



IMPERFECT COURAGE

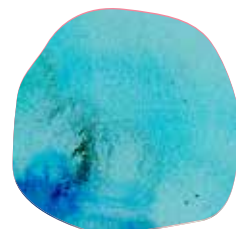
30-DAY WORKBOOK

YOUR GUIDE TO LEAVING COMFORT
AND GOING SCARED

BY

JESSICA HONEGGER





GO-GETTERS AT HEART

For most of my life, I equated courage with fearlessness.

- Courage was Martin Luther King Jr. putting his life in danger time and again to rally a crowd.
- Courage was the firefighter who ran into a burning building, while sane people were running out.
- Courage was a woman leaving her abusive spouse, having no idea what would happen next.
- Courage was about those brave people out there. Courage was never me.

But then my husband and I adopted a little boy from Rwanda, despite our bank account being overdrawn. And I pawned my heirloom gold jewelry to start a business that just might thrive. And I began envisioning how women all over this great big planet could start living beyond themselves. And I saw that courageous people are not fearless; they've simply resolved in their hearts to go scared.

Courageous people are just as afraid of ridicule, rejection, and failure as the rest of us. They just refuse to let those fears keep them chained to their comfy couch. They insist on getting up and getting going—worries, fears, and all.

I've been on this going-scared journey awhile now, and I've picked up a few handy tricks. I've assembled them here in a month-long guide, in hopes that you'll set foot on the path by my side. After all, trips are a heck of a lot more fun to take with loved ones, and you, my book-buyer, I love.

Now, this guide isn't meant to be chugged like a can of diet soda in a check-out aisle. It's meant to be savored, like a well-roasted cup of coffee or a fine wine. Each day, I hope you'll take a few minutes to sit down with me and walk through just one important truth about who you are and where you're headed. Because if there's anything I know about you, it's that you're a go-getter at heart. Now it's time to take a step toward that life of meaning and impact your heart longs for. After all, this world ain't gonna change on its own.

Let's go!

Jessica





BELOVED BUBBLE WRAP

It's tempting to bubble-wrap our lives. Layer upon layer of protection means we stay unbroken, right through to the end.

We wrap ourselves in fear.

We wrap ourselves in isolation.

We wrap ourselves in nightly glasses of wine or in our beloved Instagram feed.

We avoid real issues involving real people who live in the real world because, *What if I get hurt?* And yet what does this approach yield for us? A life of boredom, a lack of impact, spiritual death.

Before I gently tug your blanket from you and kick you (lovingly) off the couch, what is your preferred type of bubble wrap, that thing that helps you feel insulated from the big, bad world?

What keeps you from taking it off? What awaits you if you did?

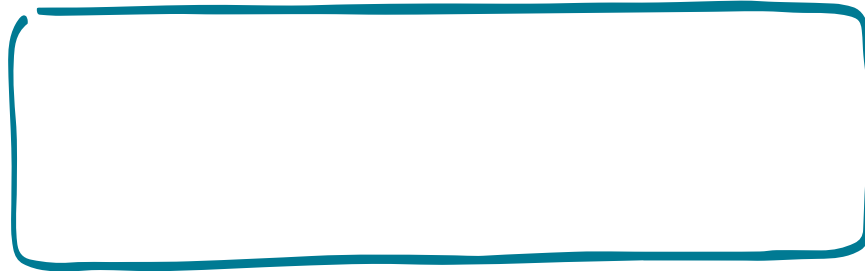


DAY 2

QUIET HEARTBREAK

Most likely, there is something in this world that devastates you, a reality that upsets you every time you encounter it, a trend that makes you tremble, a reality you wish weren't true. This is why our bubble wrap is necessary, right? It protects us from these hard-to-bear things.

If you were to name one thing you just can't tolerate, that thing that you'd throw yourself into fixing *in a heartbeat*, if it weren't for your doubts and fears, what would its name be?





DAY 3

NEVER TOO MUCH

In an average classroom, guess who raises their hands to answer the teacher's questions more often—boys, or girls?

