

EVERY  
WOMAN  
CAN





# *Every Woman Can*

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While this ebook may have been organized and assembled by one person, it's not mine.

It belongs to all the exemplary human beings listed below.

They have all helped with the creation of the name and providing insights I could never see myself.

I was simply a conduit for their positive energy -- the wind spreading their fires. Please visit their sites and support their work.

They are living proof that where there is a will to make a difference, there is always a way.

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Cover photo by Courtney Baker



# Table of Contents

Kiva Leatherman	Foreward
Courtney Baker	A Note From Your Host
Karin Volo Lives	Turning a Horrific, Life-Changing nightmare into Passion for Helping People Live Better Lives
Jess Jarecki	Living Your Inspired Life
Molly Mahar	Don't Play it Safe. Be Bold.
Hally Rhiannon-Nammu	Hope, Passion & Inspiration – Living without boundaries or limitations
Amethyst Wyldfyre	I Am A Wyldfyre
Jasmin Christensen	Courage
Crystal Gifford	Beyond Belief to Becoming
Christina Mattschei	How to Make Your Life Into a Work of Art
Erika Watson	She is Free
Jennifer Smith	Luck: Superstition, Synchronicity or Self-Fulfilling?
Heather Calhoun	Life Through the Eyes on an Unbiased 3 year old Girl
Tracy Cherpeski	High Value vs. High Maintenance
Leslie Ringler	Surrender
Natalie MacNeil	Working Happy and Living on Purpose
Jeanette LebBlanc	Getting Naked
Rachelle Anslyn	Living Real and Raw



# Foreward

**Kiva Leatherman**

[www.wisewomennetwork.com](http://www.wisewomennetwork.com)

Dear Reader,

This is a book filled with the stories of ordinary women. Ordinary, you may ask? Their stories are filled with breakthroughs, epiphanies and successes. Many of them are making huge impact for themselves and those they serve. Many are (mostly) gracefully balancing the holy grail of womanhood, personal success and family.

Upon reflection, you may see them as women who are taking the ideal of a live authentically lived to the edge. They are bold, brave and wise.

So, how exactly, you may ask, are they ordinary? They are ordinary because they are just like you and me.

Every woman can absolutely be whatever and whomever she wants to be. Each of us holds a magical spark that can make a difference in the world and in the lives of individuals. It is up to us to provide the kindling for our sparks to ignite.

I've met endless incredible over the last few years as the founder of the Wise Women Network and the host of an online radio talk show called A Woman's Worth. Women astound me, just about daily, with their bravery, brilliance and good old chutzpa.

What I stand for is that you take a stand. Whatever choices you make in your life – to be a parent, to be a wife, to work for a corporation or forge your own way as an entrepreneur – do so powerfully and purposefully. No regrets. No comparing your choices to others. No holding back the brave and brilliant you. Love it. No matter what it is.

And if there's something in your life that you're not loving... change it. As soon as possible. You are too precious for any other course of action.



# *Foreward*

**Kiva Leatherman**

[www.wisewomennetwork.com](http://www.wisewomennetwork.com)

I know that these women, who have shared themselves so openly with you on the following pages, will inspire you. What I hope is that you will take that inspiration and do something with it. Hopes, desires and dreams will never be more than figments of our imagination if we do not take action on them. Ideas will waste on the vine if we do not bring them into physical form. Businesses won't get started, lives won't change, movements won't be born.

So don't let the inspiration pass you by. Do something. Every woman can.





# *A quick note from your host*

**Courtney Baker**

*“I’m looking for someone to co-author a quick, easy, free ebook geared towards gen Y women with an inspirational tone”*

I posted this on facebook hoping one person would be interested so I could create a freebie gift for anyone visiting my website. Within the same day I had over twenty responses. “I want in!” “Me too” “Me Three” “Let’s make it a 4-some”

These women started a movement and didn’t even realize it. I didn’t even think of it. So, I took everyone who was willing to multi-co-author a book and made an online group for us to join forces. Some left and more people joined as word spread of what we were cookin’ up.

I felt myself starting to get picky, with all of these brilliant women asking to join, and I admit I almost lost touch with the heart of the project. I had some brilliant book publishers and writers strongly suggest I monetize the heck out of it. I liked the idea of my first big break bringing in money but I had a massive pit in my stomach.

No, this wouldn’t work. I told these women they could ALL join. Writing experience or not. Business owner or not. The next day I got serious. I told them no rules. The guidelines: Make it relatable and inspirational. I told them, this is your chance to get your message out to the world. What would you choose to say if you had the chance?

They have come together, not knowing each other, most not knowing me. I’d known of some of the women before, but most came from recommendations of a friend. They helped brainstorm the names. They invited in women they thought would love our mission. They were actually more excited and enthusiastic than I was at times.

What started as a simple idea turned into something I am passionate about and I’m proud to help bring into the world.

I was upfront from the very beginning. This was my first book and I had no clue what I was doing, but that I would most definitely do it if they hung in there with me. Even more, I started on my entrepreneurial path just a couple months before. I was green, and still am all the way around.

# *A quick note from your host*

**Courtney Baker**

Before the idea was born, before I started my business, I lived a very different life. For one, I worked in corporate America from age sixteen and up. I had sixteen different employers in five years – two positions I'd simply walked out in the middle of my shift – one position I was fired from. I did love a couple of my jobs but the rest made me miserable. It got to the point I actually had a routine. Get a well paid medical position, train for the three months, get comfy, quit, hang out on the couch for a few months, repeat. It became a running joke. A sad joke.

It took me a while to understand what was happening. If you don't love what you're doing, you're never going to do it well. I think I've got it figured that out now but I'll always be refining, looking at what I thrive in and what makes me miserable.

I want those of your reading to think, "What is working for me? Do I thrive doing this work, being in this environment? If you didn't start nodding your head and getting a soft, relaxed feeling in your shoulders – it's time to refine. Take in the stories below. If you only get one little inkling spark that you resonate with then take it and go refine the shit out of your life. That's all it takes.

*Courtney Baker*

[www.genymindset.com](http://www.genymindset.com)



# Turning a Horrific, Life-Changing Nightmare into Passion for Helping People Live Better Lives

Karin Volo

The story I have to share is shocking yet inspiring. It has become essential for me to share this story because by doing so, I am able to turn a horrific ordeal into something positive that is touching people deeply and helping them through their hard times. I sometimes feel like I am a walking testimonial to the Law of Attraction. But I think there is something even more, something bigger, going on with this that has yet to be revealed. Just remember, this is a true story and it happened to me and my family.

Everything seemed to be going beautifully for me: I had put behind me a disastrous first marriage to an abusive con man and now had a wonderful, handsome business partner and fiancé named Sergio (from Spain), two delightful young daughters and two great bonus kids (Sergio's children), and a successful executive recruiting business in Europe. We were working hard and growing our business, getting ready to expand in several countries and had finally just moved into our dream home. I had already come a long way in rebuilding my life and was so ready to take the next quantum leap. Little did I know that leap was going to be off a major cliff and down into the darkest, toughest time of my life.



## Life changed 180 degrees in a minute

One day in 2006, Sergio and I were at the San Diego airport, waiting to catch a flight home after an empowering and energizing weeklong workshop with our business mentor, international business coach John Assaraf, when I felt a tap on my shoulder. Not having had any contact with my first husband in years, I was not aware that he'd be accused of fraud in Mexico. A U.S. Marshal told me, "You have to come with me," and I spent the next 3 ¾ years in the jail, also accused of fraud in Mexico, before my case was dismissed and all charges were cleared. In fact, by the end of this unbelievable odyssey, I had been jailed in a San Diego facility longer than any woman in its history.

# Turning a Horrific, Life-Changing Nightmare into Passion for Helping People Live Better Lives

Karin Volo

## **I was very scared my life was in danger.**

As I fought extradition to Mexico, I knew it would be disastrous to give in to the fear and despair. Back in Sweden, Sergio ran our business and took care of my daughters, and the two of us fought a roller coaster legal battle involving two countries and several lawyers. Meanwhile, I had to find ways to stay positive. Sergio and I got married in a jailhouse ceremony, conducted in Swedish, under the noses of unsuspecting guards (a fellow inmate gifted me with a Snickers' bar wedding cake and a card written on a Tootsie Roll wrapper, a gesture I much appreciated). Armed with *Yoga for Dummies* from the prison library, I began leading yoga classes on the roof for my fellow inmates, and learned from them how to make tamales from warm water and crushed corn chips in a bag.



**I found strength** as I and the other mothers encouraged each other to talk about our children and our hopes for them. I worked at turning fear into a solid belief that "today is the day I go home" even as I endured strip searches, sudden pat downs and head counts, and separation from the man I love and my little girls for nearly four years. I had a "book angel" friend who led me to writings that helped me claim my power to master my thoughts and beliefs. I was not going to let the uncertainty and deprivation cause me to become resentful or depressed, even though there were days when my fear and sadness threatened to overwhelm me.



## **I never stopped believing in the possibilities of what any of us can create for**

**ourselves.** I felt blessed that I had watched the Law of Attraction movie, *The Secret*, the week before I was arrested and that I had my own experience of attracting my dream home to know that these concepts do work.

My trust in the angels that surround us and support us is stronger now than ever. The way I see it, horrible as this nightmare was, it was an opportunity for me to do the deep soul-searching and growth that we all say we're going to get around to some day when we can

# Turning a Horrific, Life-Changing Nightmare into Passion for Helping People Live Better Lives

Karin Volo

find the time. Now I want to inspire others with my story of finding courage and hope during those dark times in our lives.

I can summarize the happy ending: The cases against me were all dismissed in two countries (a huge miracle in itself) and I was able to return home where Sergio, our children and I are healing from this traumatic experience.

We've started a new business—Inspiring Your Very Best—to help people through coaching and mentoring to break through the bars that have kept them imprisoned for too long. Even though I did have the physical bars surrounding me, **I found ways to free my mind and my heart.** There are so many people who feel just as imprisoned and also want to feel free, who want to find that inner strength and courage...and confidence to know they can handle whatever tough challenges come their way.

**We are also spreading Joy in the world** through an incredible series of picture books that I wrote for my daughters while incarcerated. A little girl named Joy helped my daughters to understand universal lessons that empower them. You can meet Joy and get a free ebook at [www.BringingJoyToTheWorld.com](http://www.BringingJoyToTheWorld.com). I have made a conscious choice to focus on inspiration and joy after so many years of being immersed in negativity.



Still, I had to believe that everything was happening for a higher reason in order to get through this ordeal and now my life's work will be teaching people the things I learned to not only survive, but to THRIVE. We have a big vision of helping millions of people become aware of the spiritual journey we are all on and knowing that all things that happen in our lives help us to learn and grow. I want to share this story because it will help you understand my need, my desire, to work with positive and inspiring things, to be with like minded people, to use this experience to make a positive difference in the world. Every day I had to make a conscious choice between love and fear.

**I chose love and it eventually won—as it *always* will.**

# Turning a Horrific, Life-Changing Nightmare into Passion for Helping People Live Better Lives

Karin Volo

So whatever the tough transitions are going on in your life, know that they are a part of your path. I believe we must learn to honor the experiences, to recognize the growth it gives us, to discover the

strength and courage we have within ourselves, and to know that we have our own unique talents to give back to the world.

My goal is to help as many people as possible get through those tough times and learn how to create their Dream Life. It is possible! You just have to make that choice and take the right actions to get there. And along the way, you will inspire others as well. Inspiration helps us become the biggest version of ourselves! That's why Sergio and I are all about Inspiring Your Very Best and Bringing Joy To The World!

## Live Inspired and Joyfully!

*Karin Volo, an expert in personal development, is known as a Dream Life Mentor and Tough Transition Specialist. Karin is the transformational author of the Bringing Joy series. Her passion is enhancing people's lives by inspiring and teaching strategies to thrive through tough times, live joyfully, and create their dream lives.*

Join her Inspiring Lives publication, full of inspiring stories and resources at at [www.InspiringYourVeryBest.com](http://www.InspiringYourVeryBest.com) and get a FREE Bringing Joy ebook at [www.BringingJoyToTheWorld.com](http://www.BringingJoyToTheWorld.com) .





# *Living Your Inspired Life*

Jess Jarecki

If you've ever been to the circus, you may have pondered how it is the elephants don't bother ripping free from this tiny chain around their ankle. Here are these magnificent 4+ ton creatures being held captive by a chain (or in some cases, a rope!) around their ankle that is linked to a bolt, driven into the ground. The elephant would barely have to tug its leg and it could free itself. Here is why they don't: their training begins when they are young, and they are chained to this bolt in the exact same way they are as adults. The difference is when they're young, they tug and pull with all their might to get loose from the chain, until one day, they just give up, and never bother trying again. Every time they feel that resistance as an adult, they just stop trying. Its *belief* is that it cannot, it simply cannot. Sound familiar? How many self imposed limitations do we put upon ourselves? How often do we just give up the fight because it's too difficult to keep trying? We settle in our comfortable little world, even though we dream of being or doing something different. In the words of Henry Ford – "Whether you believe you can or you can't – either way, you're right." Such a simple statement, yet so powerful.

