-top emotional response that was in no way related to the reality in front of me.

And then it hit me, as it always does: the powerful and insightful "ah-ha!" moment that was conceived and birthed through these visceral reactions I had been experiencing all weekend, one after another. (I **firmly believe**

that in my case, God wields a weighty two-by-four to get my attention.).

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I went within and asked my deepest connection what was the next best move for me to make to surrender control and, once again, begin flowing with life.

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When life doesn't show up the way I want it too, I **contract** into deep resistance. I **dig in** physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually and **resist** the normal ebb and flow of life. I had been temporarily fooled this weekend because I wasn't reacting like the "old Jan". I didn't explode. I wasn't destructive. I wasn't kicking and screaming, *at least not out loud*. I wasn't blaming and pointing fingers. I don't play the victim card these days, BUT that doesn't mean that this internal contraction isn't **just as disruptive** as it used to be. Something existential was contracting my energy and wrestling for control when there was no control to be had.

*And so I got still.* I went within and asked my

deepest connection what was the next best move for me to make to surrender control and, once again, begin flowing with life. And this is what I saw.

There is a *deep wounding* that exists at the core of who I am. It's an energetic thorn deeply embedded in the perfection of who I incarnated to be. It informs everything that I do and everything that I perceive. It filters the way I hear things and it acts as a highly flammable substance that can flare up in an instant based on the tone of voice people use, a look I receive, or even events that happen half a world away that have nothing to do with me personally.



My core wounding revolves around the belief that I am not good enough to deserve love. It was embedded at an early age by those in authority who did the very best they could to raise me. *I want to be very clear here: I am not pointing fingers or placing blame with anyone.* We all show up in life doing the best

that we can based on how we were raised. We are influenced by those who taught us and by those who influenced our self-perception. .

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I was very young and impressionable when this wounding took up residence within me. I adopted this false belief as my truth. As a result, the inner pain of the wounding - of believing that I was never enough - has the potential to drive everything that I do. It drives my ambition, my relationship with my husband, my parenting, my business acumen, and every other aspect of my life. Everything I do can become a need to prove "them" wrong. I am driven by a need to be better than an impossibly high standard that *never really mattered and that no longer exists*.

Fast forward to today. I still don't like feeling powerless. I abhor hopelessness. I'm uncomfortable with worthlessness. So I overcompensate and exert some level of control in order to give myself a sense of security, safety, and acceptance. As I love to say, *denial isn't only a river in Egypt*.

But coming face-to-face with this wounding and my compensatory behavior doesn't make me angry. *It brings me hope*. The light of awareness is shining on a beautiful part of myself, a part that is ready to walk into the light. I see it as another layer that I am ready to lovingly thank and integrate. It's another giant step towards transparent authenticity.

I am ready to stop taking everything personally. It's the memory - *the story* - of all the times that I felt I wasn't enough, wasn't able to cope, wasn't open to receive the grace, love, light, and abundance, that has delivered me to this powerful realization.

As I sat on the beach, the sun was rising. I sipped my mug of hot tea, allowing the emotion of everything that had been unfolding to come up within me. It was then that inspiration descended. *This will be the week of not just accepting everything but WELCOMING EVERYTHING*.



The cold meat. The diarrhea. Family illness. Self-flagellation. Perceived mistakes. Faulty belief systems. Inner growth. Accept it. Welcome it all. **Welcome everything.**

With the sun warming my skin and the water lapping at my toes, I could feel a deep awareness rising up. *Accepting is passive.* It implies that you have no power over the situation. You must accept because you have no other choice. Welcoming, on the other hand, is a different matter altogether. **Welcoming empowers me.** It means I am ready to move through this next level of creating my most authentic life.



So, for the next seven days, (because I need to baby-step into most things) I will *consciously surrender* to the fact that life has a greater plan. I won't second guess. I won't fight, resist, or push back. I will stop telling Universal Forces what I want. Instead, I will **SURRENDER** to what is unfolding and **BELIEVE** that ultimately, I am being moved into more.

Being moved into more is our birthright. It is the **LAW** of our personal evolution. By surrendering to this birthright, we cultivate the courage to rise above the woundings, the false stories, and the resulting need to control. We rise above the web that they weave so tightly - a web that creates a belief system that keeps us chained to the past, reliving moments that no longer exist.

Let me say this again:

**This stuff NO LONGER EXISTS.** It is **past**. It is **dust**. It is **gone**. Yet, we keep it alive, hooked up to the life support system of our memories. We stand vigil over it, waiting to breathe life into what is dead based on our over-reactions to what is unfolding in the present. In doing so, *we continually reopen a wound* that must begin to heal if we are ever going to move fully into the light..

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When we accept and welcome everything that life brings, we **open the door** to the place inside where the wound resides. We begin to **access** the deep hurt and sadness and rejection that surrounds this wound and in doing so, we **experience** all the emotion that has kept us hostage for decades. The pain shrinks and becomes the small and powerless thing that it really is. *This is how we create more space for things that don't hurt and aren't limiting.*

The courage to confront our wounding brings greater meaning. This meaning gives birth to real, sustainable joy and that joy, in turn, leads to even more courage. And so the upward cycle continues, leading us into authenticity and the place where our highest selves await

Be free and I'll see you next week.



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