

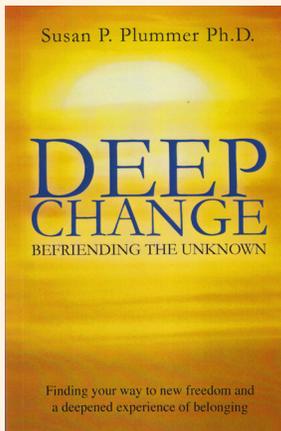
DR. SUSAN P. PLUMMER IS TO PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE DEEP CHANGE  
WHAT ELISABETH KÜBLER-ROSS WAS TO PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE GRIEF.

# DEEP CHANGE

## Befriending the Unknown

THE SEVEN SHIFTS OF TRANSFORMATION

Susan P. Plummer, Ph.D.



WHAT WOULD HAPPEN if we recognized experiences such as emptiness, meaninglessness, and anxiety not only as challenges or possible symptoms of depression but also as signs of change that are calling us into a new future? Says Dr. Susan P. Plummer: “Our relationship to our future is revealed in our relationship to the unknown, and to cooperate with our future’s longing for us we need to befriend the unknown.” Calling the indiscriminate use of pharmaceuticals a “future-buster,” she advocates that with our entire culture currently on the brink of Deep Change, the widespread indiscriminate prescription of medications may be aborting the emergence of the new futures and new worlds we desperately need.

Her more than 20 years of groundbreaking research has been distilled into an indispensable roadmap for navigating the experience of Deep Change and realizing one’s most essential self. *Deep Change* guides us through the Seven Shifts of Transformation, taking us beyond merely redesigning our lives to changing the way we experience our self and our world. We are able to begin letting go and accept change as we connect with deeper currents that originate from within and beyond ourselves. This book is about embracing our true heritage of compassion, connection, freedom, and belonging.

ISBN 978-145-6485-962  
216 pages, \$18.00  
Paperback

“Dr. Susan P. Plummer is a trustworthy guide through the most tangled of spiritual thickets; she writes in a clear and compelling style.... You will find a wise companion on the journey.”

—PARKER PALMER, AUTHOR, *A Hidden Wholeness*

“A huge consolation and encouragement to our search for light.”

—JOHN O’DONOHUE, AUTHOR, *Anam Cara*

“The first chapter described exactly what I had been going through! I had felt so lost and now I know that I am not alone and there is a known way to move through it.”

—28-YEAR-OLD ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL



SUSAN P. PLUMMER, PH.D., has been a psychotherapist in private practice in Northern California for the past 25 years. She lives in Santa Barbara, where she directs the Alliance for Living and Dying Well, a hospice agency. A popular speaker and workshop presenter, she can be contacted through her website at [www.susanplummer.com](http://www.susanplummer.com) or through Blessingway Authors’ Services at 505.983.2649.



## Why I Wrote This Book

Dr. Susan P. Plummer

*Author, Deep Change: Befriending the Unknown*

### My Story

From a very early age, I had a clear, inscrutable opening to other dimensions. I often felt like I was on the edge of a void. Because I didn't know how to describe this experience, I felt very alone, even in the midst of my lovely family.

This experience recurred in my late twenties and is chronicled in the introduction of *Deep Change*. Following a long period of living with a sense of nothingness and meaninglessness, I received guidance from a wise elder advising me not to resist but to allow my self to participate directly in the experience. Then unexpectedly I found myself in a world of profound meaning and connection. This discovery, and the mystery about how it occurred, seeded my investigation into what I called "the experience of nothingness in the life-world."

At the time, I could find no references in the psychological literature to such an experience of moving through nothingness to a vivid world of connection and belonging. Consequently, I decided to explore the nature of this relationship, in collaboration with Dr. Amedeo Giorgi, a phenomenology-based psychologist known for his profound and rigorous research methodology.

The investigation yielded surprising results. Inspired by how useful this material proved to be for my clients and by the encouragement I received from the visionary best-selling author John O'Donohue, I wrote the hands-on book *Deep Change* based on my research.

