



# The B.L.O.O.M Guide

**(B)**eautiful **(L)**essons **(O)**vercoming **(O)**bstacles **(M)**eaningfully

Paolina Calabro



One year ago today, I was unexpectedly diagnosed with stage 3 colorectal cancer. To read more about my cancer journey you can read [\*\*“Bloom Where You’re Planted: Lessons Learned from My Cancer Journey”\*\*](#).

What follows is my guide of tools that I used as I gained beautiful lessons overcoming obstacles meaningfully, or how I B.L.O.O.M. ed.

I will say that my faith played a big part in helping me navigate my emotions and gaining strength so a lot of the resources are faith based; please note that regardless of what your faith background is, you can get something from at least one of the tools. This guide is for anyone who might need some encouragement.

If through sharing my journey and the tools I used in this guide, one person can be helped, that will be something beautiful to come out of my experience.

Right before I was diagnosed I got incredibly into flowers and gardening, as I hadn’t previously had a green thumb and am not that outdoorsy, I don’t think it was a coincidence this happened. Gardens and flowers are an excellent metaphor for life and its seasons and how everything goes in a circle. Throughout my journey flowers, nature, and gardens have come up repeatedly in subtle and not so subtle ways. When I was diagnosed I decided to plant a flower garden as a visible reminder of hope.

I hope this can be a visible reminder for you or someone else that might need it.



## Getting The Ground Ready: Calling, Purpose, Mind-Set, Creating the Conditions to Thrive:

### **Bible/Faith Studies/Sermons:**

- The Caller and the Called, by Beth Moore
- Be a Pineapple, by Heather Baxter
- Affirmations, by Heather Baxter
  - Why Affirmations in Christ are Important
  - Encouragement for Loneliness
  - Walking Out in Faith and not Fear
- Spring Clean Up, by Heather Baxter
  - Weekly Spiritual Power Wash Checklist
  - Open the Eyes of My Heart
  - Demolishing Strongholds: How to Train Your Mind on What to Think
- Victoria Osteen Sermons: “Be Mindful of the Words You Speak”, “Strengthen Your Inner man”, “Contentment is a Mindset”, “Our Words are Containers of Power”, “Build People Up With Your Words”, “Words Have Creative Power”, “Let’s Have a Positive Attitude”, “Renew Your Mind”, “Re-align Your Focus to Stay on Course”, “Fight Fear and Discouragement with the Word of God”, “I Can”

### **Books: (See Summaries and Key Takeaways below):**

- The Audacity to be Queen, by Gina DeVee
- The 7 Virtues of a Philosopher Queen, by Barb Stegemann
- Believe It, by Jamie Kern Lima
- Fearless Faith & Hustle: 21 Day Devotional, by Arian Simone
- The Soul of Money, by Lynne Twist

### **Sowing Seeds: Dreaming, Planning, Doing**

### **Bible/Faith Studies/Sermons:**

- Dream Out Loud, by Heather Baxter
  - What is a Vision
  - How Do We Respond to Pain and Doubt
  - How Do We Discern the Will of God for Your Life and Dreams
  - The 5 Big Dream Busters Women Face
- VIVID, by Heather Baxter
  - How to Guard our Hearts and Minds
  - 5 Steps to Battle Discouragement



## Manure Happens! Plants Grow in the Dark

### **Bible/Faith Studies/Sermons:**

- Beauty for Ashes, by Heather Baxter
  - Where is God?
  - Where Can You Find Wisdom?
- Girl Get Up!, by Sarah Jakes Roberts
- Wild Woman, by Sarah Jakes Roberts
- Reset for the Revolution, by Sarah Jakes Roberts
- Skin in the Game, by Sarah Jakes Roberts
- Adapted for Purpose, by Sarah Jakes Roberts
- The Tutor and the Test, by Sarah Jakes Roberts

### **Books: (See Summaries and Key Takeaways below):**

- Woman Evolve: Break Up With Your Fears & Revolutionize Your Life, by Sarah Jakes Roberts
- Believe Bigger: Discover the Path to Your Life Purpose, by Marshawn Evans Daniels
- Colliding With Destiny: Finding Hope in the Legacy of Ruth, by Sarah Jakes Roberts