I'll give you a tiny clue: *not girls.*

Girls? They have the right answers.
But they keep their hands down,
and they wait to be called on.
They wait. And wait. And wait.

Be humble, those girls are taught, from the earliest of ages.
Be polite.
Be respectful.
Don't ever cause a stir.
And so there they sit, a solid answer on their lips, terrified of being *too much.*

What are some times that fear of being too much caused you to stay quiet when you might have spoken up?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

What were you afraid would happen if you had spoken up?



DAY 4

THE USEFUL THUMP-THUMP

A quick question, if I may: When was the last time your heart beat wildly inside your chest because you'd ventured to the edge of your comfort zone and new territory was about to get claimed? Was it when you engaged a stranger in conversation instead of staying silent and small?

Was it when you went to the rally for a social issue, even though you felt sure you didn't belong?

Was it when you stood up for a friend of yours, who was being disparaged and totally cut down?

Was it when you refused to wait to be called on and spoke out a solution that actually could work?

Think back. When did you feel that useful *thump-thump*? What did you say or do?



BABY STEPS

Can I let you in on a little secret? That heavy-duty *thump-thump* of your heartbeat will steady itself over time. As you take baby steps of courage, your heart will get used to going scared. It's not that the fear is eradicated; it's just that it no longer dictates your steps.

And so: a baby-step invitation for you today. Pick one and do it as soon as possible.

You can do it.

You'll live.

I promise.

- Introduce yourself to the neighbor you've neglected to go meet.
- Check in on the friend with a house full of littles, to see how you might be of help.
- Ask that colleague who is super-involved with helping women who have been trafficked about how you can come up to speed.
- Show up at that weekly gathering at your church aimed at helping refugee families.
- Take the next step in the adoption process that you keep sabotaging for who-knows-why.
- _____
[Create your own challenge]



DAY 6

THE DREADED IBBC

I have another secret to tell you, which is that while it is true you will gain courage as you practice taking courageous baby steps, this journey will not be smooth at all times. It will be hated, contested, opposed. And guess who will hate and oppose it? You, of all people. *You.*

In the spirit of full disclosure, I need to confide in you that deep within the fear-stricken recesses of your soul convenes a truly terrible group. I have heard this cacophony of mental voices named various things over the years, but in my Texas-drawn vernacular, they'll always be one thing to me: The IBBC. That's the Itty-Bitty Bullshit Committee, or as my mom would prefer to call it, the Itty-Bitty Baloney-Sauce Committee.

The IBBC is your own personal group of mean girls at the junior-high lunchroom table in your mind that sneers at your every move. "You think your voice will make a difference?" they say. "Actually, your voice doesn't matter at all."

If we're going to get free from the lies we tell ourselves, we're going to have to dig deep and bring them into the cleansing light of day. So go ahead. Quiet yourself for a moment, lean in, and listen. What is your IBBC saying to you?

“

”



DAY 7

SLACKER SCENE

One of the IBBC's most strategic weapons is its uncanny ability to convince us that what does not matter matters deeply. Take, for example, the checkout line at Target. Have you ever caught yourself standing there, comparing yourself to another woman in line? Her produce is all organic. Her kids are waiting quietly. Her butt looks better in leggings. *She actually has makeup on.* Whatever it is, your IBBC has pitted you against this perfect stranger, and you're losing at every turn.

Think of a recent scene from your life when your self-talk convinced you that were a slacker, a loser, a fraud. What went down, and how did it make you feel? Why is self-talk such as this so easy to absorb, even as it stands in direct opposition to what's true? Capture your thoughts in the space below.



DAY 8

WHAT COUNTS

The reason these “slacker scenes” wedge themselves so deeply into our psyche is that they play into a false motivation that we carry around day after day. We think that what *really* counts in life is how others perceive us. We think that what *really* counts is our past successes (or mistakes). We think that what *really* counts is our social-media following. Or our kid’s athletic performance. Or our to-do list. Or the size of our jeans. On and on it goes.