We spend far too much of our lives worrying. We wake up worrying. Worrying about our job, worrying about traffic, worrying about the bills, worrying about what to eat for dinner. We are missing the entire opportunity here. So many people drudge through life barely noticing all of the glory that surrounds us every minute of every day, if we only choose to let it. Each day you wake up, that is the first and only time in your life you will ever experience that day...that moment. You are in control of how you process it. You and only YOU. We are all here to live our time to the fullest. To experience insurmountable joy, to witness the breathtakingly beautiful world that surrounds us, to notice. To notice every little thing.

I once attended a yoga class in which our instructor, in the middle of a challenging pose, called out to the class "notice what you notice". I walked away from class pondering what she said. What did she mean "notice what you notice? What a strange thing to say." I did finally come to understand. *Notice what you're paying attention to* is what she meant. Are you noticing the person in front of you driving 5mph under the speed limit, or are you noticing the sun beaming in the sky and the wind tunneling through your hair



# *Living Your Inspired Life*

Jess Jarecki

you move forward to your next destination? Be grateful for just one thing in that moment and you'd be surprised at how contagious it becomes. Before you know it, you'll be able to overlook the things you once considered to be not-so-pleasant and replace them with things that ignite you. Keep picturing yourself where you want to be in one year, five years, ten years – not where you believe you cannot be, or where you're afraid to go. Let go of your invisible chains. It is beyond incredible what you will begin to manifest in your life just by constantly living in that positive vibration and being, with every single cell of yourself, the magnificent being you indeed are.

You have probably heard of the “Law of Attraction”, but how familiar are you with it? Your thoughts, feelings and beliefs are responsible for everything you attract in life. For instance, if you are focused on how much debt you have and what a sinking, hopeless feeling that creates for you, chances are you will continue to attract that sinking, hopeless feeling into your life. Now, consider how you would feel if you had no debt. Imagine you had enough cash flow every month to live very comfortably and you never had to live paycheck to paycheck again. Really imagine what that would feel like. Glorious, right?!

The key is to actually allow yourself this feeling every single day. Focus on that wonderful feeling you get, as though all of your dreams are your current reality. Let those feelings dominate your mind. Allow yourself to feel blissfully happy, footloose and fancy free. THIS is the Law of Attraction – so simple, yet so profound. Once you realize you are in control of your mind and have the ability to create your reality simply by a disciplined thought process, you will be amazed at how quickly your life starts turning around as more positive circumstances start to flow into your life. You are powerful beyond belief. Life is supposed to feel good to you. Always. Really! If you are depressed and feeling negative about something that happened to you today, or yesterday, or last week, or five years ago – think about how it would feel to just release that negative emotion. If you could just picture that negative black cloud in your head and just spray it away with a fire hose and watch it dissipate into thin air, only to be replaced by a big, bright, shining ball of sun – how would that feel? Pretty darn good, right?! Identify what is causing your negative emotion and simply let it go. It is not serving you.

# Living Your Inspired Life

Jess Jarecki

Focus on all that is good in your life and all that is even *better* will come to you. Choose hope instead of uncertainty. Choose happiness instead of gloom. Choose faith instead of fear. Choose *life* because it chose **you**. Live and thrive in the moment. When that glorious bright orange ball in the sky rises in the morning, be there, ever so present, in that very moment. Wake up each day grateful you have another chance. Be kind to everyone you meet. Don't fill your day with too many deadlines. Close up your laptop when your child is begging you to come and play. Meet your friend for coffee. Pick up the phone and call a family member to let them know you love them and think of them often. Wake up each morning knowing that you have the ability to impact someone's life today. And there is no better day to do so than this very moment!

*My husband and I reside in south central Wisconsin with our son. Becoming a mom in 2009 was a truly awakening experience for me. Before my son was born, I was resigned to the fact that I would be a fixture in the 9-5 corporate world for many more years to come - a place that was not at all aligned with my passion and beliefs. But, I saw it as a paycheck -- albeit one that was spent on bills faster than I could earn it. Fast forward to becoming "mom" - now I really felt I had a purpose. It was no longer just my life that I had to take into consideration. I had another little life to think about. I knew that I wanted to relish in the warm and tender moments of motherhood. ALL of them. And I could not fathom having to send my son off to be in someone else's care all day long. So I took a huge leap of faith, quit my job, and decided that I would focus all of my intent on what I wanted to attract in my life.*

*Now I am absolutely passionate about helping other women (and men!) realize that they CAN have everything they want in life, if they so choose. Every one of us deserves to live out our dreams. There is a bigger picture out there and we are all meant to be a part of it. And it is my absolute pleasure to help others to realize their true potential.*

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# *Don't Play it Safe. Be Bold.*

Molly Mahar

## **Do you want to play it safe?**

*“Research on the attributes that we associate with “being feminine” tells us that the most important qualities for women are: thin, nice, pretty. If you want to play it totally safe, you have to be willing to stay as small, quiet, and attractive as possible.” -Brene Brown*

I do not want to live my life playing it safe. I don't want to rest in conventional, content to rush about in a daze, checking errands off my to do list, putting in facetime where required, doing all the things expected of me.

Getting by, by giving up on life, is not my style.

## **Ladies, safe is not the new black. I don't want you to play it safe.**

When we get too used to playing it safe—being small, quiet and attractive—we forget what it's like to be out in the world, unencumbered and earnest. We forget what it's like to beat on our chest with a Tarzan yell and declare, “Today's the day to break the rules! To climb trees, write a poem, eat cherries, to live today as if it's all I've got!”

To play it safe requires us to forget that we are overflowing with a unique life force. Overflowing with dreams, and hopes, and an incredible capacity to love. It requires us to make our adventures and goals fit within society's ruler of acceptable.

Playing it safe takes away our opportunity to carve our place in the world. There's a cosmic space that belongs only to us— it's our unique contribution to the world— and safe doesn't allow us to paint it with rainbows, to sing at the top of our lungs, to make millions in the service of others, to dance naked, or to take pride in our quirks.



# *Don't Play it Safe. Be Bold.*

Molly Mahar

Safe keeps those differences, those shimmering contributions, from ever emerging.

Safe makes us afraid to be big, bold, and unique. Safe makes us forget what that would even look like.

Which leads me to this...

## **How Not to Play it Safe**

We are a generation of educated, gutsy women who are capable of so many incredible contributions (from raising amazing children to creating art, from making a difference in our communities to starting businesses, from exploring the world to inspiring others) yet we spend so much of our energy on our outer appearance.

We don't feel good enough unless we "look good enough." And "looking good" requires being thin, stylish, pretty, and pulled together. All of the time. And seemingly without effort.

Reality check? This is impossible.

Stop letting your outer appearance dictate how you feel about yourself, your life. Stop striving for thin as if it's the answer to everything. Stop trying to fit in with whatever pretty happens to equal this year.

Be Big. Be Unique. Be YOU.



# *Don't Play it Safe. Be Bold.*

Molly Mahar

Strive for healthy, for strong, for capable. Love your body by fueling it properly and moving it and adorning it with fashion you love. Celebrate your unique beauty, the bloodlines that connect you to each and every gorgeous woman in your family.

Deck yourself in sequins, in pinstriped suits, in cowboy boots, in sundresses, in rock tee-shirts—whatever it is that tickles your fancy. Dress for the woman you are, not the one you're pretending to be. Honor your reality. Practice loving you, as is

As far as being nice goes... I'm all for kind, for loving, for rose-colored glasses and solving problems with honey. But when nice starts equaling quiet, safe, small—it's time to break out the bold.

You're a woman. You've got an opinion, a unique take on the world. Make sure it's heard.

Don't play it safe.

You're hurting yourself and those around you by agreeing with something that makes you want to pull your hair out. You're disrespecting yourself by constantly grinning and bearing it. You're giving up your power by biting your tongue.

There's a time to be nice. There's a time to get your sass on. There's time to stand up for yourself no matter what the cost. There's even a time to pull the bitch card.

Don't be afraid. Be Bold.

# Don't Play it Safe. Be Bold.

Molly Mahar

## Parting Words?

You are a woman, thin or thick, small or big. You are a woman, pretty or unusual, attractive or unique. You are a woman, nice or sassy, quiet or bold.

Wherever you fall on the spectrum, ladies, don't play it safe. This is your life. Live it with all the guts, glory, and bravado you can muster.

Dive in. Make it Count. And don't worry—you're not alone. I promise you, I'm doing the same.

*Molly Mahar is a life coach, speaker, writer, fierce love advocate and joy enthusiast. She is the founder of Stratejoy, a positive corner of the Internet that provides thousands of women the tools, strategies and camaraderie to lead authentically joyful lives. A dynamic speaker, Molly has lead workshops for lululemon, The US Army, Ladies who Launch, The Junior League, and CRAVE Business. She was just named to ProBlogger's Top 20 Bloggers to Watch in 2012 and was selected to speak at the South by Southwest Interactive Conference this March about being Young, Passionate and Profitable. Wahoo!*

*Molly helps women live life on their own terms, celebrate their worth, and change the world through individual fulfillment. Her work is delivered through several live and digital group programs (including the Joy Equation Course, Joy Juice Journal Prompts and the Fierce Love Course) focused on creating \*YOUR\* joyful world. She works one-on-one with clients who are ready for soul-level personal alignment and big transitions.*

*Molly also laughs loudly, swims naked, and wears a lot of costumes. And she's expecting a tiny boy person on June 2, which will her give her loads of opportunity to practice fierce lovin'. She'd love to hear from you on Twitter or Facebook. Connect away!*





# *Hope, Passion & Inspiration - Living without boundaries or limitations*

Hally Rhiannon-Nammu

Three words that are instrumental to what I do and who I am: Hope, Passion and Inspiration. These are my drivers in achieving everything that I aspire to and they provide the ability to continue when all else seems futile.

There are some days that hold the lingering darkness of yesterday and remind me of where I have come from, but they no longer contain the power to do anything other than that. Whilst my journey is not one that is anymore amazing than anyone else's, what makes this unique is that it is my story and thus, the meaning to me is everything.

***HOPE... Hope is one of the strongest drives that can exist. It provides an avenue into possibility and when this is unclear, clouded in the darkness of despair it is the very thing that can pull a person through...***

Life ebbs and flows, that is common knowledge however, for me it was never that simple. It wasn't until later in life that I learned the truth that I was not related to the family I grew up with. The significance of this may seem no more relevant than what someone's high school days consisted of had it not been filled with adversity, bullying and redefining abuse.

It was later in life that I had my nervous breakdown and wanted to commit suicide. It was a time where all the hope for life, for existence and for continuing no longer was present. I didn't know where it had gone but one day I woke up and it was not there. But not surprising, not much else was either. My family, or so I thought at the time, used me as a punching bag blaming me for whatever came to mind, ensured I paid for them as much as possible all the while informing me that I was a low life because I was never content to be the same as them.





# *Hope, Passion & Inspiration - Living without boundaries or limitations*

Hally Rhiannon-Nammu

Can you imagine what it was like to not fit into the family you believe to be your own? Can you begin to comprehend wondering what is so very wrong with you because you don't agree on their practices or beliefs, and the fact you look nothing like them and were teased because of this?

It was not until my late twenties, a year or two before my nervous breakdown, that I realized I suffered from depression and I had since my teens, if not earlier. This in itself took a lot to accept. I was ashamed and consequently hid away never discussing this with anyone or sharing the excruciating pain that I carried every single day or how hard continuing each day was for me. I was alone, very alone.

My way of coping was to shut off my emotions. My way of getting through, beside the copious amount of painkillers and valium was to avoid, deny and lock myself away in the hope that somehow the pain would go away but at the same time hoping that it would stay because of the fear that if it did leave I would be left with nothing.

The icing on the cake consisted of abusive relationships, a molesting step-father of an ex and the destruction of what little self esteem had existed.

When the time came to decide whether to turn out the light permanently, it was through the compassion of a stranger that I am here today. I grew up not knowing what love was, what real hope looked like however, within me there was this hunger for more. The hunger grew the older I got and whilst it stayed rather quiet until a few years ago, it had always been there. In my darkest hour this hunger had dissipated and I thought it was gone for good. But when this person I didn't know from the other side of the country offered to help me it gave me something real; it gave me hope. The next day I woke up and the hunger, the hope, ever-so subtle, had returned.

It would be easy to say that life from that moment improved and I lived happily ever after. It never goes that way. Not with depression and feeling completely disconnected from the emotions. Not to mention the amount of pain, hate and blame I carried for myself. The hope was a step and it was a driver. Whilst the journey still needed to be travelled at least now it was going in a positive direction, slowly.

Slowly, I learned what my triggers into depression were and how to control them. Step by step, I reconnected to the person that had been shut off for so long. Eventually all I could see was hope which became the guiding light to where I am today.

