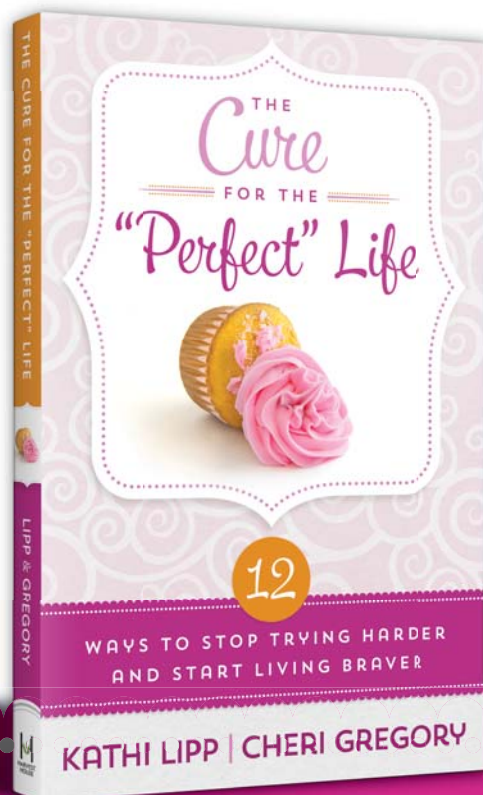


THE DISCUSSION Guide



TO ACCOMPANY
The Cure for the "Perfect" Life

"Perfection isn't Christian it's Just Crazy"

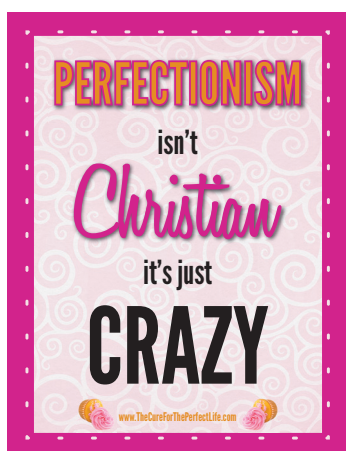


THE Cure FOR THE "Perfect" Life



FREE GIFTS for SMALL GROUP LEADERS to share with their The Cure for the "Perfect" Life Groups. For every 10 women in the group, you'll receive:

10 "Perfectionism Isn't Christian, it's just CRAZY!" magnets



10 "40% Brave is Brave Enough" magnets



10 "My Tiny Act of Rebellion for today is..." Post-It pads



1 set of laminated Braver Living Bible verse cards



1 "Brave" or "Perfect Love" pendant



Just Email me with Your Name, Address and Facebook contact at cheri@cherigregory.com.

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A Note from Kathi & Cheri

WELCOME to the Rebellion against the bullies of Try-Harder Living!

Whether you're using this Discussion Guide for personal reflection and journaling, for conversations with a Bravery Buddy, or for discussions with a small group, we are thrilled you're on this journey with us!

Taking Time for Reflective Journaling

In the Introduction to [*The Cure for the "Perfect" Life*](#), we suggest getting a blank journal to write in while reading through the book. If you're planning to use this Discussion Guide on your own, then you'll definitely want to write your responses in a journal, whether it's a simple spiral notebook, a beautiful bound book, or [*The Braver Living Handbook & Journal*](#) (designed specifically to accompany this Discussion Guide.)



Many women find reflective journaling a rewarding, spiritual practice that helps them to "be still and know" that God is God (and we are not.) If you're part of a small group, journaling can help you process what you've read and think about the discussion questions before your next face-to-face get together.

Finding a Bravery Buddy

Since this book was a joint effort, we encourage you to find yourself a Bravery Buddy to talk with while reading *The Cure for the "Perfect" Life* and working your way through the Discussion Guide. It's invaluable to be able to pick up the phone and say, "I'm making a Braver Living choice right now but it feels reeeeeealy hard!" knowing that the other will say "Bravo!" and offer much-needed support in the midst of our growing pains.

Starting and Leading a Small Group

We aren't experts on starting or leading small groups, but here are some great resources you may find helpful:

[*The Neighborhood Café*](#) – [Amy Lively](#) offers **amazing** resources

["How to Lead a Successful Discussion-Driven Bible Study"](#)

["How to Lead a Good Discussion"](#)

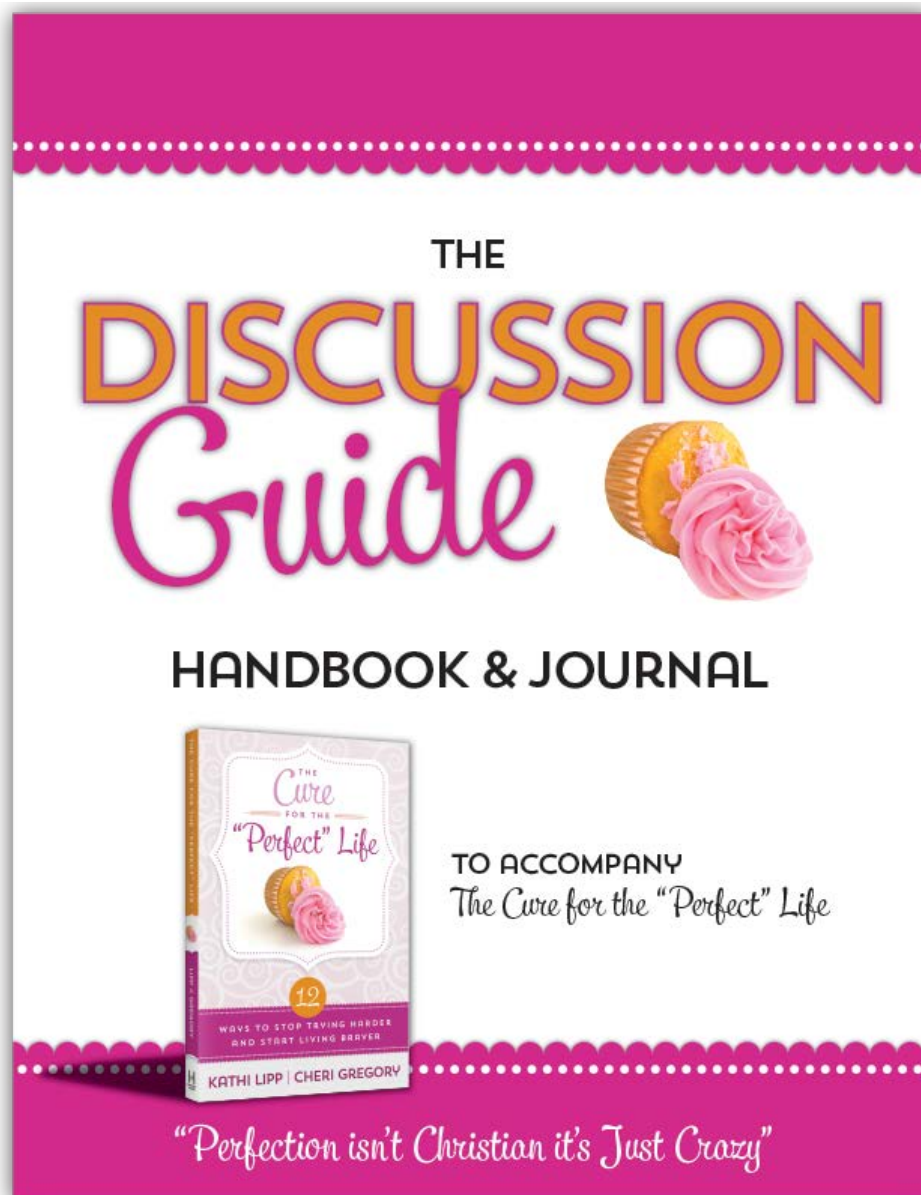
["How to Develop a Discussion Plan that Works"](#)

["Leading a Bible Study"](#)

["You Can Lead a Life-Changing Bible Study"](#)

["How to Lead a Small Group Meeting"](#)





- All [*The Cure for the "Perfect" Life*](#) free downloads/printables in one place.
- All reflection questions from *The CPL Discussion Guide* followed by plenty of blank lines for journaling.
- All "self-tests" from [*The Cure for the "Perfect" Life*](#) for easy printing.

Sign up to receive *The Braver Living Handbook & Journal* when it's complete at <http://eepurl.com/820Vz!>



How to Use This Reflection & Discussion Guide

This Discussion Guide has three main elements for each chapter in the book:

1. Two Paces: Fast Track & Scenic Route

If you're moving quickly through the book, use the **Fast Track** questions. They'll spark some great discussion without requiring a lot of time. If you're taking a more leisurely pace, start with the Fast Track questions and then move to the **Scenic Route** questions.

Of course, as the leader, pick and choose the questions that you feel will best meet the needs of your group.

2. Two Question Types: Problems & Solutions

In both tracks, you'll find *Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions* and *Woo & Wow! Questions*.

When writing *The Cure for the "Perfect" Life*, we figured out that Cheri is naturally drawn to problems. She loves to conquer problems by thoroughly analyzing, dissecting, and fully understanding them. Kathi focuses more on solutions: positive, practical "how-to"s that produce results *now*. So Cheri starts with bad news ("woe"), focuses on what needs to stop ("whoa"), and gets real about the pain ("owww!"). Then Kathi invites you to find a better way ("woo"), offering tons of encouragement as you make progress ("wow!").

Thus, our two types of questions:

- *Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions* are "Cheri questions" that dive deep into a problem.
- *Woo & Wow! Questions* are "Kathi questions" that move toward here-and-now solutions.

As you select the questions that you feel will best meet the needs of your group, we recommend first highlighting needs with one or more *Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions* and then meeting those needs with one or more *Woo & Wow! Questions*.

3. Leader's Notes

We've given you ample space to write down your plans ahead of time, to take notes during discussion, and to reflect on what did/didn't "work." Each **Leader's Notes** page includes this reminder box to help you plan, participate, and process:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



We would **love** to hear from you! Feel free to email us at cheri@cherigregory.com with more discussion questions, insights that came up during conversation/journaling, personal examples, and the like.

Our goal is to update this Discussion Guide frequently, adding new ideas and information, making this an ever-richer resource for you!



We'd Love to Join Your Group!



Videos

We've created five videos of "Bravery Buddy Convos" to accompany *The Cure for the "Perfect" Life* and this Discussion Guide. You'll find them on YouTube and can download them from Dropbox.

Video 1: Chapters 1-4

[YouTube](#)

[Dropbox](#)

Video 2: Chapters 5-8

[YouTube](#)

[Dropbox](#)

Video 3: Chapters 9-12

[YouTube](#)

[Dropbox](#)

Bonus Video A: Conversation with Kathi Pre-Compassion International Trip to Nicaragua

[YouTube](#)

[Dropbox](#)

Bonus Video B: Conversation with Kathi Post-Compassion International Trip to Nicaragua

[YouTube](#)

[Dropbox](#)



Video 4: Chapters 13-16

[YouTube](#)

[Dropbox](#)

Video 5: Chapters 17-20

[YouTube](#)

[Dropbox](#)

Skype



We'd love to join your small group discussion in real time via Skype! eMail us at cheri@cherigregory.com to discuss scheduling.

Facebook



We're both active on Facebook and would be honored to join your small group's private Facebook group. eMail us at cheri@cherigregory.com and find us on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/AuthorKathiLipp and www.Facebook.com/Cheri.Gregory.Author.



*Introduction: How the "Perfect" Life Snuck Up on Us
&
Part 1: Why Trying Harder Only Makes Things Worse*

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which of Kathi's and Cheri's experiences on pages 5-7 resonate most with you?
2. What surprises you about your THL self-test (page 11-12) answers and/or results?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Which of Kathi and Cheri's goals for you (page 8) as you read this book appeals to you the most? Why this one in particular?
2. Reflecting on your THL self-test (pages 11-12) answers, in what areas do you see that God has already been at work in your life?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Do you ever feel like everyone else "gets it" (page 5) but you don't?
2. When have you exhausted yourself trying harder and harder when it didn't matter? What were the results? (page 7)
3. When have you quit trying when it did matter? What were the results? (p. 7)
4. Read Galatians 6:9. How does this reminder speak to you today?
"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."



Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. What's one thing you've been wanting to try that you would finally give a try if you didn't have to worry about who you "should" be or what you "should" do? Why?
2. Imagine your life with an hour of freedom each day. How would you use that hour?
3. Prayerfully ponder who you might invite to be your "Bravery Buddy." Someone local or long distance? Would you perhaps want to start a small group of three, four, or five rather than just two?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-14. Why do we *not* need to keep trying harder and harder and harder and harder?

"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many."

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
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[illegible]

My "Try Harder Living" Self-Test

Strongly Disagree = 5 Disagree = 4 Neutral = 3 Agree = 2 Strongly Agree = 1

1. ___ I'm flexible about how things get done: my way, your way, either way!
2. ___ I am willing to try, fail, and learn from my mistakes.
3. ___ I allow myself to feel big emotions, from anger to sorrow to joy.
4. ___ I know how to appropriately process and express negative emotions.
5. ___ I have plenty of chances for fun, recreation, and celebration each month.
6. ___ I regularly get 7+ hours of sleep per night.
7. ___ I take responsibility for my own feelings and reactions; I expect other people to take responsibility for theirs.
8. ___ I am secure in my identity as a child of God; while I love my family, friends, work, and hobbies, none of them define me.
9. ___ I make a point to keep my home, calendar, and life uncluttered.
10. ___ I am intentional about budgeting and balancing both my time and energy.
11. ___ I ask for help as soon as I need it.
12. ___ I am comfortable declining invitations and requests; I communicate pleasantly and confidently when doing so.

_____ TOTAL SCORE

Understanding Your Score

The ideal range on the Try-Harder Living test is 12-24.

25-36 = mild Try-Harder Living

37-48 = full-blown Try-Harder Living

49-60 = severe Try-Harder Living



Chapter 1

Perfectionism: *"I'm always trying harder to look good enough."*

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. What's the difference between Perfectionism and excellence? (pages 13-14)
2. How has Perfectionism affected your life and/or relationships? (pages 14-18)

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Share an experience in which you worked faithfully toward excellence without going to the extreme of Perfectionism.
2. How do you feel when you have done something with excellence but *not* been bullied by Perfectionism?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which of the survey comments on pages 16-18 resonated with you? Why?
2. On pages 14-15, Cheri shares how she unintentionally and unknowingly intimidated others; Perfectionism alienated her from the very people she wanted to connect with. In what way(s) might this be true of you, too?
3. How can/has Perfectionism hurt your relationship with God?
4. Read Ecclesiastes 7:20. Do you find this comforting or discouraging? Why?
"Indeed, there is no one on earth who is righteous, no one who does what is right and never sins."



Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Brainstorm a list of truths you can remind yourself when the Perfectionism bully shows up with his weapons of anxiety, legalism, pride, judgmentalism, and criticism. Choose one to write down and practice using this week.
2. Think back to a recent situation in which the Perfectionism bully clearly showed up. How did you feel? What were you thinking? How did you behave? Now replay the situation, imagining yourself *not* becoming overly-obsessed with getting the results "just right." Without the Perfectionism bully breathing down your neck, how would you have felt? What would you have thought? How would you have behaved?
3. Think of a question you could ask someone close to you this week in order to hear his/her perspective on Perfectionism. Choose either someone who struggles with it or who observes others struggling with it? What did you gain from that person's perspective?
4. Read Philippians 1:6. What encouragement do these words give you?
"Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
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- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



[illegible]

Chapter 2

People-Pleasing: *"I'm always trying harder to seem nice enough."*

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. How can you tell the difference between People-Pleasing and love? service? obedience to God?
2. How has People-Pleasing affected your life and/or relationships? (pages 22-24)

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. How do you feel when you are truly serving others without crossing the line into People-Pleasing?
2. Share an experience in which you served others without People-Pleasing. How did it make you feel?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which of the survey comments on pages 22-24 most resonated with you? Why?
2. "People-pleasing is not the same thing as love...[but] is a major cause of the erosion of love." (page 19) How have you seen or experienced this to be true?
3. How can/has People-Pleasing hurt your relationship with God?
4. Read Galatians 1:10. How can you know when the People-Pleasing bully has shown up in your heart and motivations? What are the ultimate consequences of letting People-Pleasing bully you around?



"Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ."

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Brainstorm a list of truths you can remind yourself when the People-Pleasing bully shows up to convince you that you *need* other people's approval, affirmation, admiration, and acceptance.
Choose one to write down and practice using this week.
2. Think back to a recent situation in which the People-Pleasing bully clearly showed up. How did you feel? What were you thinking? How did you behave?
Now replay the situation, imagining yourself *not* becoming overly-obsessed with other people's reactions. Without the People-Pleasing bully breathing down your neck, how would you have felt? What would you have thought? How would you have behaved?
3. Think of a question you could ask someone close to you this week in order to hear his/her perspective on People-Pleasing. Choose either someone who struggles with it or who observes others struggling with it? What did you gain from that person's perspective?
4. Read Ephesians 6:7-8. How and who are we to serve? Why?
"Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free."

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
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- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



[illegible]

Chapter 3

Performancism: *"I'm always trying harder to be seen doing enough."*

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. What's the difference between Performancism and a strong work ethic? (pages 25-26)
2. How has Performancism affected your life and/or relationships? (pages 28-30)

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Share an experience in which you accomplished things without being driven by Performancism.
2. How do your feelings differ when you are accomplishing things in a healthy way vs. when you are being bullied by Performancism?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which of the survey comments on pages 28-30 most resonated with you? Why?
2. "Multitasking may work for some tasks. But multitasking kills relationships." (page 27) How have you seen or experienced the truth of these statements?
3. How can/has Performancism hurt your relationship with God?
4. Read Philippians 2:3-4. How might these instructions apply to Performancism?
"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."



Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Brainstorm a list of truths you can remind yourself when the Performancism bully shows up to convince you must get everything done, you can't rest until your to do list is complete, and you don't have time for people or the messes and delays they bring into your life. Choose one to write down and practice using this week.
2. Think back to a recent situation in which the Performancism bully clearly showed up. How did you feel? What were you thinking? How did you behave? Now replay the situation, imagining yourself *not* becoming so obsessed with achievement that you neglected people. Without the Performancism bully breathing down your neck, how would you have felt? What would you have thought? How would you have behaved?
3. Think of a question you could you ask someone close to you this week in order to hear his/her perspective on Performancism. Choose either someone who struggles with it or who observes others struggling with it? What did you gain from that person's perspective?
4. There are many "work hard" verses in the Bible. (See Proverbs 16:3 and Colossians 3:23.) How does the "work" in these verses differ from Performancism?
"Commit your actions to the Lord, and your plans will succeed."

"Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people."

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
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[illegible]

Chapter 4

Procrastination: *"I know I'm not enough, so why try?"*

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. What's the difference between Procrastination and being methodical, careful, and/or reflective?
2. How has Procrastination affected your life and/or relationships?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Share an experience in which you worked on a project slowly, over time, but without the intrusion of Procrastination.
2. How do your feelings differ when you work steadily on a task vs. when Procrastination takes over?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which of the survey comments on pages 34-36 resonated with you? Why?
2. "Over time, we buy what Procrastination is selling: the belief that we can be truly motivated only by fear." (page 32) When have you seen or experienced this truth in action?
3. How can/has Procrastination hurt your relationship with God?
4. Read Proverbs 27:1. What wisdom is offered for dealing with the Procrastination bully?
"Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring."



Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Brainstorm a list of truths you can remind yourself when the Procrastination bully shows up, telling you that you have all the time in the world, today just isn't the right day, and you aren't quite ready (but you soon will be!)
Choose one to write down and practice using this week.
2. Think back to a recent situation in which the Procrastination bully clearly showed up. How did you feel? What were you thinking? How did you behave?
Now replay the situation, imagining yourself *not* falling into the trap of putting things off day after day after day. Without the Procrastination bully breathing down your neck, how would you have felt? What would you have thought? How would you have behaved?
3. Think of a question you could ask someone close to you this week in order to hear his/her perspective on Procrastination. Choose either someone who struggles with it or who observes others struggling with it? What did you gain from that person's perspective?
4. Read Proverbs 12:11. What are the end results when you Procrastinate vs. when you don't?
"A hard worker has plenty of food, but a person who chases fantasies has no sense."