My hope is to share what I learned navigating this very challenging yet inspiring process and to offer individuals comfort and companionship as they walk the path of the transformation I call "Deep Change."

To schedule a talk, program, or book-signing event, please contact Blessingway Authors' Services at [jherzl@blessingway.com](mailto:jherzl@blessingway.com) or by telephone at 505.983.2649.  
[www.blessingway.com](http://www.blessingway.com)



## **Speaking & Workshop Topics**

**Dr. Susan P. Plummer**

***Author, *Deep Change: Befriending the Unknown****

### **Grief and Loss: Openings to New Life**

Often, in our experiences of grief and loss, we can feel that there is no bottom to the darkness and loneliness we feel. In this talk, Dr. Plummer shares how the process of grief can guide us into surprising openings of new life, connection and belonging. In this talk she outlines a map that can serve as a guide and illuminates how to recognize and listen for the signs that are bell weathers of our coming growth and renewal. Especially helpful for family members, chaplains and counselors, the talk will also cover practical ways to support our selves, and others going through the passage from grief to new life.

### **When All Feels Lost: Hope for our Relationships**

It has been said that it is darkest before the dawn. In our intimate relationships this truth is challenging to trust and we frequently “jump ship” before the dawn of new horizons appears. In this presentation, Dr. Plummer outlines the seven dynamic shifts of change and growth within our selves and our most intimate relationships. We will discover that times when we feel “at the end of our ropes” may actually be pivotal openings to new depths of connection, freedom and belonging with our love ones. She will discuss practical ways to support our relationships through the journey towards renewal and a deeper sense of connection and intimacy.

- **Cultural Transformation: Unusual Suspects**

As many of our cultural foundations and institutions seem to be unraveling and we feel we have lost our cultural stability and meaning, we can be capsized by hopelessness and miss the unusual signs towards renewal and transformation that are emerging in unsuspected locations and contexts. Dr. Plummer will speak about an original yet organic framework for understanding how the unraveling of our culture is an integral dynamic to the possibility of vital transformation and renewal. The presentation will identify critical junctures and shifts in our cultural life and how we can develop our capacity to listen to and nourish the new life that is calling us towards collaborative creation.

### **Organizational Transformation: Beckoning Currents**

When our organizations, businesses and associations falter and begin to lose their vitality, we often first seek ways to buoy our sense of mission and purpose. This talk addresses how at these times we may miss the beckoning currents that are trying to call us into a more radical transformation of our mission and our relevance to the world. The presentation will cover how it is possible to be with the unraveling of what we have known and believed in, and to listen, to tune into, the pulls towards a creative authentic relationship to the world and those we serve. We will learn of benchmarks and practical “foot holds” that can help us to stay the course towards reliable and sustainable organizational transformation.

### **Quarter-life Crises: The Transformative Call to Our Youth**

For recent college graduates entering the workforce, as well as older millennials, the “quarter-life crisis” is as real and traumatic as the more familiar “mid-life crisis?” Young people feel both the pressure to know their future and an admonishment for not knowing, as our culture tells them: “With health and a long life ahead on your side, what right do you have to be so lost, in despair and confused?” Dr. Plummer will offer a framework of how adults and community members can best support our young people through such times. She will reveal how within this “not knowing” there lives a deeper call to a more authentic living and revelation of a deeper purpose. She will outline concrete ways to assist the journey through this most promising call, a call towards a rightful heritage of connection, meaning and belonging.

### **Radical Hospitality: Embracing New Possibilities**

Often, potent openings to transformation of our lives hover just under our noses, yet we miss these promising portals as we are distracted by judgments and rejection of our experiences. In this presentation/workshop, Dr. Plummer will reveal the seven shifts of transformation and how our openhearted embrace of

challenging threshold experiences is the very key to unlock doorways to new possibilities of deeper connection, belonging and freedom.

### **Silence as Presence: Connection and Belonging**

Silence is not mere nothingness nor absence. There is a unique and vital silence around and within each life form that reveals essence. In this workshop Dr. Plummer will guide us in practices that will hone our receptivity and capacity to participate in the Silence, bringing us into deeper connection and greater creative collaboration with invisible dimensions of our world.