# Hope, Passion & Inspiration - Living without boundaries or limitations

Hally Rhiannon-Nammu

*With hope I found my way; with hope I found my voice and with hope I am here today. It is with this that I help others knowing what it is like when there is none I know the difference even the smallest hint of hope can provide. There is always hope and sometimes it takes the compassion of a stranger to show you where to find it, within.*



**PASSION... *Passion can create the most magical piece of music or provide the most incredible experience that burns from deep within and makes its way to the tips of the fingers. Its heat of anticipation, excitement and knowing that it must be drives the greatest creations from the darkest of places.***

*"Life is my stage" and where possible create the stage.* Some do this through painting, music, dance and even writing. My artistic nature can seem eccentric at times however; it provides the basis of expression. It is having the ability to connect to the passion within and allow this to drive the result into the selected medium. I loved music however; as life had it this became secondary to undertaking the dutiful tasks and obligations. So the passion was locked up, with the key nowhere to be found. What resulted was a disconnection from the person and from what was important. This then created reactive behaviour. In other words it fed the depression and because there was no outlet into the varying emotions available, depression became the passion and the foundation. As demented as this sounds it does also demonstrate that if this could be redirected what could eventuate. When I was younger I would dance around my bedroom and sing even though my step-siblings would tease me. Because of how I felt when I danced I persisted. When I was able to get Austudy at sixteen I paid for my dance lessons and the petrol to get to the classes. Within a month I made it through four grades in ballet and within six I was dancing with girls my own age. That was my determination. That was my passion for expression. It wasn't so much a choice as much as a need to survive. When I danced I felt alive. I felt that I was the song and I became the message. It was no longer about me. It was only about the message in the music.

At the same time I took up singing. I practiced and practiced every day. I wanted to sing Phantom of the Opera and that is why I learned to sing. When the opportunity came at school I had a sore throat and couldn't hit the notes. I was devastated. The girls in



# *Hope, Passion & Inspiration - Living without boundaries or limitations*

Hally Rhiannon-Nammu

the class made fun of me since my confidence tended to create excessive nerves which were reflected in my singing. I nevertheless persisted and knew, somehow, that one day the opportunity would arise. When I was nineteen I was in the town's choral group and got the part of Christine to sing Phantom of the Opera. My dream was coming true and with it this close nothing was going to stop me.

The day of the dress rehearsal came and the director stopped mid song and asked me to sing the whole song, right through to the really high notes. No one thought I could do it, little did they know that I had always practiced the whole song at home. I sang the whole song perfectly, hitting every note crystal clear. The entire hall, the cast and my friends stood, silent. It was as though time had stopped and it had stopped for me.

When I sing I became the words and the song; I am one with the music and my voice. It is as though I can breathe the freshest of air that tingles through my entire body.

The essence of my passion came a few years ago when I realized that I am a performer irrelevant of the medium. When I cannot dance or when I do not sing I will find another way. Another medium I use is writing and the page then becomes my stage.

When I was being helped by a life coach to work forward through depression and beyond my breakdown it came through that writing was a platform that I used. I was not satisfied with the level that I wrote, irrelevant that I had been writing for over twenty years. It came because, like

the rest of my emotions, it had been disconnected from the source of passion. So, I undertook my Masters in Writing with the thought that perhaps this will enable me to take it further and reconnect this form of a stage to me.



# Hope, Passion & Inspiration - Living without boundaries or limitations

Hally Rhiannon-Nammu

It not only helped me understand my message and my words allowing them to perform more eloquently but more importantly it allowed me to create an outlet for every happy, sad or excited emotion. The pen became my voice and five books later I am yet to say everything that I want to say.

*Passion creates the fundamental driver to create anything. For me it creates a stage to have a voice, whether this is to help others or to express the depth of emotion that burns within my soul. I am passion and creativity is the air that I breathe. Together anything is possible.*

**INSPIRATION... *Inspiration can come in many forms but often are seen in others. Inspiration to me is not about the amount of accolades that are acquired but rather by the respect the person has for what they believe in and how far they will go to deliver that. I become inspired by those that are authentic to whom they are.***

I believe that within each of us is the ability to inspire simply by being ourselves, not what others expect us to be. What I call adversity to someone else is nothing unusual. No doubt that is the same if the table was turned. With this in mind, it demonstrates that each person can take any adversity and make it work for them. It means that pain does not have to be the driver into fear, blame and hurt. When this is released what remains is this incredible opportunity to look beyond and see that dream that had been sitting in the back of the mind this whole time, desperately wanting to come out. With the ever smallest encouragement twice as much can be achieved. What this means to the person, is not so much about the achievement but what they have been able to create for themselves because of themselves.



# Hope, Passion & Inspiration - Living without boundaries or limitations

Hally Rhiannon-Nammu

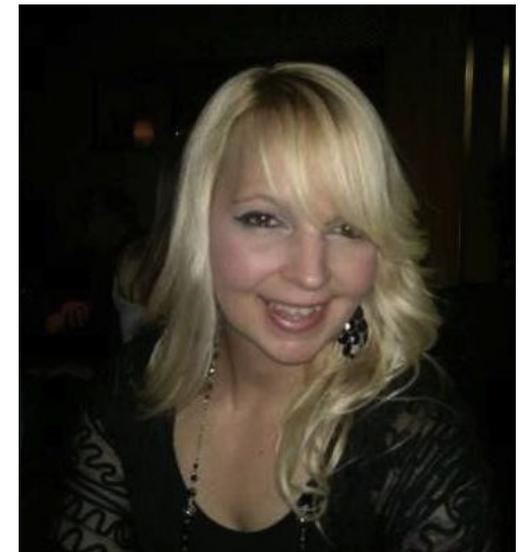
Inspiration comes from within and enabling this means that it can be accessed every day through any way that works for that person. Life will always have ebbs and flows to create the platform to grow, evolve and be everything that is wanted, dreamed of and desired. It means that inspiration can come from the passion within one's heart or from the hope that sings through the hunger of wanting more.

This was some of my journey and how I got hope, passion and inspiration to work for me. It allowed me to be released from pain and misery, creating a world doing what I love with those that I love, without boundaries or limitations.

*No journey is greater than another other than your own, because it is yours. This is the performance of your life. Make it a good one and love all that comes from the possibility that hope, passion and inspiration are all you will need to be you in the best way.*

*Hally Rhiannon-Nammu is a respected change catalyst, mentor, speaker, author and entrepreneur that delivers real and lasting change for her clients, helping many hundreds along the way. Hally is the leader and innovator in creating behavioural change. Passionate and driven, Hally empowers people to become complete and achieve success in all area of their lives. Hally has developed a new method to provide optimal results to her clients. Hally is the 'go-to' person when it comes to personal, professional and spiritual coaching. The author of five books, two exceptional online training courses Hally has assisted hundreds of clients, Hally has trekked in Nepal and can hit the high E in Phantom of the Opera. Hally has acquired numerous accolades, a multitude of qualifications and brings spiritual/shamanic healing to the mix to ensure that the solution she provides is completely holistic. Hally has hit rock bottom and equally has experienced what true success is. It is for this reason that she can empathize with any client and assist them to move forward with success.*

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# *I Am A Wyldfyre*

Amethyst Wyldfyre

Once upon a time, a beautiful girl child was born. And she was different - Very, very different. Her mind was on fire. She spoke with passion. Her presence inflamed. The wildfire that she was born to be was too much - too much for the beings that came together to create her, for between them there were many broken parts. They tried to contain her. And so for a while they did. They told her what to wear. They told her how to act. They cut her hair. They wouldn't let her dance. "It's too much!" they said. "You'll burn yourself out!" they cried. They tried to contain her. But she was. She was too much. She did burn herself out - by trying, ever so hard, to fit in. To live up to the expectations, to be the child they wanted her to be.

She grew up and still she tried, ever so hard, to live up to the expectations. To be the wife they wanted her to be. To be the mother they wanted her to be. To be the business partner they wanted her to be. To be the neighbor, friend, lover, sister, other that they wanted her to be. Anything, other than who she was. "You're too much!" they said. "You burn me out!" they cried.

She tried so hard that she rejected all - all that was a part of her sacred essence, all she was born with. All of her gifts, all of her power was hidden, covered up, stored away, pushed inside, held down, diverted, refused. She turned her back upon the feminine side of herself. That side is too weak, that side is too strong, that side is too prissy, that side is too hard, that side is too vulnerable, that side is too powerful. Let's be more like a boy. And so she tried.



She tried very, very hard to be like a boy. She dressed like a boy, she acted like a boy, she was tough like a boy, she was aggressive like a boy, she was competitive like a boy, and never, not once, no never, did she cry. They called her a bitch. "I can't seem to do anything right." Or so she thought.

Hmmm, what if, what if the thought could change? What if, what if, a new thought could enter? Spirit began to move in her life. She, of course, fought kicking and screaming all the way until finally one day she was beaten, beaten down by her own will, broken open by the brilliance of the Nameless one. She found the silence. The gift of the present was revealed. She began to move. And in the silence she asked herself, "Who am I?" and the silence answered, "You are a wildfire."

# *I Am A Wyldfyre*

Amethyst Wyldfyre

The silent space called to her more frequently. She liked it there. In the silence, a peace came - washing over her, calming her, soothing the burning embers and stoking them at the same time.

She found within and all around, more and more frequently that guides were coming to help her to be reborn.

At every turn, Spirit provided. Wherever she looked there were sweet and smiling faces. They loved her. They loved her wild spirit. They loved her burning flames. They welcomed her scorching passion. They made a home in their hearts for her.

Many started to seek her out. To ask her help in burning away all that no longer served them. They came seeking to be transformed, as she had been transformed. They wanted her to be their guide, their ally as they, too, faced the wall of flames and walked through it. She helped them. She found great joy! Such joy! Such wonder! Such beauty! To be a guide, a beacon, a portal through which Spirit can move to help others to move, to aid those seeking to cross the bridge to Spirit, to reconnect with their own sacred selves, to find out who they really are. To become the beings they were born to be.

Like a wildfire she comes burning away all that no longer serves, all the dross, all the heavy energy, leaving nothing behind but the fertile soil and the seeds for new growth. Like a wildfire she leaves. Never knowing how totally she has transformed the world by her mere presence. Like a wildfire, she will never see the new forest that will rise from the ashes of her creative destruction to stand tall and shelter many.

Like a wildfire I am.

Deep in meditation I sit. Holding a stone of purification. Black Tourmaline. Looks like a burnt up piece of charcoal. As I sit, he comes to me. My brother the Christ comes and lays his hands upon my crown. "You are Amethyst" "A Wyldfyre" "Amethyst Wyldfyre". "I christen you child with





# *I Am A Wyldfyre*

Amethyst Wyldfyre

your new name. For through the fire you have come, and through the fire you have been born anew.” Supported and surrounded on all sides by the Masters – Germaine is here – to bring the Violet Flame – Archangel Michael – the mantle of Protection. Go forth and be who you were born to be.

In August of 2003 I entered the Inca Medicine Wheel in the South, starting my shamanic apprenticeship. In the South we learn to shed our old behaviors, like the serpent sheds her skin, to release all that no longer serves us and to cleanse and purify in preparation for the next phase of the wheel. Each month during the full moon a fire ceremony takes place. Death arrows are prepared, representing that which we want to feed to the fire, the old way of being, that which we wish to release. As the death arrows are burned the prayers for transformation rise upon the sacred smoke to find their way to Great Spirit.

Six months before I started this process, I was lying on a massage table being nurtured by a beautiful being of light. As she reached my right calf I remember thinking to my self “My God this woman was made to do this”. Then I had the thoughts “What was I made to do?” and “Who am I?”. The answer I received then was “You are a wildfire.” At the end of my seven months in the South of the medicine wheel, following seven sacred fires designed to burn away the old me, I received the rest of my name, and my new identity, as a gift from the Christ energy – Amethyst – the “a” in that first answer – representing Divine Connection to Source. Into the sacred fire I placed my life, from the sacred fire I am reborn. Thank you Pachamama, Santa Tierra, Gaia for the elements that you provide to create the sacred fire, thank you tree beings, thank you plant beings. Thank you for the fuel needed to transform all the heavy energy to the light. Thank you Great Spirit for bringing the wind spirit to carry the sacred smoke, for answering my prayers, for breathing me to life – thank you for the beauty of the soul’s journey – the path of service and the courage to faith walk my way home.



# *I Am A Wyldfyre*

Amethyst Wyldfyre



*Amethyst Wyldfyre is a Multidimensional WooWoo Woman!! She Serves Messengers of Change and Global Visionaries helping them through the FIRE of their own rebirth and guiding them to find their greatest path of service to the planet.*

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# Courage

Dr. Jasmin Christensen

Courage, often a word used for great acts of bravery that typically result in someone getting a presidential citation or medal, and usually posthumously. The word brings to mind someone who has pushed through their limitations and boundaries, into the unknown. Or even someone who has refused to give up, regardless of the circumstances. Quitting was not an option. I look around me and I see people doing courageous acts every day, but their efforts are not applauded or even recognized. The single mother working two jobs and sacrificing everything because she can't give up her children. The person struggling to walk, every step a clumsy painful effort, but they revel in the fact that they can. Or even the parents of a soldier, waving a tearful good bye as he boards that plane for war towards far off lands, knowing they might never see their child again but supporting him in his wish to walk this path. Those are all example of courage that happens every day, in many lives, and it never makes the news.