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
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Video #1: A "Bravery Buddy" Convo Re: Chapters 1-4

(Note: You'll find video links to YouTube and Dropbox on pgs. 11-12)

00:00 Title Slides

00:10 Introduction by Cheri

03:03 Procrastination

Cheri

Needed to take the dog and cats to the vet

This IS Procrastination! Not just "too busy"

Chose not to beat myself up -- has never helped. EVER.

Is there something I'm missing? Is there something getting in the way -- other than busy-ness and the fact that I hate this chore?

Ah-HA! Moment: Last vet experience ended badly: I feel responsibility, regret, and remorse. My avoidance of the vet was fear-based: I don't want to "kill" any more cats or devastate any more family members!

Kathi

"Logically, Cheri, you did NOT kill your cat."

Don't we all have this "weird thing" that's SO HARD?

For Kathi, it's phone calls

What kind of conversation did Cheri have with herself once she realized it was fear?

Cheri

"Oh! *This* is what it's about!"

Started to tear up -- "Oh, that's dumb!" -- no, it's not dumb. I'm still grieving. Kleenex and five minutes.

Realizing my thinking has been dominated by fear.

[Note: As of the videotaping, the dog and both cats were completely up-to-date, even though it required the hassle of four separate vet visits!]



Kathi

So much of Procrastination is not wanting to feel my feelings. I keep doing other things to keep from feeling my feelings

Recent conversation with friend: "30 seconds in any direction from crying." It just takes the right event to happen -- it could be anything

My mom's cat has gone missing, so now I'm procrastinating calling her, because of the disappointment of losing a cat so soon after loss of husband / father

Need to let her feel her feelings, I need to feel my feelings -- I miss Sammy, too!

So much of Procrastination is "I don't want to go through this set of feelings again, so I'm just going to STOP."

07:14 Performancism

Kathi

My biggest bully is People-Pleasing, but Performancism has taken the biggest hit since we wrote the book

I've had 2 parents die -- Roger's step-mom killed in car accident on Easter ... Kathi's father passed away in September

Most of my anxiety and craziness is related to *not* saying no to people and Performancism.

In this one year -- I'm ashamed to say this out loud -- I've had 6 book deadlines this calendar year.

Not brave, not smart, just stupid! I've been walking around tense all the time.

Something in my brain says, "If I say no, I'll never have this opportunity again ... nobody will ever want to work with me again ... nobody will ever want to hear anything I have to say.

I cried for three days after last deadline -- might be a sign? (Yes, my father had just died, but there was still such a strong *relief* at finally being DONE!)

Even though the deadline coincided with death of dad, there was "such a different kind of lightness in my life."



Knowing that deadline was past and I wasn't committed to anything else...I can't even tell you. It was so profound, it was in some ways equaling the death of my dad.

Cheri

To have that weight off? That sense of responsibility off?

Kathi

I was the one who needed to pick up and take on the memorial service ... it had a definite start and finish ... done well to honor my mother and father's memory ... then go back to some normal things in my life.

I have already said "no" to a slew of things for the coming year that I would never have even given a second thought

[Note: Kathi FELT the consequences, RECOGNIZED how bad they were, and CHANGED. She did NOT tell herself "it wasn't so bad" or "next time it'll be better"!]

Anything good **in excess** can be detrimental!

I made commitments looking at the future thinking everything was going to work out...magical thinking ...

This year has done a number on me, and I'm in recovery from all that.

Cheri

Do you primarily see yourself as an author?

Kathi

No. I enjoy having written books. I enjoy short writing assignments. The idea of having a book...If you told me I had a book deadline, I'd go into a corner and rock back and forth.

It's very hard for me.

Some people don't want to hear that from me. They just want to hear me recognize how blessed I am, and I get that.

Anything good in excess is hard! Disney World last year -- fun! 8 days? Too long!!!!



I need to be out there speaking more.

Cheri

You added something this year, but it's not been a burden.

Kathi

The podcast -- total fun. Writing? No. I'm learning that I haven't managed my writing well...now learning how to do it in ways that aren't so hard. And doing less.

12:41 People-Pleasing

Cheri

All the "no" you're saying. How is that going? How are you making those decisions? In the past, you've wanted people to like you, you've not wanted to disappoint anyone. How's it going, pulling back from People-Pleasing?

Kathi

Well, nobody's died. Really hard boundaries in work and personal life. Asked my 24-year-old son to move out. Hard process for everybody ... a lot of lead-up.

I didn't know the outcome when we said, "We need you to move out." Also for him -- he needed to take some grown-up steps. We were there to support him, but we couldn't do them for him.

Those "no"s were hard. But a healthy no is a beautiful thing. Most of my "yes"es are healthy. But just one unhealthy "yes" can poison everything!

I don't know what the outcome is going to be, but I know that the "no" is correct. I know that this is the right thing to do.

I know that I'm missing out on opportunities.

Registered for Storyline, but needed to back out. Hardest part was telling my assistant, Kim, that I wasn't going after all. But as it turned out, Kim's daughter had a performance that same weekend but Kim felt she couldn't tell Kathi she didn't want to go because Kathi had paid for so much already!



Cheri

So you engaged in a "difficult conversation"...

Kathi

My healthy "no" released her to have a healthy "no"

It was so good. It gives me more bravery. I have to write these down to remember them. Otherwise, I think, "Every time I say no to somebody, it's the worst thing that's ever happened to them!" And the truth is, no, sometimes it's a really good thing! But we can't always see it at the moment.

16:27 Perfectionism

Cheri

Last weekend's women's retreat, I was so sick as a result of 10 planes in 10 days (need to re-evaluate my travel calendar in the future!)

Lost my voice and didn't know for sure what to do. Had faith, based on prior experience, that when I got up to speak God would provide my voice if that's where He wanted me.

Main consideration for canceling = pride ... I wanted to "look good" and "sound good."

All the women had been praying, so grateful, praying for strength -- I tend to feel that I'm the speaker, so it's all on me! Turns out everything we do is a team effort.

Kathi

They were carrying you along.

Cheri

Yes! We don't recognize that we have a team. They were helping me thru their prayers even though I hadn't asked I didn't know them.

I did something I wouldn't have done two years ago -- I was honest. "We're going to do a disaster drill in case I have a coughing fit." (Didn't want them staring at me or leaping to the stage to do the Heimlich maneuver.) Turn and talk to each other about the last brilliant point I made.

It set the tone for the weekend. I knew I wasn't going to be perfect, and they knew it wasn't going to be perfect, and none of us had to pretend.



Kathi

You didn't go in with the "suck it up, Buttercup" mentality. Which puts them on edge, puts you on edge.

19:53 Wrap-Up

Kathi

The question I'd want to discuss is, "Which of these is the one you've been struggling with the most lately?"

Older audiences, the more they struggle with Perfectionism. Or that they have and are starting to gain some ground.

When I start to talk about Procrastination and People-Pleasing *everyone* is all over those ... but they don't recognize Perfectionism in them.

Which of the four have you recently struggled with?

Different phases ... just had a baby, perfectionism and people-pleasing

Tough adjustment ... procrastination

Cheri

Being sick, I'm struggling with Procrastination because it should all be done by now! If I hadn't been sick, I would have gotten it all done, so it's unfair that I still have to do it. Because it's not my fault that I got sick!

Kathi

So that's a *bitter* Procrastination!



Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which "P bully" have you been struggling with the most lately?
2. Does your primary "P bully" seem to be related to your season of life?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. What's a recent victory you've had over one of the "P bullies"?
2. How will recognizing the "P bullies" help you in the everyday ordinaries of your life?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Cheri recognized that she'd been procrastinating taking her pets to the vet due to fear. Kathi pointed out that so much of procrastination is not wanting to feel certain emotions: in Cheri's case, it was the lingering grief and guilt over the loss of a cat the previous year.

What have you been putting off because of fear? Or because you don't want to feel certain emotions? What feelings are you avoiding?

2. Kathi talked about allowing too many book deadlines in the same year. The intensity of her relief when they were all done signaled that this had been a source of far too much stress for her. "Anything good **in excess** can be detrimental!" she said.

Looking at your calendar, what is causing you to be tense all the time? What have you said "yes" to because you're afraid of missing out on such great opportunities? What have you committed to that you shouldn't have?

3. Kathi talked about asking her adult son to move out, both for her and her husband's sake, as well as for her son's sake, even though she didn't know if the end result would be positive. She also told of how her "no" allowed her assistant, Kim, to give an honest "no," too.

Is there a "no" that you've been avoiding that might be best for you and the person you need to say it to (even if there's a transition time of discomfort)? Is there a "no" you've been afraid



to say because you don't to disappoint someone...but you really haven't given him or her the opportunity to dialogue with you about the situation?

4. Cheri talked about having the freedom to be honest with a retreat audience that had been praying for her health. She even gave them instructions for what to do in case she had a coughing fit. Kathi pointed out that she did not take the typical "Suck it up, Buttercup!" approach, which actually makes audiences more nervous.

What's a situation in your life in which you've been taking the "Suck it up, Buttercup!" approach? How might you be making others more uncomfortable than if you were more honest? How might you be preventing others from blessing you with their support?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. What's one small step forward you can take toward overcoming a current fear that is causing you to procrastinate?
2. What's one small way you can scale back from over commitment?
3. What's one small "no" you can say for the benefit of another as well as yourself?
4. What's one small truth you can tell to put others at ease and elicit their support?

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



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Part 2:

How to Trade Try-Harder Living for Braver Living

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which of the women described on pages 37-38 do you recognize in your life? In the mirror?
2. Which of the four "P bullies" do you feel is your primary bully? Why?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Go through the list of women on pages 37-38 together, and verbally (or in writing) revise the descriptions so that the negatives are changed to positives. For example, *"Stressed-out, overwhelmed women who are trying too hard to do too much"* could become, *"Relaxed, confident women who set and live within healthy boundaries."*

How does it feel to hear these transformations? Do you believe they are possible? Would you like to experience such transformation yourself?

2. Kathi and Cheri say that Perfectionism, People-Pleasing, Performanicsm, and Procrastination aren't just "harmless, lovable quirks" but, rather, "bullies with a death wish for each one of us." How might this actually be good news?

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
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Chapter 5

Fear: *The Main Force of Try-Harder Living*

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. What did you learn about yourself and your level of integrity from the Reflecting on Values quiz (pages 43-44)?
2. "Fear is at the heart of Try-Harder Living." Which fear(s) on pages 45-46 do you identify with?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. In what areas of life do your stated values definitely match your lived-out values?
2. Give an example of a fear that used to cause you to fight, flee, or freeze but that no longer has this kind of power over you. What made the difference?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Cheri says, "I had two mutually exclusive identities: the ideal one in my head and the real one I was living day to day. I didn't see how different they were." (pages 43-44) In what area(s) of your life does your everyday "real" fall short of your "ideal"?
2. Brainstorm a list of specific fears. Feel free to start with pages 45-46, but aim to move beyond these and develop a list that's unique to you/your group. Don't worry if they sound silly or childish or far-fetched.
Brene Brown says, "Shame thrives on secret-keeping. That's why it loves perfectionists; we're so easy to keep quiet." Getting these fears out in the open is the first step toward rendering them impotent.
3. Take a good look at your life: what evidences of fear do you see? Drawers of make-up for fear of looking ugly? A closet crammed with unworn clothes for fear of being judged? A house or garage full of "stuff" for fear of not having "enough"?



The goal of this is not to become overwhelmed by guilt or shame...just to notice. Really see the consequences of having the "P bullies" in your life.

4. Read Isaiah 41:10. What commands does God give? What promises does He make to accompany the commands?
Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Choose just one area of your life in which your stated values are different from your lived-out values. If you feel comfortable, share this with your Bravery Buddy and/or your small group. Pray for specific conviction and openness to God's leading in this area.
2. Brainstorm strategies you have used to successfully overcome fear in the past. Again, nothing is off limits. Write down every idea, no matter how silly it seems. What's one strategy you're willing to try this week when the "P bullies" show up with their weapons full of fear?
3. One simple weapon against fear is laughter. Choose some evidence(s) of fear in your life that you've noticed and make a joke out of it. Not a viscous self-slamming joke, but a quip that you and others can laugh at. (For example, I joke about making furniture out of my book collection—stack them up, and they become end tables!) Your goal isn't to minimize the truth about the impact the "P bullies" have had in your life; instead, your goal is to minimize the power of fear via laughter.
4. Read Romans 7:15-25. As you get honest about the areas of your life in which your stated values do not match your lived-out values, how can these verses offer you hope? Who *can* and *will* deliver you from bondage to Try-Harder Living?
"I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!



- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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Chapter 6

Love: *The Core Choice of Braver Living*

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. How are loving God and loving ourselves related? (pages 51-52)
2. How would you rate your level of peace? (pages 53-54)

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Describe someone you know who truly loves God. How can you tell?
2. Describe someone you know who is full of peace and contentment. What are they like? How can you tell that they have peace and contentment?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Respond to this statement: "Braver Living is all about heart: fully experiencing God's heart of love for you and responding by loving God with all your heart." (page 50)
2. Why is it not okay to hate on ourselves?
3. What kind(s) of person(people) do you have the hardest time loving? When you're with these people, how do you naturally react?
4. Read 1 John 4:19-21. How important is it to God that we love others?
"We love because he first loved us. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister."



Woo & Wow! Questions:

What does it mean to truly love God? What does it look like in the everyday ordinaries of life?

1. Brainstorm examples of the self-slamming that we say to ourselves. Choose one to prayerfully eliminate this week.
(Note: New brain research confirms that it is *vital* for us to stop verbally self-abusing ourselves, both for our own emotional/spiritual health and for our relational health.)
2. Consider reporting back and choosing a new self-slam to eliminate each week *not* for competition but for gentle, loving accountability.
3. Think of a hard-to-love person in your life. What are three ways you can demonstrate love to this person this week? *Regardless* of his or her response (or lack thereof!)?
4. Read 1 John 4:7-12. How do we experience God's love?
"Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us."

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



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Chapter 7

Take the First Brave Step

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. What's your reaction to the Finding Stated Values checklist? (pages 55-58)
2. How can wanting to do everything be a form of greed? (pages 60-62)

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Which one element of "A New Vision" (pages 58-60) appeals to you the most? Why?
2. "Shame is what got me into this mess in the first place. Grace is getting me out." (page 61)
Think of a current "mess" that shame got you into. How will it feel as grace gets you out?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Discuss the "Finding Stated Values" statements for which anyone wrote an "F" for "Fear." Give examples from real life. What kind of fear is driving these choices?

(Note: You might go section by section: "I say yes because..." then "I focus on details because..." then "I get involved in new projects because..." then "I put things off until later because..." and then "I take on new commitments before...")
2. Pick one area of "A New Vision" for which you have circled "W" but not "D." Take turns discussing why you want to go from W to D and what is keeping you from doing so now.
3. Discuss what the word "rebel" means to you. (**Note:** It's both a verb and a noun!) What are some of the negative connotations? positive connotations?
4. Read Romans 12:2. What kind of "rebel" does God ask you to be?



"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Together, read through the "A New Vision" statements aloud, one by one. After each one, pause to imagine and discuss what you will feel like as these become true for you.

(Note: This will take time, but it's worth it. You are casting a vision for change. Many women have never seen healthy habits modeled, so some of these will be entirely new concepts!)

2. Ask how you can pray for each other's "A New Vision" W-to-D desire(s). This is not a time to tell each other how to change or offer "fix it" tips or suggestions. This is a time to hear each group member's heart's desire and hear the words she'd like to have prayed over and for her in upcoming weeks.
3. If you're ready to stand up against Perfectionism, People-Pleasing, Performancism, and Procrastination—against Try Harder Living—then you are a part of the Braver Living Rebellion. How does it feel to be *this* kind of rebel? How might your rebelling help someone else become brave enough to rebel, too?
4. Read Micah 6:8. Compared to the myriad demands of Try-Harder Living, what does God ask of us?
*He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.
 And what does the Lord require of you?
 To act justly and to love mercy
 and to walk humbly with your God.*

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
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- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



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Chapter 7

Take the First Brave Step

My Stated Values vs. Lived Values Self-Test

As you read through this values list, circle “W” for anything you say with your words that you value and “L” for anything that your life consistently demonstrates that you value:

1. W L Using my abilities
2. W L Taking risks
3. W L Being a life-long learner
4. W L Treating people with respect and kindness
5. W L Having fun
6. W L Participating in hobbies and recreation
7. W L Staying healthy
8. W L Acting with personal integrity
9. W L Living in the present
10. W L Making a difference
11. W L Reaching goals
12. W L Experiencing career satisfaction
13. W L Being a good steward what God has given me
14. W L Caring for the environment
15. W L Establishing financial security
16. W L Living a balanced life
17. W L Spending time with family
18. W L Enjoying intimacy with my spouse
19. W L Building a strong marriage
20. W L Loving God
21. W L Being a volunteer/participating in community service
22. W L Nesting and creating a home
23. W L Attending church
24. W L Reading God’s Word
25. W L Being a good friend and having close friends

In the areas for which you circled “W” and “L,” your stated values match your lived-out actions. You have integrity in these areas. The areas which you only circled one or the other are likely areas of conflict, stress or anxiety for you.



Chapter 7

Take the First Brave Step

My Reality Check

Make a list of

1. Five recent commitments you said “yes” to and why

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

2. Five recent projects you started/joined and why

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

3. Five detailed things you did

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

4. Five recent tasks you postponed

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____



With the above lists in mind, reflectively answer these questions. Be honest about whether you've been motivated by the force of fear or the choice to love.

I say "yes" because:

- ___ I can't say "no."
- ___ I want to avoid conflict.
- ___ I feel guilty if I say "no."
- ___ I generally find a way to get out of it later.
- ___ I'm afraid someone will ask me "why" if I say no.
- ___ they need someone.

I focus on details because:

- ___ there's no such thing as an insignificant detail.
- ___ nobody else seems to care about them.
- ___ I hate looking incompetent.
- ___ I'm terrified of making mistakes and/or failing.
- ___ they distract me from dealing with the "big picture" issues in my life.
- ___ I *have* to. I can't not.

I get involved in new projects because

- ___ it makes me feel good to join or start something new.
- ___ I love the sense of momentum.
- ___ I like to bury myself in busyness.
- ___ I'm a get-it-done kinda gal.
- ___ I hate "doing nothing."
- ___ I'm more comfortable as a "human doing" than a "human being."

I put things off until later because:

- ___ I prefer immediate gratification, something that will give me a quick reward now.
- ___ I get caught up in the paralysis of analysis.
- ___ sometimes I really don't care if they get done or not.
- ___ the task seems so huge that I have no clue how to approach it.
- ___ I'm not the kind of person who asks for help. Ever.
- ___ I get stalled out partway through a project and can't get going again.

I take on new commitments before:

- ___ praying for guidance.
- ___ seeking input from the stakeholders in my life.
- ___ evaluating my time and energy available prior to, during, and after the commitment.
- ___ asking questions to make sure I understand what I'm agreeing to
- ___ discussing contingencies for changes in the project and/or my life
- ___ defining boundaries for what I will and will not do (i.e. saying "yes" to whatever they imagine I've said yes to!).



Chapter 7

Take the First Brave Step

My Braver Living Self-Test

Go through these statements, circling “D” for those you already do and “W” for those you want to do.

I say “yes” when:

- D W I sense God calling me.
- D W I can do so honestly.
- D W I really want to be a part of it.
- D W I’m ready to commit all the way to the entire process.
- D W I have thought through the reasons why I can and will.
- D W I recognize that I am needed.