## Getting the Ground Ready: Calling, Purpose, Mind-Set, Creating the Conditions to Thrive.

**“The soil eats, drinks, and breathes, just like we do. What it eats, it also digests. All of this is occurring through a process you can’t see, but I can tell you this: the top of the plant never lies.”** Chasing Vines, by Beth Moore pg. 186

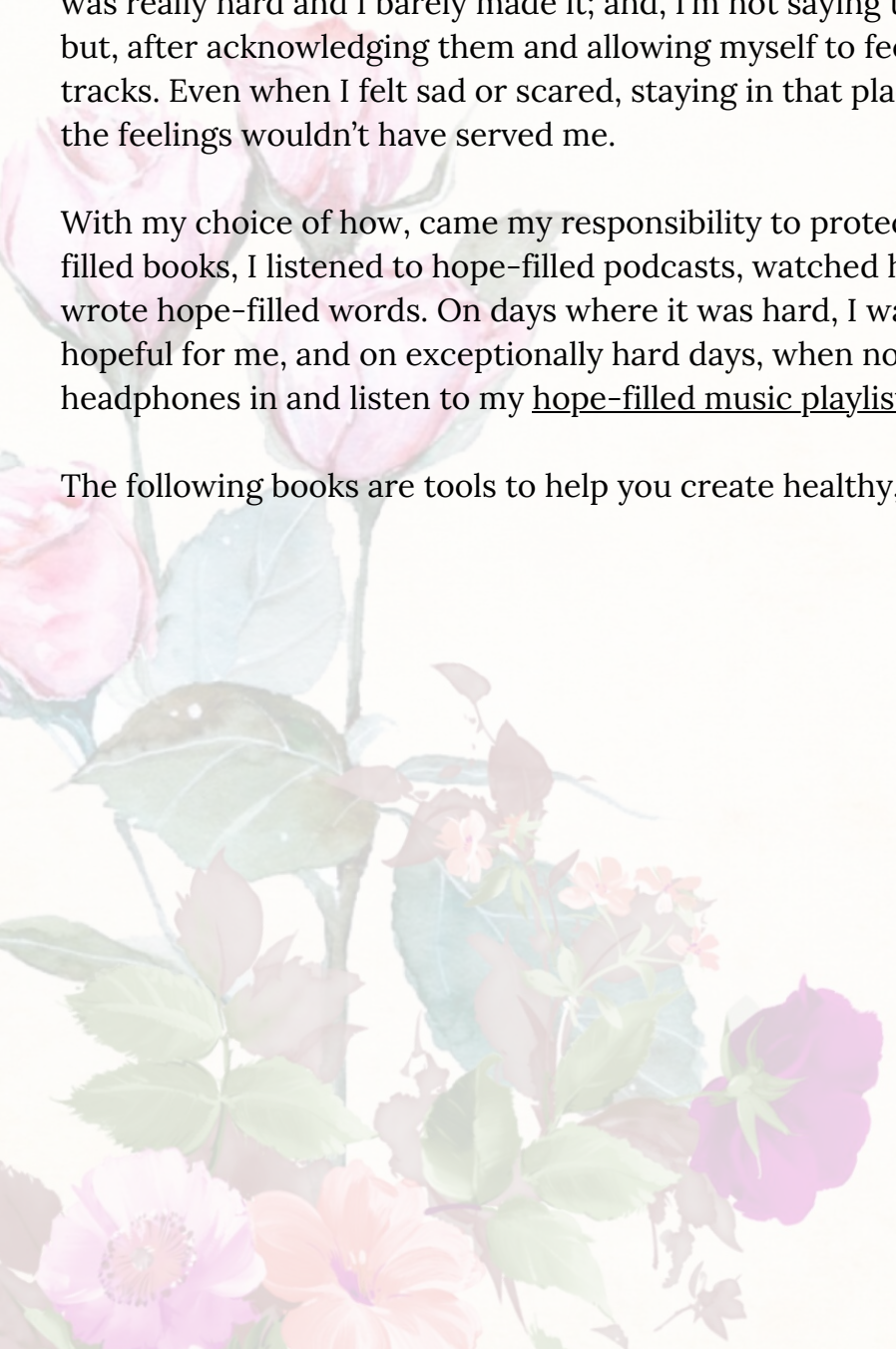
What you feed yourself mentally and spiritually gets digested and affects what grows. You can put a good seed into bad soil and it will not grow properly.