Each of the above examples are of people that had their sights fixed on a goal, determined to push through their own personal limitations because staying within them would mean failure. In a society that is described as self serving and materialistic to the rest of the world, I find that to be not entirely accurate. You see, that single mother has a back story and regardless of the judgments that others might make about her, she is determined to take care of her family and fight to get to a place where she can breathe a sigh of relief. The person struggling to walk may feel that to remain house bound is not acceptable and they enjoy the freedom of simply walking, their own personal fight with a chronic disease or injury. By pushing through the pain and taking that next step, they know that they have won, at least for that day. The parents of that soldier watch the news and are very aware of the events of the world, especially on the war front. They've done their best to try to dissuade their son from his decision to join the military. He's made up his mind and all they can do is support his decision and be as positive as possible. Never mentioning how their hearts would stop when seeing a military car drive down their street. Or the panic that sets in when they don't hear from him for two weeks at a time. But regardless of whether or not they agree with the politics behind the war, they support their child and pray every night that he returns home safely. Keeping the home front going, everything moving ahead, all for the day when he returns and their lives can be normal once more.

What does pushing past the boundaries and limitations achieve? In a nutshell, it removes the fears and preconceived notions that we can't do what we just did. Will a person have to face the same limitations again? Only if you allow yourself to fall back into the tiny comfort zone you once had and aren't willing to create a newer and larger one.



# Courage

Dr. Jasmin Christensen

Each painful step is a stepping stone that helps to propel you forward. And into the tiny comfort zone you once had and aren't willing to create a newer and larger one. Take the single mother I mentioned above. If she held on to the limiting belief that she couldn't make it on her own and that her only choice was to give the children to someone who could afford to raise them, then that would have been her fate and she would never have struggled so hard to keep what was so precious to her. By pushing past that boundaries and destroying that limiting belief, she found the courage, every day to do what she had to and what was acceptable for her in order to see their smiling faces. The joy of being a family was far more rewarding for her then any amount of comfort or ease that giving them up might bring. She knew in her heart that quitting was not an option, and the struggle got just a little bit easier every day. She was able to take the knowledge from the first painful experience and use it as a building block. She was slowly and steadily destroying more limiting beliefs about herself and was utilizing each to build a stronger foundation. She was reinventing herself and her life, and the lives of her kids

That was an easy example most would say, there are few mothers who wouldn't or haven't done the same thing for their families throughout the ages, and you are correct. So, let's take a slightly harder example, let's take a look at the person who is struggling to walk. There's no one that they are struggling for, except themselves. They might have family members or friends who encourage them to get into the wheelchair because "it's faster and we don't have all day to get through this mall..." or "why put yourself through that, I can't stand to see you struggle so for my sake just stop and stay on the couch..." or even "you don't want people staring at you..." Yes, all of those things may have been said, those attitudes to tend to prevail. The frustration of pushing against family and friends tends to be overshadowed by the craving for freedom and independence. Sometimes the day starts with pain, sometimes it takes every ounce of determination and focus just to force the muscles to move just to get to the bathroom. Would it be easier to get in a wheelchair? It probably would except for that spark inside that insists on fighting through for as long as possible. That sense of accomplishment when you stand there breathless and sweat beaded on your brow as you struggle to the kitchen for a cup of coffee. The intense focus it takes to make those feet move comes from the same fire within that does not allow you to quit. Each painful step is a stepping stone that helps to propel you forward. And when you fall, because your feet wouldn't pick up, you smile or even laugh while you pull yourself up again. Does it take courage to not give up even when you don't



# *Courage*

Dr. Jasmin Christensen

have to fight? Well, that might be more the stubbornness talking but, there is always a reason to fight a debilitating illness. Sometimes the fight is just to remember that you are alive, and sometimes it's to prove that you are not a victim of that illness, you haven't given in to it. It might take you eventually, but you will go kicking, and screaming and clawing, never giving in and never giving up. So when that person is in public and struggling to walk and they look up and smile at you, smile back, for they are fighting a battle that few understand, it's their own fight for freedom. So, is that courage? I'll let you decide that one.

So, what do all of these people I've described to you have in common? They have all pushed aside their limiting beliefs in the face of huge challenges—emotional, mental and physical. They've used each and every trial and victory as a stepping stone to strengthen their foundation and to be able to move forward. Sometimes the steps are small, but they are there. When the next challenge seems insurmountable they have been able to lean back against their strong foundation, rally themselves and move forward. They can do this because they have learned that their limiting beliefs are no longer valid and their new beliefs, that anything is possible because there are no limitations except what we place upon ourselves, is the truth. How do I know this? Because each of the people mentioned above is myself. I was the single mother struggling to survive, I am the parent of a soldier who went to war, and I am the person with Multiple Sclerosis who struggles during flare ups.

# Courage

Dr. Jasmin Christensen

*Dr. Jasmin Christensen is the Founder of Healing Connections and Pathways. She started teaching and counseling while still on active duty in the USMC. She has accrued over 20 years of counseling and teaching experience. Empowerment and healing has been the main focus of her work with people across the US and on an international scale. She has lectured at various universities and colleges both nationally and internationally. She has the unique experience of working trauma related counseling, specifically Trauma related therapy work onsite at disasters such as 9/11 in New York City and others. The idea of using Cognitive Behavioral Therapy has been something that Dr. Christensen has found useful with many clients. Using various healing techniques to help her clients overcome obstacles, move forward and become whole again is her main focus. Healing the healer's is her unique niche. Being an energy healer herself, she sees and feels firsthand what today's healers have to overcome and work past. Her unique connections with people, on a general basis, make her a popular and empathic counselor and Life Coach. Being a Multiple Sclerosis patient herself, Dr. Christensen has the first hand experience of overcoming almost insurmountable odds just to achieve daily tasks. She has fully embraced her Wounded Healer Archetype and brings that experience to the table when assessing new clients and developing their individual programs.*

Website: <http://www.Healingconnectionsandpathways.com>





# *Beyond Belief to Becoming*

Dr. Crystal D. Gifford

Everything that exists in my life I can attribute to one core reality, the persistent, though unsolicited, coaching of my dad. From the time I can remember, there was always a self-help tape (yes, tape because that is what we had when I was a kid) playing in the car, in the house, everywhere, all the time. My dad would tell me, “you’ve got to look people in the eye, Crystal.” I was a shy kid. Those who know me today have a hard time believing that, but I was so shy it was crippling. Dad would read, “How To Win Friends and Influence People” and “The Power Of Positive Thinking” before these thoughts were cool. He would tell me the principles he learned in them even when I didn’t want to hear them. When I was only 5 or 6 years old, he bought me my own tapes, “Creating Your Own World” so I could have the kid version of personal development. I listened every day, unaware that he was shaping my mind with these fun stories of choosing your mood and taking responsibility. So here I am, writing, speaking, and sharing my message of financial freedom with the world with my mission to help every last soul on earth find more joy and fulfillment in their lives starting with having the funds to make it happen and embracing what wealth truly means. I have put in my own efforts, and spent my own countless hours studying, growing, developing, and working to be the woman I am today, but it all started with a dad who knew there is a better life for all of us if we really want it.

You see, it wasn’t always cheerful. There were times in life we struggled. We even had to move into the basement of a church for a year and a half while my dad worked hard to support people who didn’t even appreciate his support as a pastor. As a 15 year old, I did not make this transition easy on my parents either. I whined and complained. Finally, a year and a half later, my dad sold the church and retired from pastoring the church and we moved back home. I hated every moment of living in the church, but I value the lessons from that time in my life immensely to this day. There was strength and a determination that arose out of that which I could have never received in a book. In my maturing, adult viewpoint, I can now see how important those struggling times are in our path to development. Thank God he allows us to go through these things against our own will sometimes, because we would surely miss the benefits if we had a choice to opt out of the painful experiences.

My life is living proof that what we have and who we are is a choice. We must make this choice daily to be “blessed” by our circumstances or see them as “unlucky” and worthy of complaint. Society says we should be one way, statistically, but is that



# *Beyond Belief to Becoming*

Dr. Crystal D. Gifford

how it has to be? I was the child of a one-night stand. My father, whom I call a sperm donor, wanted nothing to do with me and denied I was his child for years until a DNA test revealed the results. At this time, he was angry with me for revealing his secret and did not allow me to make contact with my siblings. Isn't this enough ammo to sit back and say it's his fault I am not successful? To make matters worse, my mother was young, inexperienced, and scared. Her life was full of horrible circumstances from being overweight to having low self esteem and even traumatic childhood illnesses. She quickly attached herself to the first man who would have her. For me, that meant there was no room for a baby. When she moved out of her parents' home, I stayed. By the age of two they adopted me. My grandfather is the man I call "Dad" today. My mother gave up on me too. Isn't that enough reason to say it's her fault I am not successful.

Life continued and I met the father of my children when I was thirteen. Young, naïve, and sheltered from what most kids my age knew quite well. Before I knew it, he was touching me and I let him because I didn't know how to say no. I lost my virginity at 13 and ended up pregnant at 17. Isn't that enough to say it's his fault I am not successful? It's all "their" fault. I cannot become something great because life has handed me the unlucky plate, right? Well, perception is 9/10 of reality.

Raised by my grandfather (Dad), there was never room to say "I can't" and there was no tolerance for mediocrity. You see, my dad saw silver lining even in the middle of the tornado. Because he was always on a mission, because he was always pushing forward, and because he believed in a better life, I only heard what is good, what is growth-centered, and what is possible. He never gave me the time to acknowledge just how bad I had it. Instead, he and my mom (grandmother) provided a home where I was dragged to church all the time but never forced to participate in any of it until I was ready. They were strict, but somehow they were very flexible as well. I was allowed to create my own thoughts, have my own opinions, and express myself freely. The only thing I knew is that life is full of possibilities, and if I only had a teleportation device so I did not have to endure the long car rides to churches all over the country, life would be perfect. Why do I see such a happy picture? It is the only way I have ever known. So, when I married a man I did not love at the age of 19 because we were the preachers' kids (and we had a child so we "had" to get married), the only thing I knew is that this could also be happy. The downfall of such a positive upbringing is you truly believe you can fix anything and everything, and sometimes you do not have the discernment to know which parts do not deserve your efforts to "fix" them. I worked at that marriage for twelve years. There were some wonderful times, and I cared very deeply about my husband as a person and the father of my children, but I could never find it in myself to truly love him in a



# *Beyond Belief to Becoming*

Dr. Crystal D. Gifford

sustainable way. I would love him sometimes. My positive thinking self would think myself right into loving him like I believed I was supposed to love him. The problem with positive thinking without realism woven in...it is not sustainable. After years of praying, begging, that God would help me love my husband, I finally gave up the battle and closed off emotionally. Of course, this was also not sustainable. A year and a half later, and after witnessing some patterns I did not want my children to follow and some terrifying circumstances, I finally decided it was time to end the marriage. This failure to be able to fix what seemed to be the most important thing in my life put me in a downward spiral of guilt. I failed my boys. I failed my family. Even my parents and sister were mad at me for ending this marriage. Now I am going to be a divorcee, a single mom. For sure I will not be successful now, right?

All of these events in my life could have easily made me the blamer. It is evident that I have plenty of potential areas I could use as excuses as to why I will not become anything or create a successful life for myself. Both of my biological parents let me down. I became sexually active before I even knew what sex was. I had a child at 17. I married without love. I became a divorced single mom at the age of 30. It sounds quite depressing, doesn't it? What I want to share in all of this is that these events have helped to shape me into the woman I am today, and I really like her. I have even learned to love and appreciate all the things about myself that most would want to improve. Even those areas I want to improve, I love that I have the opportunity to do so.

There are many successes that I have already achieved in my life at the age of 35 that many may never achieve in their lifetimes and much more than would ever have been statistically expected of me. But these are not my accomplishments alone. These are the accumulation of all the lessons life has taught me along the way.

