



THE *Joy*  
PAGES

*gratitude. generosity. connection. every day.*

*by* TANYA N. GEISLER

I had intended to call this eBook “The Joy Book” but then I found out that was the title of a book on polygamy. Soooooooooooooooooooooo, I didn’t.

I went with “The Joy Pages” because I love the simplicity of “Joy” and “Pages”. Nothing scary, nothing intense. Just simple joy. In everyday life, on everyday pages.

This book has been in my heart for a long time. I ask all coaching clients who are considering working with me: *What is in your heart that is busting to get out?* I ADORE the responses I get. And lately, I’ve been noticing that **THIS** is what’s been in my own heart. Yearning to be busted out and expressed. No time like the present.

You see, my mother (whom I adore) had this mantra:



## Don’t Postpone Joy.

She died at 59 and I like to think she had a very full life, albeit short, because she chose to find joy in everything. (CHOSE being the operative word). It’s easy to find joy on a tropical beach, or in a full pantry or with scads of dough in the bank. The challenge comes when recessions hit, children die and disease sets in. But choosing joy is possible.

Now, I don’t profess to be an expert on joy. But I am gaining on not postponing it.

Shall we begin?

Love,

## My Hope

That you enjoy this eBook (natch).  
That you go ahead and do the exercises and answer the questions FOR YOURSELF. That it inspires you to make choosing joy a greater priority in your day-to-day life.  
That because of that choice, your partner, children, parents, coworkers, baristas and postal carriers are more joyful for having interacted with you. That they see you as a model for choosing to make joy a greater priority and decide to do so in their own lives. That their circle reaps the rewards and chooses to make joy a priority. Big concentric circles. Viral joy.  
\*sigh\*

## It all begins with YOU.

We all know that you need to put the oxygen mask on yourself before you can start saving the world with all that joy-spreading, so let's begin by getting to know YOU.

Getting to know yourself is an amazing gift. And gifts = joy. (See where I'm going here?)

You are pretty damned fabulous, you know that? There is NO ONE in the world like you. Not even close. You are unique and exquisite in your uniqueness.

So what works for you does NOT work for anyone else.

Let's see what you're made of.

In coaching-land, we start with your values. These are the foundational bricks that comprise your core. Not your beliefs, or the things you value, but rather the pieces that make you YOU. Take away a core value and you are less, well, YOU. Someone else. More like a Gary than a Greg. Or a Tammy than a Tanya. There is much you can do with your values as your guide—but defining them is the first step.

## Your Peak Experience

This is a nice and easy tool that can help uncover your values. I've written about this [before](#).

Find a comfy spot, grab a pad and pen and find a way to get relaxed. Think back to a time when you were in flow. Your most "you". Alive. Vital. You thought to yourself: "Time could stand still...I have never felt more myself than I do in this precise moment. I am invincible in my own skin and I feel FINE." Maybe it was last week at work. Maybe sometime in your teens. Or even as a child. Dig deep.

*(Don't judge what comes up...it's all good.)*

Go ahead and do it. We'll wait for you.

Once you have that moment in your mind, start to write. Notice who's there, what the sights and sounds are and what feelings come up for you. Jot down as much detail as you're able to. Can you cull the values that show up in that story? What identifiers help to lock in how you were feeling?

**Peak Experience:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Who was there?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**What was going on?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**How was I feeling?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**What values are showing up? (i.e., freedom, luxury, ease, justice)** \_\_\_\_\_

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## What else?

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If you're feeling stuck for values, consider the list below. Keep in mind that it's not a shopping list for you to "purchase" from. Some words will sing to your soul (resonance) and some will feel flat (dissonance).

Resonance = you; dissonance = someone else. Variety, spice of life and all of that.