I didn’t have the choice of getting Cancer (the what), but I did have a choice of my how, how was I going to do Cancer? Given my diagnosis, how do I choose to think and act? My choice early on was to allow its presence to make me stronger, braver, kinder, wiser, and more vulnerable and open. Every day I have the blessing to open my eyes, I have a choice to make - to be positive, have hope, faith, and trust.

Now, I’m not saying this was always an easy choice to make; because, some days it wasn’t, some days it was really hard and I barely made it; and, I’m not saying that fear, sadness, and anger...don’t come up; but, after acknowledging them and allowing myself to feel them for a bit, I had to choose to switch tracks. Even when I felt sad or scared, staying in that place was not going to serve me, just as ignoring the feelings wouldn’t have served me.

With my choice of how, came my responsibility to protect my environment and space - I read hope-filled books, I listened to hope-filled podcasts, watched hope filled you-tube videos, and I spoke and wrote hope-filled words. On days where it was hard, I was surrounded by people whose words were hopeful for me, and on exceptionally hard days, when nothing else seemed to help, I would plug my headphones in and listen to my [hope-filled music playlist](#) until it made a difference.

The following books are tools to help you create healthy, good soil.



## **The Audacity to be Queen: The Unapologetic Art of Dreaming Big and Manifesting Your Most Fabulous Life**, by Gina DeVee

### **Summary:**

This book written by Gina DeVee; Founder of Divine Living, a multi-million dollar lifestyle brand and women's empowerment company, as well as a former therapist, with a master's degree in clinical psychology; is inspired by the true story of Queen Esther of Persia (see The Book of Esther in the Bible).

### **My Favourite Key Takeaways:**

The principles and concepts around **Designing Mindset**:

**Entelechy** - The idea that all life forms are naturally and spiritually programmed to thrive. "Entelechy is Aristotle's; the Ancient Greek Philosophers; term for the higher guidance embedded into every living cell, driving it's development." p. 16

