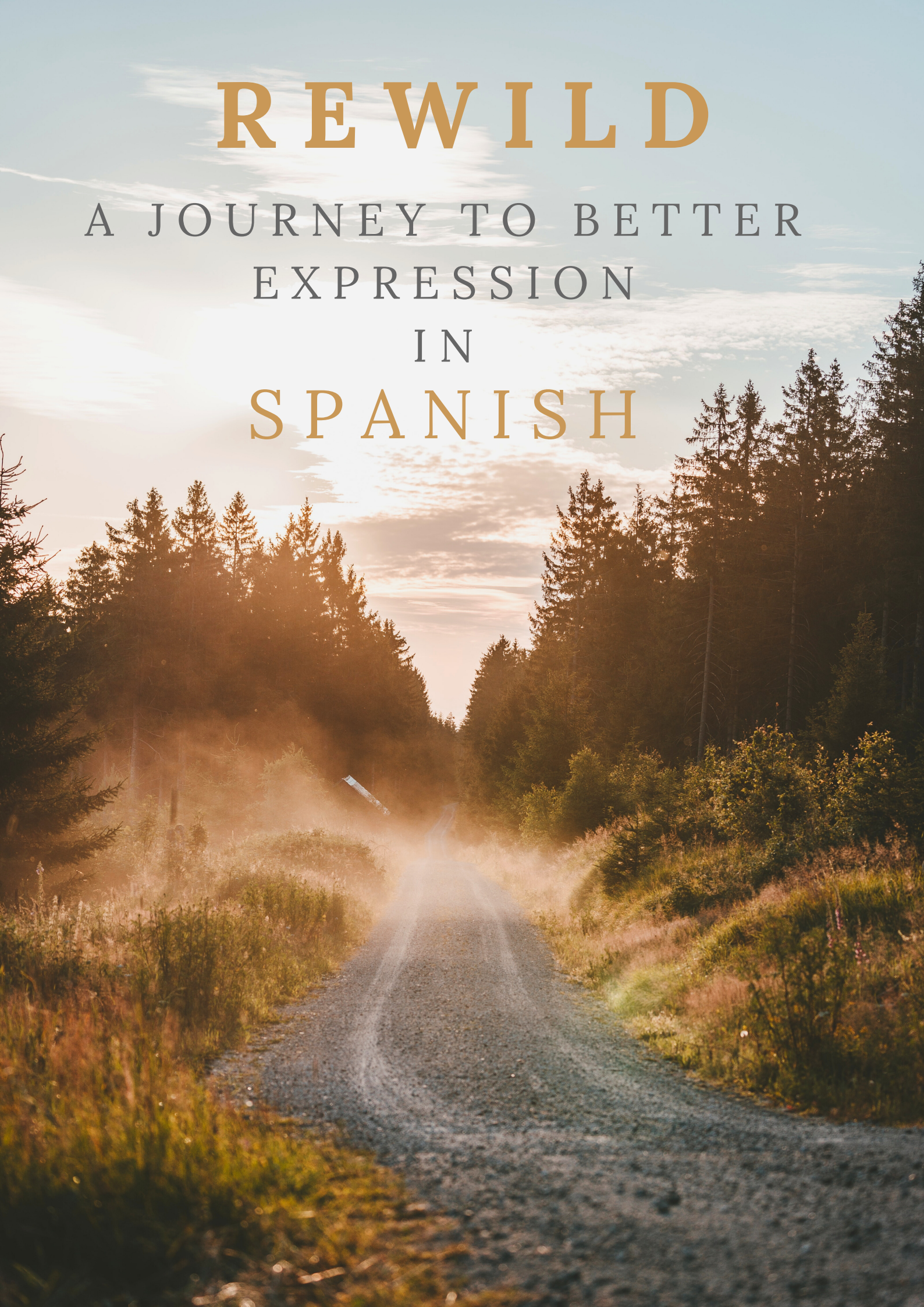


REWILD

A JOURNEY TO BETTER
EXPRESSION
IN
SPANISH



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EDITORIAL

Hola y bienvenido

Estoy feliz de que estés aquí. I am delighted you are here.

In this booklet you will find few strategies to reframe your relationship with Spanish and how that can help you reach your goals of fluency and accuracy, and keep your motivation alive.

