

*Coastal Inspirations*  
DRAWING BEAUTY AND MEANING FROM THE SEA

*What inspires you?*

When we go to the shore, we see ourselves in new ways. Our hearts open with the rhythmic sound of waves crashing on the shore, the pallet of colors painting the sky as the sun sets on the horizon, and the tranquility as a new day awakens. These are some of our favorite reflective moments on the coast.

For this father and daughter collaboration, being on the coast is a time to explore how the serenity, wisdom, and healing power of the sea expands their world. The book highlights how the insights of thoughtful people can guide others along their path through life.

This book combines both.

The images and phrases are ones that elicit pause and reflection, convey insight, evoke imagination, and inspire action along life's pilgrimage. It is our intent that this tapestry will inspire the reader on many levels and motivate the rediscovery of what brings you alive.

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“Most of us look at a thing and believe we have seen it, yet what we see is only what our prejudices tell us to see, or what our past experiences tell us should be seen, or what our desire wants to see. Very rarely are we able to free our minds of thoughts and emotions, and just see for the simple pleasure of seeing. And so long as we fail to do this, so long will the essence of things be hidden from us.”

BILL BRANT, BRITISH PHOTOGRAPHER

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# Coastal Inspirations

DRAWING BEAUTY AND MEANING FROM THE SEA

Marissa O'Neil & Peter O'Neil

VINEYARD STORIES  
Edgartown, Massachusetts



# Introduction

This book is a collaboration of a father and daughter, thirty-three years apart, who make a yearly voyage to the Martha's Vineyard sea shore—a time that has been a foundational family event. These trips have made the coast a place where time stops and our worries lighten. This sanctuary has provided our family a place where, despite how life's choices have empowered us to grow independently, we come together to connect on a deeper level and create shared memories.

This is where we call home.

This is where we have felt inspired—our lives magnified and deepened until we have felt clarity of vision, emotion, and purpose.

*Coastal Inspirations* is our opportunity to give you the same gifts the sea has given us.

We have paired photographs and quotes designed to capture a single moment along life's journey while presenting a sense of timelessness and universality. They are meant to prod memories, aspirations, and directions in life. The images are ones that elicit pause and reflection, conveying insight, initiating a conversation and inspiring action. Some of the pairings are clear and unambiguous. Others are elusive. All are intended to resonate with you on life's pilgrimage.

Our own journey in creating this book has helped transform our parent-child role into one of colleagues, sharing the work and challenging each other on a daily basis. We are using our new relationship and what we have learned from this book to align ourselves with living at the edge.

We believe this collection of images and words creates a tapestry that will enrich your passage to discover what brings you alive.

Turn these pages and open your heart to the journey within yourself.

Bon voyage,  
Marissa and Peter

“The only journey  
is the journey within.”

RAINER MARIA RILKE





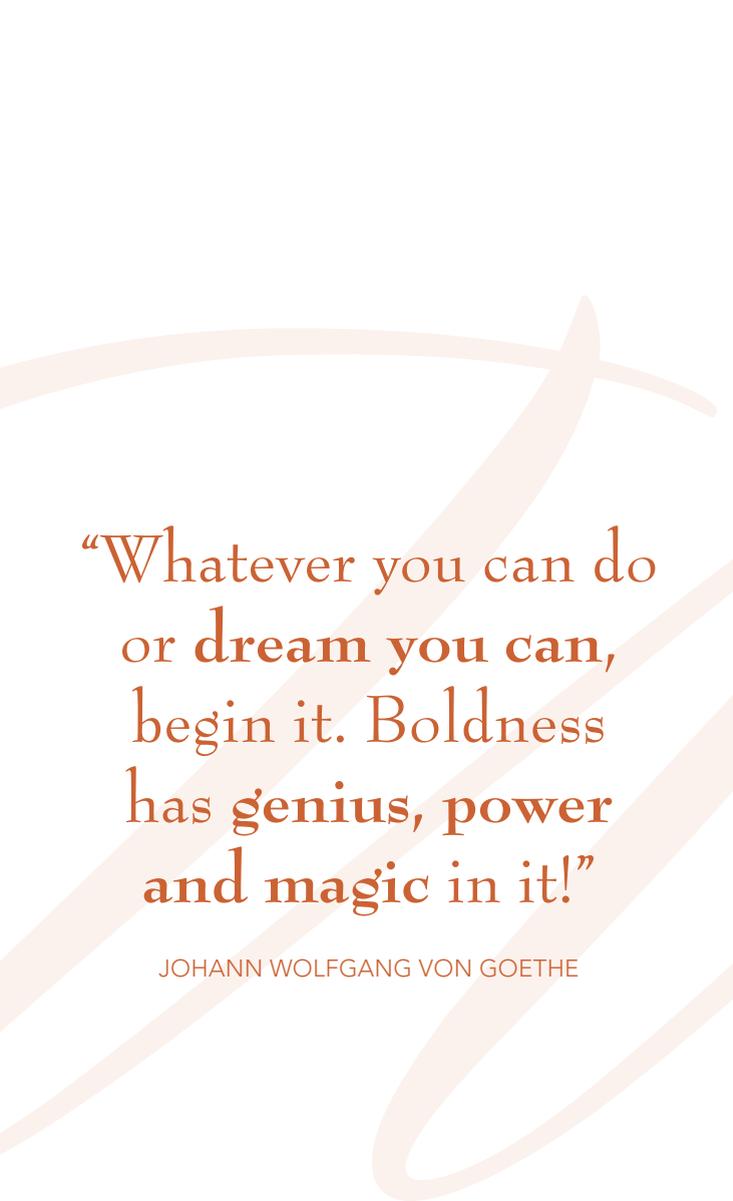
“How can we know who we are and where we are going if we don’t know anything about where we have come from and what we have been through?”