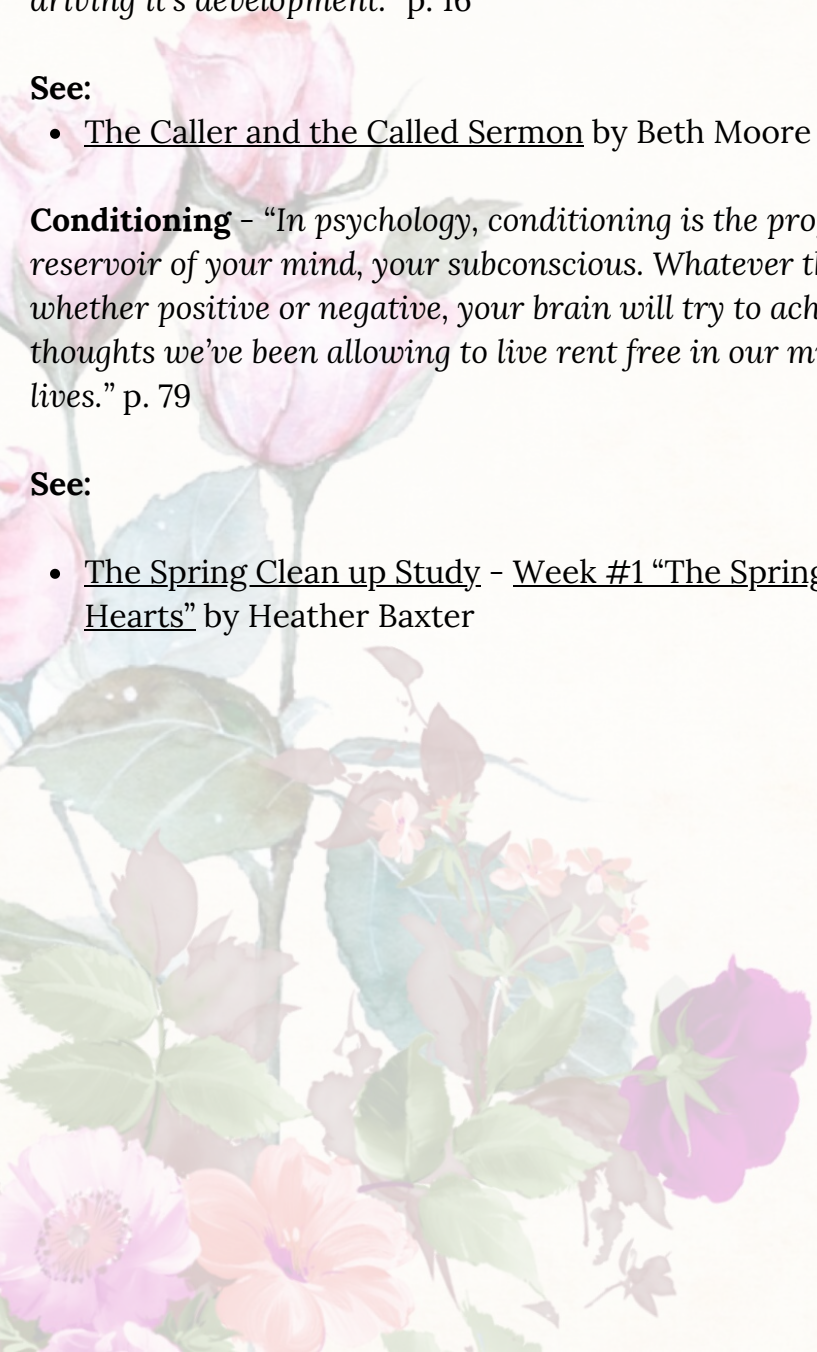
#### **See:**

- The Caller and the Called Sermon by Beth Moore

**Conditioning** - "In psychology, conditioning is the programming that's been embedded in the deepest reservoir of your mind, your subconscious. Whatever thoughts are in your subconscious programming, whether positive or negative, your brain will try to achieve them for you. Until we've become conscious of the thoughts we've been allowing to live rent free in our minds, we're not fully able to direct the outcomes in our lives." p. 79

#### **See:**

- The Spring Clean up Study - Week #1 "The Spring Checklist" and Week #2 "Open the Eyes of Our Hearts" by Heather Baxter



**Dasein** - “German Philosopher, Martin Heidegger, describes this way of existing as “Being in the world” with Dasein, a person transcends the “low-vibe mentality” that leads to an in-authentic life and becomes occupied instead with fulfilling one’s real potential.” p. 117

**See:**

- [“I can” sermon](#) by Victoria Osteen
- [The Spring Clean up Study - Week #3 “Declutter the mind”](#) by Heather Baxter
- [How to Train Your Mind What to Think](#) by Heather Baxter

**Neuroplasticity** - “The brain is moldable, just like soft plastic and it changes over the course of your lifetime as you take in data in the form of thoughts, emotions, behaviours, and experiences...The brain has neurological webbing that can in fact be changed. You can strengthen those pathways through conscious repetition.” p. 136

**Ancient Practice of Mantras:**

“The ancient practice of reciting mantras is one of the most powerful tools in training your brain ...The misunderstanding is that mantras are not meant to be a quick fix remedy to get through challenging times; they’re meant to create deep reprogramming that dramatically influences your life experience.” p. 149

**See:**

- [The Spring Clean up Study - Week #3 “Declutter the Mind”](#) and [Week #4 “Deep Cleaning our Words”](#) by Heather Baxter
- [Affirmations Study](#) by Heather Baxter
- Victoria Osteen Sermons: [“Be Mindful of the Words You Speak”](#), [“Strengthen Your Inner man”](#), [“Contentment is a Mindset”](#), [“Our Words are Containers of Power”](#), [“Build People Up With Your Words”](#), [“Words Have Creative Power”](#), [“Let’s Have a Positive Attitude”](#), [“Renew Your Mind”](#)

**The Maharishi Effect** - “The vibration that we awesome humans create when we get together and align our glorious intentions...when you’re surrounded by others who share your same beliefs and hold the same vision of what’s possible, you access abilities you didn’t even know you had in you.” p. 269

**See:**

- [How to Train Your Mind What to Think](#) by Heather Baxter

**Spirituality as Your Superpower:**

In my cancer journey, faith has played a big part in helping me walk through it, so I appreciate how spirituality is weaved through the book. The tools of prayer, meditation, and Journaling are all tools I use in my relationship with God. To get more information on customizing a daily spiritual workout see the Heather Baxter [VIVID study \(Videos\)](#) in the next section.