This values list is merely a guide and it's certainly not exhaustive, so add your own words as well. (i.e., luxe, verve...some made up word that makes perfect sense to only you.)

|                    |                    |                 |                       |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Accomplishment     | Accountability     | Achievement     | Accuracy              |
| Adventure          | Beauty             | Calm            | Challenge             |
| Change             | Cleanliness        | Collaboration   | Commitment            |
| Communication      | Community          | Competence      | Competition           |
| Concern for others | Connection         | Content         | Continuous improv't   |
| Cooperation        | Coordination       | Creativity      | Customer satisfaction |
| Decisiveness       | Delight of being   | Democracy       | Discipline            |
| Discovery          | Diversity          | Ease of Use     | Efficiency            |
| Equality           | Excellence         | Fairness        | Faith                 |
| Faithfulness       | Family             | Family feeling  | Flair                 |
| Freedom            | Friendship         | Fun             | Generosity            |
| Good will          | Goodness           | Gratitude       | Hard work             |
| Harmony            | Honesty            | Honour          | Improvement           |
| Independence       | Individuality      | Inner peace     | Innovation            |
| Integrity          | Joy                | Justice         | Knowledge             |
| Leadership         | Love               | Loyalty         | Meaning               |
| Merit              | Money              | Openness        | Patriotism            |
| Peace              | Perfection         | Personal Growth | Pleasure              |
| Power              | Practicality       | Preservation    | Privacy               |
| Progress           | Prosperity, Wealth | Punctuality     | Quality               |
| Quiet              | Regularity         | Reliability     | Resourcefulness       |

|                    |                   |                  |                 |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Respect for others | Responsiveness    | Results-oriented | Rule of Law     |
| Safety             | Satisfying others | Security         | Self-givingness |
| Self-reliance      | Self-thinking     | Service          | Simplicity      |
| Skill              | Solving Problems  | Speed            | Spirituality    |
| Stability          | Standardization   | Status           | Strength        |
| Success            | Systemization     | Teamwork         | Timeliness      |
| Tolerance          | Tradition         | Transparency     | Tranquility     |
| Trust              | Truth             | Unity            | Wisdom          |

So now you know what some of your top values are. (There are a couple of other exercises that can help you get clear on them as well – [click here](#) if you haven't already). Pretty cool, huh?

So now what?

Well, now you have a reference point to validate why you're feeling what you're feeling. If you're pissed off about traffic, maybe your value of freedom is being trampled on and a new way of getting to the office is in order. Can't stand your boss and have never been clear why? Maybe her bulldozing ways clash with your value of collaboration.

How well are you honouring your values?

Pick the top 10 that really speak to you. (If you named fewer than 10, don't make up a story about that. As you become more and more versed in knowing your values, they'll show up.) Now, assign a number from 0-10 stating how well you think each value is being honoured in your life right now (0 being, well, zero and 10 being the highest...this value is top of mind and is already being honoured in pretty much all that you do).

| Value | Rating |
|-------|--------|
| 1     |        |
| 2     |        |
| 3     |        |
| 4     |        |
| 5     |        |

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 6  |  |
| 7  |  |
| 8  |  |
| 9  |  |
| 10 |  |

Are you noticing which ones could use a little attention? \_\_\_\_\_

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Now that you know which values are begging to be noticed, consider what making them a higher priority might give you. For instance, let's say your value of freedom has been taking a beating of late. Now, let's say you decide in this moment to turn the light on make honouring your freedom a higher priority. **What will that give you? What will feel different?** (*Admittedly, this is a biiiiig question, AND an important one, so please sit with it.*)

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**What steps will you take towards embracing them more fully?** For instance, as I write this, I see that my value of performance has been taking a back seat to others of late.

**What will I do?**

I'll find some more speaking gigs that are aligned with my other values (rather than speaking

for speaking sake). Consider enrolling in that Second City class I've always been curious about. And definitely get back in touch with those producers about that TV Show.

Action follows clarity.

*Joyfully so.*

What will YOU do? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Now, far be it for me to say which values are right (none) and which values are wrong (none). I could write VOLUMES about each and every last value. I have chosen to share my beliefs about which values I am finding are supercharged and **hotlinked** to joy. For **ME**.

Gratitude.

Generosity.

Connection.

## Gratitude

A while ago, I was chatting with a dear friend at our gym about happy people and unhappy people. Noticing that some people gravitate towards happiness regardless of what's showing up in life (like my Mom) while others seem unhappy regardless of circumstance. Also noticing the correlation between happiness and success. More often than not, successful people started out happy, and that the inverse is not necessarily true.