### **Inner Haiku: Practicing Presence and Acceptance**

The ancient poetic form of Haiku is traditionally practiced with observances in nature. One of the gifts of this art form is that it requires a simple descriptive attitude towards its object. Through this “presence to what is”, the last line of a Haiku often yields a surprise of sorts, revealing new and original insights as to the nature of things. In working with “Inner Haiku, Dr. Plummer will guide us in practicing the art form, while focusing on inner experiences, which will gift us with a greater capacity to be present with and accepting of just what we are aware of, and may thrill us with spontaneous understandings.

### **Living and Dying Well: One and the Same**

Often, when a loved one or our self receive a terminal diagnosis, what truly matters to us comes into the foreground of our attention, and we may find that we then live more fully, meaningfully and compassionately. In this workshop, Dr. Plummer will highlight this truth through stories and films, illustrating the truth that as we become more aware of our mortality, we will live more fully and meaningfully. She will provide experiential exercises that will give participants first-hand insights into the reciprocal relationship between living and dying well.

To schedule a talk, program, or book-signing event, please contact Blessingway Authors' Services at [jherzl@blessingway.com](mailto:jherzl@blessingway.com) or by telephone at 505.983.2649. [www.blessingway.com](http://www.blessingway.com)



## Expanded Bio

**Dr. Susan P. Plummer**

***Author, *Deep Change: Befriending the Unknown****

DR. SUSAN P. PLUMMER is the director of the Santa Barbara Alliance for Living and Dying Well, a consortium of major end of life care services and providers in the Santa Barbara area. Prior to this, she was the director of a certified hospice program for eight years. She holds a doctorate degree from the Saybrook Institute, as well as an undergraduate degree from Berkeley's School of Social Welfare. Also a licensed psychotherapist, she has had a part-time private practice for over 25 years.

Starting at a very young age, Dr. Plummer had a curiosity about other dimensions. This grew into a passionate lifetime interest in experiences of major life transitions, which she began to investigate under the guidance of leading theorist, Dr. Amadeo Giorgi. Her research yielded encouraging results, which turned out to be navigational—offering ways for individuals to move through very challenging yet promising journeys of deep change.

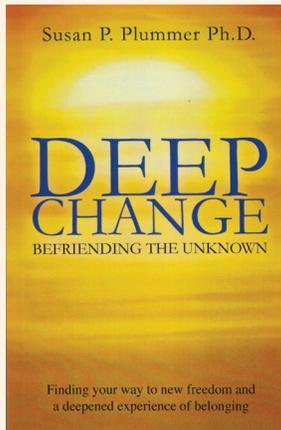
Her recent book, *Deep Change: Befriending the Unknown*, grew out of this doctoral research. Her book and presentations address the intricacies of transformation as they apply to individuals as well as the collective. Her popular workshops explore grief, bereavement, and the call to transformation as an avenue for growth in individuals and organizations.

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# DEEP Change

*Befriending the Unknown*

SUSAN P. PLUMMER, PH.D. AUTHOR SPEAKER EXPERT



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“Susan Plummer is a highly skilled and deeply sensitive psychotherapist who understands the dynamics of our inner lives as well as anyone I know; she is a trustworthy guide through the most tangled of spiritual thickets.”

—PARKER PALMER,  
AUTHOR OF *A HIDDEN WHOLENESS*

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www.susanplummer.com

**A**N ENGAGING PRESENTER, SUSAN P. PLUMMER, PHD, illuminates the process of Deep Change as a collective and individual calling of our time. Dr. Plummer's 20+ years of groundbreaking research has been distilled into an indispensable roadmap for navigating the experience of Deep Change.

Her talks and workshops illuminate the Seven Shifts of Deep Change, which take us beyond merely the redesigning of our lives to changing the way we experience our self and our world. The shifts of Deep Change are also applicable to the collective, such as organizations, groups, cultures, and countries. Professionals working in the fields of grief, bereavement, and recovery from addiction and depression have also found the structure found in the Seven Shifts of Deep Change extremely informative and relevant.