**See:**

- [The Spring Clean up Study - Week #2 “Open the Windows of Our Hearts”](#) by Heather Baxter

**Summary:**

This book is the story of Jamie Kern Lima, Founder of It Cosmetics, and her journey of starting her revolutionary makeup and skincare business from her living room to selling the company for more than a billion dollars and becoming the first female CEO of a brand in L'Oreal's 100 + years history and disrupting the beauty industry.

**My Favourite Key Takeaways:**

**The Toolbox** - *“One of the best things I’ve ever done is build a toolbox of things that I can pull from when I get knocked down.”* p.19 A toolbox is filled with stories, messages, quotes, prayers, affirmations... Through my cancer journey I’ve been building my toolbox made up of my War Binder (see Heather Baxter [Dream Out Loud Study](#) and [Videos](#)), my soul music playlist, podcasts, and a list of sermons from YouTube. On the hardest days, I just plug my headphones in and listen.

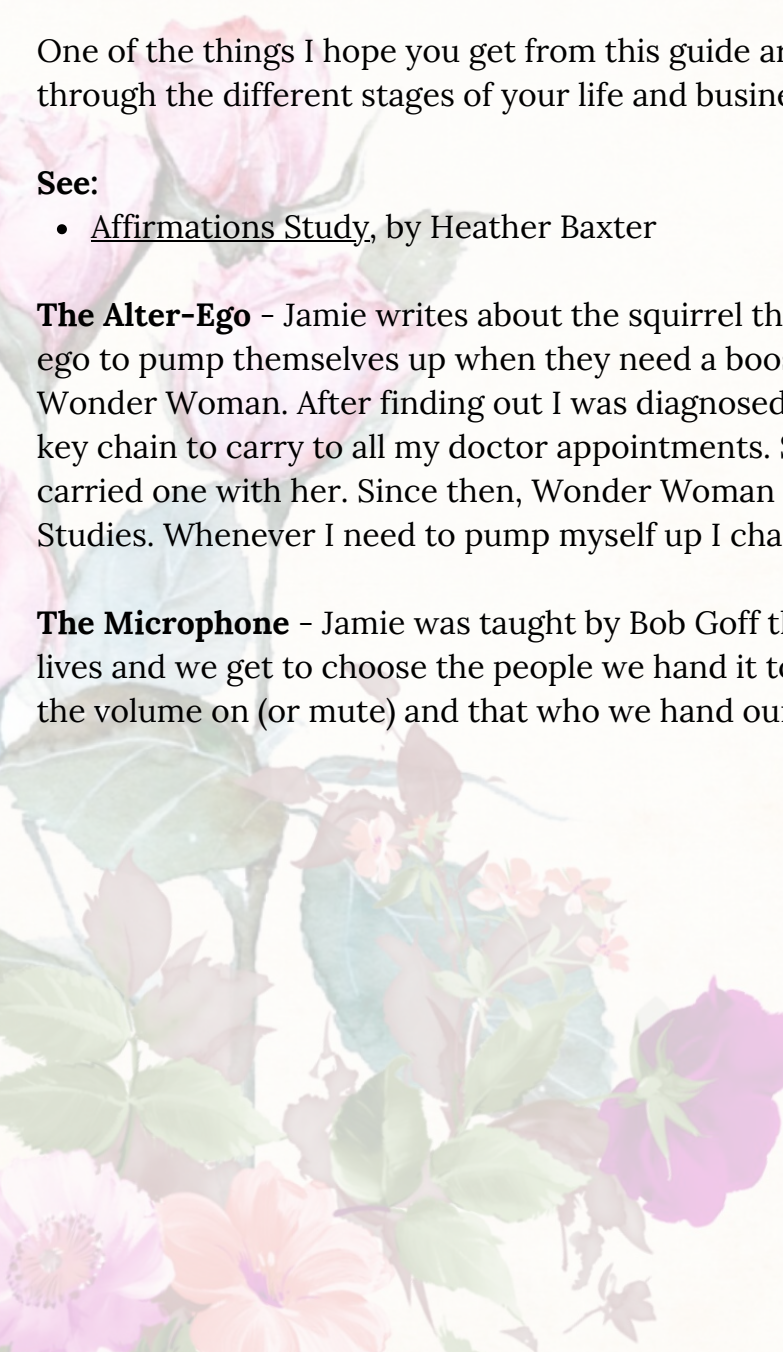
One of the things I hope you get from this guide are tools for your toolbox that you can lean on through the different stages of your life and business to stay encouraged.