There is no reason why learning Spanish has to be dull and unfulfilling. I believe it should be pleasurable, fun and thrilling. And I know that this journey to learn Spanish can be more than that if you want. It can be the journey of your life, a journey to discover your Spanish-speaking self.

Keep reading and you'll see how.

Estoy entusiasmada (thrilled) de que estés aquí.

Un abrazo,

REFRAME
YOUR
RELATIONSHIP



REFRAMING YOUR SPANISH LEARNING JOURNEY

The first hurdle one encounters may very well be the widely held notion that learning Spanish (or any other language) has to look like something very concrete: it involves lessons with a teacher and/or following text books or grammar books, or having conversation lessons or conversation exchanges. It involves practising and memorising and flash cards and very little pleasure and joy if you are not a language learner nerd (that is, if you don't enjoy learning languages as a means to an end).

MAKE IT PERSONAL

What if you saw the language you are learning as a relationship with a living being? With a person or animal? What living being does Spanish evoke to you? For me, French has always been a poised woman, English a playful friend and Irish is a mystic and wise old woman. And obviously, the relationship I have with each language is different, the way I feel like studying French is different than the way I feel like working on my English... And knowing this is very important to optimise your learning experience. There is no right or wrong way, but you cannot nor should not be doing the same with each language you are learning! It is as if you did the same things and behaved in the same way with every human being you interact with.

Try it if you haven't already, and tell me what changes!

JOURNALING

If the Spanish language were a living being, a person or animal, what would it be? How would you describe it? What relationship would you have with it?



A decorative illustration of a green vine with leaves, curving from the bottom left towards the top right, set against a white background with horizontal orange lines.

ARCHETYPES

I find that very often we adopt an archetype in every relationship that we have, and we attach an archetype to the person we interact with.

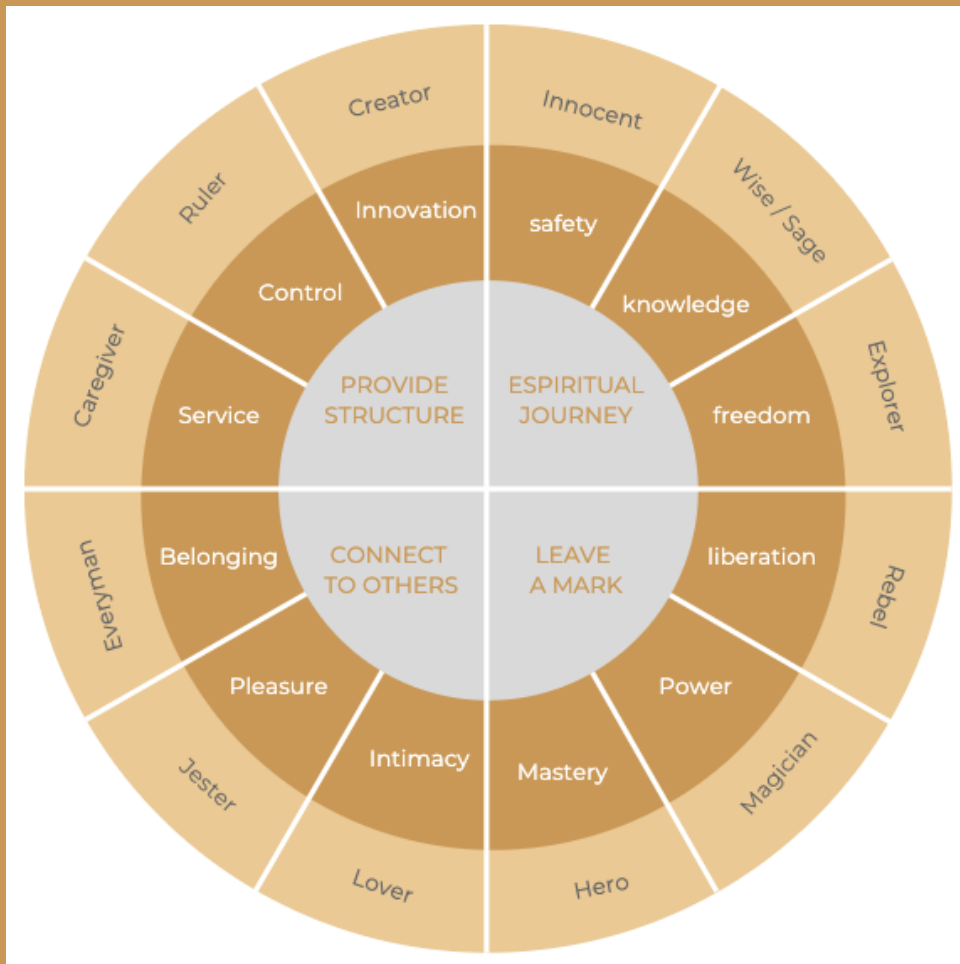
Following this, I believe we can explore what archetype we unconsciously attach to the language we are learning or what archetype we adopt.

