

## The Potentialist: The Pursuit of Wisdom

**Ben Lytle**

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*A focused self-help text that encourages attentive self-inquiry, The Potentialist suggests ways to nurture one's consciousness toward living the best possible life.*

Ben Lytle's self-help book *The Potentialist* is about the pursuit of wisdom and the individual quest to become one's best.

Arguing for soul nurturing while also seeing the potential of new technologies, this book asserts the importance of cultivating one's consciousness to be ready for insights: "A few transcendent minutes or hours over a lifetime is better than a PhD in philosophy or thirty years of trial-and-error life experience." Clear, rich examples are used to make a case for the importance of becoming wise, with the book suggesting that in an age of ever-increasing complexity, digital interconnection, and AI automation, the pursuit of personal growth is a priority and a responsibility. It suggests possible pathways to cultivating such wisdom.

First introducing the questions it deems necessary to learning "the art of living well," this is a focused text that encourages attentiveness while one is in the self-inquiry process. Explanations of what the psychological body is, and regarding various aspects of natural law, play in to form the book's foundation. The second section dives into specific psychic qualities and states, while the third and final section is an entry point into reframing fear, learning from experience, and cultivating daily wisdom. Existential questions are the book's throughline, including "Are people getting better or worse?" These muse on differences in human experience, circumstances, and psychological makeup.

The chapters are structured to allow for flexibility in their consumption: After defining and explaining the topic at hand, they address psychological barriers, triggers, and reactions alongside examples, tips, metaphors, and hands-on practices related to them. Case studies and wisdom stories complete the chapters with practical inspiration and material for reflection, as with the story of a boss who used an unruly meeting as a lesson and is credited with having "masterfully framed issues to respect each point of view" so that "resolutions came surprisingly easy... thanks to his wisdom and intuitive use of the Law of Polarity."

The book's message is one of optimism, self-responsibility, and belief in human potential, which is framed as universal (though few of the book's references relate to the experiences of people outside the US). Sources are well documented in the end notes and the bibliography, but the book also draws on Lytle's personal and professional experience, case studies, and wisdom stories drawn from various walks of life. Tables and graphs are used to clarify complex psychological notions and distinctions.

*The Potentialist* is a soul-attuned guidebook to becoming wise by developing psychological states that nurture one's authentic self.

FRANCESCA ANIBALLI (October 28, 2024)

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