**See:**

- [Affirmations Study](#), by Heather Baxter

**The Alter-Ego** - Jamie writes about the squirrel that she and her friend Natasha channel as their alter ego to pump themselves up when they need a boost (p.73). This got me thinking about my alter-ego, Wonder Woman. After finding out I was diagnosed with Cancer, a friend gave me a Wonder Woman key chain to carry to all my doctor appointments. She's been through some similar experiences and carried one with her. Since then, Wonder Woman has popped up multiple times in the Heather Baxter Studies. Whenever I need to pump myself up I channel Wonder Woman.

**The Microphone** - Jamie was taught by Bob Goff that we all have a microphone that we control in our lives and we get to choose the people we hand it to, who to amplify the volume on, and who to lower the volume on (or mute) and that who we hand our microphones to can change everything. p.92





Jamie writes, "If your intuition tells you that a friend, partner, or family member doesn't see your goals and dreams with the helpful perspective you need, don't actively seek their advice. Don't hand them the microphone on that topic. Love them from a new, healthier boundary...If you aren't surrounded by the kind of support you need, be open to adding some new people to your circle who can help you strive to be the best version of yourself and who you can do the same for. When someone operates at a higher vibration than you, you can feel it, and they're a good person to ask to speak into your microphone when you need good advice in that area." p.94-95

She also writes, "When you give what you need, it's a way of using your own microphone to uplift others. It's also incredibly powerful when we turn up the volume on the right people and right words, whether it's in the form of helpful advice, valuable ideas, or inspiring and uplifting moments...This practice, of turning up the volume on the positive things that empower us, is like creating a playlist of positivity that we can keep in our toolbox for the days we need it." p. 214

### **See:**

- The Spring Clean up Study - Week #3 "Declutter the Mind" and Week #4 "Deep Cleaning our Words" by Heather Baxter
- How to Train Your Mind What to Think by Heather Baxter
- How to Speak Affirmations by Heather Baxter
- Victoria Osteen Sermons: "Be Mindful of the Words You Speak", "Strengthen Your Inner man", "Contentment is a Mindset", "Our Words are Containers of Power", "Build People Up With Your Words", "Words Have Creative Power", "Let's Have a Positive Attitude", "Renew Your Mind"

### **The Power That is You?**

The subject of a major speech Jamie gave was focused on the question - what will you do with the power that is you? She writes, "It's a question we have the gift of being able to ask ourselves each and every morning when we wake up and open our eyes, will we use our energy and power to be liked, or to be brave? To take risks, or to play it safe? To challenge the status quo, or to numb out in the comforts of our surroundings?" p. 167

### **See:**

- The Caller and the Called Sermon by Beth Moore
- The Pineapple Study by Heather Baxter

### **Something Has to Give**

"The price of anything is the amount of life you exchange for it" - Henry David Thoreau

Jamie writes about an encounter she had with a very successful woman, where she asks her about if she spends energy worrying about and being insecure about her body, weight, and appearance, as she's found so many other successful women have. The response she got was "No", "something has to give and something had to give". Jamie writes, "Because the things we focus on come at the price of other things that we then can't give our time/energy/focus to..Think about the things we focus on that take our time, energy, and

hard-earned money that don't serve our souls, dreams, health and well-being, or others." p. 203

**Automatic Thermostat** - This concept looks at how we value self-worth, using the analogy of the automatic thermostat - where Jamie writes, "we have a base temperature (our base self-worth), and anytime we achieve something that's above what we think we deserve ( a higher temperature) we sabotage it (automatically bring the temperature back down to base level). Similarly, anytime we're given something that's less than we deserve ( a lower temperature), we find a way to improve it (automatically bring the temperature back up to base level)." p. 262-263

**Social Media Edit** - Jamie writes,

"We each choose who shows up in our social media feeds, and we choose with free will to follow the people we follow. And when we follow someone online, it also means we're making the choice to fill our own energy with what that person subscribes to, from what they find funny to how they define success and worthiness. Every so often I like to do an inventory of the people I'm following, and just take a moment to pause and ask myself if I like the way it makes me feel after I see their content. Does it inspire me, uplift me, and fill my soul? Or does it tempt me to feel inadequate, empty, and unworthy? Edit who you're following often so you curate the kind of energy and impact you bring into your life. This also helps protect your peace, your positivity, and your potential!" p. 223

**See:**

- How to Train Your Mind What to Think by Heather Baxter

I really enjoyed this book and have it highlighted and tabbed all over.