In the middle of all this seeming chaos, there have been many accomplishments. Some of them were hard work and achieved in a short time, but most of them have been a progression of consistent focus and effort in which sometimes the results came so



# *Beyond Belief to Becoming*

Dr. Crystal D. Gifford

gradually I did not even notice all that I had accomplished. From surprising my high school principle when I, a single mother, managed to still graduate as co-valedictorian of my graduating class to completing my education all the way to the doctoral level and beyond, there is clear proof throughout my life that when you truly believe something it is yours for the taking. I found this to be true in my career as well. The first year that I made six figures was three years after my divorce. We had never reached this level even as co-contributors, and certainly it was evident that I could not do this on my own to any logical thinker. Fortunately, I have never been one for logic when it overrides my dreams. I never wondered if I “can” do something like complete a degree, grow a successful business, have a close relationship with my mother who gave me up as a child, or become full time faculty at a university. My focus was always on “How do I become” for the goals I had set. It was this determination to be successful and to help others along the way that inspired me to launch The Empowered Wealth Network. The purpose of the Empowered Wealth system is to promote more joy to all who wish to embark on the journey with us, remove barriers to success including financial, emotional, and spiritual barriers, and open up all to a luxurious dream life. We find that our clients begin to learn that they can “have their cake and eat it too”, meaning they can both enjoy life now and maintain the financial freedom to enjoy it in the future as well. Life is about embracing every moment, and we help our clients learn to fund their dreams and fun and live in their glory. Our network is rapidly growing and I am seeing my dream become reality by helping others realize their dreams.

Most of the realities in my life happened so naturally that I have to remind myself to call them accomplishments. The credit really goes to the continual efforts of my dad to stay positive when being positive made no sense to anyone else. In time, I grew to take on these philosophies and mindsets myself, as I found they were quite useful characteristics to possess. The continual quest to become greater, better, and contribute more to the world around me was what kept me going. My love for my children and to provide for them made me work harder on becoming a better person. My love for my dad pushed me to make him proud. My stubborn nature pushed me to prove everyone wrong when they said “You can not do that”, and my determination to love the person I see every day in the mirror pushed me to work to make every choice one that made me love what I see even more than the day before. It is not a perfect game, and sometimes my playbook is out of order and confusing, but I have learned to enjoy the game we call life anyway. I once heard it said, “Life is the only game in which the object of the game is to figure out the rules.” If we are playing, then all is well. As long as we have the strength to role the dice, all is well. And when we do not have t



# *Beyond Belief to Becoming*

Dr. Crystal D. Gifford

the strength to role them ourselves, it is those around us who role them for us who remind us of all life is really about. Sometimes we get to hold on for others who can't play their own pieces as well. When my biological mother was in the hospital in critical condition not long ago and we almost lost her, I realized that I am very blessed that although her circumstances did not allow her to raise me herself, she maintained a very close relationship with me and I truly was there supporting my mother. I realized in this just how much of a mother she has been to me in spite of our strange circumstances. Our relationship is very special, and I love her dearly. I am double blessed, as I got to grow up with two moms.

Looking back over the events of my life, I can honestly say I am completely grateful for every one of these parts that seemed at the time to be major hardships. It is in these that I have learned the lessons that make me who I am. It is through these hard times that I was able to build my character, become who I wanted to be and learn what really matters to me. It is because of these difficult times that I am able to recognize the value in each day and appreciate life when it offers peace, good fortune, sunny days, and even the simplest things like the fresh smell of lilacs on my front porch in the spring. In the words of Paula Fellingham, founder of the Women Information Network, "It is the days that we just can not dance that allow us to dance when the sun is shining.



# *Beyond Belief to Becoming*

Dr. Crystal D. Gifford

Dr. Crystal D. Gifford, CFP® is known as The Wealth Doctor for her extensive expertise and spot on remedies for healthy financial living and worry-free wealth. Helping clients to maximize the impact of their success through financial development and efficient resource planning for over 15 years, Dr. Gifford brings the difficult and often taboo topic of finances to clients in an understandable, applicable manner. Her clients have said that she has a unique ability to help them see their own strengths, which gives them the courage to create grand visions for their lives. Together with Crystal, they craft a plan to manifest those dreams into reality. Her indisputable talents to authentically see the silver lining in clients' circumstances has brought clients to study with Dr. Gifford from all over the world. It has often been said Dr. Gifford has an "optimism that brightens even the darkest of rooms." Her philosophy is that money management should be fun and uplifting, and her approach supports this philosophy. For those of you seeking to boost cash flow in a comfortable, safe space, Dr. Gifford has the tools you need to harness the power of your prosperity.

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# How to Make Your Life Into a Work of Art

Christina Mattschei

*So you're probably wondering: what exactly does that mean, to make your life a work of art?*



Well, here's what I've learned. The most common sources of discontent that plague us today are dissatisfaction with some part of our lives and the inevitable surfacing of anxiety and depression that follows. This happens as we avoid our emotions and the things that make us uncomfortable, and we allow ourselves to feel stuck. There are many traditional approaches to dealing with this malaise, and I do believe in them.

Cognitive behavioral therapy is an approach where we allow ourselves to fully feel our emotions, identify the thoughts that accompany them, and start to change our behaviors in order to make a holistic shift away from patterns that aren't serving us. Some form of mindfulness training usually goes along with that, so we can learn to be fully present and observe our thoughts, while remaining separate from them.

But what if we could take all of this a step further and actually make the present moment *a work of art*?



# How to Make Your Life Into a Work of Art

Christina Mattschi

As a sensitive person and an artist, I've always been creative and have always wanted to immerse myself in art forms whether its paintings, beautiful film scenes, or music. When I gained my first sense of independence and started studying the art of manifesting and law of attraction, I realized that I had the ability to consciously create my own personal experience. I could surround myself with beautiful things and affect my mood. I could take a risk and introduce myself to someone I always wanted to meet and then spend the day with them, when I wouldn't have otherwise. I could dream of new things coming into my life, and then welcome them as I looked for the signs and opportunities that brought them in.

I could choose to sit on my balcony, listen to beautiful music, eat soup, and take in the gorgeous night air. And I could love this moment as if it is a scene from a film, except that I am living it in the moment. And it is beautiful. To experience it is 10X more amazing than a painting of it, or a picture of it, or a film of it, or a song about it, if you allow yourself to fully feel it. And it doesn't matter if anything else in my life is not quite right. The moment *is* art, and these moments make up life.

Sure, there are moments that don't seem significant, like when you're waiting in line, or cleaning, or just walking. But has anything strange or out of the ordinary ever happened to you in a moment like that, when you weren't expecting it? I know that's happened to me! And sometimes the strangest things can happen when you least expect it—that's how you know that every moment is sacred. Because each moment holds an infinite amount of possibilities, even if some feel mundane. The trick is to remember this, and allow the veil that clouds up how we normally see reality to fall away. If you can feel alive in the moment and aware of all your emotions--good and bad, pleasant and unpleasant--you are truly living.

I came across an old friend's Facebook profile today, who used to be involved in creative projects. She put on her profile that she wasn't involved in any creative projects at the moment, because her son is her priority, and he is her true art. I thought that was so beautiful and completely the point—especially for us artists, who don't always have the time to create specific art projects. Our *lives* and our experiences with the people in them can be our legacy and true art.

Remember that you make your own fun. I met a guy recently who looks like he's having an absolutely amazing time in his pictures. Being with him in person, I realized that it's not so much the event or the environment he's in that's so much fun. It's *him*-- it's the playful fun that he creates with his presence. That's something you can do anywhere with anyone. You can make any moment look like a blast, present it that way, and feel the experience that way. That is making art of life.



# *How to Make Your Life Into a Work of Art*

Christina Mattschei

You may already live this way. Or you may just need a gentle reminder to come back to it, to return. We all do. I invite you to try this.

Ask yourself what you're feeling. Breathe. You may not know at first. You may find a surface feeling, but you may need to dig even deeper. Sometimes there are feelings beneath feelings. There are certain ones we stuff down deeper; maybe sadness. I'm not sure what we're afraid of when we stuff them down, because feeling it is beautiful and liberating. But it can be intense. Sometimes we have to build up our tolerance for the intensity of our emotions and life experiences.

I want you to know that this moment right here is sacred. It might seem insignificant, but consider the infinite amount of possibility that exists in this moment--all the things that could happen, all the things that may not happen. Or that could be happening to someone else right now that will set into motion a chain of events that will affect you in the future. This moment matters. In every moment you are the heroine of your own life on your very own movie screen. Dress up for it. After all, you are dressing up for your life. Do whatever you need to do to feel beautiful (most of it comes from within). If you need to pretend something, anything, then pretend.

(Secret: Pretend is powerful. Why else do children spend so much time pretending what they will do as adults? Everything has a consequence).

If you're not getting the results you want, something isn't going quite right. It's time to play investigator. When you OWN IT, when you say BRING IT, you will get it. When you really believe your reality is malleable, there is nothing that can stop you. Trust me. Even when I waver and forget, I always come back to this truth and see it play out.

It's all about restructuring thoughts, feeling emotions, and making the shift. It really is all about the shift! It's in the subtle and the simple. Grand things are always simple and elegant. But that doesn't mean it's always easy...

Right now, if you are on the fence about something or have something in your life that you want to change, I invite you to scan your body and soul for conflict. Conflict often manifests as an unpleasant physical sensation. Or you might feel an uncomfortable sense of anxiety. Or maybe the apathy of depression, because there doesn't seem to be an obvious solution. Whatever you feel, observe it without judgment.

# How to Make Your Life Into a Work of Art

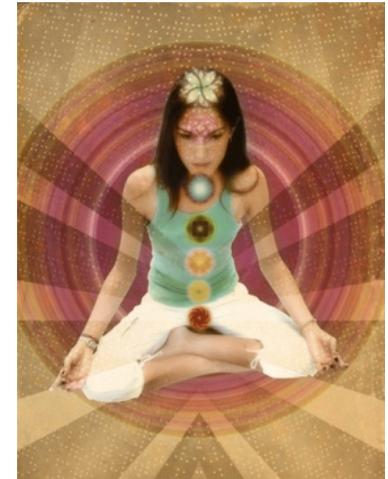
Christina Mattschei

The next step might be allowing the parts of yourself that are in conflict to dialogue with each other, so you can come to an overall resolution holistically, either in written form or vocally (I know it sounds a little strange, but this is a very powerful way to feel more integrated and make a decision you can stick to). Or you may want to take a walk with someone and sort through potential regrets you could have with various decisions as you're moving. Get in touch with your core values, the things that matter most to you, and make decisions from that place.

Make the decision right now to honor this moment as sacred and take that leap you've been meaning to take, no matter how small or how large. I invite you to find a way to dream your dream even bigger, if you can imagine it. Stretch your limits and experiment with seeing your "story" from a different perspective.

*Can you imagine it even one other way?*

Be on the lookout for signs and symbols everywhere, even in the mundane. That person you had a chat with at the grocery store might just have a key role in bringing you closer to your dream. Notice synchronicities, those strange coincidences which have such a small percentage of occurring, but are in complete alignment with your own emotional, meaningful experience. Your subconscious is so much more powerful than you can imagine. It is the link to interaction with your world, your destiny, how you are perceived, synchronicity, symbols, and the stories in your dreams. Pay attention to your dreams—there's often a bigger message there.





# How to Make Your Life Into a Work of Art

Christina Mattschei

## Exercise:

Here is an exercise that you can try right now to get started sculpting your present moment into a work of art. Remembering to come back to these moments often enough is what makes your *life* a conscious work of art.

If you're like me, you might feel some initial resistance. You might feel uncomfortable surrendering control, or giving up your "to do" list. Do you ever feel like a caged free spirit? Try this now and see if you can live like this for the rest of your day.

