

## **Praise For My Manifesto**

The world changed when Martin Luther nailed his Manifesto to the Castle Church doors in Wittenberg in 1517. Your world will change if you take the time to read, absorb and follow the guidance in this marvellous 'how to' manual for a better life. And you will not risk charges of blasphemy or ostracism, like Luther, but break from the shackles of the many layers of Ought Selves others have loaded onto you. Live your life to the fullest and use your Manifesto to jump start the process and declare it!

—**Richard Boyatzis**, co-author of international best seller, **Primal Leadership** and the new **Helping People Change**

*Authors Robinson and Wong take us through a gradual process, in accessible, yet significant steps, that enable any one of us to create ... the kind of statement we have all longed for at one time or another. Their work, rooted in best practices in psychology, coaching, philosophy and their own lived experience, enables the reader to build an understanding of the self that is unique, powerful, and positive.*

—**Maria Sirois**, author of **A Short Course in Happiness After Loss (and Other Dark, Difficult Times)**

The difference between living a full life (which many of us do in a constant state of busyness) and living life to the full (with all the richness, significance and variety that goes along with that) is so sharp it's almost frightening. Sue and Justin will help you move towards a better and valued way to bring your talents to the world, to your circle and – most importantly – to yourself.

—**Mark McKergow**, co-director of **The Centre for Solutions Focus at Work** and author of **The Next Generation of Solution Focused Practice and Host Leadership**

Gentle, inspiring and uplifting ... the world would be a much better place if we all went on this journey.

—**Hugh van Cuylenburg**, author of **The Resilience Project** and **Let Go**

The unique DIY approach taken in this book will prompt you to ask the big questions and then show you the small, doable steps, to create change. When you find your own inner gifts, you have more to give others. In this way *My Manifesto* is more than a simple book, it's an invitation to start a positive ripple effect.

—**Lea Waters, OAM**, author of *The Strength Switch*

Justin and Sue's authenticity and positive collaboration shine throughout. I strongly recommend this book to those interested in further self-knowledge or a clearer life direction.

—**Chris Mackey**, author of *The Positive Psychology of Synchronicity*

*My Manifesto* combines the most up-to-date science and ancient wisdom to provide a powerful and playful path to fulfillment and excellence. *My Manifesto* provides gentle, loving strategies for achieving and sustaining a beautiful life.

—**Robert Maurer**, author of *One Small Step Can Change Your Life*

*My Manifesto* provides interesting and challenging ways to be part of a community where the synergy of many individuals can coalesce into a force for good.

—**Brigid Arthur**, coordinator of *Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project*

Sometimes in life we know what we want but just lack the compass to get there. Simple, beautiful, and deeply meaningful; *My Manifesto* is a masterclass in self-discovery and personal empowerment.

—**Matthew Johnstone**, illustrator and author of *The Big Little Book of Resilience* and *Stress Less*

*My Manifesto* is a brilliant guide to supporting us in living our best lives. I enjoyed the process of working through each of the steps to unlock some really powerful takeaways. Highly recommend the read.

—**Trent Cotchin**, author of *From the Heart*

## **Feedback From My Manifesto Clients**

My manifesto sets me up for the day.

—Nicole (thirties)

I will continue considering and reflecting on many of the concepts and evolving my manifesto, as I realised this was the first time I had thought about many areas!

—Faith (twenties)

When I read my manifesto, I'm reminded of what is important.

—Joel (forties)

I really appreciated that throughout the book there was talk of not being perfect, of not putting pressure on myself to 'get it right', that there were no right answers ... I felt like it was okay to bring my full self to the process.

—Tunya (thirties)

Best thing I have ever done!

—Lisa (fifties)

The results are so powerful.

—Charlie (sixties)

I found the whole process really beautiful. For me, it was incredibly beneficial, grounding and recalibrating. I feel we all need a reminder sometimes of what is important and what is driving us, and this did it beautifully.

—Nic (forties)

It really was a gift to myself. I am proud of the manifesto I have created.