**The Soul of Money: Transforming Your Relationship with Money and Life**, by Lynne Twist

**Summary:**

This is one of my favourite books about stewardship and I've read it multiple times; however, for the sake of this guide I'm focusing on what Lynne says about the power of words because I think it's extremely important in getting your ground ready and creating the conditions to thrive.

**Key Takeaways:**

**The Power of Words:** Lynne writes,

"We think we live in the world. We think we live in a set of circumstances, but we don't. We live in our conversation about the world and our circumstances. When we're in a conversation about fear and terror, about revenge and anger and retribution, jealousy and envy and comparison, then that is the world we inhabit. If we're in a conversation about possibility, a conversation about gratitude and appreciation for the things in front of us, then that's the world we inhabit.

*I used to think that the words we say simply represent our inner thoughts expressed. Experience has taught me that it is also true that the words we say create our thoughts and our experience, and even our world. The conversation we have with ourselves and with others - the thoughts that grip our attention - has enormous power over how we feel, what we experience, and how we see the world in that moment.” P. 208-209*

Lynne also writes,

*“We can’t always change the circumstances that surround us, but we can choose the conversation we generate about them. In a world of thorns, a culture where there’s not enough, more is better, and that’s just the way it is dominates the conversation. We have no choice but to walk in that world, but we can wrap our feet in leather, so to speak. Without denying or being blind to things that aren’t working, we still can turn our attention to those aspects of life where we thrive and prosper, and make that conversation the context of our journey. We can choose our words and create new “life sentences” p. 219*

**See:**

- The Spring Clean up Study - Week #3 “Declutter the Mind” and Week #4 “Deep Cleaning our Words” by Heather Baxter
- How to Train Your Mind What to Think by Heather Baxter
- Affirmations Study, by Heather Baxter
- Victoria Osteen Sermons: “Be Mindful of the Words You Speak”, “Strengthen Your Inner man”, “Contentment is a Mindset”, “Our Words are Containers of Power”, “Build People Up With Your Words”, “Words Have Creative Power”, “ Let’s Have a Positive Attitude”, “Renew Your Mind”

**Fearless Faith + Hustle: A 21-Day Devotional Journey for the Fun Fly Fabulous Female Entrepreneur,**  
by Arian Simone

**Summary:**

Arian Simone, is an entrepreneur, philanthropist, investor, best-selling author, international speaker, and PR & marketing specialist. She co-founded and operates the Fearless Fund, a venture capital fund investing in women of color led startup companies.

This book came about in response to her being asked regularly what her morning routine is, Arian decided to package up her morning routine into a 21-day devotional where each day has a scripture, a story, a prayer based on the scripture, declarations based on the scripture, and an exercise. Throughout the book there are stories of other faith-based entrepreneurs.

To hear more about the book and Arian, watch her on Sister Circle.

I'm not an entrepreneur; but, I am a blogger/content creator that develops and creates as well as a Finance professional, I still find this book extremely useful, especially as I am at the stage of my journey where I'm getting ready to go back to work, after having spent quite some time away in treatment, surgery, and recovery. As I get ready to go back, tools like this help me to get the ground ready for my next phase.

### My Favourite Key Takeaways:

I love how easy it is to incorporate the daily devotional into your morning routine. It gives you the scripture, prayer, and declaration so you can use those and it's another exhibit on how you can create your own.

### **See:**

- Affirmations Study, by Heather Baxter

### **The 7 Virtues of a Philosopher Queen, A Woman's Guide to Living & Leading in an Illogical World,** by Barb Stegemann

### Summary:

This book is about living life in a philosophical direction and living out in daily practice the seven virtues of - wonder, balance, truth, courage, justice, wisdom, and beauty.

### My Key Takeaways:

In terms of my journey, I'm focusing on wonder, truth, and wisdom and sharing the quotes/tools that really helped me.