Every language awakens different parts of us and when we are conscious of that part of us being aroused by that language, we start allowing the language and the relationship with the language to guide us instead of us controlling it.

We are transforming the language-learning journey into one that is much more than learning the language itself, it becomes a journey to awaken the parts of us that were dormant in our native language.

ARCHETYPES

Have a look at Jung's major archetypes.



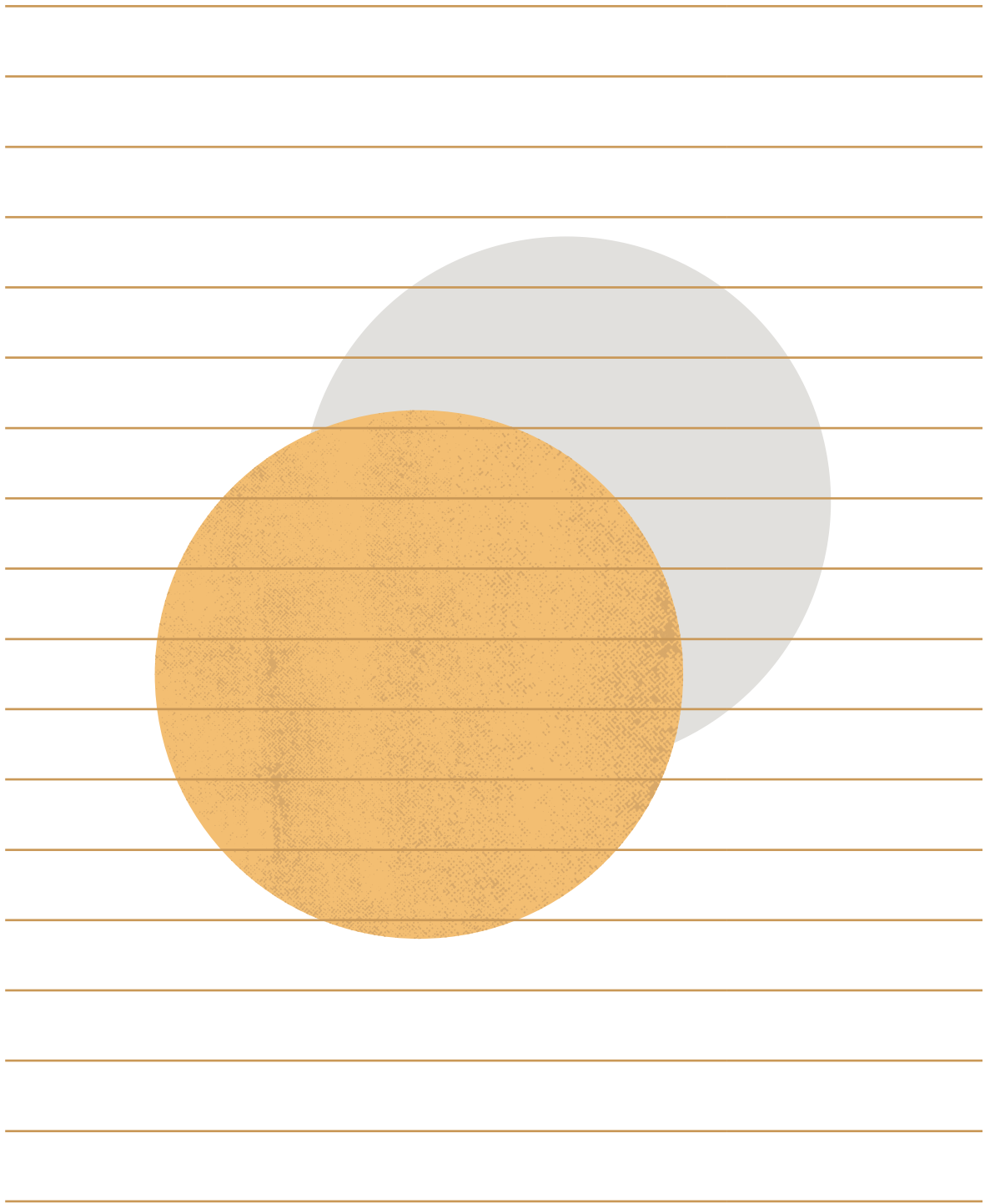
For me French, or my relationship with French, is in between the lover and the jester, because I seek and find pleasure with it.