—Jo (fifties)

# MY MANIFESTO

A compassionate guide  
to reveal your best life

Sue Wong & Justin Robinson

Published by Melbourne Books  
Level 9, 100 Collins Street,  
Melbourne, VIC 3000  
Australia  
[www.melbournebooks.com.au](http://www.melbournebooks.com.au)  
[info@melbournebooks.com.au](mailto:info@melbournebooks.com.au)

Copyright © Sue Wong & Justin Robinson 2024

Title: My Manifesto: A compassionate guide  
to reveal your best life  
Authors: Sue Wong & Justin Robinson  
ISBN: 9781922779212  
Front cover design: Marianna Berek-Lewis  
Book layout design: Ellen Cheng

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may  
be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or  
transmitted in any form or any means electronic,  
mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise  
without the prior permission of the publisher.



A catalogue record for this  
book is available from the  
National Library of Australia

M  
MELBOURNE BOOKS

**This book is dedicated to mentors, authors, friends, coaches, and philosophers who have compassionately guided us to know and live our best lives.**

**It is our pleasure to offer you the opportunity to reveal your personal manifesto.**

#### Disclaimer

Neither Sue nor Justin claim to be therapists. The information in this book is for self-education purposes. It is offered to aid self-coaching and, where relevant, to complement therapy or psychological advice. As you work through the book, should any situation arise for you, please consult with a therapist or health specialist of your choice.

*Sue Wong and Justin Robinson are distinguished career educators with extensive expertise in wellbeing education and growth coaching. Their profound knowledge has been honed through years of dedicated professional learning, coaching diverse clients, and engaging in continuous self-discovery. Their paths crossed at Geelong Grammar School, where Justin founded and directed the Institute of Positive Education, while Sue pioneered a highly successful coaching model. Together, they bring a wealth of experience and a refined 7-Step framework that reflects their commitment to empowering individuals on their journey towards personal and professional fulfillment.*



## **Sue Wong**

Sue has a Certificate IV and Diploma of Workplace and Business Coaching with Open Door Coaching. She is also a Professional Certified Coach with Growth Coaching International (GCI) in Leadership Coaching and Advanced Coaching: Solutions Focus Masterclass. She has her Coaching Accreditation with GCI. Sue's teaching qualifications include a BA Hons in English followed by a Dip Ed. Sue has deepened her ability to connect with students and teachers by adopting a coaching approach and pioneered a coaching model at Geelong Grammar School, which included developing coaches and introducing coaching concepts for teachers and students.

## **Justin Robinson**

Justin has a Master of Education degree and a Certificate in Positive Psychology and an altMBA. He is an Honorary Fellow of the University of Melbourne's Graduate School of Education and is a global board member of the International Positive Education Network. In 2017, Justin was listed in The Australian Educator's Top 50 Hot List. He was the inaugural Director of the Institute of Positive Education, based at Geelong Grammar School, Australia. For more than ten years he was instrumental in pioneering a sustained implementation of Positive Education. He has also trained thousands of educators around the world in designing evidence-informed approaches to wellbeing.