Additionally, Dr. Plummer is an advocate for an alternative to the widespread and indiscriminate prescription of medications for symptoms of depression and anxiety, which she cogently describes as *future-busters* — serving to abort the emergence of new futures and new ways of thinking. Instead, she encourages us to “befriend the unknown” and, in doing so, find our way through the mystery of Deep Change into greater freedom, compassion, connection, and belonging.

“Dr. Plummer’s model for personal change may be one of the most important contributions toward growth-centered counseling since Abraham Maslow’s work on peak experience. The practical applications she describes make it easy to apply her principles, both for individuals guiding their own personal change and for professionals guiding others through theirs, I believe that this work will be a source of great personal breakthroughs for anyone committed to a path of personal and spiritual development.”

—HAL ZINA BENNETT, PH.D., AUTHOR OF *LENS OF PERCEPTION*

## Talks & Speaking Engagements

Respected speaker, Dr. Susan P. Plummer, captivates audiences with humor and insight while sharing her groundbreaking work as a thought leader for Deep Change. Drawing upon her extensive professional research and development, her talks and presentations provide a context to the oft-misunderstood process of transformation and accepting change. In a time when so many aspects of our lives, relationships, systems and governing bodies are undergoing substantive revision and transformation, her talks couldn't be more timely or illuminating.

# DR. SUSAN P. PLUMMER IS TO PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE DEEP CHANGE WHAT ELISABETH KÜBLER-ROSS WAS TO PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE GRIEF.



*“Deep Change is a very accessible guide toward places and moments when we are startled into finding that we are alien to ourselves and that the resulting emptiness is a call forward....I now point myself and others into the direction of the insights pioneered in this book.”*

—ROBERT BOSNAK, AUTHOR OF  
*EMBODIED IMAGINATION*

*“You intricately wove together innovative academic research, personal stories, poetry, and diagrams to create a pattern for change that captures the imagination and engages the soul. I found the invitation to embark on the journey of deep change and experience personal freedom, compassion, connection, and belonging absolutely compelling.”*

C. S., SPIRITUAL DIRECTIONS COACH AND  
HOSPITAL ATTENDANT

## POPULAR SPEAKING TOPICS

The Alchemy of Deep Change  
Deep Change of the Collective  
Deep Change as an Avenue to Growth:  
Befriending the Unknown  
Deep Change Guidelines for Clinicians  
Deep Change Implications for Bereavement

## RECENT CORPORATE & ORGANIZATIONAL SPEECHES

The Collective Impact of Deep Change  
Transformational Leadership in Deep Change  
of the Collective  
Clinical Implications of Deep Change  
Organizational development of Deep Change  
Deep Change as an Avenue for Self-Growth  
Bereavement and Deep Change  
The Role of Radical Hospitality in Self-Care and Growth  
Relationship between Living and Dying Well  
Grief and Deep Change

**Dr. Plummer presents at schools and venues in social welfare,  
psychology, counseling, and spiritual direction including:**

The National Conference of Methodist Ministers  
in Hospice, where she serves as a Keynote Speaker  
The International Conference for Human Research Science  
Antioch University, Santa Barbara  
Estes Park Retreat Center, Estes Park  
Institute for Existential Inquiry, San Francisco  
Hollyhock Learning Center, Cortes Island, Canada  
JFK University, San Francisco  
La Casa Retreat Center, Santa Barbara  
Saybrook Institute, San Francisco  
Sophia Center at Holy Names University, Oakland  
UC Berkeley School of Social Welfare, Berkeley  
(among others).

“I was moved by your compassion for your fellow humans and their individual journeys. You described seven ‘shifts’ that we experience as we move from a known state to an unknown state and shared numerous life stories of what transformational change can feel like. While for some, Deep Change comes with uncertainty, insecurity, feelings of isolation, emptiness, worthlessness, grief, and despair that can cause them to choose therapy or treatment for relief rather than experience these feelings, instead, you taught us that these ‘shifts’ are like trail markers, signs that we are on the right path. You managed to do this without clinical detachment and to let us know that we are all in this together.”