Gratitude is not  
only the greatest  
of virtues, but  
the parent of all  
the others.

~ Cicero

To which my friend asked me: “how does one BECOME happy”?

I responded: “I think it starts with [gratitude](#).”

(I TOTALLY see how pretentious that is that I quote myself and yet, it really is a good answer).

Have you ever noticed that? That the successful people you admire seem to be grateful for what they have (and here, the operative word is [ADMIRE](#))? There is a link.

**Don't know where to begin? Allow me.**

It's hard to be joyful when the richness of your life is shrouded with drudgery. It's hard to be joyful when you are focused on the misery of your commute, the interest rates you pay on your credit cards, the heavy snow you need to shovel.

Try this on. You have a car. A job you're commuting to. Money to pay the bills. A back that's strong enough to shovel your walkway. Not to mention that you HAVE a walkway to shovel in the first place.

Chances are good if you are reading this, you have light to read by, you CAN read, and that if it was sent to you, then someone loves you enough to spread some joy your way. Give thanks, please.

Now, don't get me wrong. It's more than a simple parlour trick of switching your perspective. It takes some practice, patience, perseverance and dedication, but give 'er!

**You just may become positively addicted.**

Final note on this: that same day I was chatting with my friend at the gym, I received this message from another friend, a newspaper reporter, writing from Haiti a year after the devastating quake ravaged the land and lives of millions there:

***Big, terrible day in Haiti. Voices of survivors singing hymns still waft into my window. Be grateful for your families, jobs, homes and friends.***

Okay.

Now. How might you find more ways to infuse some gratitude in your day?

Is it a journaling exercise you do before you fall asleep, ensuring sweet and love-filled dreams?  
Is it a morning practice of meditation devoted to all the gifts you have? Is it saying grace before you eat to give thanks to a higher power?

Is it something else?

**State it here:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Then do it.

Thank you. I for one am grateful.

Practice gratitude,  
but aspire to  
elevate your  
amateur status  
to pro.

## Generosity

Generosity's a funny thing. I happen to believe that it makes the world go 'round (that and... what's that other thing? Oh right, love<sup>1</sup>). My world, in any case. Then again, I've been charged with being [generous to a fault](#).

I also happen to believe (and am willing to bet) that those same happy, grateful people you admire ALSO tend to be generous. Am I right? Thought so. You see, they've learned the SECRET (not THAT "secret"...the OTHER one). **Generosity expands: hearts, minds, and bottom lines.** So, I'll take my chances with the peanut gallery and their well-meaning

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<sup>1</sup> During the production of this eBook, my almost seven-year-old daughter noted:  
"We need money to survive and love to thrive." Feel THAT resonance?

“compliments” and continue to dig a little deeper. Indeed, I have “miles to go before I sleep.”

**Now, back to glorious YOU!**

You have gifts, talents and super powers. Many, MANY of them. And they are all yours to [give away](#). Do you know what they are? Here’s a super simple exercise:

**What do people thank you for? (This really is your personal brand of genius).**

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You have this in such abundance, you don’t even see how rare and precious it is. And it is. **So how might you spread it around?**