# CONTENTS

14 Introduction

## **PART 1: PRIMING YOUR MANIFESTO**

20 Chapter 1: Unique And Imperfect

28 Chapter 2: The Gaining Of Wisdom

36 Chapter 3: Starting Where You Are At

42 Chapter 4: Questions As Doorways

49 Chapter 5: Creative Living Beyond Fear

59 Chapter 6: Our Pep Talk

## **PART 2: CREATING YOUR MANIFESTO**

70 Introduction to Part 2

76 Chapter 7: Step 1 – The Energising Step

99 Chapter 8: Step 2 – The Courageous Step

120 Chapter 9: Step 3 – The Mattering Step

138 Chapter 10: Step 4 – The Visionary Step

154 Chapter 11: Step 5 – The Releasing Step

177 Chapter 12: Step 6 – The Connection Step

197 Chapter 13: Step 7 – The Contribution Step

215 Chapter 14: My Unique Manifesto

## **PART 3: LIVING YOUR MANIFESTO**

232 Chapter 15: Your Pep Talk

243 Chapter 16: Small Steps And Great Small Steps

251 Chapter 17: Shaping Your Environment

258 Chapter 18: Listening To Your Environment

266 Chapter 19: Am I There Yet?

274 Acknowledgements

277 Appendices

277 Appendix 1: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

280 Appendix 2: The VIA Classification Of Character Strengths

281 Appendix 3: An Overview Of Ten Key Positive Emotions

282 Appendix 4: Character Strengths 360 Exercise

283 Appendix 5: 50+ Authentic Living Books That We Love

284 Appendix 6: Some Inspirational Words

287 Sue's Current Manifesto

288 Justin's Current Manifesto

**It is common to  
have a full life.**

**It is less common  
to live life fully.**

**Your manifesto can  
be the difference!**

*Sue Wong and Justin Robinson*

# Introduction

Hi!

We are excited to share with you what we have discovered, and have attempted to capture the essence of that discovery in this book. Our hope is that, in doing this, we will honour our compelling belief in servant leadership by compassionately guiding you to reveal your own manifesto – the statement that represents your best life.

Our 7-Step guide has been fine-tuned over years of personal discovery, hundreds of client coaching sessions, and has now been road-tested by individuals spanning from age twenty-one to eighty-four! It has proved relevant and empowering across genders, cultures, backgrounds, and life stages. This book acts as a DIY manual enabling you to craft your personal manifesto with confidence.

Developing and working through this process has been so good for us, and we have been told by our road-testers that it was good for them, too – so much so that we could not help but rush to share it with all of you. Your current, unique, and personal manifesto – a private declaration of wisdom and intentions – can also support you



to live your best life and really help when you are feeling stuck or uncertain. We invite you to join us and seize this opportunity for personal growth and self-realisation.

To make this process as accessible as possible, we've arranged this book into three parts. In *Part 1: Priming Your Manifesto*, we get you ready for the upcoming 'work' in six related chapters that explain what a manifesto is, how it might help you, and some of the challenges you may come up against. You've got this!

In *Part 2: Creating Your Manifesto*, we take you through our curated 7-Step process as you complete relevant exercises and draft initial responses to seven powerful overarching questions. This is it. The good oil! We start up close and personal, *The Energising Step*, which is you revealing you, to you, and then we move to what you stand for. We call this *The Courageous Step* because it really takes courage to stand up and hold your ground for what is important to you. From there we progress to what you care about, *The Mattering Step*, and what you dream about, *The Visionary Step* – lovely stuff. Of course, having gone there, we've opened up the can of worms and out pops fear in *The Releasing Step*. We have to then release ourselves from it; enough of it, anyway, to be able to keep moving forward! Ah, and then we return to the lovely stuff again with a chapter on relationships, *The Connection Step*, and finish with *The Contribution Step*, in which we invite you to put into words what, ultimately, we all want, what we want being here to mean, what it was all about – our unique footprint.

We round off *Part 2* with the exciting and inspiring opportunity to bring all your work together as you reveal your manifesto, something we are sure will be a treasured document for you, full of your personal wisdom and insights.

We don't leave you here. You have your hard-won manifesto, now you need to live it! We therefore conclude our book with *Part 3: Living Your Manifesto*. This is where we explore the challenges and opportunities of harnessing, and living, your manifesto. We discuss the power of small steps, the importance of shaping and listening to your environment, and celebrating the joys and wonders of living life to the full. What a wondrous, celebratory part of the book this is! We hope you are smiling all the way through it.

We feel confident in the effectiveness of the process delivered in this book. Why? Because we followed it and we are living it! Not a day goes by that we don't feel grateful for the awareness that our manifestos have raised in us. Each day is a new chance to put into place all that we know that honours our unique, individual, short but rich time on this earth. Our confidence is further built by the positive experiences and feedback shared by our road-testers and our clients.

What have you got to lose? What have you got to gain?

We wish you well as you embark on this extraordinary journey of self-discovery. Create your personal manifesto, and live a life filled with authentic purpose and complete clarity.

You owe it to you.

With best wishes,

Sue & Justin