When you find yourself wallowing in insecurity, courtesy of your chatty IBBC, what is *really counting* for you? Give it a name, and then jot it down on the line below. After all, it’s only by calling out the painful stories we tell ourselves each day that we can find the flaws in them, and begin to tell ourselves a better story.



DAY 9

THE PARADOX OF WOMANHOOD

One of the things I most love about women is that deep down, we believe in sisterhood. There is something inside of us that instinctively longs for it. But as we move through life, we start to believe the lie that acknowledging one woman’s successes somehow diminishes our own. As if there is only room for so many women at the table, and if she gets a spot, that’s a spot I don’t get.

I think our culture plays a big role in that lie telling. Women are placed under a ridiculous amount of pressure to meet society’s ever-increasing expectations:

- Have an incredible career, but be ready to give it up.
- Have kids, but not *too many* kids.
- Be thin, but not *too thin*.
- Support your husband, but be strong and independent.
- Be feminine, but also be one of the guys.
- Have opinions, but know when to keep your mouth shut...

The list goes on and on. In such a climate, is it any wonder we spend our energies shooting daggers at each other instead of going the sisterhood way?

What are some of the pressures you feel, as a woman making her way in the world? Note the paradoxes you face below.

DO/BE THIS...	BUT ALSO DO/BE THIS...
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•



DAY 10

THE OPPOSITE OF GROWTH

All that results from this kind of high-pressure environment is a nagging feeling among all of us that we are being judged, side-eyed, and whispered about—and that is no way to build a sisterhood. When we feel judged, we reflexively begin to erect walls around us, to shore up any vulnerabilities we might possess. At the first sign of judgment from others, we either shut down completely or we lash out from the safety of the massive emotional barriers we have put up.

These approaches may temporarily keep us from feeling the pain of judgment, but they do nothing to help us grow.

Can you relate? What is *your* reflexive reaction to the nagging feeling that the world is forever judging you? Fight, flight, or something else entirely? Capture your thoughts in the box below.

DAY 11

THE COUP DE GRÂCE

If there is one thing that can tank a woman, even on her finest day, it is bumping up against her own narrowly defined understanding of beauty. In short, she just doesn't measure up.

Recently, an international study revealed that a full 98 percent of women want to change at least one aspect of their physical appearance. It doesn't take a mathematician to sort out, then, that only 2 percent of us believe that we are beautiful, just as we are.

So.
Very.
Sad.

And yet also: so very true.

So, what is it for you? What aspect of your physical appearance tends to make you disparage yourself? And how can you turn those negative stories into positive ones? For example, instead of bemoaning the fact that your arms have some extra flab, thank those arms for being strong enough to serve you well each day.





DAY 12

INSANITY, UNCHECKED

In her book *Bossypants*, comedian Tina Fey put words to what happens when we as women refuse to arrest the self-disparagement that threatens to take us down. She writes: “Now every girl is expected to have Caucasian blue eyes, full Spanish lips, a classic button nose, hairless Asian skin with a California tan, a Jamaican dance hall ass, long Swedish legs, small Japanese feet, the abs of a lesbian gym owner, the hips of a nine-year-old boy, the arms of Michelle Obama.... The person closest to actually achieving this look is Kim Kardashian, who, as we know, was made by Russian scientists to sabotage our athletes.”ⁱ

You and I both laugh at the over-the-top assessment, even as we live as though it is true. And based on current statistics, we really *do* believe it’s true. At last count, Americans spend upward of \$60,000,000,000 on weight-loss tricks and trends each yearⁱⁱ. Eyes glazing over at all those zeroes? Let me count them for you. There are ten. *Ten* zeroes, which amounts to sixty billion dollars, which is also more than the gross domestic product of entire *countries* that Noonday works with.

Why do we engage in such madness?

Those abs. We so want those abs.

What are some ways that you are striving to earn your worth instead of receiving it from God?