I focus on details when:

- D W they’ll make an important difference.
- D W God will be glorified.
- D W quality will benefit everyone.
- D W they’ll help me learn and grow.
- D W I’m being honest about dealing with “big picture” issues.
- D W I choose to.

I get involved in a new project when:

- D W I’ve finished my previous projects.
- D W I’ve had enough rest since finishing my last one.
- D W I’m sure I’m not using it as an escape from my problems.
- D W I’m clear that it’s worth doing.
- D W It’s a choice, not a compulsion.
- D W my unique contribution will make a difference.

I postpone taking action when:

- D W I sense a check in my spirit.
- D W I realize that I might be disguising meddling as “helping.”
- D W I need time to reflect before reacting/responding.
- D W other steps need to come first (prayer, discernment, planning, etc.)
- D W I need to seek counsel and/or ask for help.
- D W I need more information to make a wise choice.



I take on a new commitment *only after*:

- D W praying for guidance and receiving clear direction.
- D W seeking input from the stakeholders in my life and having them all on board.
- D W determining that I have enough time and energy prior to, during, and after t
this commitment to devote to it and everything else I'm already committed to.
- D W asking enough questions to be certain that I fully understand what I'm agreeing to
- D W including contingencies so that if there are changes to the project and/or in my life, my
agreement may change as well
- D W setting clear boundaries regarding what I am and am not committing in terms of time,
energy, finances, and other resources

These are just some of the choices that characterize Braver Living. So celebrate your Ds and get ready to make progress on those Ws!



Chapter 8

What Type of Rebel Are You?

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. What's one personality type weakness you struggle with yourself?
2. What's one personality type weakness you find particularly challenging in others?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. What do you find most rewarding about your own personality type(s)?
2. How might understanding your loved ones' personality types help strengthen and deepen your relationships?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. What circumstances push you toward the P-bully associated with your rebel type?
2. Think of a recent time when you found yourself fixated on someone else's personality type liabilities rather than assets. What caused such tunnel vision?
3. How have you seen "masking" at work either in your own life or the life of someone you're close to? What are the consequences of "wearing glasses" that aren't your own?

(Note: One evidence of potential "masking" is test results that show opposing personality types: Expressive + Analytic or Driving + Amiable. In many cases, the "mask" can be identified by an over-abundance of weaknesses and lack of natural strengths.

However, it is crucial that the presence of "masking" be a matter of self-discovery. No one should tell another person, "I think you're masking." Such a confrontation, regardless of good intentions, is likely to make her uncomfortable, defensive, and even ashamed.



If someone in the group who has self-identified her own "masking" feels comfortable sharing her own experience, this can be a beautiful way to explore the topic. But never force anyone to face truths she's not ready for. Trust the Holy Spirit to lead—this is very sensitive, very holy ground.)

4. Read Ephesians 2:8-10. How do these verses address the erroneous idea that some personality types are "better" than others? How can they help you move from fear to love when you find yourself wishing you had a different rebel "type"? How can they help you move from fear to love when you wish someone else was a different "type" of rebel?

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. What personality type liability are you becoming aware of for the first time or for how serious an obstacle it can become? What asset are you seeing for the first time or realizing how valuable it can be? (pages 69-75)
2. How can recognizing the various assets and liabilities of your personality help you give yourself more grace?
3. How can knowing your rebel type help you make set and maintain healthy boundaries?
4. Read Jeremiah 31:3b. Imagine going throughout your day looking at every person you meet and mentally rehearsing these words about them. What if you started each face-to-face encounter by seeing that individual as someone loved by God with an everlasting love and drawn toward God with His unfailing kindness? How might this change your thoughts, your feelings, and your behaviors toward each individual you encounter? How about starting with the gal in the mirror?

*"I have loved you with an everlasting love;
I have drawn you with unfailing kindness..."*

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



[illegible]

Chapter 8

What Type of Rebel Are You?

What's My Rebel Type?

(To take the online version, head to <http://www.TheCureForThePerfectLife.com/rebel-quiz.php>)

For each scenario, circle the one response that is most true for you. If two are equally true, circle them both.

1. *In childhood photos, I*

- E) am always smiling and posing.
- AN) am sitting up straight with a serious look on my face.
- D) have an “Are we done yet?” look that conveys what an interruption the photo shoot was to my plans.
- AM) slouched, leaned, laid all the way down, or hid behind someone/something.

2. *When board games come out at a party, I*

- E) want to play and be part of the group.
- AN) know, follow, and enforce the rules.
- D) play to win.
- AM) enjoy watching others play.

3. *When it comes to a dreaded project or chore, I*

- E) try to turn it into a game.
- AN) like figuring out exactly what needs to be done and doing it all correctly.
- D) get a thrill from checking it off as yet another item “done” on my to-do list.
- AM) often dink around until it’s too late or someone else has already done it.

4. *When there’s a sudden change of plans, I*

- E) may be devastated (if the change makes me feel disappointed) or elated (if the change makes me feel anticipation).
- AN) will be distressed because what I’d counted on happening is not happening and may attempt to reverse the change and make the original plan happen after all.
- D) react in frustration, even anger, to the loss of control.
- AM) patiently roll with it—“It is what it is.”



5. ***If I had a day of free time, I would love to***
 - E) get together with friends and family for a spontaneous party.
 - AN) reorganize a closet, a room, the garage, or the entire house.
 - D) start and/or finish a new project.
 - AM) “chillax.”

6. ***When developing a relationship with a new boss (or other authority figure), I***
 - E) try to get to know him and make him laugh.
 - AN) analyze his expectations and strive to meet them.
 - D) challenge him, testing his right to be in charge.
 - AM) try not to attract any attention for the wrong reason.

7. ***When it comes to my clothing choices, I am drawn to***
 - E) eye-catching colors and prints.
 - AN) coordinated outfits in subdued hues.
 - D) functionality.
 - AM) comfort.

8. ***If my flight were to be delayed by five hours, I would want to***
 - E) talk to all the interesting people hanging out in the airport with me.
 - AN) catch up on my reading.
 - D) make progress on a project via my laptop and cell phone.
 - AM) find a quiet place to catch a nap.

9. ***If a stranger were to watch me for a week, she would conclude that I highly value***
 - E) playing.
 - AN) organizing.
 - D) doing.
 - AM) resting.

10. ***I learn best by***
 - E) talking, active discussion, debate.
 - AN) seeing, visualization, diagrams.
 - D) listening, repeating aloud, hearing audiobooks/videos/podcasts.
 - AM) getting hands-on, making a model, demonstrating a process.



11. *If I were to enter a competition and do poorly, the worst part of the entire experience for me would be*

- E) disappointing others; not giving them something to cheer about.
- AN) making mistakes; trying to figure out what I'd done wrong.
- D) not being #1.
- AM) all the stress of the entire experience.

12. *When learning a new skill, the thing that upsets me the most is*

- E) corrections.
- AN) illogical instructions.
- D) failure to progress rapidly.
- AM) complexity.

13. *The worst part about being sick for me is*

- E) being isolated from people.
- AN) the germs, messes, and medications.
- D) the to-do list that's not getting done.
- AM) not feeling well enough to actually enjoy the R&R.

14. *Behind my back, I'm pretty sure people say that I'm too*

- E) talkative.
- AN) obsessive-compulsive.
- D) bossy.
- AM) lazy.

15. *In school, my response to a group assignment was typically*

- E) euphoria that I could receive class credit for socializing.
- AN) resignation that I would be the one to make sure the finished product was good enough to turn in.
- D) determination to make sure everyone did his/her part rather than just getting a free ride on my efforts.
- AM) satisfaction that there were plenty of other people in the group to make sure it got done (and usually at least one of them was far more invested than I was).

16. *I consider someone a bad driver if he*

- E) honks at me or makes a rude gesture.
- AN) doesn't follow the rules of the road, thus endangering the safety of others.
- D) drives slowly in front of me rather than pulling over to let me pass.
- AM) causes an accident.



17. *I am likely to find it difficult to respect an authority figure who is*

- E) critical.
- AN) late.
- D) incompetent.
- AM) insensitive.

18. *My biggest time management issue is*

- E) optimism: I act as if everything will magically work out (and, if not, who cares if I'm a little late?).
- AN) deciding a project is "done enough": I get so caught up in little details that projects often remain unfinished.
- D) energy management: I start too many projects and try to do them all simultaneously.
- AM) breaking a large project into smaller steps: I focus on the expected end result and get so intimidated that I put it off, often until it's far too late to actually do it at all, let alone well.

19. *An important contribution I make to my friendships and to my family is demonstrating how to*

- E) really enjoy life.
- AN) care about quality.
- D) get things done.
- AM) live at peace.

20. *If our family were to plan a trip together, they would rely on me for _____ (but then...)*

- E) spontaneous enthusiasm and tons of excitement (but then I might forget to pack half the necessities).
- AN) alphabetized checklists for packing (but then I might become stressed from double-checking all the pre-travel details).
- D) leadership in setting concrete goals for the trip: where to go, what to see, how long to stay (but then I might tire everyone else out with a demanding daily agenda).
- AM) a calm and easygoing presence, with a bit of dry humor that breaks any tension (but then I might dig in my heels right at the worst possible moment).

21. *Others would describe my walk as*

- E) strutting.
- AN) pacing.
- D) striding.
- AM) sauntering.



22. *When checking in to a hotel, I*

- E) tell the person behind the counter all about why I've come to town and ask for restaurant recommendations.
- AN) ask for a room that's away from traffic and noise.
- D) pray for no line and quick service.
- AM) hope the bed is comfortable.

23. *Of the following, the one I find most distressing is*

- E) rejection.
- AN) chaos.
- D) powerlessness.
- AM) disharmony.

24. *If I were to asked to help plan a friend's birthday party, I'd want to*

- E) welcome guests as they arrive and get them involved in mixer games.
- AN) make sure the invitations are accurate and include a map.
- D) order the food and decorations.
- AM) show up and help however.

25. *When my plans don't turn out the way I'd expected, I'm likely to respond*

- E) with disappointment shortly followed by a better new plan.
- AN) with days of let-down and wondering why this always happens to me.
- D) by blaming whoever messed up my plan.
- AM) by making fewer plans.

Now, add up your totals:

- (E) Expressive = _____
- (AN) Analytical = _____
- (D) Driving = _____
- (AM) Amiable = _____

Your highest score correlates with your dominant personality type, and your next highest score indicates your secondary type.

(To take the online version, head to <http://www.TheCureForThePerfectLife.com/rebel-quiz.php>)



Video #2: A "Bravery Buddy" Convo Re: Chapters 5-8

(Note: You'll find video links to YouTube and Dropbox on pgs. 11-12)

00:00 Title Slide(s)

00:10 Fear & Love

Cheri

Last weekend, right before leaving for retreat (I was sick) got into a "misunderstanding" with Daniel.

Daniel volunteered to cover my one class. I agreed to just 10 minutes: proctor the quiz and go. He said he was going to stay the whole 50 minutes.

I was like a bulldog -- I clamped on and said things like, "I wouldn't have agreed to this..." and "This is why I never ask for help..."

Daniel: "Why do you never accept what I give you -- why is nothing ever good enough?"
But I was relentless.

Crowning glory: "Maybe your control issues are worse than you think they are!" And Saturday night's message? "Trust creates connection or control."

While driving, I practiced self-soothing rather than escalating my upset. "Maybe your control issues are worse than you think they are!" kept echoing in my mind

I tried to be prayerful: Is there something here I need to be convicted of? What bothered me was my own stubbornness.

Control comes down to FEAR -- if things don't go my way, then....!!!!
THE WORLD WILL END!

Finally understood my fear: we lost a beloved pastor/teacher/colleague two years ago, very suddenly. I've been terrified that something's going to happen to Daniel due to overwork. He wears many hats as a pastor, a teacher, etc.

Without being conscious of it, I've committed to needing as little as possible, to taking up as little of his time as possible, to demand as little as possible, to make sure I'm not the one that pushes him over

My tenacity of insisting 10 minutes only -- not a full 50 minutes -- was about my desire to **guarantee** that I'm not going to lose him ... that nothing's going to happen to him.



Kathi

It's all fear

Cheri

I'm going to lose him because I'm going to drive him crazy! 40 extra minutes in my classroom? Probably not gonna be the death of him.

I was sobered as I reflected on our confrontation. Here I am, telling him what to do even tho he's a grown adult who can make his own choices ...

I could have said ... "Thank you!"

Kathi --

Isn't it funny ... we think we're acting out of love ...

I love you, so I'm trying to protect you = I fear for you, so I'm going to control you.

Fear is the thing that keeps us bound to Perfectionism, but love is the antidote

What would have been truly loving would have been, "Thank you. I appreciate you."

Cheri

I did talk with him after the retreat. Not trying to make an excuse, but to share what I'd learned from that episode and express my actual concerns.

Kathi

Fear drives us to be codependent.

Jake -- our living example!--is a freaky dog with a lot of fears. He hates it when people are upset. We have to fake being happy around him ALL THE TIME.

Our kids do this for us. We do this for our kids.

It's a form of control: "I'm putting on a face for you, so you have to behave -- you have to be okay." It's a scary way to live when you do it for too long, because you don't know what's true any more, what's reality.



Drilling down to recognize fear and realize I want to respond with love.

07:01 Taking the First Brave Steps

Pg. 59 -- new vision -- whole list of statements ... W for what we WANT to do, D for what we find ourselves DOING

Cheri

I'm in the midst of trying to be conscious of God leading right now: "I say yes when I'm ready to commit all the way to the *entire process*."

I'm a starter!

Kathi

Starting's fun!

Cheri

My Strengths Finder = motivator. Finisher? Detail? Responsibility? Not so much.

Kathi

Starting has no obstacles, no limits. It's all potential and possibilities and lollipops and unicorns. Finishing is hard!

Cheri

True confession: I am about 2 years behind on my thank you notes. My mother raised me better. Kathi, you modeled this – you had thank you notes at your father's memorial service! Committed to the ENTIRE process!

I tried it -- took them, had them with me, but didn't write them.

Now, when a new request comes in, I don't respond until I've written a current Thank You and one on my old list.



Kathi

Like a reward. I bet the people who get the past ones are just delighted.

Cheri

Sent one that was about a month late ... so much I wanted to say ... we don't always get feedback, but every now and then we do. "As God's timing always is, the timing was perfect."

That gave me motivation and reminded me that it's not just, "They like me! Somebody new wants me!"

The people I've been with value me, and I can show them that I value the experience they gave me. Reciprocal blessings!

Kathi

We want to be people of integrity. It's more than just wanting; it's actually doing it. There's Procrastination; sometimes Thank you notes are hard for me -- especially to a former teacher. I'm dyslexic. Spelling isn't my strong suit. I let perfectionism get in the way.

"I get involved in new projects when..." I'm really really striving to say I'm only going to commit to new things **when I've had enough rest since finishing the last one.**

For a speaker and author, that looks a little different. We make these commitment years in advance, sometimes. I finally had to go to my publishers and say, "This is my timeline. I can not compromise." Good timing -- had a hard time with last book, and my editor, who had to carry me through the entire project, agreed, "Kathi needs the time!"

I need to have some rest in between. I am no good for the next project when I haven't had rest. If I haven't had a break and gone to experience some life, what business do I have writing and speaking about it? There's an inauthentic notion, there, if I say, "I'm doing this stuff" when I'm no longer actually living it.

As important as it is to know your strengths, it's important to know your weaknesses. Hire to your weakness. I married to my weakness. Roger is Analytic -- skills I doesn't possess. Balancing with friendships and working relationships. Choosing projects based on personality!

Cheri

Part of what I'm realizing is that there have been some gaps in my life with the amount of speaking I've been doing recently, it's time to start doing scripture study JUST for fun.



Most of what I've been doing has been for a purpose. Or I've been reviewing. In the last few weeks, I've had a new idea for Bible study, and I can't wait to dive in just for me. Eventually, I may blog it, it may show up in a talk. But right now, there's no book contract -- I'm just about to go on a journey. Alarm rings, I'm excited to get up because I have this new journey!

Part of Curing the "Perfect" Life = recognizing that we have seasons and cycles. Sometimes rest looks like one thing, sometimes another. (When I was sick: stay on couch. I watched movies. ALL *Pride & Prejudice*... 14 hours! FORCED myself to rest. That much Mr. Darcy!)

15:59 What's Your Rebel Type?

Cheri

Recognizing extremes. Anything moved to an extreme.

Analytic, especially, gets a bad rap -- "All Analytics are Perfectionists!"

No, they strive for excellence!

Expressive -- People-Pleasing, we have to be aware of, but it's NOT automatic!

Amiable -- always Procrastinators? Teach us to slow down ... methodical.

Not all **Drivers** are Performancists -- we just like getting things done!

Kathi

Listening to a talk by Daniel Pink -- who are the best salespeople?

We would think Expressives -- extraverts. But extreme extraverts and extreme introverts perform about the same!

What if finally comes down to -- and we're ALL salespeople... we're all trying to get people to do what we want and trade it for time, money, energy, expertise

The KEY to being the best salesperson is ... to **BE YOURSELF!**

We spend so much time bagging on our personalities.

God has equipped me with these unique strengths. I'm not 100% anything. Even I have a tiny bit of Analytical in me. There's something deep inside of my bones that loves an Excel spreadsheet!

When we are fully committed to being who God created us to be, and we understand there are weaknesses that come with that and we need to work with those...

But we also understand the **strengths** and how they can be used not just in our own lives but in other people's lives? That is a beautiful thing!



19:51 Wrap-Up

Kathi

What's the question we want to leave these guys with:

Fear -- in what area of your life are you controlling and what's the fear behind that?

Friend who kept a clean house for fear of her MiL dropping by and having a list of criticisms. Now that her MiL has moved, Kathi feels more comfortable. And the friend has a new freedom ... but is asking, "Why didn't I live like this before?"

Fear of being criticized

Cheri

Those fears you're asking us to think about, many are attached to our personalities.

Kathi

So true. My fear is that people won't like me or accept me. Won't think I'm working hard enough. For an analytic, fear they don't care about their job. Amiable -- fear of not connecting, fear of conflict.

Maybe understanding what's the fear and how does that connect to your personality type?

What's the fear that's locking you into control and how does that connect with your personality type?

Cheri

Let's flip it.

Kathi

Let's be positive, too?

Cheri

Have a discussion about the fears and how they connect to your personality.

Then flip it, from fear to love:



How do you express love, especially through your personality?

So if fear is that thing holding you back, is that a weakness being exaggerated in your personality?

Spend some time talking about when you are at your best – when you are most YOU – the best "salesperson" being yourself – then what does love look like?

Kathi

That's going to be hard for some women, very hard. We can automatically think of all the times we've failed.

When you're at your best, what does that love look like?

Cheri

It might involve asking special people in your life, "When have you really felt loved by me?"

Kathi

Good question.

Cheri

You might get some interesting answers! (And if you do, we'd love to hear about them!)

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. What's one fear that causes you to reach for control?
2. How does this fear connect to the weaknesses of your personality type?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. How do you express love, especially through the strengths of your personality?



2. When you're at your best, what does that love look like?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Cheri shared how she became aware that she's been living in fear of losing her husband, Daniel, to overwork. She's been hyper-vigilant about not taking up his time, not being the one to push him over the edge. This fear caused her to become unnecessarily controlling when he decided to stay with her class for the full fifty minutes rather than the ten minutes she expected.

What's a situation in your life in which a reasonable concern has mushroomed to full-out control?

2. Kathi pointed out how easy it is to think we're being loving without seeing fear and control: **"I love you, so I'm trying to protect you = I fear for you, so I'm going to control you."**

Brainstorm a list of qualities of true love vs. fear (disguised as pseudo-love). Check out 1 Corinthians 13 for ideas.