DAVID McCULLOUGH

“There are, it seems, two muses:  
the **Muse of Inspiration**, who gives us  
inarticulate visions and desires, and the  
**Muse of Realization**, who returns again and  
again to say, ‘It is yet more difficult than you  
thought.’ It may be that when we no longer  
know what to do, **we have come to our real  
work** and when we no longer know which  
way to go, **we have begun our real journey.**”

WENDELL BERRY





“Whatever you can do  
or **dream you can**,  
begin it. Boldness  
has **genius, power**  
and **magic** in it!”

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE





“People say that what we’re all seeking is a **meaning for life**. I don’t think that’s what we’re really seeking. I think that what we’re seeking is an **experience** of being alive, so that our life experiences on the purely physical plane will have **resonances** with our own innermost being and reality, so that we actually feel the **rapture of being alive**.”

JOSEPH CAMPBELL

“You would be wise to listen to the **wisdom of a tree**: Live your life with your own personal majesty. Let the **roots of all your dreams grow deep**. Let the hopes of all your tomorrows grow high. **Bend, but don't break**. Take the seasons as they come. Stick up for yourself. And **reach for the sky**.”

DOUG PAGELS





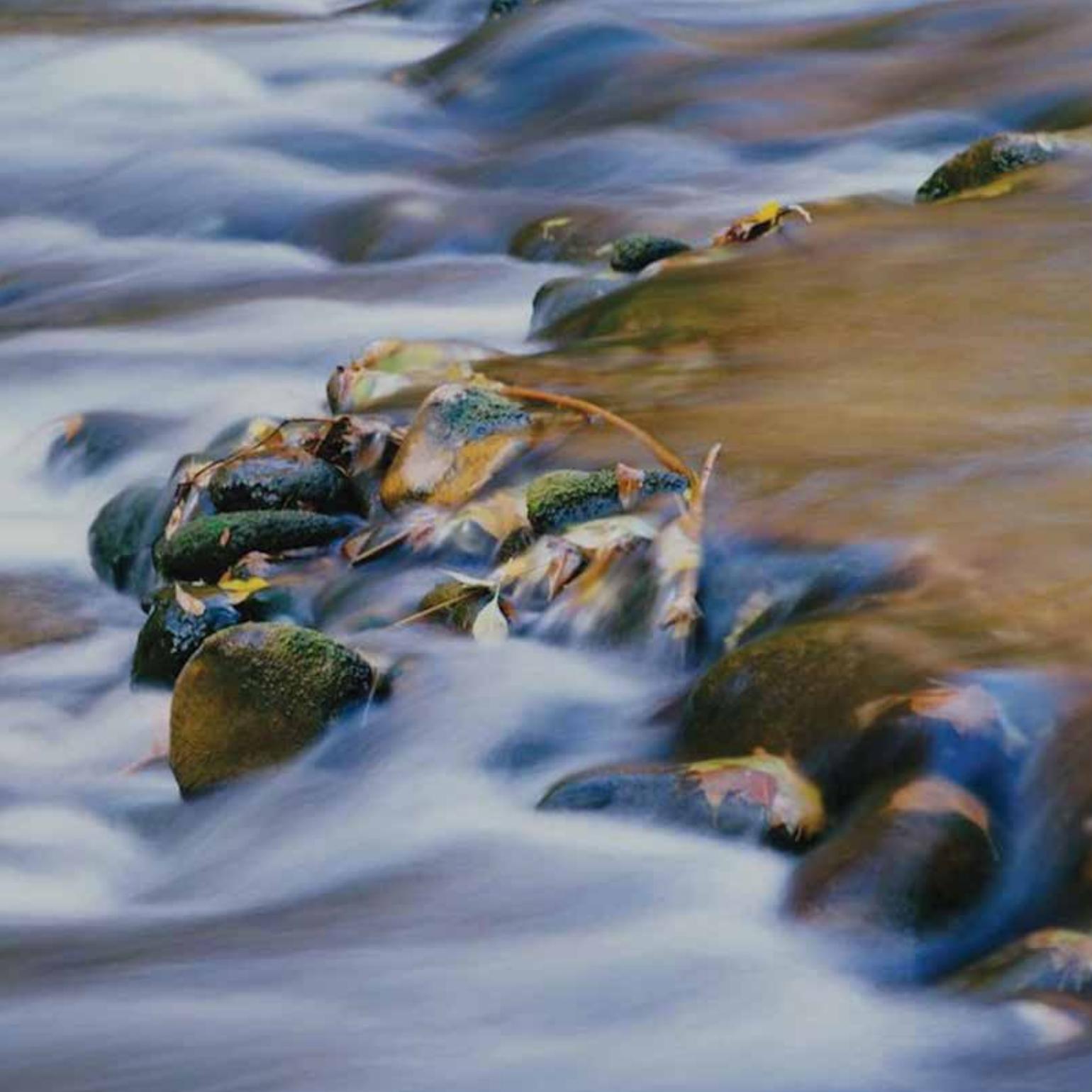
“Far away in the sunshine are my **highest aspirations**. I may not reach them, but I can look up and **see their beauty, believe in them, and try to follow where they lead.**”