DAY 13

INSIDE JOB

One of the best parts of Noonday Collection’s design philosophy is this idea that imperfection isn’t just inevitable—it’s desirable. In creating our jewelry, we use natural materials like water buffalo horn from Vietnam that varies in color from horn to horn and goat leather from India that tans over time. And the pieces are beautiful. Imperfectly so. Rather than lamenting the variances from piece to piece, we *celebrate* them.

Now, it’s your turn.

If you were to turn on its head the one thing about your physical appearance that drives you nuts, celebrating rather than condemning it, what would you say about this distinction of yours? What just might be *special* about that uneven smile, those robust hips, the fine hair atop your head?

Name something about your body that you love. Now tell a friend.

COMING OUT OF THE CAVE

It's of vital importance that we engage in the hard work of replacing the negative stories we are telling ourselves with better stories. That's why we've been focused on this inner work up until this point. But I've got some hard news for your introverts and independents: to affect real change in this world, we're going to have to come out of our caves of isolation and engage. And as we spot and comment on the power we find in each other, we are reminded that greatness surrounds us on all sides. We need only to choose to engage.

As we shift gears to begin talking about the need for interdependence in life, think about where you rate yourself, on the dependence scale, below. Let "X" mark your spot.



HIGHLY DEPENDENT

I have trouble managing my own life most days and can be a little needy, truth be told. I struggle to "gear up" to meet the challenges of everyday life.

INTERDEPENDENT

I carry my own daily load but accept help from others when times get rough. I reciprocate for others equally easily, whenever they hit a speed-bump in life. I am not afraid to ask for help. I know there isn't such a thing as self made.

HIGHLY INDEPENDENT

I hate the thought of coming across as needy and struggle to receive assistance from anyone else. I pride myself on being self-sufficient. Why can't everyone handle life so well?



WORKING WITH, NOT AGAINST

One of my core beliefs is that if you're longing to leave a life of safety for a life of risk, meaning, and impact, you *cannot* get there on your own. You—even you—were made for community. To flourish, we must work *with*, not against, togetherness, and to prize togetherness, we must come out of isolation and be seen.

Regardless of whether you fear being perceived as weak, or you think that you will be a burden to others, or you don't know if you can return the favor, or you are afraid that people will say no, or you are afraid that your need is excessive and, well, needy, choosing self-reliance and isolation is *never the better bet*.

While it may indeed be safer to curl up on the couch for *The West Wing* reruns night after night (guilty), that is hardly the life you were made for. It's not at all what *flourishing* means.

You and I cannot serve in a context of isolation.

We cannot give in a context of isolation.

We cannot grow in a context of isolation.

We cannot truly live all by ourselves.

What emotions do these statements elicit from you? Which is the toughest for you to receive? Note your thoughts in the space below.



DAY 16

ACCEPTING ME, AND YOU

If you're like most people I know, the statements in the previous entry strike a little note of terror in your heart. But if I've learned one thing across the years, it is this: it is only by embracing vulnerability that we can create compassionate spaces of belonging for ourselves, and also for others.

When we realize that none of us is perfect and inclusion doesn't come from being skinny or raising perfectly behaved kids or having the right job, then we are able to accept ourselves just as we are. And when we become adept at accepting ourselves, we are quicker to accept others.

Think about a relational struggle you're in at the moment. It could be a tussle between you and your partner, you and your child, you and a colleague at work. Do you have the situation in mind?

Now, on the lines below, write down a few grace-filled words of acceptance you could speak to this person the next time you two are in the same room.

Go on. Quit hemming and hawing, girl. *Do it.* You'll feel better in a minute. I promise.

“

”



DAY 17

CIRCLE OF COMPASSION

When we begin to eye ourselves with compassion instead of condemnation, we set ourselves up for success. And so, try this: in those moments when negativity threatens to wedge itself between self-acceptance and you, grab a piece of chalk and with great intention draw a circle of compassion around yourself.