3. Cheri's current "brave step" is to commit to something new only when she can commit to the entire process. One discipline she's practicing is writing thank-you notes (even though some of them are a couple of years late) to teach herself *to finish*...not just be an enthusiastic "starter." Kathi emphasized that integrity means doing, not just saying. Kathi's current "brave step" is to commit to something new only when she's had adequate rest from the previous project. She's recognizing that without rest, she's inauthentic.

What's a next "brave step" you sense God asking you to take, from the list on pages 59-60?

4. Kathi shared the bottom line advice from Daniel Pink about how to be the best "salesperson" (and we are all salespeople): be yourself.

Looking at the details about your "rebel type" in Chapter 8, which aspects of your personality are you holding back? Why?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. What's one thing you can do to remind yourself to "fear not"?



- ### Leader's Notes:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
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- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED

[illegible]

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Part 3: 12 Cures for the "Perfect" Life

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Kathi and Cheri say, "Authenticity is what it takes to battle the bullies." (pages 80) In what area(s) are you most likely to maintain an image rather than risking authenticity? What is the hardest thing about being authentic?
2. Which of the twelve bully beliefs do you relate to the most? (pages 80-81)

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Who is the most authentic person you know? What does (s)he do that makes you consider him/her so authentic?
2. Why do we value authenticity in a writer, a speaker, or a friend? What difference does it make for us when someone chooses to be authentic rather than maintaining an image?

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM IDEA DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



[illegible]

Chapter 9

Redefining “Right”: *There’s more than one right way to do things right.*

Bully Belief #1: If I want something done right, I’m gonna have to do it myself.

Braver Living Belief #1: “Right” is the enemy of “Done.”

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. In what situations does it stress you to let others do things their own way? (pages 83-85)
2. What fear is driving you when you find yourself insisting (aloud or internally) that things be done your way? What are you worried will (or won't) happen?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. How has a past struggle, mistake, or failure helped you to grow? (pages 90-92)
2. What's one tiny act of rebellion you can take against Bully Belief #1? (pages 92-93)

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. What's something that you feel absolutely has to be done the right way—your way? How do you respond when it isn't done "right"?
2. How do you tend to respond to other people's mistakes and struggles?
3. How do you tend to respond to your own mistakes and struggles?



4. Read Romans 12:3-5. How can these words guide your view of accepting someone else's way of doing things as another right way? (page 87)
"For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others."

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. What's one example in your life where love (treating someone right) won over fear (doing something right)? (pages 87-90)
2. How can reframing from "doing things right" to "doing the right things" help reduce your stress and bring you freedom?
3. Read the quote from Daniel Coyle on page 91. How can this change the way you view mistakes and struggle?
4. Read Romans 8:1. What is the difference between "condemnation" and "conviction"? How can these words bring you comfort when you've made a mistake or are struggling? How can they guide you in responding to someone who has made a mistake or is struggling?
"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



[illegible]

Chapter 9 Self-Test

Redefining “Right”: *There’s more than one right way to do things right.*

Take a moment and check off any of these scenarios that hit closer to home:

1. ___ When I’m visiting someone else’s home, I often straighten pictures on the walls when nobody’s looking.
2. ___ I avoid criticism by going “above and beyond.”
3. ___ I only compliment others when they’ve done something deserving of praise.
4. ___ When I make a mistake, I say (or think), “What is wrong with you? ... How could you be so stupid? ... Can’t you just get it right?”
5. ___ If I had a child who brought home a report card with all As and one F, I would focus on an immediate plan to solve the F.
6. ___ I feel compelled to correct people in conversation (i.e. pronunciation, grammar, accuracy of facts, etc.)
7. ___ When visitors come to my home when it’s not been properly cleaned, I can hardly think about the people, I’m so fixated on the dirt.
8. ___ I feel physically ill when plans turn out wrong or my house gets messy.
9. ___ People regularly disappoint me and let me down.
10. ___ I can’t sit and relax when I know there are urgent matters to do or fix.
11. ___ I tend to check and recheck details for complete accuracy.
12. ___ I do my best to make sure failure is never my fault.
13. ___ When people say I’m “being defensive,” they should just let me explain so everything would make sense.
14. ___ I resent people who gush, “You’re so good at everything!” to my face but label me “anal-retentive” behind my back.
15. ___ I can’t help it that I am better at some things than most people.
16. ___ I love my lists; I hate being “listless”!



Now go back through the list and erase any checked scenarios that you know, in your heart of hearts, are motivated by love and result in peace, for you and others in your life.

Keep any scenario checked if it describes an action or reaction that springs from fear. How many still have check marks?



Chapter 10

Perfect Is for Pinterest: *How to stop striving for perfection and actually get things done*

Bully Belief #2: If I can't do it right, I won't do it at all.

Braver Living Belief #2: Perfect is for Pinterest.

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Describe a time when perfection paralysis caused you to stall out, robbing you of a blessing and/or being a blessing. (pages 97-98)
2. How does the decision, "If I can't do this right, I won't do it at all!" make you feel short-term? long-term?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Describe a time when so-so (or even mediocre) ended up being "good enough." What can you learn from this experience?
2. What one tiny act of rebellion against Bully Belief #2 can you take?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which Try-Harder Living lie is most effective at attacking your desire for progress? (pages 98-100)
2. Respond to this statement, especially in light of the parable of the talents: "Stop waiting until you're fearless—you never will be—but do as much as you can with what you have." (pages 101)



3. Kathi suggests being "40% brave"—just brave enough to get started. Does this sound appealing or appalling to you? Why?
4. Read Matthew 25:24-30 from The Message. What caution does this story offer us when we start convincing ourselves that *doing nothing at all* is better than *doing something imperfectly*?

"The servant given one thousand said, 'Master, I know you have high standards and hate careless ways, that you demand the best and make no allowances for error. I was afraid I might disappoint you, so I found a good hiding place and secured your money. Here it is, safe and sound down to the last cent.'

"The master was furious. 'That's a terrible way to live! It's criminal to live cautiously like that! If you knew I was after the best, why did you do less than the least? The least you could have done would have been to invest the sum with the bankers, where at least I would have gotten a little interest.

"Take the thousand and give it to the one who risked the most. And get rid of this "play-it-safe" who won't go out on a limb. Throw him out into utter darkness.'

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. How can you stop striving for perfection and start aiming for excellence instead?
2. Describe a project that you were able to successfully break down into "smaller bites" as Kathi suggests.
3. What's something new you've been wanting to try? What's been holding you back thus far? What do you need in order to be just 40% brave and take the first brave step?
4. Read Joshua 1:9. How might this Scripture help you combat Perfectionistic Paralysis?
"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
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- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



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Chapter 10 Self-Test

Perfect Is for Pinterest: *How to stop striving for perfection and actually get things done*

Are you paralyzed by Perfectionism? Circle T for true or F for false, and then total up your true responses.

1. T F When a friend tells me that my slip has been showing for hours, I am appalled: at her for not telling me sooner and myself for letting it happen.
2. T F Affirming someone for “doing their best” is silly; results are what count.
3. T F I’ve been told that I tend to be an “all-or-nothing” thinker.
4. T F I don’t like learning a new skill where others can see me try and fail.
5. T F I have creativity abilities (i.e. painting, singing, writing, etc.) that I’ve not shared with anyone because I’m sure people would just tell me I’m wasting my time.
6. T F I’d rather get an F for not trying than invest my best efforts and still fail.
7. T F Criticism crushes me. I’ll do anything to avoid it.
8. T F If God wants me to do something or become something, it will just happen.
9. T F I agree with the wisdom of Yoda: “Do, or do not; there is no *try*.”
10. T F I dread letting down the people I care about.
11. T F “If at first you don’t succeed, try try again” doesn’t work for me; I need to succeed the first time, every time.
12. T F Being “talented” or “gifted” means being good at something naturally, without having to work at it.
13. T F I know that God has called me to do specific things for him, but I’m so afraid of letting him down that I haven’t even tried.
14. T F If I won’t win, I won’t play.
15. T F I make long to do lists and then freeze because I don’t know where to start.

An ideal score here is 0 T, 15 F. The more of these statements are true for you, the more likely it is that you, too, get frozen by Perfectionistic Paralysis.



Chapter 11

Be a Rebel with a Cause: *Good girls get angry, but for all the right reasons.*

Bully Belief #3: I don't do angry.

Braver Living Belief #3: Rebels know when it's time to get angry.

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Are you a Stuffer, a Stewer, a Seeper, or a Screamer? (pages 114-119)
2. When is it hardest for you to assume the best about people? (pages 124-125)

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Share an example of how doing a reality check has diffused a potentially explosive situation.
2. What tiny act of rebellion against Bully Belief #3 will you take?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Give an example of how different circumstances and different people can triggered different anger reactions for you.
2. What can happen when we don't acknowledge and deal with our anger in healthy ways?
3. Respond to this statement: "When we're bitter, everything and everyone bugs us. Bitterness is like a termite infestation that gnaws away at us. We look fine on the outside, but we're disintegrating on the inside."
4. Read Psalm 37:8. What does unhealthy anger lead to? How so?
"Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil."



Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Think of a recent incident in which you became angry. Now run this event through Dr. Redford Williams' four questions at the bottom of page 122. What do you find valuable about this exercise?
(Note: You'll find a wallet-sized copy of the four questions at <http://www.TheCureForThePerfectLife.com> and in *The Braver Living Handbook & Journal*.)
2. Kathi keeps reminding herself "the only one affected by my anger is me" and "the only thing I can change is my reaction to the situation." Brainstorm a list of common, everyday anger triggering situations. Then, for each one, brainstorm several possible new reactions to try.
3. Many women are uncomfortable with feeling anger. They say, "I feel hurt" rather than "I feel angry." Do you think this is a good substitution? Why or why not? Why might it be important for women to learn to accurately identify and deal with anger rather than camouflaging it as "hurt"?
4. Read Proverbs 19:11. How do you think society views anger—as an asset or weakness? How does God view anger?
Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.

Leader's Notes:

[illegible]

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



[illegible]

Chapter 11 Self-Test

Be a Rebel with a Cause: *Good girls get angry, but for all the right reasons.*

For each question, circle the response(s) that you would do or would love to do:

- 1. It's 10:00 p.m., and my husband has not acknowledged my birthday. My reaction is to**
 - a) tell myself that he's just forgotten ... and it's no big deal anyway.
 - b) resent all time and effort I've put into the great birthday parties I've thrown for him and gifts I've given him.
 - c) say, with forced cheerfulness, "It was so nice of your mother to call to wish me a happy birthday today!"
 - d) let my anger finally spill out via tears and accusations.

- 2. I'm trying to make a simple return, but the customer service agent acts like it's a huge imposition. When she says, "Well, I'm not even sure we can take this back." My response is to**
 - a) smile and wait pleasantly for her to figure it out, keeping my thoughts to myself.
 - b) write a letter of complaint later that evening, once I realize how mad she really made me.
 - c) sigh, pull out my cell phone, and start texting while I wait for her to figure it all out.
 - d) say "Well, I'm sure you *can*!" in a loud and determined voice.

- 3. I've brought my car in to have all four tires replaced, which I was told would take one-hand-a-half to two hours. It's been four hours, and my car is still not ready. I**
 - a) try to keep myself calm by watching mindless TV in the waiting room.
 - b) work myself into a migraine fretting about the inconvenience and waste of time.
 - c) ask "Is it done yet?" every fifteen minutes and complain loudly to friends via cell phone.
 - d) demand to talk to the manager and tell him that I'm going to give them a low Yelp rating for such inexcusably poor service.

- 4. When someone changes lanes suddenly, causing me to swerve and brake, I react by**
 - a) shaking my head and sighing because some people just don't know how to drive.
 - b) turning the incident into an "ain't it awful" story that I tell everyone for the rest of the day.
 - c) getting in front of him and then driving slowly, to make sure he gets a taste of his own medicine.
 - d) yelling, "Where'd you get your driver's license? Correspondence school?"

- 5. While out to dinner, I order my favorite dish without onions. It looks fine when the server brings it to me, but when I take my first bite I can tell it's full of onions. I**
 - a) say nothing and choke it down; I don't want to make a scene.



- b) spend ten minutes telling my companion how this kind of thing always happens to me; no matter where I go, nobody ever gets it right.
- c) sarcastically comment to my server that he must be new and still learning how to take down orders correctly.
- d) angrily flag down my server and loudly proclaim, "I said NO ONIONS!"

6. When I've warned my daughter about the consequences of a choice, but she goes ahead and does it anyway, I'm likely to

- a) shift my anger (she didn't listen to me) into guilt (a good parent would have gotten through).
- b) call all my friends and vent about how upset I am, but say nothing directly to my daughter.
- c) say, "Well, I hate to say 'I told you so,' but ..."
- d) tell her in no uncertain terms how immature I think she is.

7. I've spent all day cleaning the house when I find muddy boot tracks from the back yard, through the kitchen, and up the stairs. When I find the culprit, I

- a) ask pay closer attention next time.
- b) mop up the mess, all the while rehearsing all the ways my family takes me for granted.
- c) say, "Well, it's nice that someone gets to do what she wants around here."
- d) go into Drama Mama mode, starting with "After all I do around here ..."

8. During a job performance review, my boss levels an unfair critique at me. I immediately

- a) put on my poker face so he cannot tell how upset I'm feeling.
- b) plan to tell all my co-workers what a jerk he is.
- c) start thinking of passive-aggressive ways to get him back
- d) snap, "That's not right!"

9. The neighbor's dog has been barking for hours. This happens all the time. This time, I

- a) once again reach for earplugs in self-defense and wish I had better neighbors.
- b) post a Facebook status update about barking dogs and selfish neighbors.
- c) give my neighbors the cold shoulder the next time I see them.
- d) finally call and give my neighbors a piece of my mind.

10. When I feel like God hasn't shown up like I expected him to, my natural response is to

- a) swallow my disappointment and try to move on. After all, who am I to question God?
- b) spend the next women's Bible study discussion time chronicling all the times God's let me down.
- c) throw myself all the more into doing godly deeds; at least I can be counted on to come through.
- d) rant directly to him, demanding to know, "Why?!?"



_____ a responses = **Stuffer**

_____ b responses = **Stewer**

_____ c responses = **Seeper**

_____ d responses = **Screamer**



Chapter 12

*This Probably Isn't the End of the World:
How to pick battles worthy of your time and energy.*

Bully Belief #4: Everything I feel is valid and must be valued.

Braver Living Belief #4: This probably isn't the end of the world.

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. By what "big emotions" do you sometimes find yourself overwhelmed? (disappointment, regret, jealousy, frustration, etc.)
2. Do you hear "You're so sensitive!" as a compliment or an insult? Why?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. When can sensitivity be a strength and a blessing?
2. What tiny act of rebellion against Bully Belief #4 will you take?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Jesus wants to minister to the young places in your heart. What stops you from taking the little girl in your heart to Him?
2. Discuss Cheri's suggestions for learning to deal with waves from the "emotion ocean" (pages 133-134). If you no longer had to worry about big emotions overwhelming you for hours (or even days) at a time, how would your life and relationships change?



3. Which of these do you do the most: complain, criticize, or gossip? Take the "Complaint-Free Challenge" for one week, switching a bracelet or watch every time you catch yourself doing any of these three things. Report back at the end of the week what you learned about your "baditude" habits.
4. Read Philippians 2:14-16a. What conditionality do you notice in these verses? In other words, what happens first, second, and third?

"Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, 'children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.' Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life."

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. How can acknowledging the young places in your heart help them start to "grow up"? (pages 131-133)
2. Review some A.N.C.H.O.R. Scriptures. When you sense yourself starting to become increasingly upset, how can you use God's words to change your thoughts, feelings, and choices? (pages 133-137)

(Note: You'll find a free set of A.N.C.H.O.R. Scriptures at <http://www.TheCureForThePerfectLife.com> and in *The Braver Living Handbook & Journal*.)

3. What are your favorite gratitude practices?
4. Read Ephesians 4:14 and Hebrews 6:19a. What reassurance do you find for the little girl parts of your heart in these verses?

"Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming."

"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure."

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



[illegible]

Chapter 12 Self-Test

*This Probably Isn't the End of the World:
How to pick battles worthy of your time and energy.*

If you frequently hear, “You are the most emotionally healthy person I know,” you may not find this chapter particularly practical. (Although reading it may help you better understand those in your life who live on the emotionally intense end of the spectrum.)

But if you're a sister Screamer, Seeper, or Stewer, read on!

Directions: For each question, circle Yes or No. (Leave the blank empty for now.)

- ___ 1. Yes No I've been told, “You're too sensitive!” all my life.
- ___ 2. Yes No I expect others to validate my feelings.
- ___ 3. Yes No I hate unresolved conflicts and will pursue people to make sure we've achieved closure.
- ___ 4. Yes No I believe in “venting” my emotions to get them all out in the open.
- ___ 5. Yes No I have a hard time experiencing opposing emotions simultaneously. (*i.e. sadness and gratitude, anger and curiosity*)
- ___ 6. Yes No I tend to keep explaining my feelings until I believe the other person has understood me.
- ___ 7. Yes No I tend to blame my feelings on others, saying or thinking that they “made me mad” (or whatever the emotion may be).
- ___ 8. Yes No A certain amount of complaining is normal and healthy.
- ___ 9. Yes No Some of my emotions are so intense, I'm afraid of them.
- ___ 10. Yes No I wish I could just avoid certain emotions.
- ___ 11. Yes No I keep a gratitude list.
- ___ 12. Yes No I have several strategies for responding to unexpected emotions.
- ___ 13. Yes No I have safe people in my life who can help me deal with my emotions when they become overwhelming.



- ___ 14. Yes No People sometimes feel that they have to walk on eggshells around me.
- ___ 15. Yes No I am ashamed of being so emotional.
- ___ 16. Yes No Some people are just naturally critical.
- ___ 17. Yes No I am proud of being so emotional.
- ___ 18. Yes No My emotional nature comes with specific strengths, such as empathy.
- ___ 19. Yes No I often wish I could find the “off” switch for my emotions (or, better yet, pull the plug on them altogether).
- ___ 20. Yes No I’m in at least one relationship in which I am waiting for the other person to change how they react to me before I change how I treat them.
- ___ 21. Yes No People close to me aren’t completely honest with me because they don’t want to risk a big emotional reaction.
- ___ 22. Yes No When I’m angry or upset with someone, it’s hard or impossible for me to treat them with kindness and respect until my anger is resolved.
- ___ 23. Yes No I often replay difficult conversations in my mind; I can still hear the negative tones of voice and see the upset facial expressions.
- ___ 24. Yes No I sometimes get stuck waiting for someone to validate, understand, hear, and/or apologize to me.
- ___ 25. Yes No I’ve been called an “attention seeker” or “Drama Queen” or “control freak” (especially by people who don’t understand me).
- ___ Total

Write in the following point values and total up your score.

1 point: 16 Yes; 18 Yes; 23 Yes;

2 points: 8 Yes; 10 Yes; 11 No; 12 No; 13 No; 14 No; 15 Yes; 17 Yes; 19 Yes; 20 Yes; 21 Yes;

3 points: 1 Yes; 2 Yes; 3 Yes; 4 Yes; 5 Yes; 6 Yes; 7 Yes; 9 Yes; 22 Yes; 24 Yes; 25 Yes

If your score is 20 or lower, “losing it” probably is not a frequent issue for you.
 If your score is 21-40, “losing it” is a problem you’ll want to deal with before it escalates.
 If your score is 41+, your tendency to “lose it” is probably causing your own physical health and the health of your relationships to suffer.



Video #3: A "Bravery Buddy" Convo Re: Chapters 9-12

(Note: You'll find video links to YouTube and Dropbox on pgs. 11-12)

00:00 Title Slide(s)

00:10 Chapter 9: "Redefining 'Right' "

Cheri

I have a real problem with numbers!

Kathi

You won't let me tell you how many books we've sold or what the Amazon rank is.

Cheri

No, because I looked one day, and the numbers weren't what I was hoping to see, and I felt myself distancing from our readers.

I realized that with numbers, I have this unhealthy polarization: they're either good or bad. This is true of the scale, the percentage on the test...