Irish is the wise/sage archetype as I learn it to deepen my spiritual journey and find a certain kind of knowledge from my relationship with the language.

My relationship with English has gone through different stages (=archetypes) as happens with every long-lasting relationship: so it has evolved from "everyman" to "explorer" to "rebel", "magician" and "hero".

EXPLORATORY QUESTIONS

Think about your relationship with Spanish, consider the personification you have of Spanish in the previous task and think about the deep reason behind your wanting to learn Spanish. What archetype (or archetypes) represent this relationship?



EXPRESSING BETTER



EXPRESSING BETTER

Expressing better is not only related to speaking, as we can express ourselves without saying a word. But if you are reading these words, you are probably interested in expressing yourself better in conversational Spanish, which involves words in Spanish (spoken and written).

But one important thing: *you won't speak better Spanish by speaking more.*

It's all about meaningful work, significant (relevant) work and self-knowledge. And this last part is often forgotten.

Tell me, how can you express yourself if you don't know who you are? And yes, you might say that you do, but what if I asked you to respond to the question "who are you?" without using gender, nationality, status or career, for example? Would you still have an easy, quick answer to that question?

Speaking better is ALL about understanding and knowing your POINT of VIEW inside out. And the way to get there is to practise self-questioning and introspection often about topics that are uncomfortable.

It is about having an opinion and questioning it and getting down to the nitty-gritty of you (your beliefs, thoughts, opinions, biases....) THROUGH SPANISH!

WHO ARE YOU IN SPANISH?

Learning a new language means that you will discover your plurality in the moment you immerse yourself in the language and allow the mindset and worldview of that language (that is, of the people who "create" it) to permeate you. It happens when you stop trying to translate your "native speaker self" into your "Spanish speaker self". It happens when you allow yourself to become a clean slate in which you can rewrite yourself through the force of the language itself, as if the language (and all that comes with it) would be guiding your hands to create a new story of you.

It's like this, you are who you are in your native language, not only from your lived experiences but also from the mindset of that language (the shared history, experiences and worldview of that culture) that impregnates your way of being.

When you learn a new language, we can't simply translate ourselves into that language. And when we try to do it, it's when things go wrong. Because there will be concepts and ideas that don't exist in that new language and the opposite, there are concepts and ideas of that new language that won't be explored in you when you are only translating from your native language's worldview.

The potential for alchemy of languages is when you understand that you ARE a different person in every language and allow that to come through, – through an open mind, open heart and open will, in other words, through play and exploration.

Think about the "untranslatable" words that exist in every language. The concept they convey is one that can be experienced by anyone. However, the fact that some languages do not have a word for a special concept, means that it's not something which that culture, for whatever reason, needed to express.

Words are created from thoughts or experiences, but thoughts and experiences also come from the words we have. For example, the idea of "sobremesa" in Spanish is the time we spend sitting at the table chatting and socialising after eating. Meals are so important that Spaniards created a word to express the "ritual" of the meals. I haven't experienced "sobremesa" in any English-speaking country and the idea of sitting after the meal seems foreign to them (in my experience) but when I introduce this word to my students in the retreats I organise, the concept and experience is now an awakened part of them. Some students go on to embody that "new" part of themselves and implement it in their daily lives.

You don't need to have "sobremesa" only when you are in Spain. And you don't need to adopt all the new things you experience from the language when you allow the language to permeate you and awaken your dormant parts. This untranslatable quality of languages is what we want to tap into to awaken the untranslatable parts of ourselves that haven't been lived or experienced yet.

Who are you or who can you be "at the table"? Who do you become in every language when you allow that language to be lived through you, or you live through the language?

FIND
YOUR
IMAGERY



FIND YOUR OWN IMAGERY

What are your own, unique images?

For me coffee is like a cosy blanket. It makes me feel cosy, warm and safe and I have clear images of how these feelings appear in my mind. Now, what does this first sip of coffee mean to you? Is it the beginning of a new day, gratitude, potential? And what images do these feelings evoke?