Inside this circle, no nitpicky voices are allowed. No ruthless judgments, no clinging self-doubt. This circle is where you show up for you, just as you are, today.

Rather than using words that define you by your limitations, instead choose words that emphasize your humanity, your intrinsic worth, your *personhood*.

- Rather than calling yourself “an overachiever,” say you’re “a *person* who tends to overachieve.”
- Rather than calling yourself “an addict,” say you’re “a *person* struggling with addiction.”
- Rather than calling yourself “unstylish,” say you’re “a *person* for whom style can be challenging.”
- Rather than calling yourself “flat,” say you’re “a *person* with smaller breasts.”

Rather than referring to any of a thousand other labels, elevate your personhood to the forefront of the conversation. Remember that you are a worthwhile *person* before you are anything else. Now write a letter of compassion to yourself.



DAY 18

"YOU LOOK SO SMART TODAY!"

Are you ready for next-level compassion? Wouldn't it be amazing if we could all apply this person-first thinking to our interactions with each other? To look at each other and see the *whole person* instead of this feature, that talent, this win?

There is a saying in Uganda that my family has co-opted as our own: "You look so smart today." It's an expression used when speaking of appearance, but I think it speaks to the whole person as well. As women, I know we mean well when our compliments focus on all things exterior. And listen, I love a good compliment on my new haircut and statement earrings as much as the next gal. But how often do we as women express admiration for another woman's confidence as a speaker or kindness toward others or gifting in leadership?

Maybe when reconnecting with an old friend, instead of saying, "You have lost so much weight since the last time I saw you," we could say, "Wow, you really shine today." Instead of saying, "That dress is *fabulous*...where did you get it?," we could say, "You look so confident in that dress."

Just for today, try being generous with compliments that celebrate another person for who they are, and not only for what they wear or how they look. Ready to give it a try? Scan your agenda for a few minutes, thinking carefully about the people you will see today. Then, on the lines below, write down a few characteristics that you admire in each of those people. As you encounter them, comment on the characteristic that seems most prevalent to you today

NAME	CHARACTERISTIC(S) I ADMIRE IN HER/HIM

IT COULD HAVE BEEN ME

If my experiences with people living in poverty have taught me anything, it's that at the end of the day, we *all want the same things*—to be seen, to be accepted, to be known, to be loved. We want wholeness. We want connection. We want *hope*.

Yes, we want safety for ourselves and our families, access to healthcare and a good education. But we also want birthday cakes for our children, a morning kiss from our partner, and an outfit we can always pull on to make us feel like a million bucks.

We extend the circle of compassion we have drawn around ourselves to include others when we embrace this vulnerable truth: *It could have been me*. When we bravely choose to empathize with people who are in painful circumstances, rather than judge them, we become not only a balm for their souls but a dose of courage for our own. We come to realize that yes, we may all be vulnerable to pain, but if we keep showing up for each other during that pain, we will find the courage to weather what comes.

And it's not just in the big and newsworthy moments that we can find the courage to choose empathy and closeness over judgment and distance; it's in our everyday lives too, as we navigate our relationships with the people around us. I recently reached out to a group of women and asked them to share the situations where they found themselves reacting with judgment instead of empathy—and how they're working to rectify that line of thinking. In response, they shared with both sheepishness and great vulnerability what they've caught themselves side-eyeing. Which of these do you most relate to?

- I sometimes judge people who drive fancy cars as being pretentious and trying to prove themselves. Yikes.
- I used to judge parents who allowed their small children to watch a show on a phone while waiting at a restaurant for dinner. Now with a two-year-old surprise baby of my own, I realize that sometimes Paw Patrol is our only option.
- I have a hard time not judging when people can't "afford" bills but always have an iPhone, beer, cigarettes, a nice bag, and a car. It's something I have been working on for years—seeing a need and meeting it without trying to fix them or figure out why they are in this situation. I know it's not mine to judge.
- I have totally been guilty of judging people for not being positive enough, happy enough, or taking charge of their own lives enough. I couldn't understand why people wouldn't pull themselves out of depression or other sadness. It wasn't until I went through a massive season of depression, trauma, and heartache myself that I learned to be more comfortable with grief and sadness and not just try to shoo it away.
- Something else:



ONE STEP FARTHER, NOW

In my college sociology class, I learned about something called the *bystander effect*, a phenomenon in which the larger the group, the more unlikely it is anyone from that group will stop to lend a helping hand to someone who is obviously in need.