More recently -- show and tell! -- I ordered some "I'm a bear in the morning" PJs. I was so excited to get them, but when I tried them on, even tho they're the size I normally wear, they were WAY too small. Decided to order another size ... it was a NUMBER, two sizes up from what I normally wear.

Kathi

A number that you did not want to visit!

Cheri

A number that I do not DO! Started thinking: "I'll just return them ... I don't want them that bad ... I don't deserve new PJs ... I can save the money..."

No, this comes down to my idea of **right**: there's a "right" number and a "wrong" number. There are good numbers and bad numbers.

I love these PJs, I need new PJs, and if they fit, I would get a lot of joy out of them.



It's this judgmental attitude -- fear again!

No.

There are multiple ways to be "right" in this situation. It has nothing to do with a number but with finding the PJs that FIT. That FEEL right.

Kathi

I have a friend who is a stylist. She says, "The sizes can only be used as a guide." More people are walking around with ill-fitting clothes. She grabs the "right" one, one smaller and one bigger. That's how she figures out what she should wear. PLUS, tailoring! Pre-made clothes cannot fit all body types!

To be locked in to a number is so damaging.

Cheri

I know I'm 1.5 inches short in the back not necessarily in the front. When I sewed, I could compensate for that. But when I buy things off the rack, if I have a message to myself that it "should" fit ... that's the "right" thing and it should fit right away ... and I don't want to spend the money on tailoring ...

Whereas the truth is that a bit of tailoring, and it can look custom-made just for you!

Sometimes our idea of "right" centers on a number or some other arbitrary measure, and we can miss out on a lot of fun! And ... okay ... it even flashed through my mind, "Maybe I'll keep them and lose the weight."

Kathi

Oh my goodness! I can't believe you said that!

Cheri

I know! It only flashed through my mind, but again -- these ridiculous, arbitrary things rather than, "I'm going to go ahead and get what feels good, what's comfortable, what actually works."



Kathi

At least you didn't take it to the self-punishing place of, "I'll just hang on to them. It's too much bother to return them." I've done that so many times, where I had clothes hanging in my closet because they didn't fit. Self-punishing, leaving them hanging there so that NEXT TIME I'll get it right.

No. I'll take it back, and I'll get the right thing NOW that will make me feel better about myself rather than worse.

06:01 Chapter 10: "Perfect is for Pinterst"**Kathi**

Read *The Nesting Place* about how our homes need to be personable not perfect.

It's given me a lot of freedom to do some things! I've had this coffee table for two years ... I like it because it was free, and I liked the scale of it. But it's just plain wood.

So I really wanted to paint it. But I've hard all the things you have to do in order to do it perfectly: Sand it. Scrape it. Prime it. Paint it. Seal it. It's FOREVER!

I love what she told us in the book: "You can't ruin something you don't love."

So, I asked for help. I asked Roger, "Would you sand it for me?" And he said, "Sure!" He got a new toy.

I primed it -- if you lifted it up and looked under ... nobody is allowed to lie on the floor and look up.

It took me on and off a full day to get this thing done. And now, every time I look at it, I am SO happy. It is probably 90% of perfect, and I don't care about the last 10%.

And I'm going to show you the knobs, because they have put it over the top! Everybody who comes in here says, "I love your table!" Every time I come downstairs, it makes me happy. The curtains behind you, I bought them to match the table.

Everything in here used to match before, and now almost nothing matches but everything makes me happy. Perfect didn't make me happy, because there is always a room more perfect.

09:52 Chapter 11: "Be a Rebel with a Cause"**Cheri**

So, have you had a Starbucks incident?



Kathi

I've had a couple of angry things. What I get really angry with, is we were ordering some food from Baja Fresh, and they told us how to do it, and we did everything right, but when we got there to pick up our web order, they didn't know who we were. But they treated us like criminals.

One thing I've really learned is that I didn't have to lose my cool, I wasn't screaming at anybody, but I'm telling people [who ask me] why get upset over a \$3.50 cup of coffee? ***I'm paying \$3.50*** – I'm allowed to have expectations!

Roger's standard order at Starbucks is the three petite vanilla scones. Four times, we've gotten home and there's been only one vanilla scone. I don't get angry, but I DO say, "I'm going to give you the opportunity to make this right."

I want to save my anger for things like poverty, mistreatment of animals and kids. I think anger is a tool we can pull out, but it has to be used judiciously. We live in very close quarters around here, and we have some people who yell at their kids -- such a misplaced use of anger. Always brimming right here ... that's what your kids are going to remember.

Anger is a good thing when used in proper portions and when you know what the end is you want to get to.

I may be getting more angry than I used to, but I think it's in good ways. I used to be a door mat. I just wanted everybody to like me and "Kumbya". And now, I am somebody who will say, "I'm going to give you an opportunity to make this right. And if you don't, then we're going to have some problems."

12:58 Chapter 12: "This Probably Isn't the End of the World"**Cheri**

My life-long battle has been dealing with big emotions, being so easily overwhelmed. I know, I can feel it, and my kids can say that they've seen a big difference in me over the last couple of years.

One thing I wrote about, just a small part, is that in dealing with overwhelming emotions, gratitude has been really important. This is one of my many gratitude journals.

I learned something really unexpected from this particular gratitude journal.

At first, I could barely write 1-2 things a day ... "I'm breathing...not sure I'm grateful about that!" Then I tried to get to 3 and 5, and of course I do have a slightly competitive side to me, so one day it occurred to me that there are 21 lines ...



I challenged myself to fill the entire page ... NOT to be "Jesus-y," but if I got to just 12 by the evening, what was I doing all evening long?

Kathi

You were looking.

Cheri

Which means I wasn't seeing the other. Joy is processed in a part of the brain where none of the other emotions are processed. So if we're in the part of the brain that processes joy, and that's going to include gratitude because gratitude produces joy, we can't be angry at the same time we're being grateful. We can't be resentful. We can't feel sorry for ourselves.

I thought, "WOW!" All the verses in scripture about being thankful, it's almost as if God knew what He was talking about! (Who would have thought...)

But here's the thing that was so fascinating to me. I got to the end of this journal, and I'd only been writing on the right-hand page. Since I didn't have time to go buy a new journal, I started writing on the left-hand side. And each day, I started skimming/ reviewing my previous pages. After doing this for about ten days, I realized that I LOVE HUMMINGBIRDS. Page after page -- they show up on every page. Here I am going on (50) -- how do I not know that I like hummingbirds?

So many women, we're trying to figure out who God created us to be, we're trying to figure out who we really are. Earlier you talked about the importance of just being yourself. That's a great concept, but so many of us have been anybody but ourselves! We've been the perfect version of this or that for everybody else in our lives.

For me to realize, hang on a second, the place to find out who I am is right here: this is a collection of everything I love, everything that's meaningful for me. It's like a gallery of gratitude. And the best thing is that because it's my own unique collection, it has made me so much less envious. I don't need what anybody else has; I have my own unique blend right here!

Now, I met somebody at a retreat -- she had drawn a beautiful hummingbird and she brought it up to me, but I didn't envy her drawing ability. We have hummingbirds in common, but she can draw and I can enjoy her talent! She has this incredible artistic ability which I can appreciate and enjoy! I don't feel the urge to put myself down because I can't draw or decide I'm not special because she can draw and I can't.

To recognize that gratitude isn't just a great way to change an attitude, it's an amazing tool for self-discovery. I don't mean it in a selfish way ... but it's a way to discover who God created us to be in the first place!

And that did not occur to me when I first started ... this is my 4th or 5th gratitude journal.



Kathi

To recognize that things change over the years ... you mention that you like unicorns and suddenly you have eighteen hundred figurines.

To constantly ask, "What brings me happiness, what brings me joy?"

We'll go back to decorating ... for the longest time, I had everything in muted tones and browns and creams.

Cheri

But that's not your personality.

Kathi

It's not my personality. I was doing things so everything would blend, nothing would stand out. But it doesn't bring me joy. It might bring calm to someone else, but that's so interesting. Such a great exercise.

19:05 Wrap-Up**Kathi**

What's the question we're going to leave everyone with?

Cheri

I'd love to end with the question, "Who are you? What brings you happiness? What in your house? Look at these four chapters ... doing things right, not doing things at all if you can't do them right, anger, big emotions ... what you do or don't do in terms of the four "P bullies". Because their goal is to make you **not** yourself. To make you anybody **but** yourself. And to steal your joy.

Kathi

Discover what you love and how can you bring more of that into your everyday life?



For me, it's color. I'm like that kitchen table in there that's all brown is going to be a very mossy green. Again, it's not going to look perfect. I allowed myself to imagine, "What if I walked into every room of my house and it made me happy?"

That's kind of a radical thought. I've had to live for so long with functionality. But our last kid just left the house three weeks ago. I don't think there's such a term as "re-nesting" – I'm coming up with it. I get to think about what works for me and my husband is pretty and beauty and peace and joy. So that's how I'm incorporating it.

Cheri

So, I'm going to extend the question "What if you walked into every room of the house and it made you happy?" to "What if you looked at the calendar and it made you happy?" and "What if you looked in the mirror and were happy?"

Kathi

I've lost weight ... re-nesting ... don't have to wait until your kids leave ... new hair style ... in a phase of "I'm going to try it! Nothing permanent! They're not tattoos!"

And it's not just happy, because I understand that happy is a temporary thing. But when I look at my calendar, these are the things that are important to me. The things on my calendar reflect my values.

Cheri

They're "you." I'm hearing taking RISKS. Taking calculated risks.

Walking into any room of your house, is it "you." Does it give you a sense of happiness, contentment, joy, whatever word you want to use, peace, excitement, whatever matches your personality. Is this "you"?

Kathi

And you may be in a season with the kids.

Cheri

Not all-or-nothing. There can be *something*.

Your home, your calendar, who you see in the mirror – does this represent "you"? Who God created you to be?



Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which of Cheri and Kathi's stories made you feel most convicted? Why?
2. What aspects of your life (home, calendar, habits, etc.) are not really "you"? Why?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Which of Cheri and Kathi's stories did you find most personally encouraging? Why?
2. What do you love? How can you bring more of "you" into each area of your life (home, calendar, habits, etc.)?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Cheri shared her struggle with "right" and "wrong" numbers, spotlighted by the arrival of PJs two sizes too small.

How have you wrestled with arbitrary external standards?

2. Kathi talked about painting her coffee table and loving it, even though it's not perfect.

What's a project you've considered doing but have avoided because doing it "right" seems like way too much work?

3. Kathi shared that she's finding herself getting angry more often, not in an inappropriate way, but she's not being as much of a "doormat" as she used to be. She's being more assertive and giving people a chance to make right their mistakes.



What's an area in your life in which you tend to be more of a "doormat" rather than holding firm to reasonable expectations?

4. Cheri shared how her practice of keeping a gratitude journal not only has helped her replace "baditude" with gratitude, but also has unexpectedly allowed her to find a detailed picture of who God created her to be in the record of things she loves.

If a stranger were to hang around you for a day, trying to figure out who you are, would they hear more about who you *are* (gratitude) or who you *aren't* (complaining, criticizing, gossiping, and sarcasm)?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. How can you diffuse the power of arbitrary external standards?
2. What small project could you do "good enough" just to see how it goes?
3. When/where can you practice taking appropriate action when your reasonable needs/expectations have not been met?
4. Make a list of 10-20 things you know you complain about and 10-20 things you know you express gratitude for. Which list do you want to be known for? Why? How can you live this list more fully?

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



[illegible]

Bonus Video A: Kathi Pre-Compassion Trip

(Note: You'll find video links to YouTube and Dropbox on pgs. 11-12)

Kathi: Do you have any anger stories?

Cheri: No, but I'm going to put you on the spot. You and Roger are about to take a trip, and you're going to see all sorts of things that could trigger all sorts of emotion. Tell us a bit about that and what your thoughts are?

Kathi -- We're going to Nicaragua. Compassion International and I have been talking ... we have a sponsored child in Nicaragua, and we've been talking about me doing some speaking on Compassion's behalf. I love their organization, I love what they do, I love how they use their money. So I was on the phone with them, and they said, "Where's your sponsored child?" "Nicaragua." "What are you doing November 3-7?" Mind you, this was October 1st. "Would you like to go to Nicaragua and meet your Compassion child, Roger?"

"No, I don't want to ... are you kidding?"

This is where my Perfectionism is going crazy. I need to lose more weight before I go. I need to do all these things. The timing ... all excuses not to do what God has called me to do.

Talk to my husband. Roger didn't want to go. We've both had some not great experiences with International travel. Roger's braver choice is to come. We are going, and we are going to meet our sponsored child Roger and meet with some of the leadership over there and find out more.

But it is Nicaragua. I'm reading descriptions of their houses that are made out of cardboard with dirt floors and tin ceilings. My hope is that it ignites a holy passion for what I need to be doing because the more I am confronted with the inequity in the world, the more I say, "God, I have nothing I can do with this ... but tell me what you want me to do." So I think there will be some anger, but also a lot of hope. I hope that it jars me enough to make some big changes in my life so we can do more to support. It's very easy to become complacent, to send off our \$38/month and not really have to think about it. So this is going to make me confront thinking about it.

I'm excited and terrified. We've been to REI twice now to get different kinds of bug sprays. That's one of my fears: when I was in Japan, I had such severe bug bites I had to be hospitalized. But I also know that God knows about the bugs; the bugs are not a surprise to God. We're being smart about it but also going with faith.

Cheri: I love that phrase "a holy passion" because I can't help but wonder for some of the first world problems that we get so intensely upset about, how much of that energy is energy that we really could be funneling elsewhere?

Kathi: Are you judging my \$16 taco freak-out?

Cheri: No, no, no...



Kathi: There's so much we get so upset about. We are so concerned about our "rights." I don't want anybody to be taken advantage of. I think it's going to be exciting to see what Compassion has done over there already. I want to come back to share with people who haven't gone over there and challenge them to ... everybody says it's only \$38 ... the question is, "We believe in God, so what does that make me do differently in my life."

Cheri: Sorry for springing that on you.

Kathi: It's okay. I'm excited! And terrified. And excited.

Cheri: I think that as women, we have such capacity to care, and sometimes it gets channeled into areas where we're wasting the energy.

Kathi: For me, for SO long.

Recently there have been some articles about how women's ministry shouldn't be about tea parties. I understand where those articles are coming from. But I also understand that connection looks different for different people. And those articles make me angry sometimes, because I need stuff I can bring my neighbor to, and Diane loves a good tea party! But also, I want to be involved in Compassion. It looks so different for different people! I hate when we're bashing each other over the head about what things are *supposed* to look like. That makes me angry! I'll be honest. That makes me angry.

Cheri: That's one of the things that's been a surprise to both of us since writing the book. We didn't realize that Braver Living looks so different for different people! So for one woman, it may be putting on the "perfect" tea party at church, and for somebody else, it might be going overseas. Both of those are Braver Living choices if they're doing what God has called them to do!

I think as women, somehow we've gotten the notion that if it's God's leading, it'll all look the same.

Kathi: And it just doesn't!

Cheri: I know when a woman comes to me with a problem, it is SO tempting to tell her what worked for me. And I'm not saying there's anything wrong with that, but to expect that what worked for me will work for her -- when she's a totally different person with completely different experiences and God is working on her heart totally differently than He's working on mine ...

Kathi: I wrote about all these different experiences related to Braver Living. But I have to say, decorating has been the thing that has changed my perspective on really understanding that "perfect" doesn't get you happy. I know that's such a silly little thing, but when I come downstairs every single day and I see these curtains and they make me smile, and I see the nobs on the drawers -- I'm just like, none of it's perfect.

You know my natural tendency is to point out all the problems because I want you to know that I've seen them, I already see that it's not perfect, but I'm resisting doing that!

But I'm resisting doing that.



Cheri: I'm impressed!

Kathi: But yes, it looks SO DIFFERENT. For somebody, it's not going to be decorating, it's going to be preparing a meal. It's going to be serving. I know that Nicaragua is going to be mind-blowing for me. So stay tuned!

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. What concerns and fears do you hear Kathi expressing?
2. If you've ever been on a mission trip, what were your concerns and fears before going?
3. What's one service opportunity you've felt drawn toward but not participated in due to concerns and fears? What were your concerns and fears?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. How do you hear Kathi processing and dealing with her concerns and fears?
2. If you've ever been on a mission trip, how did you process and deal with your concerns and fears?
3. What's something you can do to process and deal with some of your concerns so that you can become involved in that service opportunity you feel drawn toward?

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
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- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
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[illegible]

Bonus Video B: Kathi Post-Compassion Trip

(Note: You'll find video links to YouTube and Dropbox on pgs. 11-12)

Kathi:

I told my FB friends, while I was on the trip, that I'm going to be that annoying person who is going to talk about Compassion [International] all the time.

Roger and I had the same things hit us, over and over again.

First of all, I went there knowing that the cute little kids were going to break my heart. But it wasn't the kids that blew me away: it's the moms.

Oh my goodness. These moms want the same things for their kids that we want for ours.

No, that's not even true.

They want less...we want very different things.

At the core, we want them to know God, to have joy, to have security.

To us, security means you have a good house in a good neighborhood. For them, security means some sort of food every day.

We first went to Roger's house -- he's been our sponsored child for two years, and I thought, "Oh this is a poor house."

And let me just say, it was awkward as all get out. I mean, what do you say? The mom knows we've been sending money every month ... it's just weird, as we're starting to ask questions ... so we're finally getting to the point of asking the mom, "What does your day look like?"

She gets up super early and goes to the market to sell stuff. Then she comes home to take care of the house. And then around 4:00, she takes a bus for an hour-and-a-half to go to college. She takes three hours of classes every night, and her bus is the last one of the night; if she misses it, she has to take a taxi.

Super awkward ... but I'm hearing her tell this story, and she's sitting there with her math homework ... and I said, "This is going to sound so bizarre..." praying it wouldn't come out condescending ... and we have a translator ... "I'm so proud of you. I see how hard you're working."

And things got 100% less awkward at that point...we're both crying ... The photographer with us, Mike, said, "She so needed to hear that."

It was time for us to go back to the school. And about five minutes later, this woman [Roger's mother] who had barely talked to me when we first got there, showed up at the school gate and said, "I just wanted to say goodbye again."



I said, "I wish I'd gotten a picture of Norwin [Roger's brother]" and she said, "I'll go get you one." And she brought back their photo album -- we took pictures of all the pictures -- she wanted to give it to us! She said, "I just don't want you to forget us." I said, "Trust me, there is no way I could forget you."

The moms -- over and over again. They want everything that we want for our kids, but the tool box they have has so many fewer tools.

Come to find out Roger's house was the nicest house we'd visit the whole time.

The next house we went to, they live on the banks of the swamp, and three days a month their entire house floods. But they have to live there. Their electricity comes from the top -- two live wires strung through a syringe, so when you push on the syringe the wires touch, and that's how you get electricity.

But I look at what Compassion International is doing ... with that \$38 a month ... we went to the school, where there's a binder on each child. For kids who have been there for years, it's thick. And all the different penmanship in there from all the different hands that touch that child. They are worried about cognitive, spiritual, physical development, nutrition ... every area of that child's life. A medical check up every single year. What they're doing with that \$38 a month is a miracle.

What I love is that they're coming alongside churches that have already invested in kids. And so many of the workers are volunteers, like the tutors. We sponsored another child while we were there, the oldest girl in the program. When the director of that center found out, she said, "We've been praying for Brisbania because she was sponsored for a month."

We went to Brisbania home -- it was on the beach. We asked her, "What do you like about living here?" And she said, "Well, I really liked it when we had a back yard." But the back yard went away, and her house is going to go away.

The things they have to think about...they just had an earthquake...a lot of families couldn't live in their main house any more, they were living with brothers and sisters.

To translate the impact... I know lots of people have been on these trips, but I didn't understand until I got there. If I'm not different six months from now because of this trip, that's totally on me.