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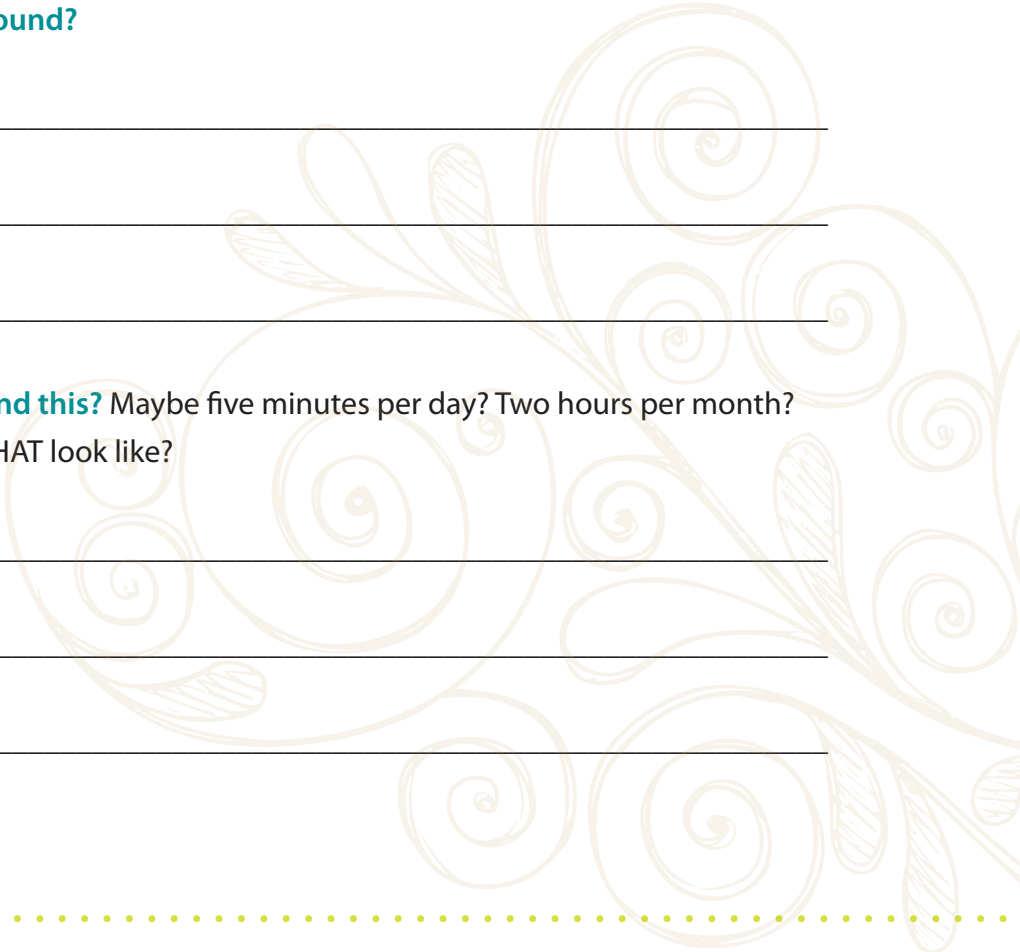
**Can you create a practice around this?** Maybe five minutes per day? Two hours per month? A week per year? What might THAT look like?

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Generosity is not giving me that which I need more than you do, but it is giving me that which you need more than I do.  
~ Kahlil Gibran



**What else do you have to share?** Money, time, expertise, love, attention, yourself, compliments (you know...the really heart-felt kind), [Hope Notes](#)?

Whatever it might be, please give it with abandon. And see what happens.

I promise you'll get it ALLLLLLL back, and then some.

Oh, and one more thing on this topic. Please find a way to be generous with YOURSELF. You're doing some damned fine work. Woo yourSELF. Win yourself over. There's massive joy to be found in being generous to you too.

**How will you be generous with yourself this week?**

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Can't spread it around if you're running on empty, so fuel up.  
**Vroom VROOM.**

## Connection

Ah...connection. Such richness in this word. For some, it's a meeting/linking/joining of minds. For others body. And for others still, soul.

At the epicenter of this lusciousness, of course, is relationship. How we relate to one another, how we treat one another, and how we commune.

How do you want to FEEL in your relationships? Good? Held? Invoked? Beautiful? Heard? Challenged? Called forth?

I do it for the joy it brings  
because I'm a joyful girl  
because the world  
owes me nothing  
and we owe each other  
the world  
I do it because it's  
the least I can do  
I do it because  
I learned it from you  
and I do it just because  
I want to

~ Ani DiFranco

Surround yourself with people who make you feel THAT. You do? FABULOUS!!!

Now...**is there anyone in your life that isn't making the grade?** Anyone taking the energy AWAY from you? Makes you feel less like YOU? \_\_\_\_\_

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Consider what you want to do about that. Why are they in your life in the first place? Can you rid yourself of them? Or deal with them differently? **What might addressing them give you?**

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That's hard stuff. And cathartic. Breathe.