The bystander effect says, "I shouldn't ask that stressed-out mom in the carpool line if she's doing all right. She has plenty of people in her life who are doing that for her."

Or, "I won't tell that speaker what a good job she did because I am sure *everyone* tells her that *all* the time."

Or, "The emergency shelter is probably being inundated with volunteers right now. I doubt that there's anything I can do."

When have you seen the bystander effect crop up in your life most recently? Describe the situation in the space below.

If you could go back in time, how would you have responded differently in that situation? What would you have said or done?



DAY 21

THE SISTERHOOD EFFECT

The kind of life I want for you and me both is one catalyzed by compassion that propels us to act instead of just perpetually scrolling through a digital life that is really no life at all. I want us to be people who cultivate compassion and create spaces of belonging for those around us.

But if we're going to get there, we've got some work to do—especially in terms of how we connect with the women around us. It's clear that we'll never lift each other out of the deep valleys we all fall into if we make a habit of comparing, judging, or silently standing by. That kind of life isn't going to cut it if we want to build a world that flourishes for all of us.

So, how are we going to get there? Let's start by investigating a new sociological phenomenon: what I call the *Sisterhood Effect*. You know that wall in your life that looks like an unscalable barricade? Look up; your sisters are at the top, ready to toss you a rope.

When have you been "sistered" recently? Who came to your aid? What did they say or do? How did you feel as a result? What emotions are stoked in you even now, as you replay that scene?

THE POWER OF YOUR PRESENCE

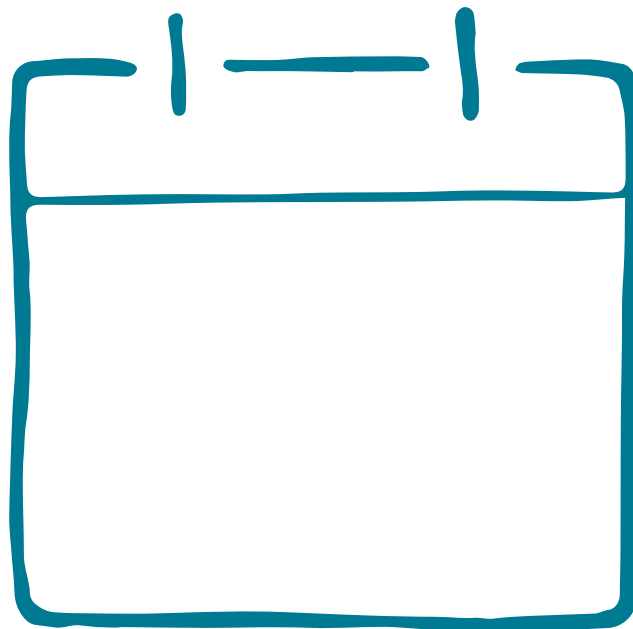
The fact is, each of us is distinctly wired and has unique skills, interests, and *power* to bring to bear on making this world a better place.

For starters, there is unique power in your *presence*.

There is an annual celebration held every year in Austin to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. *Every single year.* But it wasn't until I began meeting with a group of women, spearheaded by my African American friend Tasha, to talk safely and frankly about issues of race in our community that I knew I could attend. I thought that because I was white, I had no business marching in this event. Despite the fact that I have a black son, I still viewed myself as part of the problem; and as a result I disinvited myself from being part of the solution. The day that Tasha invited me to come along was the day I received the permission I sought. And as we marched that day, kids in tow, I realized how deeply my presence matters.