I did not see one unhappy kid while I was there. They have hope, they have joy; what they don't all have is sponsors. What was especially heartbreaking was to see brothers and sisters who one was sponsored and one wasn't.

The hope that is there for not just the kids but the whole community. This doesn't just lift a kid out of poverty.

The difference between the two centers we saw, one that had had Compassion International for 7 years and one for 7 months, I was very depressed while at the one for 7 months. How do people live like this? But then someone reminded me: this is just the beginning. When I saw the one for 7 years?



That's where people are going to school, living in homes that are solidly built. What can be done with that small amount of money is mind-blowing. And the Compassion people are just amazing.

It was amazing. I'm so glad we went. I didn't want to go. I was scared to go. And this is so much where our book is at: fear was going to keep me from experiencing God's best for my life.

I know some people *get it* without going there...but it's the difference of seeing a homeless child on TV and meeting them. Connecting with them.

Cheri:

You entered into their story, and they've now become part of your story.

Kathi:

And I think how brave they are! They're living this every day. But they have so much hope. And it's not based on a fairy tale. It's based on God has saved us, chosen us, and cares for us.

I saw kids who, because of Compassion, could go to the hospital to get an arm set instead of having a neighbor do it.

After the earthquake, going and counting all the families to make sure everybody was okay. Through churches who already care.

Cheri:

I'm listening to Philip Yancey's book *Vanishing Grace* right now, and he talks about the power of starting with our hands, reaching the hearts, and then getting to the head knowledge of who Christ is and the theology. He says that when we do it the other way around, things get mixed up.

Kathi:

Compassion is coming alongside what the churches are already doing, with their hands, discovering the needs.

What you said about Yancey's book, that's so true. What the kids need -- they have very deep needs - - but what they really needed was for somebody to come play with them!

I have this picture of Roger blowing bubbles to those three little girls. Oh my goodness, first of all, I fell in love with him all over again. He became known as the Man in the White Shirt with Stickers; they knew a target when they saw it. But I love how he did it; he said, "Please tell me the name in



Spanish of this animal." So they were teaching him, *zebra, elephant*. I was like, "Oh my goodness, I have so much to learn from him."

The kids wanted to be played with, sung to. This little girl who had the broken arm, her mom kept saying, "She dances" and we kept saying, "Dance for us." I finally got smart and said, "You need to teach me to dance." She was this little thing and couldn't help but move. And when I finally asked her to teach me – it's like, "Will you pray for me?"

Starting with the hands.

I want to go back.

Not this week. But I want to go back.

I can't talk enough about Compassion: I'm not a paid spokesperson, I just really like 'em.

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. What aspects of Kathi's Nicaragua trip sound hard?
2. If you've ever been on a mission trip, what were the hardest aspects for you?
3. For you, what's the hardest aspect of being "Jesus' hands" to other people, through acts of service?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. What aspects of Kathi's Nicaragua trip sound rewarding?
2. If you've ever been on a mission trip, what blessings did you experience?
3. What's one way you can be "Jesus' hands" to someone else, through an act of service, today or this week?



- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
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This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

[illegible]

Chapter 13

*Fun Is Not a Four-Letter Word:
Giving yourself permission to have fun and still get things done.*

Bully Belief #5: No fun until my work is done.

Braver Living Belief #5: Fun is not a four-letter word!

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. For every forty hours of work (defined broadly) you do, how many hours of fun do you have?
2. Do you have enough "fun" in your life, or do you wish for more?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Which of these words resonates with you the most: *fun, delight, recreation, play, creativity, or celebration*? Give a practical example of what this word means to you.
2. What tiny act of rebellion against Bully Belief #5 will you take?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which of the answers to "Why is all the fun gone?" (pages 145-146) do you identify with the most? Share a recent example.
2. What are some consequences—physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, relational—of not having enough "fun" in your life?
3. How often do others see you living as a "daughter of God's delight"?



4. Read Romans 15:13. What does "all joy and peace" mean to you? What would it look like, in the everyday ordinaries of life, to "overflow with hope"?
"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. How would having more "fun" benefit you and your relationships with loved ones?
2. Spend five minutes brainstorming all the ways you enjoy having fun. Compile your ideas and make a "master list" that you keep adding to each week.

(Note: Share your list with us at cheri@cherigregory.com, and we'll send you a gift! We're compiling a LONG list of fun ideas.)

3. Have you ever kept a gratitude journal or played the "Gratitude Game" some other way? If so, share your experience. If not, share any reticence you've had. Now, choose a time frame—one week, 10 days, 21 days, one month, whatever works for you—to intentionally play the "Gratitude Game." Be ready to share your experiences the next time you meet.
4. Read Psalm 71:23. Ultimately, why do we celebrate? Who is the source of our "fun"?
*My lips will shout for joy
 when I sing praise to you—
 I whom you have delivered.*

Bonus: If you're at all curious, check out Cheri's monologues at <http://www.cherigregory.com/media/solo-performances/>.

What would *you* do with 10 minutes on stage?

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

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[illegible]

[illegible]

Chapter 13 Self-Test

Fun Is Not a Four-Letter Word:

Giving yourself permission to have fun and still get things done.

For the following questions, circle all answers that apply to you. If something else comes to mind as you're thinking, right it in the "Other" blank.

NOTE: If fun is not something you inherently value, try substituting one of these words when responding: *delight, recreation, play, creativity, or celebration.*

1. When I was a child,
 - a) my family had a lot of fun together.
 - b) I found ways to have fun in spite of my family.
 - c) fun was frowned upon as frivolous.
 - d) I got in trouble for having too much "fun."
 - e) I was too busy to have much fun.
 - f) I envied girls who had "fun" parents.
 - g) Other: _____

2. "Having fun" doesn't seem
 - a) necessary.
 - b) biblical.
 - c) Christian.
 - d) mature.
 - e) significant.
 - f) worthwhile.
 - g) Other: _____

3. I had more fun before
 - a) I got married.
 - b) I had children.
 - c) I started working so many hours.
 - d) an illness/injury.
 - e) a crisis/emergency in my/our life.
 - d) a major loss in my/our life.
 - e) I went back to school.
 - f) my latest move.
 - g) Other: _____



4. I would have more fun now if only
 - a) I had more time.
 - b) I had more money.
 - c) I had someone willing to have fun with me.
 - d) I had more energy.
 - e) I didn't have so much to do.
 - f) I knew how.
 - g) Other: _____

5. I the main thing I do for fun these days is _____.
 - a) eat
 - b) shop
 - c) use social media
 - d) watch TV shows and/or movies
 - e) exercise
 - f) take a nap
 - g) Other: _____

6. If I don't start adding more fun into my life, I'm afraid that
 - a) I'll become depressed.
 - b) I'll be a cranky wife/mother/friend.
 - c) I'll start looking for fun in all the wrong places.
 - d) I'll miss out on my children's lives.
 - e) my marriage will suffer.
 - f) I'll look back with regret later in life.
 - g) Other: _____

7. 10 Things I like doing just for fun:
 - a) _____
 - b) _____
 - c) _____
 - d) _____
 - e) _____
 - f) _____
 - g) _____
 - h) _____
 - i) _____
 - j) _____

This self-assessment has no score. It's just meant to help you reflect on your own relationship to fun. But if you had had any trouble filling in all ten for #7, or if you skipped #7 altogether, this chapter is for you!



Chapter 14

Give Yourself a Time Out: *Everyone (and we mean everyone) needs a nap.*

Bully Belief #6: I'll rest when I'm dead.

Braver Living Belief #6: Rebels need a nap.

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which do you have the hardest time with: Taking a rest break during the day, sleeping at night, or taking a Sabbath? Why is this one such a challenge for you?
2. Kathi says, "It never occurred to me that maybe that blank spot [on my calendar] needed to be dedicated to rest." Respond to this.

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Describe your favorite way or place to rest.
2. What tiny act of rebellion against Bully Belief #6 will you take?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Describe your relationship with multitasking. When is it helpful? When is it harmful?
2. What inner thoughts, feelings, and/or beliefs make it hard for you to shut down/rest? (pages 155-157)
3. On the left-hand side of a piece of paper, make a list of external obstacles to rest/Sabbath. Which of these are completely out of your control? For which do you have some influence?



4. Read Psalm 46:10a. What's the danger of never "being still"?
"Be still, and know that I am God."

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Take turns saying, "I need rest" and having the group respond to you, "Yes, you do. Good for you!" Start practicing this in the mirror: "I need rest" and "Yes, you do. Good for you!" Don't wait for anyone else to give you permission ... or for illness/injury to force you to rest!
2. Describe, aloud or in writing, the "perfect" day of rest/Sabbath. What would it include? Exclude?
3. Look back at your list of external obstacles to rest/Sabbath. On the right-hand side of the page, brainstorm ways to remove each obstacle ... or at least plan around it.
4. Read Psalm 46:1a. What might it be like to seek refuge in God *before* seeking His strength? "*God is our refuge and strength.*"

Leader's Notes:

[illegible]

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
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[illegible]

Chapter 14 Self-Test

Give Yourself a Time Out: *Everyone (and we mean everyone) needs a nap.*

Fill in each blank with the first thing that comes to mind:

1. I get _____ hours of sleep each night.
2. I drink no more than _____ caffeinated beverages a day to keep me alert.
3. When I'm feeling sleepy or exhausted, I _____ drive.
4. I make sure to exercise _____ minutes each day.
5. I _____ take brain breaks of five to ten minutes just to clear my head.
6. If I feel sleepy in the afternoon, I _____.
7. I work _____ hours a day.
8. I have _____ hours of discretionary time each day.
9. Once a week, I take _____ hours "off" for rest.
10. I _____ take truly restful vacations (or staycations.)

Reflecting on your answers:

1. Most women need 8+ hours of sleep per night.
2. Using any artificial methods to stay awake is a warning sign.
3. The safest answers are "don't" or "ask someone else."
4. Even fifteen to twenty minutes of mild aerobic exercise can help you sleep far better at night.
5. "Never" is a red-flag answer.
6. "Take a quick nap," "take a quick walk," and "drink a glass of water" are all healthy answers.
7. More than eight to ten hours takes a toll on all aspects of your life: physical, mental, emotional, relational, and spiritual.
8. While there's no one right answer here, you need "margins" in your life: spaces for the unexpected and the necessary to take priority without causing even more stress.
9. Twenty-four is an excellent spiritual discipline.
10. "Regularly" is the answer we're looking for. ("Never" is not!)



Chapter 15

Disappointment Isn't Deadly:

Learning to say, "I'm sorry you're sad, but I'm not buying you a pony."

Bully Belief #7: I'm responsible for everyone else's happiness.

Braver Living Belief #7: I'm sorry you're sad, but I'm not buying you a pony.

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Respond to this statement: "We live with the illusion that we have some measure of control over how other people behave." (pages 169-171)
2. How do you react when someone you care about is expressing "big emotions," such as disappointment, hurt, anger, etc.?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Describe an important life lesson you learned through a difficult situation that you wanted out of at the time but were later grateful to have gone through.
2. What tiny act of rebellion against Bully Belief #7 will you take?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Share an example of a time when choosing the "short-term fix" backfired in a relationship.
2. How can you tell the difference between "growth opportunity pain" and inappropriate/unnecessary pain that needs intervention?
3. Which of Kathi's two questions ("Is this the best solution for them?" and "Is this the best solution for me?") do you have the hardest time asking? Why this one?



4. Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. What reason does Paul give for being "all things to all people"? How does this compare with your reason(s) for doing whatever it takes to keep people happy and/or avoid criticism?

"Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings."

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Share one "I could try *that!*" moment you had while reading about the Lipp family vacation to Disney World (pages 175-178).
2. Brainstorm several situations that tempt you to make keep-them-happy-right-now choices *just this one last time*.

Write out or role-play the inner dialogue you have with yourself that lures you into these kinds of rescuing roles *yet again*.

Then, brainstorm new, healthier dialogue; write it out and role-play it so you can start practicing it and developing new habits.

3. Why will Bravery Buddies be important as you start trading short-term rescues for long-term growth choices?
4. Read Galatians 6:8. What are the consequences of people-pleasing vs. God-pleasing?
"Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life."

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

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[illegible]

Chapter 15 Self-Test

Disappointment Isn't Deadly:

Learning to say, "I'm sorry you're sad, but I'm not buying you a pony."

Fill in the blank with:

always
frequently
sometimes
rarely
never

1. I _____ try to soften the blow when my child has a disappointment.
2. I _____ try to make sure my husband is in a good mood.
3. I _____ believe that others will know what I want and need if they really care.
4. I am _____ the one who keeps the peace in my circle of friends/coworkers.
5. When people aren't getting along, I _____ feel the need to mediate.
6. I _____ feel unappreciated for the sacrifices I make on behalf of others.
7. If there's a fine line between wanting to be a part of people's joy and happiness, and feeling responsible for their joy and happiness, I cross it _____.
8. I _____ feel like a bad mom when my kids don't get along.
9. I _____ think to myself, *If I had just said the right thing the right way, nobody would be upset.*
10. I _____ try to prevent those I love from experiencing pain, even the pain of natural consequences.
11. I _____ keep quiet about my own wants and needs.
12. I am _____ the peacekeeper with my adult family members.
13. I _____ feel resentful when others don't seem to realize how hard I'm trying to make everything work out for them.
14. I hate conflict and _____ try to avoid it.
15. I _____ word my input as a helpful question (i.e. "Are you sure you want to do it that way?") rather than a statement.



Chapter 16

What You Do Does Not Equal Who You Are:
Refusing to be defined by the St. Patrick's Day cupcakes you take to your kid's class.

Bully Belief #8: I am what I do.

Braver Living #8: I am more than the St. Patrick's Day cupcakes I take to my kid's class.

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Describe a time when, like Cheri, you "sure did all this to yourself." (pages 183-184) Why were you driving yourself so hard to do so much?
2. How do you decide when you've done "enough"?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Share a recent piece of progress you could add to a "Ta Da!" list.
2. What tiny act of rebellion against Bully Belief #8 will you take?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Respond to this statement: "Many of us claim to believe in salvation by grace. But take one look at our to-do lists or calendars and you'll see what we really believe in—doing, doing, and more doing." (page 187)
2. How can wanting to "do everything" be a form of greed?
3. Why is it more important to focus on the process than the end product?
5. Read 1 Corinthians 6:12. When faced with many things you are capable of and even interested in doing, what guidance does this verse offer?



"All things are lawful for me,' but not all things are helpful. 'All things are lawful for me,' but I will not be enslaved by anything."

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Share a time when you worked hard **because: because** you knew you were loved, **because** you knew God had called you, or **because** you knew you have something unique to offer. How did that experience feel different from times you've worked hard **so that** people would accept you or **so that** you would avoid criticism?
2. What might being "a woman who leaves her jar at the well" look like for you? (pages 189-191)
3. How can you make the process—rather than the end product—the point in the everyday ordinaries of your life? (page 192)
4. Read Ephesians 2:8-9. How can these verses help you contradict Bully Belief #8?
"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



[illegible]

Chapter 16 Self-Test

What You Do Does Not Equal Who You Are:

Refusing to be defined by the St. Patrick's Day cupcakes you take to your kid's class.

To see how much "I am what I do," is influencing you, rank each statement and total up your answers at the end.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
1. I live by my lists. I can't imagine a life without lists!	1	2	3	4	5
2. I feel like I have to prove my worth through my achievements.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Interruptions and unexpected delays frustrate me.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Sometimes my to-do lists become so long and detailed that they overwhelm me.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I get an adrenalin rush when I check/cross something off my list. (In fact, when I do something that wasn't originally on my to-do list, I write it in just so I can cross it off!)	1	2	3	4	5
6. I constantly compare myself to others.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I don't really get the phrase "doing nothing." By definition, "nothing" isn't "doing"!	1	2	3	4	5
8. I make self-care (rest, nutrition, exercise, regular check-ups, etc.) as high a priority as caring for other people in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I'm a multitasker.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I can't just sit still and watch a movie; I have to have something in my hands to keep them busy or I have to get up to do things.	1	2	3	4	5



- | | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-----|--|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. | My schedule is typically full with little/no margin for unexpected events or emergencies. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. | I get a thrill from starting new projects. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. | I sometimes approach personal relationships like projects, with a "checklist mentality." | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. | I really wouldn't know what to do with "down time" or "free time." | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. | I need recognition for my achievements. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. | I get more accomplished than most people (and two to three times as much as many!). | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. | Some people are intimidated by me. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. | Sometimes I get so focused on projects that I forget about people. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. | I often mentally rehearse the tasks I need to do (and the order in which I need to do them). | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. | When I relax, I feel guilty. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. | I have a hard time knowing when I've done "enough." | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. | When I'm not accomplishing new things, I feel like a failure. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. | I often think, "When this project is done, things will finally get back to normal." | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |



Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

24. When I make a mistake, feel horrified—as if I am a mistake.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

25. Key people in my life wish I would spend more time with them.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

26. I sometimes feel more like a “human doing” than a “human being.”

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

27. I skipped BB #5 (“No fun ‘til your work is done”) and/or BB #6 (“You’ll rest when you’re dead) because I already know I’m too busy to have fun and/or rest.

Yes	No	Prefer Not to Answer
-----	----	----------------------

A score of 70 or lower indicates a healthy distance between your sense of self and your sense of accomplishment.

71-100 means that much of your identity comes from what you do.

101-130 says that your sense of self-worth is almost entirely defined by your accomplishments.



Video #4: A "Bravery Buddy" Convo Re: Chapters 13-16

(Note: You'll find video links to YouTube and Dropbox on pgs. 11-12)

00:00 Title Slide(s)

00:10 Chapter 13: "Fun is Not a Four-Letter Word"

Kathi:

I feel like I've kind of turned a corner in this.

Before, there was no end to my day. Always more that needed to be done! Couldn't justify going out to dinner with Roger, etc.

Realized: I need to be realistic about how much work I have, and what *done* looks like. Not "done with all my work" — but "done for the day."

To do list every day — use same template. Sunday "to do" list = Sunday evening.

Put down a reasonable amount each day.

Amanda: "Can we go look at wedding spots together?"

Day after I get back from being out of country for a week..."Of course, I'd love to!" 2 hour lunch.

List can't stay that long! Need to re-adjust expectations.

Done at 4:00? Might cook.

But no more work after 7:00. Please don't hear that this is what anyone else should do. I'm learning that I'm worthless! I'm free to watch TV w/Roger. Or read a book; I used to feel that reading a book was only for people who got all their work done.

I want to enjoy myself! Going to plan the wedding with Amanda was so much fun!

I want fun to be a priority for me! What does fun look like for me? Hanging out with family or friend(s). Watching TV shows I like. Movies. On airplanes: read a book or watch a movie time. I love a good story. And it's taken me a long time to say, "That's okay! I *can* do that!"

I feel like I've got some fun back in my life. I'm planning on this being a fun year. Looking forward to the wedding: tiny budget, but they want their wedding to be "fun." Not just the day but the 10 months leading up to it.



Cheri:

So you're defining "done" as "done enough." And you don't have to keep working to "earn" your fun months and months down the road. "No fun until the work is done" is not okay any more.

Kathi:

No, it's not. It's been a really rough year. We've had two parents die. Major stuff going on. If I waited until everything was sewn up and tidy, it would never ever happen!

05:22 Chapter 14: Rest

Kathi:

You've had a rest revolution

Cheri:

Rest realization — we'll see if it turns out to be a revolution.

Sick for a month — several times this year, falling behind, ugh.

Retreat theme of "simplify" — Jesus: come to me, you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

What do we call something that one individual gives another?

Kathi:

It's a *gift*.

Cheri:

We call it a gift.

Rest is a **GIFT**!!?

I've treated it like something I'll get to "some day." And honestly, with my temperament, I've treated it like something that only weak people need.



Kathi:

I thought people who needed naps were wimps! Some of the people I admire most in the world are champion nappers!