H. W., PARTICIPANT IN ENGINEER/ARCHITECT RETREAT

“Attending the presentation brought home how this wisdom is so graciously resident in you. You combines authentic experience with a scholar’s mind and, in doing so, has helped to gently demystify and make accessible insights that everyone can benefit from.”

F. I., ARTIST/EDUCATOR

## Workshops

A popular presenter of the experiential shifts of Deep Change, Dr. Plummer helps participants encompass the metaphor of alchemy, practices of embodied awareness, radical hospitality, silence as presence, and the transformational impact of living more closely with our mortality.

Today, although many people are being called into Deep Change, most do not recognize its potential or understand its meaning; nor are they prepared to cooperate with its powerful forces. Dr. Plummer’s workshops foster the discovery of the mystery of Deep Change and how it is bringing us into greater freedom, compassion, and belonging.

For organizations and communities as well as individuals in the midst of Deep Change, Dr. Plummer’s work offers an understanding of these shifts and their interrelatedness, providing a framework for comprehending the nature of Deep Change and how best to respond to its beckoning forces.

### 2.5 – 5 DAY WORKSHOP INTENSIVES

#### Deep Change in Bereavement and Grief:

The Seven Shifts of Deep Change closely parallel the phases of those who are experiencing grief. In this workshop the shifts will be presented, drawing on the similarities of the bereavement experiences. What is unique about the seven shifts and their interrelationships is that they clearly show the avenue through which grief can be growthful and even transformational. Grief counselors have testified how utilizing the Seven Shifts of Deep Change have been extremely helpful in their work with bereaved clients, as the material allows them the courage to meet their grief experiences while offering greater hope of deeper connection, belonging and meaning. In addition to drawing clinical parallels between Deep Change and grief, anecdotes and experiential practices/experiences will be introduced to bring the material alive and to offer concrete ways to offer navigational support to clients in the throes of grief.

*This workshop is presented for professionals working in the field of grief and bereavement counseling and support. It can be adapted for those directly in the process of grief and bereavement.*

#### The Alchemy of Deep Change:

The metaphor of alchemy and the implications and practices inherent in Deep Change are explored in relationship to recent discoveries in physics and the transformational art of ancient alchemy. Descriptions and anecdotes of the shifts of Deep Change as they parallel alchemy and physics will be infused

## PRAISE FOR THE BOOK DEEP CHANGE

“A profound work of discovery—originality and insight shine through. This book will be a huge consolation and encouragement to our search for light.”

—JOHN O’DONOHUE, AUTHOR OF  
*ANAM CARA*

“An important book at a critical time in the life of our society, providing crucial insights as it deals with the paradoxes of gaining the world but losing its soul.”

—RICHARD TARNAS, AUTHOR,  
*THE PASSION OF THE WESTERN MIND*  
AND *COSMO AND PSYCHE*

“The first chapter described exactly what I had been going through! I had felt so lost and now I know that I am not alone and there is a known way to move through it.”

—28-YEAR-OLD ENTERTAINMENT  
INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL

with experiential opportunities using such tools as journaling, imagery and meditative practices, thereby connecting our own journeys with those of the creative cosmos.

## Deep Change of the Collective

The Seven Shifts of Deep Change are applicable to both the individual transformational journey as well as that of collective units such as couples, families, organizations, corporations and cultures. Processes and practices designed to guide people with a common cause/mission/goal through the Seven Shifts of Deep Change will provide a larger context in which to understand the current dynamics of their respective groups, as well as offering concrete tools and promises of new emerging organizational life.

Additional workshop titles include: Befriending the Unknown, Silence As Presence, Living and Dying Well, Inner Haiku: Presence to What Is, Practices of Embodied Awareness and Radical Hospitality.

*Workshops can be designed to meet specific audience needs.*

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**TO BOOK A WORKSHOP, RETREAT, KEYNOTE ADDRESS,  
OR SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT, CONTACT:**

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