**Below is a list phrases that form a poem and are the holistic actions of the exercise:**

*Today make each choice based on what makes your heart expand and not on what you "should" do*

*Be spontaneous*

*See your world and your reality as malleable and sculptable*

*Become empowered by music*

*Imagine that you are the heroine of your own life on a movie screen and everyone is rooting for you*

*Anticipate the unexpected*

*Look for signs, symbols, and synchronicities*

*Write down your dreams and reread for clues*

*Play and pretend your dreams have already come true*

*Honor the present moment as sacred*

*Breathe*

# How to Make Your Life Into a Work of Art

Christina Mattschei

*Before starting **Coaching With Christina**, I spent seven years working with people who had sustained traumatic brain injuries. I worked with them to help them find their purpose and create a life from scratch in many cases. It was very rewarding to help people rebuild their lives after a setback—in many ways, you could say some manifesting was involved! My desire understand my mind, heart, and spirit and use this knowledge to help others grow and heal if necessary, lead me to the study of psychology. I received my Master's degree in 2011 from Saint Joseph's University, and I'm thrilled to have a practice as a Life Coach, and to be writing and maintaining my blog, **Coaching With Christina**. I specialize in empowering women to manifest their dreams, cultivate mindfulness, and remove emotional blockages to living their best lives. When you are aware of yourself and your emotions, and you have clarity about what you want in life and how to manifest it, nothing can stop you from having the love and life that you desire. When you are in a space of mindfulness, you will always know intuitively the best course of action to take in a given situation. Sessions with me are typically done over the phone with me once per week with emails in between.*

*My Specialties are:*

**Manifesting Goals** using visualization, meditation, intention setting, and mindset shifts

**Improving Relationships** by improving communication skills, reducing relationship-based anxiety and stress using cognitive behavioral techniques, and increasing sensuality and romance

**Releasing Anxiety** using cognitive behavioral techniques, exposure/response prevention, mindfulness, and meditation

Get my **FREE** mini-ebook "How to Manifest Your Best Life: 5 Powerful Tools" at my website: [www.CoachingWithChristina.com](http://www.CoachingWithChristina.com)

Email: [Christina@CoachingWithChristina.com](mailto:Christina@CoachingWithChristina.com)





# *She Is Free*

Erika Watson

*May the sound of her voice, hit the world with a bang..  
exploding like thousands of fireworks, sprinkling inspiration  
to every women who looks for their light inside...*

*May she find her own small rumbling, a tremor of despair  
and unleash her wild roar, declaring to the world whats  
kept her small, hidden, and afraid...*

*May she find freedom in the wind that calls her name,  
beckoning her truth the story from which she comes...*

*May she move with presence, power, and beauty...the wisdom and honor transformed from shame*

*dancing in the light of the fires that stroked her curiosity, creativity, and innocence...*

*Loved seen heard...finally voices free.. she becomes more of who she already truly was.....♥*

# She Is Free

Erika Watson

AUTHENTIC TRUTH, POWERFUL CONNECTION, DEEP IMPACT

Loved. Seen. Heard

ERIKA WATSON



*Erika Watson is a speaker, coach, and muse to hundreds of heart centered entrepreneurs across the globe.*

*She has worked with women as far as Dubai, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, London and the USA to find their voice and embrace a soul-aligned, purposeful and profitable lifestyle through transformation, connection, and business. As a leading expert in affiliate relationships, Erika supports entrepreneurs in creating powerful partnerships that leverage their time and reach, makes a global impact quickly, and creates financial abundance for everyone. Her ongoing interview series "Giving Rise to the Voice Within" is a platform developed to connect women from all of the world with the inspiration, courage, and steps successful Women Leaders have taken to own their truth and share their message with the masses. Erika's clients have described her as warm, inviting, loving, and a genius business woman. If you are ready to shift from restless to results, transform the limited beliefs that have been holding you back, and live an empowered, fulfilling, and prosperous life, connect with Erika at [www.facebook.com/lovedseenheard](http://www.facebook.com/lovedseenheard) and introduce yourself. You'll be thrilled she's on your side.*



# *Luck: Superstition, Synchronicity or Self Fulfilling?*

Jennifer A. Smith

- \*Do you have good luck or bad?
- \*What happens if you wear your lucky shirt or walk under a ladder or break a mirror?
- \*Have you ever been in the right place at the right time, or the wrong place at the wrong time?
- \*Is your life just a little bit better because you have luck, or do the dark clouds follow you where ever you go?

Picture yourself as a child. You are 6 years old, playing a game at the county fair. It's you, 3 feet away from a table full of empty glass bottles, a well worn red ring resting lightly in your hand. You toss that ring toward the bottle, what happens next? Do you hear the sound of the ring rattling down the bottle, or the sound of the ring bouncing off and onto the ground? Do you see yourself sitting next to a giant teddy bear on the ferris wheel, or standing with shoulders hunched, head down as your parents tell you, "**better luck next time.**" What sound do you hear? Does it match the kind of luck you had as a kid? What kind of luck do you have now?

If you were told as a kid you were lucky, you would believe it. You would walk right up to that ring and toss it round. Experience a couple positive twists of fate in your future and you continue to believe you are lucky. On the other hand, if you were told you have bad luck, or "**better luck next time**", and next time never came, how do you think your luck will be today? Still standing with your head down, missing out on the amazing opportunities passing you by because you believe they are a privilege reserved only for the lucky. Luck and being lucky are states of mind.

You know those people, the ones who always win. They win at raffles, they win at games, they win at life. How did they get to be so lucky? What is their secret? "**Knowing**" is the secret! The secret is, they believe in themselves and they trust their intuition. They KNOW they are going to win. They KNOW they will succeed. They've been there before and KNOW they will be there again. Tennessee Williams said, "**Luck is believing you are lucky**". When you have positive experiences to reinforce your belief it's easy. What if you don't? If you never won that giant teddy bear, you might not know what it feels like to be lucky.

Think again of your past, a time when you were lucky. Whether you believe it or not, you are lucky. Maybe you found \$5 in your pants pocket. The weather man said slight chance of showers, you listened to your gut and brought an umbrella. Maybe you thought you locked yourself out, but had "**luckily**" left the back door open. You were text-ing while driving and looked up just in time for the light to turn red. Little reminders, fate is on your side. Draw on those experiences to build your belief. Pay closer attention to your gut, fear and worry may have replaced joy and knowing. Go back once again to your childhood. Feel the joy of

# *Luck: Superstition, Synchronicity or Self Fulfilling?*

Jennifer A. Smith

squeezing that teddy bear tight, your arms barely able to wrap all the way around it. **KNOW** you've won and will win again. What kind of luck do you have now? You ARE lucky. Believe it! Go ahead walk under the ladder in your lucky shirt and remember, those dark clouds are bringing rain for your money tree!

*Too often, I feel like I am living my life for my family. I am sort of lost somewhere between Chasing Callie and Trent Time. Don't get me wrong, there's no place I would rather be, but I also like to ponder more about myself. If only just for these couple of minutes a day. From 9am-2pm I work with Cardiac Patients. From 2pm-9am I am a Wife, Mother, Sister, Friend, Direct Sales Consultant and Mama-ratzi. From 10pm-1am I am a Hobbieist Blogger and Internet Junkie. 24/7-365 I am Jennyography.*

*Me, my pictures and my perspective.*

*Email: [jennyography@gmail.com](mailto:jennyography@gmail.com)*



# *Life Through the Eyes of an Unbiased 3 year old Girl*

Heather Calhoun

I'm a Mom. That is my favorite thing to say with pride.

Here's my transformation from party girl to stay-at-home Mom...

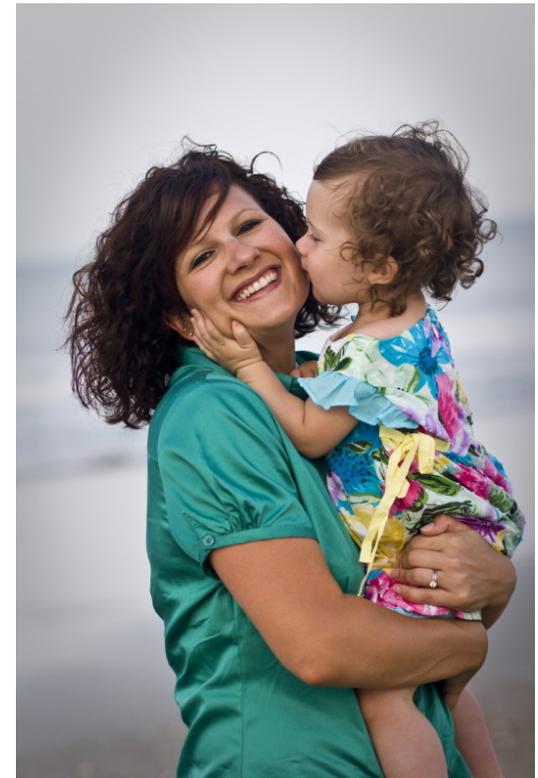
My Teen interests: Boys, clothes, sports, clicky friends and a little drinking.

My 20s: Boys, clothes, sports, clicky friends and a lot of drinking.

My 30s: Husband, baby, family, friends and no drinking... while nursing!

As I hit my 30s, where I am today, my life took on new meaning and a new direction. I didn't care as much about the social pressures, gossip and someone help me... my style! (I solemnly swear never ever to wear 'Mom jeans')

I promised myself that I would be the best parent I could possibly be. I would teach my daughter, play with her, read to her, feed her the best...etc. I must say, she's turning out pretty fantastic. (Not biased at all). Here's the real truth. She has taught me so much more than I ever knew was possible. She knows no stereotype, no history, no mistakes from the past, no hardships, no VCRs, no cassette tapes, no floppy discs... ok I'm getting carried away. You get my point.



# *Life Through the Eyes of an Unbiased 3 year old Girl*

Heather Calhoun

She has taught me:

- Smile at strangers, no matter how they look or act.
- See nature for it's true beauty and not just what you walk through to get to your car.
- Enjoy the flavors of foods as if it's the first time you tasted them, opposed to shoveling down dinner.
- Be in the moment and don't stress about your 'to do list'.
- Hug and kiss the ones you love frequently.
- Be curious, ask questions and don't just go with the flow.
- Wear dresses, it gets nice airflow.
- Appreciate My Mom more than ever.
- Salad tongs are scissors with forks on the ends.
- Pick my battles, let the small stuff go.
- Doing something over and over makes you better.
- Speak the truth...even if it hurts... 'Mommy your boobs are floppy', ouch!
- You are never too old for tickle fights.
- Send more snail mail, it really can light up someones day.
- What you do duplicates in your personal & professional life. (curse words included)
- Most of all... she has taught me Unconditional Love!



# *Life Through the Eyes of an Unbiased 3 year old Girl*

Heather Calhoun

I have used these lessons in my daily life, my business, and my personal development. I won't say I'm not judgmental, I think we all are a bit, but I definitely have seen the world through my 3 year olds eyes and appreciate the differences in people, nature, food, animals, learning, school, fun and so much more.

So, after all that sappy stuff... I'll say... I guess all those blowout diapers, tiring nights, hair pulling, pregnancy weight gain, tantrums and potty training... ahhh, it was all worth it!! I think I'll do it again one day!

*I'm a Mom, Wife, Business owner, and a very driven person. I am a people-person. I enjoy meeting new people and not a day goes by that I don't entertain my friends with my quirky sense of humor. I have a 3 year old daughter who is absolutely amazing. I've been married to my high school sweetheart for 9 years. I'm from Virginia, but have moved quite a bit with a prior military family. I went to college at Clemson University and majored in Graphic Communications. My masters degree is in Mass Communications from Kansas State University.  
[www.HeatherCalhoun.com](http://www.HeatherCalhoun.com)*





# *High Value vs. High Maintenance*

Tracy Cherpeski

*“Only the man who crosses the river at night knows the value of the light of day.”*

- *Chinese Proverb*

We place value on all kinds of things: cars, houses, toys, other objects and our loved ones. I wonder, though, do we place enough value on ourselves? Do we know how to differentiate between placing high value on ourselves and being “high maintenance”? I think sometimes we get confused along the way. I sent a silly text to a friend a while ago, and it went something like this:

Me: “My hairspray costs \$22.95. Does that make me high maintenance?”

Friend: “HAHAHA! No sister, it makes you have fabulous hair.”

First, let me say: my friends are the best! But, regardless of whether I spend too much on hairspray (and we can debate the finer points,) it made me think about whether or not I value myself highly enough. I certainly don’t give too much thought to how much I spend on hairspray because I like how it works on my hair in the humid climate here in the Washington, DC area. However, when I thought about it, I also realized that I had not been giving too much thought to how much time, energy and effort I was spending on other people’s needs, often at the expense of my own. So, in a simplified way, I was placing more value on my hair than on my own energy and time.

In my youth, I spent a lot of time in the drama realm, playing the role of victim of circumstances and the actions of others. A few years ago when my marriage was ending, I woke up to the fact that I had designed a personal value system where I allowed my needs to register on the lowest rung. In the transformation that I experienced thru my divorce, I noticed the same pattern in work situations, and with a couple of friends. I allowed the needs of others to take precedence over my own, and accepted less than what I needed and deserved. I allowed energy-suckers to drain me, and I accepted a low-paying, demanding job where it was incredibly difficult to say no to increased demands. I justified all of these allowances because I felt I was working hard, “paying

# High Value vs. High Maintenance

Tracy Cherpeski

my dues” and being a good friend. But the truth is, I was exhausted, my children were suffering my frustration and lack of energy, and I felt awful and unfulfilled. Something had to change. I decided to take back my power and make a personal value statement.

I could have easily said that my misery and fatigue were due to being a single parent, having friends in transition who needed me and a misogynistic boss who blocked me at every turn, but I allowed and chose to continue in those circumstances - nobody forced me to take the job, and nobody forced me to be friends with energy-drains. This realization became the moment when I made the ultimate value statement: I figured out a plan to start my own business and as I got busy working on my business plan, I naturally became too busy to spend time with energy-draining friends. I quit my job a few months later, gave myself permission to slow down, take note of my own needs and raise the bar for my personal development and value.

I hired a coach who trained me in the coaching skill set, and one day when I needed to re-schedule a session because one of my children was sick, I mentioned several times that I was worried about being “high maintenance” as I apologized profusely for the need to reschedule. My coach stopped me and asked what the “high maintenance bit” was about. As I reflected, I realized that whenever I needed to do something to suit my needs, I felt guilty about it. I felt like I wasn’t worthy of re-scheduling around a sick child, and it was extremely difficult for me to ask for that allowance.

My coach gave me one of the best insights ever, which became a powerful affirmation:

**“I am an empowered woman and I maintain high standards.”**

How very true! I do maintain high standards. Yes! I honor my commitments, I am an excellent mom, business woman and coach. My standards are high, and so I very rarely ask others to change their schedules around to suit mine, nor would I want to, but a sick kid is a sick kid, and that requires attention.