These images are super important when we want to talk to someone. Because it helps the listener paint a picture of our message in their heads. It makes it clearer. And it helps the listener to connect with us better and deeper.

If you talked with me, you will soon notice how I tend to bring colour to my speech by bringing in images and comparisons (metaphors). I tend to speak in English all the time because I live in an English-speaking country and all my friends speak English, so what helps me make myself understood is bringing in these images when I don't find the right words. So, let's say I want to explain to my friend that the other day I woke up very disoriented and I wanted to tell her that I was "wobbling down the stairs" but I didn't have that word in my vocabulary yet. I then would say that I was going down the stairs like a toddler, which would immediately paint a picture in her mind. We "share" that image and she would connect with my emotion of how I felt going down the stairs. Now, this is a common image as an example, but the point is that **being "fluent" in your own imagery is more important and useful than having a long list of decontextualised words in the target language.**

FIND YOUR OWN IMAGERY

HOW?

Writing poetry in Spanish is one fantastic way of discovering your own imagery and getting fluent in it.

EXERCISE 1

One simple exercise you can do is find emotions, feelings, concepts that are relevant to you or you are familiar with.

Start with how you are feeling right now if you feel stuck.

How would you describe this feeling with only your senses (colours, smells, songs or noises...) What story or lived example would illustrate this emotion? What "picture" can you create to describe this feeling? Search for something that is unique or personal to you (don't reach for things you have read or been told), use your own experience.

EXERCISE 2

Another exercise is paying attention to moments in your life, like taking photos for your Instagram feed.

What catches your eye, what do you want to take photos of, what makes you feel in awe? These are your unique images. Now, what emotion do you attach to them? How do they make you feel? What meaning do you assign to them? What story do you connect to them?

JOURNALING

Find your images and metaphors with exercises 1 and 2 in the previous page.



UN HASTA LUEGO

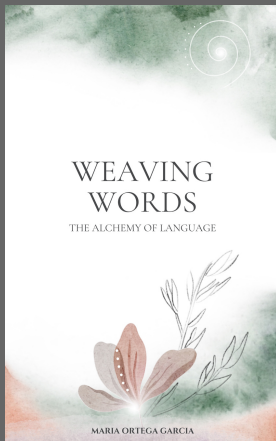
This is all from this little booklet. My only intention with these pages is to bring you a new perspective about what it means to learn a language and how doing it can transform you if you let it.

I have been teaching languages for almost 20 years. I have always been passionate about education, languages and how we use words to express ourselves, heal parts of us and grow, transform and become more of who we are by unlocking parts of us that we don't get the chance to enliven in the monolingual, comfort zone of our daily lives.

Learning Spanish can be as daunting and deep as spending months in a silent retreat in Japan, as transformative as traveling solo around the world, as expansive as reading all the self-help books you can think of, as healing as having therapy. But it can also be none of that. And that's ok too.

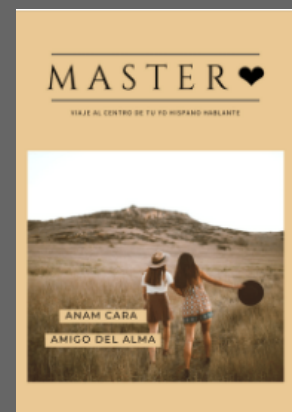
But if you wonder how it would be to unlock your Spanish self as a way to grow, expand, heal and become whole, you are in the right place. And I can help you because I have been doing this my entire adult life. I am not a polyglot and learning languages *per se* is not my thing, but I have developed deep relationships with some languages (and broken up with some others) that have allowed me to see the potential for growth and transformation and awakening that learning a language, living a language, embodying a language can be.

Do you want me to be your guide on this journey?



If you want to deepen your understanding on this heart-centered approach to languages, you might enjoy my first book: *Weaving Words: The Alchemy of Languages.* Available in ebook and paperback format worldwide in Amazon.

Spanish Masterheart is a monthly 40-pages magazine that includes texts about different topics to practise reflection and introspection, journaling and creative writing prompts, audio prompts, listening tasks and the opportunity of have correction and feedback every month.



Varied self-paced courses around journaling, accuracy, grammar, conversation, self-exploration in Spanish... [Learn more.](#)

And, in the meantime, let's keep in touch via the newsletter that you will receive every week or three times a month.

Maria