Cheri:

Arrianna Huffington has a TED talk ...

Kathi:

...it's called "Sleeping Your Way to the Top"...

Cheri:

She was so tired at work, she fell asleep and fractured her jaw.

I judged her as pathetic. Until last week. Right before a MOPS group, I go to tank up my car...a bit confusing...but mainly because I was so exhausted: CLUNK. I had started to drive away with the hose still in my car!

Fortunately, no gas or fumes or explosion ... driving Daniel's car ... because I am SO TIRED.

For me, that kind of thing is a warning.

Kathi:

What did you do?

Cheri:

Well, I finished my obligations. Came home and rested!

Now I need one of those things [pointing at Kathi's fitness tracking wristband] that tells me when to go to bed!

Kathi:

(explains her jawbone telling her to go to bed)



Rest is not valued.

Cheri:

Daniel was just listening to a TED talk...latest research: while we sleep, our brain releases toxins. When we don't sleep, toxins aren't released and they (in layman's terms) eat away at the memories we've just made.

Kathi:

So, what are you going to do differently now?

When we wrote this, rest was something we talked about quite a bit.

Cheri:

Yeah, but you wrote the chapter.

Kathi:

So what looks different now?

Cheri:

I'm looking at the pattern of illness for me: I need more down time...get to bed earlier ... we get up early but stay up too late.

I used to take short naps —

Kathi:

To value and protect rest for others in our life.

Naps: Sorry I was such a jerk to you when I was a kid!

Can't have caffeine after 6:00 PM at night — too buzzed ... bad night sleep.



Cheri:

More short little breaks during the day.

Cup of tea and write in gratitude journal. Read a chapter of a book.

Don't have to "deserve" my fun — don't have to "deserve" my rest!

12:03 Chapter 15: "Disappointment Isn't Deadly"

Cheri:

Annemarie — working on her senior project ... SO frustrated

chapter is on trying to soothe others and make everything okay for them

Annemarie frustrated at advisor

How to support rather than "fix"

Habit: "step in and fix"

How can I support her without taking sides or over-dramatizing ... not giving her emotions ... just to hear and be present for her.

She and Jonathon are staring at the computer screen ... one of her portraits, with eyes.

I think I am making progress, because instead of a "here's what I think!" reaction, I said, "Whoa!" ... something more neutral.

And she said, "I know...it looks SO GOOD."

She and her advisors are back and forth, they see her as talented and are pushing her.

The old me might have suggested she settle or argue for her limitations. By staying out of it and by allowing her to have her frustration/disappointment/difficult feelings, and the time and space to deal with them without me intruding, she knows she can do eyes. She doesn't have to, but the limitations have been removed.

Kathi:



What does this look like for someone else? What does it look like to support your child without controlling the situation?

Cheri:

Still learning. I used to be so quick to give them my emotion: how terrible, how awful, I can't believe that happened, that should never have happened.

I'm trying to be more neutral.

Massage therapist, "MMmmm..." Interested but non-committal ... I'm here, I'm listening ...

Each relationship needs ways to signal I'm here ... I'm not abandoning you. Conscious that just because I feel a certain way does not mean the other person needs to feel the same way.

And if I define the experience for them, I may crowd them out of a really good growth experience.

Kathi:

Son's recent BDay dinner. Justen came in in a foul mood ... Kimberly was in a foul mood ... for the first few minutes, I was trying ... then I decided to talk to the people who were being nice: Roger and Mom.

Pretty soon, Justen and Kimberly wanted to engage, so they had to come up to here. And we had a wonderful night.

But had I said, "Oh, you've had such a bad day..." we all would have sunk down here.

I don't want to do that any more!

18:06 Chapter 16: What You Do Does Not Equal Who You Are

Kathi:

It was interesting going on this Compassion trip.

Let me just talk about my prejudice right of: it's an "artist" trip ... first time I've been called an artist in my life ... they're all musicians, except for me (and spouses.)

Oh no. Artists drive me nuts.

I went in with a fear: I'm the "chick speaker."



A bunch of guys in skinny, drop-crotch jeans.

They're going to think, "Oh, she's just a chick speaker." I was getting defined by what I do, in my own heart.

I was defining them and saying, *Here's how you're going to define me.* These people who are so much more spiritual ... "hipster Christian." I went in thinking, *I'm probably not going to like them and they're not going to like me.*

(I was right in a couple of cases...I used the term "hipster nonsense" more than a few times.)

Tim Timmons — worship artist — drop-crotch pants, on the cutting edge, but his heart for what we were doing there! And he must have told Roger and I, "You just need to know we really like you."

I told him, "I felt weird coming here being the 'chick speaker'." He said, "I know you do all those things. But that is not who you are."

I almost self-selected out of being part of that group.

When we go into a new situation, "I need to make sure my cupcakes rock! That everyone sees that I have skills and talent!"

We want others to know we belong...we have a right to be at the table.

We self-select out because we think that what we're doing is not good enough.

Unqualified.

What makes me "qualified" for anything?

Jesus.

SHOW UP.

40% brave.

22:42 Wrap-up

Cheri:

What are the stories we're telling ourselves? Having fun? Kind of rest I can or can't allow myself? Whether I have to fix things for others or can change the story?



Kathi:

The question we're asking ourselves is: Have I done enough?

The answer will always be "no." We've never done "enough." Doesn't mean we should be doing more.

We need to be doing exactly what God has called us to do, and not an ounce more.

So what our job is to figure out what God is calling us to.

The great work we have is discovering God's will. And sometimes we mess it up! But always seeking his face. That's the great work.

Saying, "God, where do you want me to be? Where do you want me to put my hands? Where do I need to be putting more of myself—being fearless for You? And where do I need to be saying, 'Somebody else needs to be taking care of that. That is not my job.'?"

And I think both are equally hard.



Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which of Cheri and Kathi's stories made you feel most convicted? Why?
2. What limiting stories are you telling yourself about having enough fun? getting enough rest? "fixing" other people? Identifying with your achievements?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Which of Cheri and Kathi's stories did you find most personally encouraging? Why?
2. What has God revealed is *His* will in your life? Where does He want you **to** put your time and energy? **stop** putting your time and energy?



Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Kathi talks about how she used to never have an end to her day—there was always so much more to do, she couldn't justify having "fun" by going out to dinner with Roger, watching TV, or even enjoying a good book.

What keeps you from having fun?

2. Cheri tells a "wake-up call" story of starting to drive away from the gas pump with the gas hose still in the gas tank of her husband's car.

What evidence do you have that you might need more rest?

3. Cheri reflects on how during her early years of parenting, she jumped in to "fix" things for her kids rather than simply supporting them.

What areas of life tempt you to be a "fixer"? Why?

4. Kathi shares the story of how she almost "self-selected" herself out of experiencing community on her Nicaragua trip.

When have you self-selected yourself out of a community or experience because you felt unqualified?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Kathi is redefining "done" as "done enough" and "done for today." She no longer feels she has to "earn" fun but is making it a high priority in her daily/weekly schedule.

Discuss the ideas of "done enough" and "done for today."

2. Cheri shares her recent realization that Jesus' statement, "I will give you rest" indicates that rest is a *gift*.

What would it look like for you to accept rest as a gift from God?

3. Cheri talks about how she's learning to give neutral responses rather than emotionally-loaded responses. And Kathi gives the example of refusing to sink to the level of her kids' negativity while out to dinner with family.



Think of a recent situation in which you either gave someone your emotions or joined someone else in their negative reaction. What could you do and/or say differently in the future to resist the People-Pleasing bully?

4. Kathi points out that the only reason we're "qualified" for anything is Jesus. All we do is show up.

How would focusing on Jesus as your #1 qualification, rather than your own accomplishments, change your perspective on your life? change how you relate to other people? change what you say "yes" and "no" to?

Leader's Notes:

[illegible]

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



[illegible]

Chapter 17

Enough Really Is Enough:
How to stop keeping three dozen empty egg cartons just in case!

Bully Belief #9: I can't throw it away; I might need it some day!

Braver Living Belief #9: I'm done keeping three dozen empty egg cartons just in case.

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Give an example of "hard boiled eggs" (things you keep in your home, your garage, your schedule, your mind, and your heart, "just in case" you need them) in your life? (pages 197-199)
2. When you ask yourself, "Why do we still have this?" what's the most common answer?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. "Jesus said that the gardener (God) prunes the branches that bear fruit (us) so that they will produce even more fruit." How is this ultimately good news?
2. What tiny act of rebellion against Bully Belief #9 will you take?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which of the three reasons for keeping stuff (pages 199-200) do you resonate with the most? (Feel free to add your own!)
2. Describe a time when keeping "stuff" fed your insecurity and/or fueled your compulsion. (pages 201-202)
3. What area of your life is "stuffed" to the 8, 9, or 10 on the Fullness-Hunger spectrum (page 204)? What are the negative consequences of that area being so full?



4. Read Matthew 6:19-22. How can these verses help you decide what to keep and what to let go?
"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. What's one area of "Not Enough" you'd like to start filling in your life? What's one "Too Much" you can give up to make space?
2. How could you explain the concept of "Push Pause" to your family? How might you encourage them to "Push Pause" for a period of time as a family?
3. Describe what your life will look like once you've committed to One-in-Two-Out for a while: your home, your garage, your closet, your calendar, your mind, your heart, and/or your relationships, etc. Be specific—you're casting a vision for yourself!
4. Read Philippians 4:19. What reassurance does this verse offer?
"And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus."

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



[illegible]

Chapter 17 Self-Test

Enough Really Is Enough:

How to stop keeping three dozen empty egg cartons just in case!

How stuffed with “just in case” clutter is your life? Circle Yes or No to each question and then total up your Yes answers.

1. Yes No I frequently look at things I own and ask myself, “Why do I still have this?”
2. Yes No I often feel guilty for spending money on items I don’t use.
3. Yes No I have some habits that were helpful once but are now getting in my way.
4. Yes No I own quite a few things that I have not used in six months or more.
5. Yes No I hold onto a number of beliefs that may be downright destructive.
6. Yes No I buy things I don’t really need just because they’re on sale.
7. Yes No I keep things I don’t need/want because someone I care about gave them to me.
8. Yes No I constantly wish I had more time.
9. Yes No I have a hard time forgiving other people who have offended me.
10. Yes No I tend to expect a lot of myself.
11. Yes No My house and/or garage are full of stuff.
12. Yes No When I don’t have money in the bank but see something I want, I often pull out my credit card and just charge it.
13. Yes No I have a “junk drawer” and/or “junk room.”
14. Yes No I dread the thought of moving because we have so much stuff that I’d have to sort and pack.
15. Yes No I sort through our stuff and give some of it away regularly, but somehow we never seem to have any less.
16. Yes No We have things that we don’t use, but we keep them “just in case.”
17. Yes No I’m ashamed to have people over to my house because it’s so cluttered and/or messy.
18. Yes No I tend to hold grudges.
19. Yes No I have collections that require a lot of space to store and/or display.
20. Yes No I have high expectations for other people in my life.

If you circled more than five Yes answers, clutter—whether physical “stuff” or calendar clutter or emotional baggage—may be taking control of your life.



Chapter 17

Enough Really Is Enough:
How to stop keeping three dozen empty egg cartons just in case!

Overstuffed Areas of My Life

To find which areas of your life are overstuffed, finish these statements:

“I have so many commitments on my calendar that ...”

(Example: ... I rarely see my husband.)

(Example: ... I am too busy when my kids have an emergency.)

“I have so much stuff in my house/garage that ...”

(Example: ... I never invite anyone over for dinner.

(Example: ... we park the car in the driveway.

“I have so many expectations for myself/others that ...”

(Example: ... I am constantly disappointed in myself.)

(Example: ... I am always irritated at people I love.)

Areas of your life in which you have “too much” are the places to start giving up.



Chapter 17

Enough Really Is Enough:
How to stop keeping three dozen empty egg cartons just in case!

Starved Areas of My Life

To find which areas of your life are being starving, finish these statements:

"With freed-up time, I could ..."

(Example: ... have some personal "quiet time" each day.)

(Example: ... do something I've been sensing God calling me to do.)

"With more open space, I could ..."

(Example: ... enjoy my home as a refuge and sanctuary.)

(Example: ... invite people into my home without feeling embarrassed.)

With hope instead of expectations, I could ...

(Example: ... try new things and be okay with making mistakes.)

(Example: ... give others the freedom to fail as they learn and grow.)



Chapter 18

No More Last Minute: *How to take "I work better under pressure" out of your vocabulary.*

Bully Belief #10: I work better under pressure.

Braver Living Belief #10: Last minute is for losers.

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. How has procrastination negatively affected your life? (pages 211-213)
2. Who does procrastination hurt the most: the procrastinator or people closest to the procrastinator? Explain your reason(s) for your answer.

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Share one technique you've used to successfully avoid procrastination.
2. What tiny act of rebellion against Bully Belief #10 will you take?

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. "Procrastination makes you an offer you can't refuse: 'Oh, let me take care of you! I'll make your fear disappear!' And then it stabs you in the back. Ever. So. Slowly." (page 215) Respond.
2. Which of the reasons for procrastination (page 213) hit home the most for you? What other reasons can you add to the list?
3. Discuss the Procrastination Cycle (pages 215-217). What point resonates the most with your experience?
4. Read James 4:17. What do you find most convicting about this verse?



"So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin."

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. How will remembering the Procrastination Cycle help you the next time you start getting caught up in it? (pages 215-217)
2. Which of the suggestions for "How to Break Out of the Procrastination Cycle" (pages 217-221) looks most useful for you? Why this one?
3. Whose life will improve the most as you learn to procrastinate less? Why?
4. Read Ecclesiastes 9:10a. What does this verse remind us to do when we are tempted to stall or ignore a commitment?

"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might..."

Leader's Notes:

[illegible]

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



[illegible]

Chapter 18 Self-Test

No More Last Minute: *How to take "I work better under pressure" out of your vocabulary.*

Which of these thoughts do you identify with?

1. ___ I thrive on the excitement of a last-minute deadline.
2. ___ I do my best work right before it's due.
3. ___ I'm accomplished at "winging it."
4. ___ The work I do at the last possible minute is better than what most people spend weeks working on.
5. ___ I can't get started sooner because I have so many important things to get done first.
6. ___ I have to wait until inspiration strikes.
7. ___ The adrenaline rush of waiting puts me at peak performance.
8. ___ Some of my favorite memories are of the all-nighters I've pulled while part of a team on a tight deadline.
9. ___ I'm smart enough to pull it off at the last minute.
10. ___ I'm not a fan of delayed gratification. I do what feels good first.
11. ___ When I wait until it's a crisis, other people step in and help me or even do it for me.
12. ___ If I end up doing lousy work, I can always say, "Oh, I threw it together at the last minute" to save face.
13. ___ I'm a starter, not a finisher.
14. ___ I'm a free spirit. I don't work well within the confines of schedules and deadlines
15. ___ I love telling my war stories of how I got an impossible amount done in a short span of time.
16. ___ The closer the to the deadline I wait, the less exercise and sleep I get.
17. ___ When I've procrastinated as long as I possibly can, I need a ton of junk food to get me through doing the actual work.
18. ___ When I suddenly have to devote all my time and energy into meeting a deadline, I get grouchy and snippy with people.
19. ___ Procrastination causes me to suffer from sleep deprivation.
20. ___ I used to think that my procrastination only affected me.



Chapter 19

Help May be a Four-Letter Word...But It's a Good One: Rebels call in reinforcements.

Bully Belief #11: I got myself into this mess, so I have to get myself out.

Braver Living #11: Rebels call in reinforcements.

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Describe a time when you needed help but didn't ask for it.
2. What stops you from seeking help? (pages 223-225)

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Describe a time when you accepted help without guilt or shame, just gratitude.
2. What tiny act of rebellion against Bully Belief #11 will you take? (pages 230-233)

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which of the statements in the "Asking for Help" self-quiz is the strongest "True" for you? Share a life experience that reinforced thought pattern.
2. Read and respond to the *Jesus Calling* excerpt on page 228.
3. How do blame and/or shame influence your unwillingness to ask for help? (pages 229-230).
4. Read Philippians 2:1-4. How can our willingness to receive help from others actually bless them?
"Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do



nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. "You can't succeed big if you're not willing to fail big." (page 230) What's your immediate reaction to this statement?
2. Which of the suggestions on pages 230-231 looks most do-able for you? Why this one?
3. How might your relationships change if you started using the phrases "I need help all the time" and "Let's help each other"? (page 232)
4. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12. What do these verses say to those who feel that the "Lone Ranger" approach is better than working together with others and accepting their help?
"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



[illegible]

Chapter 19 Self-Test

Help May be a Four-Letter Word...But It's a Good One: *Rebels call in reinforcements.*

1. True False When I was growing up, I saw my parents ask for help when they needed it.
2. True False When I was growing up, other people asked my parents for help.
3. True False I've always been able to ask my parents for help and know they'd be there for me.
4. True False In school, I felt comfortable asking my teachers for help as soon as I didn't understand something, even in front of other students.
5. True False In school, I only asked my teachers for help privately.
6. True False In school, I never asked my teachers for help.
7. True False In school, I thought the kids who asked for help were stupid.
8. True False I've had at least one mentor in my life to whom I could turn to for help.
9. True False I seek help in books.
10. True False I seek help at seminars and workshops.
11. True False I seek help via the Internet.
12. True False If I'm in the midst of a crisis that I did not cause, I am okay with asking for help.
13. True False When I get into trouble due to my own mistakes, I feel too ashamed to tell anyone.
14. True False I'm afraid that if key people in my life really knew how messed-up I am, they wouldn't like me anymore and might even leave me.
15. True False Asking for help feels like admitting that I'm weak.
16. True False I am allergic to feeling vulnerable.
17. True False I don't mind it when others ask me for help.
18. True False I am honored when others feel safe to be vulnerable with me.
19. True False I hate feeling like a bother to anyone, including God.
20. True False I really can't wrap my mind around the idea of God's grace; how can he love me even when I've totally messed up again and again?



21. True False I don't like asking for help because then I feel uncomfortable until I can return the favor.
22. True False I have little tolerance for people who sabotage their own lives by making poor choices.
23. True False Most people don't really need help; they just need more self-discipline.
24. True False I believe the old expression "God helps those who help themselves."
25. True False I love the idea of being a self-made [wo]-man.



Chapter 20

"No" Is a Complete Sentence:

Why this two-letter word is the most powerful one in your vocabulary.

Bully Belief #12: "No" is a dirty word.

Braver Living Belief #12: "No" is a complete sentence.

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Why are knee-jerk "yes"es so automatic for so many women? so dangerous to our health and relationships?
2. Respond to this statement: "We are not designed to please people. We are designed to please God." (page 236)

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. How can a gracious "no" truly be a gift?
2. What tiny act of rebellion against Bully Belief #12 will you take? (page 246)

Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which of your "a" answers on the "Rip Current of People-Pleasing" self-assessment do you think has the most serious consequences? Why?
2. Describe a time when you were "Somebody...Anybody."
3. Of the three reasons to stop answering to Somebody and Anybody, which one resonates the most with you? (pages 239-240)



4. Read 1 Timothy 5:8. How does this verse speak to the People-Pleasing habit of pouring time and energy into so many "other people" that there's little-to-nothing left for one's own family?
"Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. What is your "oil"? What resources do you need to wisely keep fully stocked? (page 241)
2. Share an "aha!" moment from the "How to Say an Intentional Yes" section (pages 241-242.)
3. Which of the eight steps of "How to Give the Gift of a Gracious No" (pages 242-245) do you think will bring about the quickest change once you implement it?
4. Read Jeremiah 29:11. What do God's plans for us **not** include? What **do** they include?
"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



[illegible]

Chapter 20 Self-Test

"No" Is a Complete Sentence:

Why this two-letter word is the most powerful one in your vocabulary.

How far out are you being dragged by the rip current of People-Pleasing? Circle the one that applies to you the most often.