# *High Value vs. High Maintenance*

Tracy Cherpeski

This got my wheels turning. If I mis-direct my personal value, others must do it too.

Ask yourself: Do I spend my energy wisely? Do I place high value on myself? Do I make value statements thru my choices, words and actions? Consider the quote below.

“Until you value yourself, you won’t value your time. Until you value your time, you will not do anything with it.” - M. Scott Peck

How much time do you let slide in one day? Do you dedicate time to things that do not serve you or benefit your family? Are you able to say no when you really don’t have time or energy to complete the task that is asked of you? Do you feel guilty for saying no or putting your needs ahead of others? If so, read on.

I believe that the difference between high value and high maintenance is very clear: high value comes from an internal belief and understanding of who you are. If you place a high value on yourself, you will automatically create and maintain firm boundaries, carve-out “me time” and treat yourself and others with compassion. High maintenance is an externalized need to validate yourself by being demanding or needy. If you want to perceive yourself as high value, you are moving in the right direction just by thinking about it.

Replace old negativity with positive messages. When you find yourself thinking negatively about yourself or others, stop yourself, take a breath, and say, “Hmmm.” No judgment, no analysis. Just, “Hmmm.” Now, take another breath and send the negativity away with a strong exhale. Find something good about yourself, the person or situation. Say it aloud or to yourself. Remove the negative thoughts and replace them with positive messages, immediately. Every time you think negatively or place judgment on yourself or others, you etch-away at your own value. We want to increase our value, don’t we?

Account for your time and use it wisely. Do you run out of productive time? Observe how you spend your time, without judgment. If you spend a lot of time surfing the internet with no goal in mind and feel the time crunch elsewhere in your day, set aside a



# *High Value vs. High Maintenance*

Tracy Cherpeski

dedicated time to do that, but finish your action steps first. Celebrate your success by rewarding yourself with free time to surf for pleasure.

Along those lines, do you feel overwhelmed and over-committed? If you do, pause before agreeing to do something you are not certain you have time to do. If you are the volunteer extraordinaire at your children's school, does that bring you joy? If it does, but you also feel like you can never catch your breath, start delegating some tasks to other volunteers, setting a time limit on your volunteer activities and (gasp!) practice saying "no." If saying no feels uncomfortable, here is a great way to get out of it gracefully, with your dignity intact: say, "Hmm, let me think about it and get back to you." You can send an unapologetic email explaining that at this time you do not have the time to dedicate and give attention to the project to complete it in a way that meets your high standards.

Release drama. I recently adopted the following motto for my "outside my home" life: I will not tolerate drama from people to whom I did not give birth. My children are little and provide enough dramatic flair for this busy mama. I do not have energy for additional drama. I quietly remove myself from gossipy conversations, take a breath and try to leave it behind. I do not engage. I do my best to stay out of gossip and other related drama. I do not always escape and avoid engaging, but I usually do, and the quality of my life has improved tremendously since employing the motto.

Practice Compassion. Be kind to yourself. Give yourself kudos, give kudos to others. Celebrate your accomplishments, and feel proud of yourself. Allow yourself to feel happy for others, especially if they have achieved something you have not yet accomplished. Let others inspire you, and be your own

inspiration. Practice compassion by writing a letter to you, praising yourself. Allow yourself to feel happy for where you are right now. Write encouraging, motivating notes to yourself. When you practice compassion with yourself, you will automatically have more to give to others.

# High Value vs. High Maintenance

Tracy Cherpeski

Be courageous in making changes, yet soft and humble. Be kind to yourself and to others. You will notice a brighter outlook and your life will change for the better.

Blessings. Gratitude. Love.



*Tracy wears many hats: she owns a wellness company that provides team-building workshops for corporations, and services women-in-transition in career, relationship and life balance. Tracy is a modern mom, writer, public speaker and fitness professional. Tracy holds an MBA and MA. Blog: [powerstrengthgrace.wordpress.com](http://powerstrengthgrace.wordpress.com) Twitter: @tcherpeski, Facebook: PowerStrengthGrace.*



# Surrender

Leslie Ringler

What do you want?

No seriously, what do you want! Not what are you suppose to want? What is socially acceptable for you to want? What culturally, makes sense for you to want? But, what do you really want deep down beyond the shouldas, wouldas and if only I couldas?

The gorgeously big and exquisitely mundane...what do you want?

Here's the secret. Women! Your body, mind and soul hold the key to receiving what you really want! Here are four easy steps to accessing this incredible wisdom anytime, anywhere and when it feels incredible to do so! All you have to do is remember SALT! And I'm going to challenge you – this is going to seem simple, ridiculously easy, but I hope you will do a little experimenting with your life and take a few moments a day to do some implementing.

We as women ARE complicated and still grappling with fully understanding ourselves in a world that hasn't taken the time to do the same (until now J), so we tend to overcomplicate everything. This is simple. This can change your life. Remember SALT.

1) Surrender. Stop whatever you are doing and surrender to the present moment. How do you so this? What is right in front of you now? A flower in bloom, dirty dishes in the sink, a child vying for your attention, birds chirping outside your window, a cup of coffee or tea you've let get cold? A glass of cool water waiting to be consumed? Whatever it is, pay attention. Feel your feel on the ground, your body in space. Be witness to the simple lesson becoming present to your life right now!

2) Ask. What the hell do you want? Okay, got it? Now breathe, relax, soften and below that...what do you really want and if you really want to have fun, ask why! Now proclaim it! Shout it out loud. Whisper it softly and lovingly like a sacred prayer you know by heart. Write it in a special place where you keep your hope and your dreams.

# Surrender

Leslie Ringler

3) Listen. This is where your amazing wisdom as a woman comes into play. Pay attention and listen to the thoughts that come immediately after you state or write your want. Thank these thoughts for so lovingly protect you and keep you safe...now shhhhh...listen deeper, below the

initial mind chatter and accompanying physical sensations. Listen to the essence and visceral knowing in your very being that says, "yes, I know.... I've always known and here is your next step." Then prepare yourself for the toughest part.

4) Trust. Yes, breathe again. This time deep in your belly and now even deeper into the seat of the divine feminine within you. Our world has not always honored and in some forms has conspired against the deep-seated knowing that we have as women. This is your chance to reclaim that holy and ancient knowing, trusting that if you follow it, you cannot make a mistake. You are like a child, curious and discovering all along the way. You can do know wrong. You will not hurt anyone. You only become more and more of you with each act of trust. You will continue to EVOLve and BE-come until the next time your inner compass entices you, once again, to surrender.

And this time you know what to do.

*A teacher, healer, dancer, mother and a visionary! Founder of HealThy Self Wellness, Leslie uses her natural gifts of intuitive empathy, perceiving energy and professional training in bioenergetic healing and dance to help souls step into their authenticity and self-healing powers! An avid learner and advocate of meditation, Leslie lives life open and receptive to the Universe and nurtures a life of transparency and authenticity in herself and the lives of those she is lucky enough to touch.*





# *Working Happy and Living on Purpose*

Natalie MacNeil

Dreams are elusive creatures. Like twinkling stars in the sky, the harder you stare at them the harder they are to see. Come with me as I expand on thoughts from my book “She Takes On The World: A Guide to Being Your Own Boss, Working Happy, and Living on Purpose,” and discover what you may be missing.

## *The journey...*

How many times have you heard that success starts with love and a passion for what you do? It's easier said than done for most people; it's a journey.

Let me start by saying that journeys are only worth it if you see and experience new things. What I'd like to do is help you know whether you love what you do or just love the idea of what you do or you love being comfortable. Comfort can be a dangerous creature.

I believe that to work happy you have to be madly in love with what you do and passionate to boot! So let's take a little journey now to experience what love and passion really feel like.

Imagine that your business is your dream home, passion is the car you drive and love is how you decorate. So what does your dream home look like? Is it sprawling and crawling with plants and test tubes? Is it gleaming and beautiful with collectibles and art? What do you love to surround yourself with?

## *Love and passion...*

Love is the feeling we get when we always want to be close to something or surrounded by it. Love is worth fighting for and often worth dying for. It's easy to imagine this feeling with people we know, so try instead to imagine that you are alone and decorate that house!

Passion is the second attribute of success I discuss in my book. Passion is your car because it gets you where you want to go. It's your drive, your machine! What causes you to act? What would you drive 5,000 miles for? What would make you stand up



# *Working Happy and Living on Purpose*

Natalie MacNeil

and say NO, if someone tried to take it away? Passion is your motivation and is the only thing that will keep you afloat when those around you lose faith or steam. It's your success insurance! So learn it, test drive it and keep it well maintained!

## *Don't settle...*

Don't settle for working towards anything but your wildest dreams. Don't keep a job that's "pretty good" and never think it's too late. Dare to dream big and reap the rewards. Without a big dream, you might suffer from a lack of motivation and a lack of motivation will keep you from reaching your true potential.

So tell me, what do you see as being your ultimate purpose? What's that big dream you have? Write it down. Look at it often. People on a path of purpose are happy, magnetic souls and I sincerely want that for you if you don't have it already.

## *Know -and trust -yourself*

Getting to a state of knowing who you are and what you're good at is easier said than done. To make it more difficult, we are constantly bombarded by the opinions of others which wage war on our own inner voices.

These internal battles cause students to choose the major their parents prefer, artists to get a "real" job because friends say they won't make a living from art, and entrepreneurial spirits to stay in the workforce because people tell them starting a business is too risky. Is an artist really going to thrive and find success working an office job though? Probably not since it's not playing to their strengths as a creative soul.

What are 5 things you know about yourself?



# *Working Happy and Living on Purpose*

Natalie MacNeil

If you can get to that place where you know, you'll be able to let your inner voice guide you to honor your strengths. Feel what could be. Ask yourself "What would I do if I knew that I could not fail?" I prefer the positive version of this: "What would you do if you knew you would succeed?"

The trick here is to go beyond picturing what work would be like but to feel what your days and your life would look like.

Where would you wake up? How does that feel?

What would your surroundings look like? How does that feel?

How would you spend your day? How does that feel?

The more detailed the experience the more clear the "big answer" will become. Just let it swirl in your head and build over time until one day "POP" you will know for certain what you need to be doing. Don't expect fast results; just keep working on the idea, piece by piece, every day until it reveals itself.

*Less talk, more walk*

A big reason many people don't know what they want is because they have never tried to get to that place of contentment and living on purpose. If you even have an idea of something you may like, go and do something about it. Talking about it is more fantasy than reality. Think you want to breed and raise horses? Go and volunteer a couple hours of your weekend to a local equine breeder and get inside the job. Maybe you have always wanted to write a book. Start with blogging and see how it feels after a month of blogging every day.

# Working Happy and Living on Purpose

Natalie MacNeil

The great thing about trying new things is that you'll also learn what you don't want to be doing and that's just as valuable about finding the things that make your heart sing. Never stop striving to achieve your greatness, commit to giving the best of yourself to the world, and relish in every magical moment that makes up the journey.

*Natalie MacNeil is an EMMY Award-winning media entrepreneur and the bestselling author of [She Takes on the World: A Guide to Being Your Own Boss](#), [Working Happy](#), and [Living on Purpose](#).*

*Natalie is best known as the Founder and Editor-in-Chief of [SheTakesOnTheWorld.com](#), one of the top blogs in the world for entrepreneurial women. [She Takes on the World](#) appeared on the Forbes list, "Top 10 Entrepreneurial Sites for Women" and on the ForbesWoman list, "Top 100 Websites for Women." It is also the 2010 winner of Blog of the Year at the Stevie Awards, dubbed "the Oscar's of business awards."*

*Natalie is also the Co-founder of [Imaginarius](#), an award winning digital media company known for its groundbreaking work in interactive innovations and creative online marketing strategies. Natalie and her business partner each received an Emmy for their work on [Out My Window](#), the world's first 360 degree, full feature documentary which was developed with the National Film Board (NFB).*

*Natalie is frequently quoted and interviewed in the media discussing entrepreneurship, personal branding for women, and new media. She has appeared in [Forbes.com](#), [ForbesWoman](#), [Wall Street Journal](#), [Entrepreneur.com](#), [Teen Vogue](#), [Mashable.com](#), [Examiner.com](#), [Financial Post](#), [CNN](#), [MSN](#), and more.*





# *Getting Naked*

Jeanette LeBlanc

Come here.

Right here. Get closer. Real close.

Can you feel my breath on your cheek? Yes? Good.

Now take off your clothes.

You heard me. All of them. Right now.

Yup. It's time to get nekkid.

Everyone needs to strip down now and then, to get naked and let the wind breeze blow across bare skin so that every last nerve ending feels exquisitely alive. We just rang in a brand new year and there's no time like the present.