Want to know a secret? *Your presence matters too.*

What is one event you can attend this week—a neighborhood meeting, a mom's night out, a political rally, whatever—that would lend your power to someone in need? Jot it on the calendar below.





DAY 23

THE POWER OF YOUR VOICE

There is also power in your *voice*. A friend of mine went to the local police department to report her friend's abusive husband and in so doing, she used her voice to empower another person. In this case, that friend's life was saved.

Now, it's your turn. Name one way that you can use your voice to speak up for someone who is hurting this week. Write your idea in the comment bubble, below.





THE POWER OF YOUR PURCHASES

There is power in your purchases, as well.

My company, Noonday Collection, has an impact model that is built on this power of purchases; every piece of jewelry sold creates and helps to maintain jobs in vulnerable communities. Personally, I love this model because it subdues my consumptive ways. I love to shop. I love to buy new clothes. And while I don't always buy fair trade, I do believe in voting with our dollars for the way of life we know is best. As long as Noonday prioritizes a long-haul view over cheap price tags and fast fashion, I get to join others in putting the humanity back into industry.

You might buy produce from local farmers.

You might buy coffee from fair-trade growers.

You might buy clothing from ethically sourced labels.


You might keep mom and pop shops afloat in your town by driving past big-box stores.

What is one way you can use your purchasing power for good this week? Note it on the check, below.

1025

DATE _____

PAY TO THE ORDER OF _____ \$

_____ DOLLARS  Security Features Included. Details on Back.

MEMO _____

⑆0000000000⑆ ⑆0000000000⑆ 1025



DAY 25

LOVING WELL OVER THE LONG HAUL

As you can tell, I'm a huge proponent for investing our lives beyond ourselves—our needs, our wants, our wishes, our whims. And yet I am the first to admit that if we're going to set out on a path of lasting and meaningful impact...if we're going to *go scared* over the long haul, then one thing is certain: we've gotta find the time.

You can't give of yourself if there's none of yourself left to give, and you can't respond to the needs you see in the world that stir up your passion—what I call your “why”—if your schedule is already jam-packed.

At the moment, making space for good involves slowing down at least once a week to schedule intentional time when I will stop being productive, stop rushing around, and just sit and think and breathe. Some people call this meditation. Some people call this prayer. I don't care what you call it; I promise you that if you make the time to take a step back and refocus, your life will open up.

When will you carve out time this week to sit and think and breathe? I'm serious here: what is the exact date and time and place? Note it on the schedule at right.

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY



DAY 26

IT'S ONLY A SEASON

In Guatemala, a weaver's most valuable possession is her backstrap loom, a portable weaving board that can be worn on the hips while the weaver goes about her daily life. Some of the most beautiful pieces I've seen have been made on such a device, and yet if you focus on the backside of the woven fabric, all you'll see is a tangled mess of zig-zaggy colors, stray strings, and knots.

It's when you turn it over that you see how those threads have come together to form a breathtaking design. And so it goes with our lives.

You may think this season you're in will last an eternity—and when that season involves dirty diapers, do I ever feel your pain. I spent a few years of adulthood persistently damp from either using baby wipes to blow my nose or from using nursing pads to dam me up. That season is hard. And yet, it's still a season: it's here, and then it's gone.

How would you describe the season you're presently in? What challenges are unique to that season? What do you hope to be able to look back someday and say about how you made it through, about the beautiful design that emerged from the tangled mess of stray strings and knots?

WHEN INTERVENTION IS A MUST

Regardless of the season you're in, may I offer a word of advice? Don't let self-care get away from you. Even go-getters need a break!

