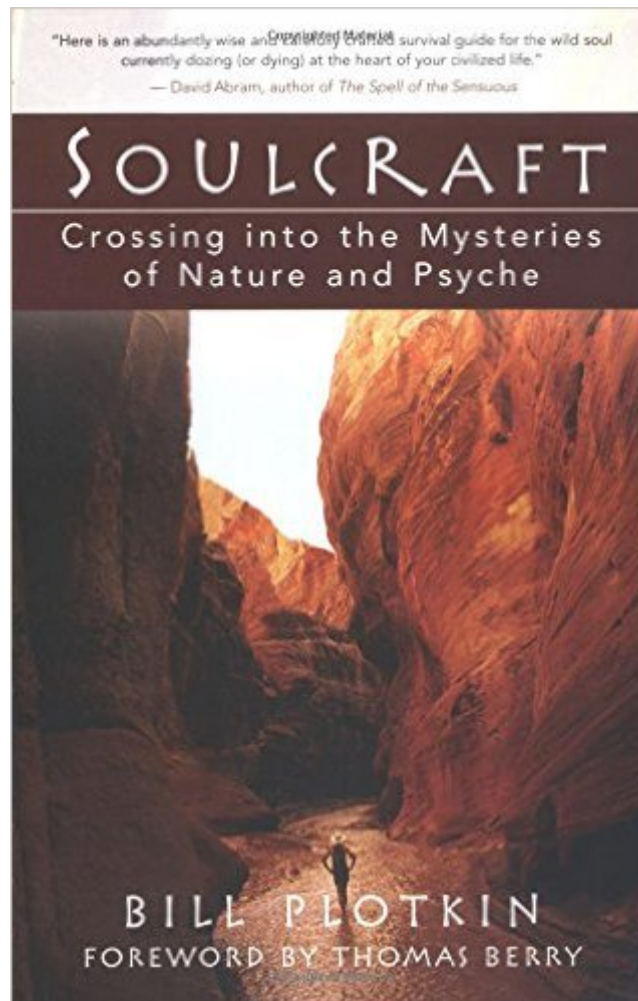


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# Soulcraft: Crossing Into The Mysteries Of Nature And Psyche



## Synopsis

Since 1980, depth psychologist Bill Plotkin has been guiding women and men into the wilderness—the redrock canyons and snow-crested mountains of the American West—but also into the wilds of the soul. He calls this work soulcraft. There's a great longing in all people to uncover the secrets and mysteries of our individual lives, to find the unique gift we were born to bring to our communities, and to experience our full membership in the more-than-human world. This journey to soul is a descent into layers of the self much deeper than personality, a journey meant for each one of us, not just for the heroes and heroines of mythology. A modern handbook for the journey, Soulcraft is not an imitation of indigenous ways, but a contemporary nature-based approach born from wilderness experience, the traditions of Western culture, and the cross-cultural heritage of all humanity. Filled with stories, poems, and guidelines, Soulcraft introduces over 40 practices that facilitate the descent to soul, including dreamwork, wilderness vision fasts, talking across the species boundaries, council, self-designed ceremony, nature-based shadow work, and the arts of romance, being lost, and storytelling.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Bill Plotkin's Soulcraft, grounded in the author's formal training as a clinical psychologist, and in his decades of experience as a wilderness guide who guides his clients through both inner and outer wilderness, provides readers with an experience-based, intellectually stimulating, and potentially life-altering antidote to mainstream Western civilization. Based on the premise that virtually all of us

live lives that attempt to satisfy the ego's needs while ignoring the soul's deeper yearnings, Plotkin guides us to a severance from our ego-based lives, through an encounter with soul, and finally into a return, with new knowledge of the gifts we carry to our people--family, friends, co-workers and community. As he encourages us to grow from our necessary and valuable uninitiated adolescent need to be accepted by society, into our initiated adult need to live authentically these gifts we carry, he treats us to his own story and the stories of others who are doing the work of authenticity. More than 30 practices validate the presence of the word "craft" in the book's main title. Whether the reader is drawn to meditation, drumming, dream work, deep imagery, befriending the dark, wandering in nature, working with shadow or any one of more than a score more approaches to living a soul-based life, Bill Plotkin challenges us to live our true callings, and provides us the means with which to do so. Soulcraft engaged me both experientially and philosophically, calling me to both act and think. It's no accident that Thomas Berry wrote the foreword, or that Brian Swimme, Angeles Arrien, Robert Johnson, and Derrick Jensen, among others, praised the book before publication. Bill Plotkin, in the words of David Whyte, whose poetry graces many of these pages, carries "what is hidden as a gift to others." For this we should all be grateful.

I am currently translating this book into the German language. It is the most exciting translation I have done in the last years. Even though I am only copying it down it has already changed my life in a profound way. I am very thankful for the destiny that put this book on my desk - and I know that there was no coincidence involved. The book provides several practices and approaches that help to address the problem a lot of people encounter in the middle of their lives - or sometimes even earlier: The moment when you notice that things that have always made sense all in a sudden don't carry any meaning for you any more. It is the first book I ever read that does not only promise to, but actually really helps you finding out what you are here for and how you can act according to this insight. It brings you on your path - the soulpath. Work your way through the practices, exercises, and ceremonies in this book and your life will never be the same again. Seriously, I see a lot of books on new age and nature spirituality going over my desk, but this one definitely outdoes all I have been reading and working on during the last ten years.

Every now and then a book is birthed into the world that is destined to irrevocably alter the spiritual face of modern culture. Bill Plotkin's Soulcraft is just such a book. Charting a course through the underworld pathways with the heart of a shaman, mapping the powers of myth and psyche with all the soul and interpretive skill of Jung or Campbell, Plotkin's guide to the journey of initiation is to

nature-based soulwork what Huxley's *Doors of Perception* was to consciousness studies. This book is an immense treasure that will provide wisdomseekers, psychologists, shamanic practitioners, and seasoned wilderness guides alike with a fresh heart-opening soul language, a new mythos for fathoming the depths of change, as well as time-tested practical methods for navigating the landscape of authentic transformation. In essence, *Soulcraft* is Plotkin's "soul gift," a user's manual for the journey of the human soul, as well as a guide to the futurescape of why we are all really here. It is the book I wish I could have had at my fingertips when I began to feel the ancient call for rites of passage in my early youth. It is required reading for anyone guiding other people in soulwork, or delving deep into their own. As philosopher Parker Palmer has said, "The way to God is down." Plotkin shows the way. - Frank MacEowen, author of *The Mist-Filled Path: Celtic Wisdom for Exiles, Wanderers, and Seekers*

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