1. ___ When others ask me for help, I feel
 - a) flattered.
 - b) curious.

2. ___ When I'm asked to be involved in a project, I
 - a) feel needed.
 - b) assess my motives.

3. ___ I say "yes"
 - a) because I'm afraid to say "no."
 - b) only when I mean that I can commit fully from start to finish.

4. ___ When commitments outside the home take priority over my family,
 - a) I expect them to understand and "roll with it."
 - b) I reassess my commitments and priorities.

5. ___ Disappointing other people
 - a) terrifies me.
 - b) happens every day.

6. ___ When I disappoint someone,
 - a) I feel like a failure.
 - b) her disappointment is her issue to deal with.

7. ___ Intellectually, I know it's not possible for everyone to like me,
 - a) but I keep trying.
 - b) and this reality guides my "yes" and "no" choices.

8. ___ When someone asks me to make an immediate decision,
 - a) I often cave into the pressure and just say "yes."
 - b) my answer is usually "no."

9. ___ If I don't have my calendar with me,
 - a) I tend to say "yes" and hope it doesn't conflict with anything.
 - b) I say "I'll get back to you after checking my pre-existing commitments."



10. ____ If my spouse and/or children aren't with me,
 - a) I often say "yes" and then may or may not remember to tell them about my new commitment.
 - b) I wait until I can confer with them to make a new commitment.
11. ____ When I hear, "If you don't do it, it won't get done" I ...
 - a) say "yes" because I'm their last hope.
 - b) say, "Well, if nobody feels called to do it, perhaps it isn't going to happen this year."
12. ____ Once I've said "yes,"
 - a) I find a way to back out if I didn't really mean it.
 - b) I stick to my commitment.
13. ____ Once I understand all the details,
 - a) I realize that I shouldn't have committed without asking questions.
 - b) I am in a position to give a thoughtful "yes" or "no."
14. ____ I say "yes"
 - a) to my idea of what the other person is asking me.
 - b) after I've learned what the other person has in mind.
15. ____ I say "yes"
 - a) to many commitments that require me to do things I'm not good at.
 - b) only to requests that tap into my strengths and spiritual gifts.
16. ____ When someone lays on enough guilt,
 - a) I'll say "yes" to almost anything.
 - b) I am likely to say "no" because I don't want to work with someone who relies on such unhealthy manipulative tactics.

The more "a" answers you gave, the greater pull People-Pleasing has on your life.



Video #5: A "Bravery Buddy" Convo Re: Chapters 17-20

(Note: You'll find video links to YouTube and Dropbox on pgs. 11-12)

00:00 Title Slide(s)

00:10 Chapter 17: "Enough Really Is Enough"

Cheri:

Last May, we thought we might have to move.

We would have short notice: 7-10 days.

Absolutely panicked: I'd told God, "NO more moves!" I had SO much stuff.

Tried to sort, tried to follow your books. But because I wasn't taking care of heart issues, so I could get rid of stuff, but then new stuff came flowing right back in!

Stemmed from: "I deserve it ... I need it .. I've never gotten nice things in my life." Scarcity mentality, so I kept bringing in quantity to make up for it. (Which doesn't work!) Started adding up expense of moving van, storage ... I knew the size of the moving van it took to get us here: it was ENORMOUS!

Suddenly, this thought came to me: ***Just give it all way!***

No. Not possible.

Started walking through the house: I ***could*** give that away. I could ***give*** that away. I could give that ***away***.

Okay, a small moving van for the books.

But I could invite church members and friends to come take it all away! It would be so much cheaper, months down the road, to replace rather than rent the van and pay for storage to keep all sorts of used stuff.

It all came down to: Was I going to trust God to provide for us?

When I walked through the house, and realized ... No, I don't **want** to get rid of all of it. But I ***could*** ... I could let go of **all of it**. Without singing the *Frozen* song, I really could Let It Go, and I would be fine, there was such a sense of **freedom!**

Part of it was because gratitude has become such a practice, I don't feel gypped. I don't feel like I need



to hang on to my stuff. We've told family members: don't give us things for Christmas!

(What we're going to give as gifts this Christmas is sponsor a child through Compassion, with a month of sponsorship in honor of each family member.)

We didn't have to move. BUT, we spent the summer getting rid of stuff. Load after load after load.

I didn't think, "Oh, we don't have to move, I'll keep it all." I couldn't get rid of it fast enough! Once I realized I could let it go, "Okay, let's get rid of it!"

One of the most precious things I found — while going through boxes marked "Misc. Stuff" ...

1) Pocket watch I'd given Daniel as a 1 year or 5 year anniversary gift ... first time it's been in use in 20 years.

2) Flag presented to Daniel's mom at his father's funeral 20 years ago. "One of these days I'm going to..." Decided THIS is "one of these days" TODAY. Ordered a display case, mounted the flag in the case and hung it on the wall. Daniel choked up when he saw it.

Enough really is enough. We really can let go of things when we are aware of what God has provided. Enough is enough because HE is enough.

And if anyone should need practical help?

Kathi:

Really excited about *Clutter Free*. [Releases January 2015]

You would not believe how much a book about living braver and clutter-free go hand-in-hand.

This clutter book is one of the most spiritually deep books I've lived through.

06:34 Chapter 18: "No More Last Minute"

Kathi:

I don't know why it's taken me this long to figure this out.

You and my friend Erin and I — you're my friends and co-authors. One of the big things we've discovered ... you and Erin both love to write.

I write because ...



Cheri: ...you love the women who read your books.

Kathi:

... and I love telling them stories.

The writing process is very difficult for me. I am dyslexic ... many challenges, including just sitting still.

I'll be honest: I put things off because I did not like it.

What we've discovered recently is that I do better with smaller chunks that have been assigned to me.

I am working on a book that's not due until February [Note: recorded in November] ... I've been working on it for months, and it's been such a pleasure...

Cheri:

[Quoting *Megamind*] Who *are* you?

Kathi:

I know! Let's just say, that's not how this book was written!

Cheri:

I say nothing...

Kathi:

Because, it's not a crisis. I'm not in this [tense and anxious...stiff neck and shoulders] mode all the time.

And it's not just about doing things ahead of time...it's about breaking it down into *micro-steps*.

It's not just about doing things ahead, because that just means the pain comes earlier!

What it is, is saying, "How can I break this down into do-able chunks that I can be excited about accomplishing."

I have these short little assignments.



I'm not going to put myself in that seat of like this [tense and anxious].

That has been revolutionary for me. And it means facing your fears — I procrastinate with an email...what's the first step? I have to open it up! And then I realize it's not that terrifying.

I need to get to the truth.

And sometimes, the truth is overwhelming. But no step, on its own, is that overwhelming.

Cheri:

You've taught this to me. An entire task is going to take different kinds of thinking. So if I can just do one little part that uses just one kind of thinking, like critical or creative or NO thinking: like just find the box I couldn't find.

Being able to say, "I'm going to just do that one infinitesimally small, even embarrassingly small, but it's the one boulder, the one obstacle in the way.

So I've been asking myself, "What am I afraid of? What's scaring me about this?"

Then, when I figure it out, breaking it down into such small steps, I can even do one before going to bed! And then one the next morning ... but NOT forcing myself to do it all. It's astonishing how all the little things add up over time, and suddenly the whole thing is done!

Kathi:

Part of it is acknowledging that this is scary for me. I'm worried about how that person is going to respond. I'm worried about doing the wrong thing.

Just acknowledging that and breaking it down.

You've got to have a couple friends in your life you can say, "I know this is stupid, but I need you to proofread this email to my child's teacher."

Cheri:

That's what Bravery Buddies are for. They will never agree that it's "stupid." They will always understand. Even if they don't understand the letter, they understand that hard is hard and brave is brave.

Kathi:



What you're doing when you're stopping Procrastination is giving yourself a gift. It's a huge gift to not be in panic mode all the time.

That's bad for your health and your heart.

Cheri:

And your relationships.

Kathi:

So break it down!

11:46 Chapter 19: "Help May Be a Four-Letter Word...but It's a Good One"

Cheri:

I was at an event a few months ago. I had a wonderful shepherd [someone who has volunteered to assist the speaker], and when we arrived at the location, she offered to carry my luggage for me.

And my natural, independent reaction is, "NO! If I'm capable, I should do it!" I looked at her and said, "Why yes. That would be so nice!"

I've decided that my new heroes are women who ask for help and accept it.

One woman in our launch group told us that she had so many people offer to help with church potlucks, so she did the most amazingly brilliant thing: She made a list of all the tasks that needed to be done, typed the all out, printed them on cards, prioritized them, and when someone asked to help, she'd hand them one and say, "Please do this." Part of asking for help, at least for me, is that I've been so overwhelmed due to procrastination, I don't even know what to do ... it's easier to just do it myself.

Whereas, what if we could live in such a way that we could break the task down? we could put it into words? Not everything, of course, but a few key things ... which means, of course, knowing it ahead of time enough to ask for that help.

Other thing I've slowly been realizing ... I've been sick, and had a friend offer to mail me the ingredients for elderberry syrup which she thought would cure me. And I was going to say "no," but at the end of her message she said, "I would really love to do this for you." So I decided, "I will gladly accept!"

She mailed me a packet of everything I need, with a recipe telling me exactly how to do it.



Kathi:

And of course, you didn't want to bother her...you didn't want to put her out...

Cheri:

There was something about that last line that made me wonder:

What if all the times I've said 'no' to help, it was something they really wanted to do *for* me ... *with* me ... what if they wanted to chit-chat and share a problem ... what have I missed out on in terms of connecting and developing community by being this lone ranger and saying "no"?

14:35 Chapter 20: "No Is a Complete Sentence"

Kathi:

"No" has been a very valuable word this year.

One thing that has happened recently is ... I'm friends with a popular author. And people ask me to get to her. Some of them are being selfish, but some really believe they have something that would help her.

And I could just pass it all along and let her deal with it. But I think that everything she gets is just an extra burden. So I'm trying to be brave and say "no" not just for me but people I care about.

Roger is an extreme introvert. It means society exhausts him. I know that I need to protect a lot of that.

It's not just about me but what's good for my people.

Nicaragua was a big discussion — not just getting all the facts, but being around a bunch of artists for five days? We had one meeting where he was just exhausted from not sleeping well, and I was like, "No. You don't have to be at that meeting."

It was so lovely, the coordinator said, "He needs rest."

Cheri:

Even on a mission trip, doing God's work!

Kathi:

So I got to sit outside with the giant bats to debrief. It was lovely.



Saying "no" in the short-term to preserve the long-term. It's exactly what I needed to do. The healthiest choice.

I want to say "no" a lot so I can say "yes" a lot.

Good people *get* "no." Selfish people **don't** get "no."

I had an event booked for mid-April ... a MOPS group .. they've saved for two years to have me. Then, Roger's step-mother died in a car crash. So I asked to re-schedule. We moved it to September.

I was scheduled to be there September 10. My dad died September 5.

We moved it to November 5, and I got the call: "Kathi, do you want to go to Nicaragua with Compassion."

Kim, my assistant, said, "I'm not making that call! I can't do it. I can't do it." I called her, and she said, "Kathi, of course you have to be there!"

Four times we've had to re-schedule this.

Cheri:

But she *gets* it.

Kathi:

She *gets* it. This is a woman who *gets* it.

People who care about you ... here's the thing.

The September 10th date, Dad died on the 5th, and I said, "I'm doing this. I will be there."

But on the 9th, I was in tears. I did not want to go.

That woman got ahold of Kim, my assistant, on the 9th and said, "I just want to say one more time that we are okay if Kathi doesn't come tomorrow."

Cheri:

WOW.



Kathi:

"Whatever Kathi decides is fine, but I felt like I needed to make this call."

Cheri:

What you're describing right now is GRACE.

Kathi:

It's so GRACE!

So my question is not, "Why don't more people do that?" it's "Am I doing *that* for other people?"

Am I holding them to standards that they don't need to be held to? Or am I leading with grace.

So it's not just "no" for me, but can I be a "no" advocate for other people. That's what I want to be: I want to be a "no" advocate.

I've never thought of it like that before: that's radical obedience to God.

For her to do that for me, breaks my heart in all the right ways.

Grace.

21:18 Wrap-Up

Cheri:

So what kind of a grace question can we wrap this whole thing up with in terms of the grace we're accepting and the grace we're extending?

Kathi:

I think those are the questions:

What are of your life do you need grace?

I would really say, "Where is some place you could extend grace right now?" Is there somebody in your family...so often there are compromises that we don't see.



Roger and I are going to see his family this Christmas in Georgia.

Roger: When we get back, I'm going to need a vacation.

Kathi: I don't want to leave again. I travel so much. But Roger needs to get out.

Brave conversation: Cancel trip to Georgia? Roger *needs* a vacation; Kathi *can't* be gone from home.

Compromise: See family for a shorter time ... take a 2-day vacation after seeing family.

We both needed desperately different things, and the compromise only came through some tough, grace-filled conversations.

So maybe there are some conversations that need to happen in your own home.

Ask each other:

"What is an area in which you need to be heard and understood? "

And ask yourself:

Am I struggling to hear and understand someone else?

Is there a way I can meet them there [in a place of grace]?

Fast Track

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Which of Cheri and Kathi's stories made you feel most convicted? Why?
2. Who are you are struggling to hear and understand in your life right now? How can you extend grace to this person?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. Which of Cheri and Kathi's stories did you find most personally encouraging? Why?
2. How have you been offered and received grace recently? How have you given yourself grace?



Scenic Route

Woe/Whoa & Owww! Questions:

1. Cheri talks about how a "scarcity" mentality caused her to cling to her belongings. Why do you keep things you don't need or love? Why do you buy new things you don't necessarily need?
2. Kathi talks about the fears that used to keep her from even taking micro-steps, fears such as, "I'm worried about how that person will respond" and "I'm worried about doing the wrong thing." What fears keep you from breaking large projects down into smaller steps and micro-steps?
3. What keeps you from accepting help when it's offered? What holds you back from asking for help when you need it?
4. What's likely to trigger an ungracious response from you to being told "no"?

Woo & Wow! Questions:

1. What's something special you have in storage that could be displayed in a place of honor in your home? What's the story behind it? What would it take for you to remove it from the exile of storage and out on display where it can be enjoyed?
2. Respond to Kathi's statement, "What you're doing when you're stopping Procrastination is giving yourself a gift. It's a huge gift to not be in panic mode all the time."
3. Cheri tells about a friend who has actually made cards with specific tasks for those who ask to help with church potlucks. What's an area of your life in which you could analyze a task, break it down into "micro-steps," and delegate steps to others?
4. Who is someone in your life for whom you can be a "No" Advocate? How?

Leader's Notes:

JOT DOWN:

- WHO DID/DIDN'T COME
- ICEBREAKER IDEAS
- SCRIPTURE(S) TO READ TOGETHER
- PERSONAL STORY TO SHARE
- ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ?S
- IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION
- PRAYER REQUESTS/REPORTS
- FOLLOW-UP NEEDED



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Stay in Touch



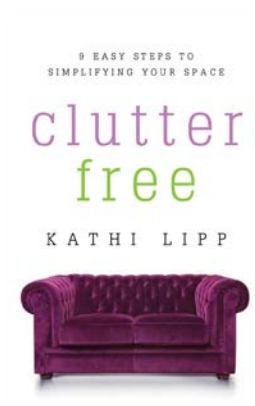
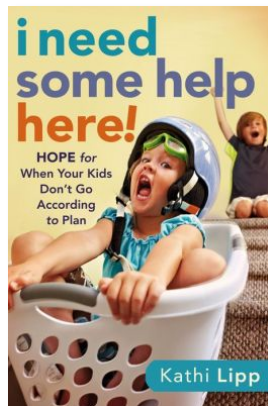
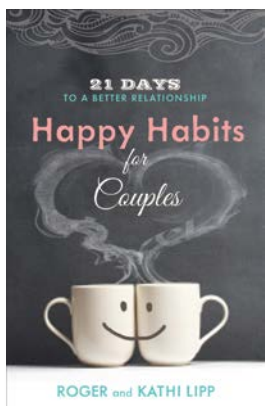
Kathi Lipp is the author of *The Husband Project*, *The Me Project*, *The Get Yourself Organized Project*, *21 Ways to Connect With Your Kids*, and several other books. Kathi's articles have appeared in dozens of magazines, and she is a frequent guest on Focus on the Family radio and TV.

She and her husband Roger are parents of four young adults in San Jose, California. Kathi shares her story at retreats, conferences, and women's events across the United States.

Connect with her at <http://www.KathiLipp.com>

On Facebook at <http://www.Facebook.com/AuthorKathiLipp>

On Twitter [@KathiLipp](https://twitter.com/KathiLipp).



Cheri Gregory is a Certified Personality Trainer; contributor to multiple books, including *Wired That Way* and *21 Ways to Connect With Your Kids*; and frequent speaker for MOPS groups, women's retreats, parent workshops, and educational conferences. She is also a high school English teacher and graduate student.

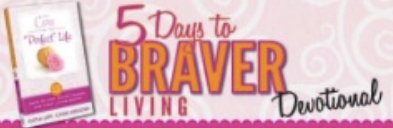
Cheri has been "wife of my youth" to Daniel (her opposite personality), a pastor, for over a quarter-of-a-century; they have two college-aged kids (who are also opposite personalities). She blogs about expectations, "baditude", and hope at www.CheriGregory.com.

Connect with her on Facebook at <http://www.Facebook.com/Cheri.Gregory.Author> and Twitter [@CheriGregory](https://twitter.com/CheriGregory).



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<https://www.etsy.com/shop/HeartsInHope>



Recommended Resources

Authors

Josh Becker

Brene Brown

Susan Cain

Henry Cloud

Annie Downs

Karen Ehman

Suzie Eller

Emily Freeman

Holley Gerth

Bob Goff

Jennifer Lee

Greg McKeown

John Ortberg

Jill Savage

Jeff Shinabarger

Books

Simplify
Clutterfree With Kids
Inside-Out Simplicity
Living With Less

Daring Greatly
The Gifts of Imperfection

Quiet: the Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking

Never Go Back
Necessary Endings
Boundaries

Let's All Be Brave

Let. It. Go.
Keep It Shut

The Unburdened Heart
The Mended Heart

A Million Little Ways
Grace for the Good Girl

You're Already Amazing
You're Made for a God-Sized Dream

Love Does

Love Idol

Essentialism

Soul Keeping

No More Perfect Moms
No More Perfect Kids

Yes or No



Rachel Macy Stafford *Hands Free Mama*

Renee Swope *A Confident Heart*

Tullian Tchividjian *One Way Love*

Lysa TerKeurst *The Best Yes*
Unglued

Ann Voskamp *1000 Gifts*

Laurie Wallin *Why Your Weird is Wonderful*

Emily Wierenga *Atlas Girl*



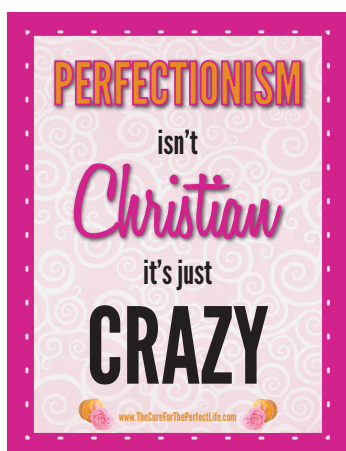


THE Cure FOR THE "Perfect" Life



FREE GIFTS for SMALL GROUP LEADERS to share with their The Cure for the "Perfect" Life Groups. For every 10 women in the group, you'll receive:

10 "Perfectionism Isn't Christian, it's just CRAZY!" magnets



10 "40% Brave is Brave Enough" magnets



10 "My Tiny Act of Rebellion for today is..." Post-It pads



1 set of laminated Braver Living Bible verse cards



1 "Brave" or "Perfect Love" pendant



Just Email me with Your Name, Address and Facebook contact at cheri@cherigregory.com.