These days, I know it's time for a little "me, myself, and I" intervention whenever I covet the job of the person who is foaming my latte. In the not-too-distant past, I happened to be feverishly working on a chapter for this book at a coffee shop around the corner from Noonday's offices, and for a good five minutes, I just stared at the coffee-making team. They were smiling. They were laughing with customers. They were seamlessly filling orders with lightning-fast speed. *Look how much fun they're having*, I thought. *Just think how life-giving that job would be.*

For a split second, I thought about submitting an application, which is when I came to my senses and realized that perhaps I was a teeny bit stressed. While that job may very well have been life-giving and fun, it wasn't mine to do. I shook my head as I slipped behind the wheel of my car to head home, muttering, "Tonight, the laptop stays closed."

What are the warning signs that tell you that you need a break? What caution cones show up on your path?



DAY 28

YOUR GO-TO HAPPINESS HACKS

I don't know what the warning signs are for you, but my encouragement is to pay attention to them. This mission we go-getters have accepted to have global impact can feel heavy at times; we've got to know when to set the burden down.

Which is why I'm faithful to keep my therapy appointments.

And why I show up at boot camp whenever I'm in town.

And why I get regular massages.

And why I practice meditation and prayer.

I'm curious: what habits bring you back to life, when you're feeling worn out and tired? What hacks give you a jolt of happiness? What practices make you feel whole? Note your thoughts below.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

Now, circle the one that you commit to practicing at least one time this week. Remember to take care of yourself. You're the only you that we've got!



DAY 29

COME

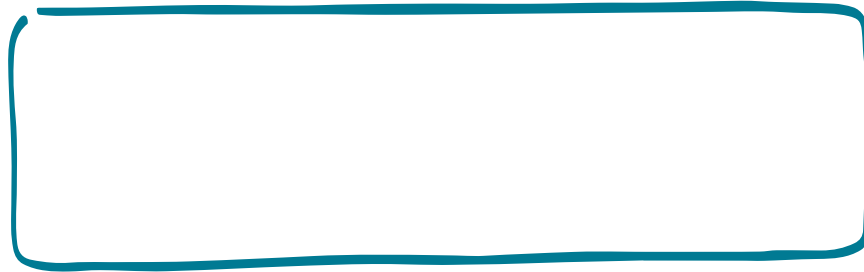
This mission to make our world a far better place than it is today will require more of you than what you believe you have to offer, but can I tell the truth of the situation? It will give you back more than you dreamed. Because as you are faithful to go scared, you'll realize that the life you've been searching for has been here waiting, just beckoning you to come.

And so: *come*.

Come exactly as you are, with your history, your struggles, your fears.
Come with your gifts, your talents, your passions, your pain. Your personality, whatever it is.
Come with your quirks and not-so-perfect ways.
Come with your weakness, and with your strength.

Come, and together, we'll change the world, shining light like the noonday on all that is dark.

The darkness you named way back on day 2? Write it again, here and now:

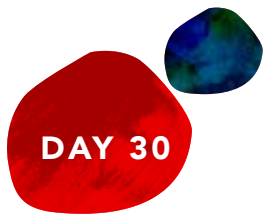


I believe that you are part of the solution, my friend.

Come.

Engage.

Find out what's yours to do.



FLOURISHING WORLD

I'm a dreamer who is forever living in the future instead of the present or past. As such, I spend a fair amount of time thinking about what Noonday will become in the days ahead.

It's as if I can see right into the future, into a reality where Noonday has multiplied in size, but not lost the relational and personal qualities that make it so special. Where we have grown our ambassador community across the country and have invited thousands more hostesses to join us in building a flourishing world by opening their homes for trunk shows. Where we have impacted many times the number of artisans we initially dreamed of reaching, and we have worked hard to improve their lives holistically through work, education, life-skills training, and more. Where we have inspired thousands more women to stand up, step into their stories, and own their worth.

In that reality, we all have linked arms, agreed to go scared, and *set the world ablaze* with brightness and hope.

What about you? How do you describe a world that is flourishing? When you look into the future, what do you see?

i Tina Fey, *Bossypants* (New York: Little Stranger, 2011), 23.

ii <https://money.usnews.com/money/personal-finance/articles/2013/01/02/the-heavy-price-of-losing-weight>