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

“Don’t ask yourself what the world needs.  
Ask yourself **what makes you come alive**  
and then go do that. Because what the world  
needs is people who have come alive.”

HOWARD THURMAN





“The future belongs to those who **believe**  
in the **beauty of their dreams.**”

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

“If you have built castles in the air,  
your work need not be lost; that  
is where they should be. Now put  
the foundations under them.”

HENRY DAVID THOREAU





“Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you’ve imagined.”

HENRY DAVID THOREAU



#### PHOTOGRAPHER'S NOTE

The photographs exhibited in *Coastal Inspirations* were made over twelve years, several after repeat visits to the same location at various times of the day and year to improve composition and lighting. Each image has its own storyline embedded in memory that accompanies it; a personal response to what is before me at the moment when the shutter is pushed. The joy of photography is exploring an area and discovering a subject that calls out. My image making intent is much more than a literal reproduction of the scene or object before me. The challenge is to convey the emotions felt at the time and have others respond.

All photographs were made with slow speed slide film and drum scanned without any enhancement, alteration, or modification. The rectangular sized images were shot with Nikon F3 and N90S 35 mm cameras and lens and the square images with a Hasselblad 203fe medium format camera and Zeiss lens.



#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book would not be possible without the memories of our family growing up by the ocean. We would like to thank our immediate family, Patricia Herlihy and Jeff O'Neil, who have been instrumental in sharing our passion for the coast, a place where we call home.

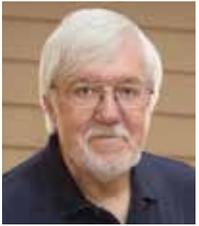
During the development of this book, the images, quotes, pairings, and flow have changed multiple times. The evolution of the book came not only from our efforts but from the suggestions, reactions, and comments of dozens of friends and family members. To each, we are grateful for your feedback, causing us to pause and question the fit between image and quote. At each point along the way, we were driven by our desire to improve the quality of the book and viewer experience by broadening and intensifying the possible meanings left to resonate with the viewer's imagination and curiosity.

We are especially appreciative of the time and attention demonstrated by Jan Pogue, publisher of *Vineyard Stories* and Jill Dible, graphic designer. From the beginning, Jan and Jill understood our vision and transformed our photographs and words into a book of beauty and inspiration.

Thank you to all who have contributed to making our first book possible!



Marissa O'Neil is a health and wellness expert who frequently travels the world exploring diverse cultural customs and inspirations of coastal communities. Raised in greater Boston and a graduate of Colorado College, Marissa began her career managing the healthcare of clients at a preventative medicine center in New York City. After relocating to Santa Monica, she co-lead a new performance center and pioneered corporate wellness programs with Fortune 500 companies. Marissa is currently the founder of an integrative wellness company, where she empowers and inspires individuals to realize their potential and achieve a healthy mind, body, and soul.  
<http://www.marissaoneil.com>



Peter O'Neil's passion for photography stems from his ability to explore how the eye and mind collaborate in exploring, seeing, and discovering the extraordinary in the ordinary; the subtle and naturally found abstract beauty of what we encounter each day and yet rarely notice. With degrees from Boston University and Harvard University and a visiting researcher at MIT, he has contributed over the past thirty years to the shape and growth of scientific research networking.  
<http://www.peteroneil.com>

JACKET DESIGN BY JILL DIBLE

*"The only journey is the journey within."*

RAINER MARIA RILKE



"Peter O'Neil's evocative images, paired with Marissa's thoughtfully chosen quotations, take me on a lovely and meditative exploration of the shoreline of Martha's Vineyard and beyond. Father and daughter have come together in this lovely book to share their deep connection to the island and to family.

—ALISON SHAW, PHOTOGRAPHER, OAK BLUFFS, MASSACHUSETTS

"For those who draw strength and clarity from Mother Nature, *Coastal Inspirations* is the ultimate resource for motivating, self-reflection. Not only a gift for the soul, but a feast for the eyes that illustrates how "living on the edge" is where beauty and revelation can easily go hand-in-hand".

—MIA KYRICOS, PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER, KYRICOS & ASSOCIATES

"*Coastal Inspirations* is just that—truly inspirational. Stunning photos of the island which are both refreshing and unique are accompanied by words of encouragement and wisdom. A fantastic way to keep a piece of the island with you always."

—JULIE FLANDERS, CHILMARK, MASSACHUSETTS

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