Feeling shy? Of course you are. Those clothes cover up a lot that you're more comfortable hiding away. They hide fear and shame and all your tender and achy parts. Bumps and bruises and those spots where your skin got sheared clear away by that wipeout. You've got not-good-enough moments tucked in your pockets and repeated pleas of i-couldn't-possibly hidden under your hat. Why, you're even wearing sunglasses inside so I can't see the depths of pain behind your eyes. Sweet girl, let me hold those for you – you don't need them here.



# Getting Naked

Jeanette LeBlanc

We're so accustomed to tucking it all away, thinking it more polite or acceptable to keep it to ourselves – making snarky comments at those who feel free enough to parade it all for the world to see. We're constantly afraid that one of our layers might shift or be blown up in the breeze; exposing the parts we keep deeply hidden and fiercely guarded.

We laugh too little, and we don't cry near enough. We judge ourselves with harsh words and harsher actions; thinking we'll beat the world to the punch by taking ourselves out first. We silence our voices, limit our choices and hide our magic under layers and layers of protection.

This, my friends, takes a ton of energy. This keeps you from the brilliance that only comes with being seeing and being seen and loving it all anyway. You know what? This year has too much in store for you for you to even consider continuing this way. This year demands boldness, and physicality and sensuality and moxie like none has before. There are times in life for playing small, for covering up and hiding away. This, sweetness, is not one of those years.

This year is about claiming, about living fierce with reality, about celebrating your inherent holiness and getting down with your goddess self. And it's hard to shake your divine booty when it's covered in layers and layers of stuff. Lets take care of that right now.

It all starts with getting naked. Shedding and peeling and tearing all that does not serve you.

Culling and paring down what holds you back. Dismantling walls and protective layers and all that keeps you distanced from your one, magical life.

That cloak of self-deprecation? Gone.

That skirt made of long-held shame? Burn it.



# Getting Naked

Jeanette LeBlanc

Those too small shoes that you thought you needed to be beautiful? Garbage.  
The pockets stuffed full of unspoken dreams? Empty them now.  
That big old ugly sweater knitted from every hateful word you've ever absorbed?  
Fuck. That. Shit.

It's time to take off those clothes, dammit.

I'll put on some music. Get you a stripper pole if you like. By the soft light of a hundred candles or right in the center of the spotlight. I'll feed you chocolate dipped strawberries with whipped cream. If you need me too, I can help. Look you straight in the eyes, transmit universal love and unbutton the buttons. Spiritual Seduction delivered exactly as needed. We can do this long and drawn out and fast and dirty. The end result is all the same

There you'll stand. Without your armor. Without talismans or amulets and everything you always wanted and thought for sure you needed to get by. All of it. Gone.

And there you are. Just you. Utterly, breathtakingly perfect. You've let it all go now, and aren't you the beauty? Just as you are. None of that stuff was necessary. And yes, you want to run and hide. You're cowering in preparation for the judgment and the cold air and the wash of shame that is sure to come.

Except it doesn't. The air is warm and the room is filled with nothing but love. No judgment. No harsh words. We're too awestruck by your beauty to even consider it. We're blown away by your courage and in awe of your strength. There you are, doing the very thing we know we should do but can't quite make ourselves commit to.

And with the removal of all that did not serve, there is space cleared to call home what is already yours.

# Getting Naked

Jeanette LeBlanc

Call it home, darling, call it home.

You can dance by yourself whenever the music moves you. You can read your poem to 300 people even though your legs are shaking. You can submit that novel that you poured your heart into to the best publishing house in the country. You can learn to sky dive, go back to school, birth your baby on your own terms, end your marriage, fall in love, raise your voice, speak your mind, invite the consequences of living your truest life. It's all yours for the taking.

And when you're ready to get dressed again you'll find only the finest fabrics; sheer, light and beautiful. In colors that make you shine from the inside out. And although you could choose to cover yourself again, you wouldn't dream of it. You've witnessed the magic of transparency and seen how crazy beautiful the world looks with your light shining on it.

Plus – you are on badass hot mama in your birthday suit. Don't let anyone EVER tell you otherwise

*Jeanette LeBlanc is an inspirationalist, writer, poet photographer and dreamer. She regularly consumes ridiculous amounts of dark chocolate, craves the sound of crashing waves and wishes people would stop putting olives on pizza. She has a love affair with words (all of them, especially the bad ones) and is inspired by the intersection of shadows and light. Hopelessly idealistic and impossibly pragmatic, Jeanette fully believes that she will one day earn a very good living with her words and her camera. In the event that Plan A doesn't work out, she is willing to settle for a huge lottery win, or the generosity of a very rich benefactor. Either way, she has no intention of being a starving artist. Jeanette lives in Phoenix, Arizona with her girlfriend and three delightfully unruly children. Jeanette writes about life at <http://peacelovefree.com> and shares her photography at <http://jeanetteleblanc.com>*





# *Living Real and Raw*

Rachelle Anslyn

The chase left me feeling empty. I didn't even realize I was in it.

I started with a purpose, my why, and in the process of getting my message out there... I got lost in the matrix only to go through the birth canal and discover a profoundly transformed why.

I teach bio-individuality, meaning what works for one person may not work for another, so I wanted to be clear- this goes for the food you eat, the way you move your body, how to live your life, grow a business, express your purpose, love in relationship and on and on. What I want to share with you is my path of discovery... how I found my true why and true way, and yours may be radically different than mine.

Probably the first business principle I was taught when I was still in school to become a holistic health coach was this mantra "I'm not a \_\_\_(health coach)\_\_\_ I'm a marketer." I heard this time and time again in learning about creating a business... and I lived it. I learned business and marketing, invested in all of the right info-products and coaching programs and learned a lot. However, what it also did for me was left me disconnected from who I truly am and how I really want to serve (and along the way had amassed a huge amount of debt)... I finally realized the truth is I don't want to be a marketer.

I want to be a connector. I want to create sustainability in my life through healthy choices, community and collaboration. I would rather grow my business organically than massively. Again, bio-individuality; I finally came to the truth of what works for me, and it comes in a very different package than long sales letters and following blueprints from the most successful coaches.

So many people who are going for million dollar businesses give everything back to growing that business; their time, money, energy and then the business is what needs to be sustained verses their life. Striving for abundance and success in the material world created a disconnect from the truth for me.



# *Living Real and Raw*

Rachelle Anslyn

Abundance, as beautiful as it is, when made to be about getting more and more and more... it becomes an addiction not a universal law.

The truth is. I am abundant now. I have everything I need in every moment of my life. Feeling connected abundantly to source leaves no room for lack in our lives. I check in with myself, "Am I ok?" yes, I am in this moment and every moment I have checked in, regardless of my bank account or credit.

External wins and losses can shape your entire existence if you are driven by them.

I awakened to something deeper that would drive my life. My why has become about living real and raw. Living the path of evolution and being willing to be vulnerable enough to share the light and the dark shadows of the path to inspire connection on the deepest level with others. Living connected to truth, living in truth.

So let me get even more transparent here, building a business based on ego wants and needs is the shadow. Mine looked like this..

## *Shadow*

Part of me was building my business to create worth for myself, to challenge how I show up in the world, gain confidence, to be seen and heard, to be successful, to be somebody, to be important, to make money, to create safety and security, to have nice things, to feel good, to be who I thought I wanted to be, to project an image.

Then there is the light, the other side of the shadow that comes from our true nature.



# *Living Real and Raw*

Rachelle Anslyn

## *Light*

I have always been a natural coach and had a lot to offer, am deeply caring, compassionate, a good listener, problem solver, intelligent, insightful and I thrive in supporting people.

When I was trying to create self-worth out of success, what I had done and accomplished my self-worth actually diminished. My true worth comes from me just being me, being present, meeting the eyes in front of me; this is the source of our inherent worth, our true abundance, our true connection and creative force.

Shining (or playing a bigger game), abundance, manipulation masked as authenticity are a few shadow's I've seen played out in marketing. I already spoke to how abundance can be made a shadow when it becomes an addiction to more. For insight into the manipulation that is being used in marketing check out "Start With Why" by Simon Sinek. The last shadow I wanted to call out is around shining.

Shining bright doesn't come from stepping into the spotlight and getting a high from your accomplishment.

There is a difference of shining your true essence and shining because you need to prove something to yourself or the world. Shining that creates competition and ill feeling is outdoing each other. Shining that comes from an open heart, a willingness to see the one in front of you as a divine being... that is where the beauty of humanity can truly emerge. Your essence comes from shining in your everyday moments, being a light that is connected to something deeper within you which is the true source of power and wisdom.

I'll give you a little context for where this is all coming from (to read more... <http://www.concentricbalance.com/2011/07/awakenings/>). I had an awakening in my body during the time that I was teaching my Body, Food and Love program ([www.bodyfoodandlove.com](http://www.bodyfoodandlove.com)). It was an experience that has left me more connected to my



# *Living Real and Raw*

Rachelle Anslyn

body and intuition than ever before. After that, I went to Eden Unplugged (a retreat for evolutionary entrepreneurs [www.edenunplugged.com](http://www.edenunplugged.com)) which awakened me to community. Within a month after the retreat I had given up the life I had so lovingly created and was grateful for. I gave it all up, my land, my partner, the house we built, my business as I knew it, my comfort, my security, my safety, everything I loved most in my life. I gave it up because I was being called to something more. Something deeper.

In my 20's I had immersed myself in personal growth to alleviate emotional pain. I found a place of relative comfort in my life, which in retrospect, I can see what I actually did was learn how to out-think my emotions. I learned how to be very practical and rational and move through things with the will of my mind.

Through this awakening, I also tapped deeply back into my emotions. I realized that when I am not afraid of my own emotions I can be with others in a clear loving presence that embraces all of who we are and the human condition that we live in. That's when I began to really look at the shadows.

The both/and - living the paradox. We don't get rid of the shadows, we acknowledge and bring them to the light. We make friends with them, love them and accept them. Only when we can love the shadows within ourselves, can we actually truly love each other.

I've been getting really, really uncomfortable in life so that I know I'm actually always ok. Something I know that I have been doing in my life that I see we do as a culture.... chase the comfort, the ease, the happy life, great body, perfect partner. It is all for the illusion of safety.

What if we all got wickedly uncomfortable. Gave birth. Connect in with source. Went deep, deep, deep.



# *Living Real and Raw*

Rachelle Anslyn

I've gone through massive deconstructing of my whole life to reconstruct in truth and alignment. This isn't something we do once, get it down and remain that way in our lives. It's important to have the breakdowns to allow for the reevaluation, reassessment, realignment, reconstruction. What we see is truth for us as one time becomes only a fragment of truth or completely not truth at another time.

Now I am establishing a life based on my connection to source, myself and community. Why is community so important? We get to practice giving and receiving on a moment to moment basis in community. We get to have our light as well as our shadows reflected back at us in community. We get to face things that we don't want to face. We consciously chose to see what we don't want to in order to bring that to light as well. Drop into deep, deep love. Self love, then loving other.

My hope is that my vulnerability, authenticity and transparency will help heal others.

What was I chasing - self worth, recognition, admiration, financial freedom, attention, love are all with in me already.

I still love appreciation, acceptance, recognition, attention, and love from the external world... and I own it in a different way... I show up to say - yes, I love these things and the truth is I am worthy, I don't have to seek it and prove it... I have to be it. My job is to see it in others, love others deeply. Look at any judgment that comes up, anything that keeps me from fully seeing and loving you for the essence and beauty that you are... anything that keeps me separate, I have to take a look. I see what I am not loving in myself. I find love and compassion... then I can fully love you. Then I can fully see you.

There is the being and the doing in life - living the spiritual and the physical. I am still working with these edges, balancing and being the bridge of the physical realm to the spiritual realm.

# *Living Real and Raw*

Rachelle Anslyn

My why. My own evolution which leads me to being more whole and fully able to love you. To live and breathe my own self worth so that I can see yours. To shine authentically so that you are seen through my light.

*Rachelle Anslyn is known for thinking big and living an extraordinary life. Her passion for being authentic, creative, and vibrant has taken her to explore the depths of what is possible. She has traveled over 30 countries to work with clients, for volunteer aide, to study with yoga masters, and for the delight of cultural wisdom.*

*Rachelle has studied over 100 different dietary theories and learned straight from leading health experts and doctors such as Deepak Chopra, Andrew Weil, Sally Fallon, Mark Hyman, David Wolfe and many, many more. Rachelle graduated in 2009 from The Institute of Integrative Nutrition in New York City.*

*Her mindset mastery came from attending The School for The Work of Byron Katie in New York City in 2001. The following year, Rachelle staffed The School working directly with Byron Katie in Los Angeles.*

*Rachelle has also studied with yoga masters around the globe in several traditions including Kundalini, Iyengar, Jivamukti, Ashtanga, Vibrant Living Yoga and Yoga Synergy. Through her experience with self-inquiry, yoga, nutrition and the healing arts, Rachelle has cultivated a full spectrum understanding of living a vibrant purposeful life. [www.radiantevolution.com](http://www.radiantevolution.com)*





## *Stay Connected*

Thanks for reading. We hope you enjoyed the stories!

Keep in touch with Courtney Baker for news on the next ebook

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