***Ahhhh. Space.***

In my corporate advertising/marketing days, I had a kind of a velvet rope policy about who could get through to me no matter what was going on in the office. This doesn't seem like such a big deal now with iPhones etc, but back in the day, it was pretty much unheard of. In any case, my assistant and the receptionist knew that (for instance) my mother could ALWAYS get through to me. NO MATTER WHAT.

I recall one such time: I was in the middle of a client meeting when the receptionist came in the boardroom to tell me that my mother was on the phone. I took the call...she wanted to tell me about the most beautiful butterfly she had just seen that alighted on her coffee mug in the back garden. Sheer wonder and joy in her voice. And gratitude too...for the beauty of the moment, and for me being there to help hold it.

**I'll never, ever regret taking that call.**

Do you have a “velvet rope” policy? Maybe now’s a good time to establish one, huh?

**Who gets to be on the IT list?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Who ELSE are your people?** (Maybe not the interrupting-a-client-pitch people, but vital nonetheless) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Who loves you unconditionally?** Who can you count on to help you hide the evidence?

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**Who can you turn to to give you the straight goods—whether or not you might want to receive them?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Who can always make you laugh?** \_\_\_\_\_

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Who can make you cry (even if you're not a crier) because they matter just that much?

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Those are your soul-people. Cherish them. Tell them you do. Sincerely and often.

Which leads me to...

## Acknowledgement

Acknowledgments are [gifts](#). How are you with giving and receiving them as such?

### ***Giving***

Yes, the giving is a little like the generosity piece we've already looked at, but there is another level to be explored.

By truly acknowledging someone, you are daring to look inside them, really seeing them and telling them what you see. For the purpose of sharing your truth and inspiring the same in them.

Someone I love ([Kelly Diels](#)) recently wrote some generous words about me and my writing on Twitter. Traffic to my blog spiked that day by 300 per cent. Because I wasn't raised in a barn, I thanked her. But I know what really landed with her was my comment: "You are an influencer. I just want you to know that".

Totally my truth. And I reckon it made her stand a little taller in her heels, seen in her role as influencer.

Not comfortable doing so in person? What about a phone call? A card in the mail would can also do wonders (eCards, not so much).

**Who in your life have you been meaning to acknowledge and why?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Whatchagonna do about it? By when?** \_\_\_\_\_

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### ***Receiving***

'Tis indeed better to give than to receive. Mostly because we are LOUSY at receiving graciously: compliments, gifts and acknowledgments.

Let them in anyways, freely and gratefully. They were lovingly meant for you and you alone. They are not to be scrutinized and they may not feel like your truth. Believe that they are someone else's. Accept graciously.

How might you ramp up your efforts to truly see someone and tell them what you see? Time to write out some thank you notes? How about picking up the phone and calling that person who told you fifteen years ago that you light up a room? Tell them how often you think of that acknowledgment. How it still makes you smile. And how it still moves you.

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### ***Doesn't that feel good?***

Now, please don't forget to thank someone for a solid acknowledgment. *I'm going to take my own advice on that one. It's time.*

## Being with what is. Now.

[I struggled to write this eBook](#). This confounded me given how much I wanted to EXPRESS my thoughts from my heart (as I wrote in the intro). Confounded and frustrated. I mean, really... I am struggling with writing about JOY? What the hell is THAT about?

I got some good coaching around what some blockages may be about. All sane, rational and sensible and YET... it wasn't enough to open things up.

Then the lovely and lustrous [Carrie Klassen](#) (who designed the gorgeousness of the cover) asked me about what Mom liked and loved. She knew about butterflies because I had told her the boardroom story. "What else did your Mom love?," she asked.

I wrote it all out. Lillies-of-the-Valley. MacIntosh apples. The potential of travelling in India. Butter yellow paint AND salmon-coloured walls. I found myself absolutely sobbing by the end of that email. For a good long while.

I hadn't realized that I had so much wrapped up in this. How important it really felt to me. How much I miss my Mom.

***Release. Sadness yielding to joy.***

The walls we build around us to keep out  
the sadness also keep out the joy.  
~ Jim Rohn

I sat down to write the first draft of this eBook in one day.

Having trouble with these thought-starters? Don't give up. Instead, address your own blockages, openly and honestly.

**What simply won't go away?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**What are you trying so damned hard to keep out?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Did you have the same answer to the last two questions?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**What might it be costing you?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**What do you choose to do about it?** \_\_\_\_\_

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## Lest we forget: levity

Yeah...it feels like time for some levity. You know: fun. Do you ever MAKE TIME for it? Get "serious" about it?

Like, have you ever grabbed a kid and skipped down the block (I HIGHLY recommend this one). Tried laughter yoga? Taken a [brain-cation](#)? No?

If not laughter, then what? Bliss? Amazement? Ecstasy? Delight? Frisson? Delirium? Jubilation? Enchantment? Festivity? Nostalgia? Contentment? Curiosity? Glory? Sparkle? Giddiness? Euphoria? Rapture?

Gateways to joy, all of them.

Baby, it's time.

**What will you do to intentionally bring it on (and in)?** \_\_\_\_\_

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## Closing the Circle: A Final Word About Joy

Remember how often you have postponed minding your interest, and let slip those opportunities the gods have given you. It is now high time to consider what sort of world you are part of, and from what kind of governor of it you are descended; that you have a set period assigned you to act in, and unless you improve it to brighten and compose your thoughts, it will quickly run off with you, and be lost beyond recovery.

~ Marcus Aurelius

Sounds like mercenary Marcus (he WAS a Stoic Philosopher, after all) and I are of the same opinion. No sense in postponing anything.

Least of all joy.

Find it now. It's everywhere. Seize it. Then share it.

***When you wish someone joy, you wish them peace, love, prosperity and happiness... all good things. – Maya Angelou***

**I wish you joy.**



Photo: Stephen Caissie [www.stephencaissiephoto.com](http://www.stephencaissiephoto.com)

## About Me

I'm a proud Mama, wife, friend, daughter and a former advertising/marketing exec (this comes in handy). I'm also a Certified Professional Co-Active Coach (CPCC) from the Coaches Training Institute. I am the Founder of the Board of Your Life program...a unique blend of coaching and brainstorming. Transformative and thrilling stuff.

As a Business and Life Coach, I help people get crystal clear about what they want for their whole lives. And then we go after it. Maybe we work on finding their THING (more on this in my upcoming eBook...oooh it's gonna be GOOD!). Maybe we bring back that loving feeling to their work—or launch the business they've only dreamt of. Or maybe we bring back that loving feeling to their business. (I do all of the above). My one caveat is that I work exclusively with people who are ready to do the work...and we do goood work. I work with clients for a good time...not a long time, because as Kelly told me, "You're a catalyst, not a therapist, dammit!"

[They](#) say I'm challenging and supportive, passionate and compassionate, inspiring and fierce ("they" are very kind). I say I just really love what I do...don't we all deserve that?

[Contact me](#) to see how we might work together. Or check out my [coaching offerings](#) here.

## Thank You

Can't exactly profess to hold gratitude as a core value of I don't own my own, now can I?

Thank you, Greg. For endless conversations about this eBook. For getting it and helping me to get it out of my heart. For being the best (and least paid) CMO, ever. And for the rest.

Thank you [Carrie and Allie](#). For loving this project into its beauty. It sings because of your design.

Thank you, [Lisa](#), [Jamie](#), [Tia](#), [Leslie](#), [Amy](#), [Jen](#), [Andrea](#), and [Sarah](#). For inspiring and invoking action in me.

Thank you, [Kelly](#). For "what can I do to help?". And for helping.

Thank you, Stine. For the loving support.

Thank you, Pancho. For teaching me the joy inherent in generosity. For showing me that it's the quickest path to richness.

Thank you, Mom. For teaching me your joyful ways and for planting the seed of this project. I adore seeing the same in the babe.

And finally, thank you, YOU. For reading this. For caring enough to access joy in your every day and for the good it does in the world. And it matters. It sooooo matters. Please feel free to spread this eBook around far and wide. It's yours to do so.

Heart's full.

TG