### **Chapter 1: Wonder:**

*"When we make the choice to wonder instead of doubt or judge, we immediately diverge and travel the path toward living with honour while allowing those around us to live with dignity" - p.32*

I believe faith is a form of wonder and as I've stated previously, it is definitely one of the biggest things that has gotten me through this journey.

The book outlines daily practices that help cultivate a sense of wonder, some of which are:

- Letting go of your old ideas
- Seeking out wisdom and mentorship
- Knowledge over opinion
- Controlling your media
- Begin to ask "What if?"
- Make "I wonder" statements
- Identify where and what situations naturally put you in a reflective state.

*“To wonder is to ask great questions of yourself - and that is philosophy in action.” p. 51*

### **Chapter 3 Truth:**

#### **The triple filter test:**

This is used to filter what you hear or are tempted to repeat as rumor or gossip, but I also think it is useful for thoughts. Before allowing any thought to settle in your mind or soul ask yourself this:

Is the thought:

- True
- Good (as in embodies goodness)
- Useful

If it's none of these three don't let the thought settle, as it's not in service to you, it's an unproductive thought.

#### **Existentialism:**

- Existentialism is about choosing to interpret your circumstances
- You have the fullest freedom to interpret your experiences
- We build ourselves out of our experiences and circumstances
- You are not solely formed by your experiences - you are formed by the meaning you give those experiences

**People Check In (who do you surround yourself with?):** Do you surround yourself with people who:

- Support you in your goals
- Get excited about your accomplishments
- Challenge you to be the greatest human you can be
- Have high expectations of you and applaud you when you meet them
- Make you laugh
- Are there for you when you need them
- Back you up when in a challenging situation or unfair confrontation
- Listen to you
- Find joy in your company

*“The meaning you give both your experiences and the people with whom you surround yourself will dramatically shape you and affect your outcomes” p. 117*

See:

- How to Train Your Mind What to Think by Heather Baxter
- Affirmations Study, by Heather Baxter
- Victoria Osteen Sermons: “Be Mindful of the Words You Speak”, “Strengthen Your Inner man”, “Contentment is a Mindset”, “Our Words are Containers of Power”, “Build People Up With Your Words”, “Words Have Creative Power”, “Let's Have a Positive Attitude”, “Renew Your Mind”

## Chapter 6: Wisdom

In chapter 6 of the book, Barb offers her **10 Steps to Visualization** p. 200-206:

1. Keep your eye on your goal - see it, visualize it, and it will happen
2. Know there are only 2 things that can stop you from realizing your dreams - Fear & yourself
3. In order to visualize long-term success, you need to see how every day presents opportunities to get you to your next goal
4. Share your dreams with others
5. Find Mentors:
  - a. A mentor inspires you
  - b. A mentor connects you with their vast network
  - c. A mentor cares about you and supports you in achieving success and joy
6. Get an education
7. Take note of the people that inspire you and their experiences
8. Treat everyone with the same amount of respect
9. CEOs and Leaders were often nerds
10. Never stop being a student and a teacher

### See:

- Dream out Loud, by Heather Baxter

### Personal Meditations:

*"In the opening of The Meditations, Marcus Aurelius wrote about whom he had learned from and what he was grateful for. Because of this conscious exercise, he was able to focus upon his strengths and talents." p. 213*

The back of the book offers a template for writing out your personal meditations, you can write out as many as you want, the form is:

From \_\_\_\_\_, I learned: Then write out what you learned. Ex. From my mom, I learned; From my dad, I learned; from my challenges, I learned...

### Sowing Seeds - Dreaming, Planning, Doing

When you're in a valley dreaming gives you hope. The HB Ministry and these bible studies came into my life when I needed them the most, when I was feeling the most sick from my treatments. At first, all I could do was listen to the videos, gather my supplies and then in moments when I felt okay start to slowly put the pieces together. I started with my word for the year - "Victory" and then pulled together my little vision board. My goal for the year was to develop a healthy strategy for dealing with my cancer journey, putting together daily practices that would help my internal mental and spiritual environment to thrive. Every day, to the best of my ability that day, depending on how I felt, I worked toward that goal and in doing so felt hopeful about getting to my Victory. One foot in front of the other, step by step, day by day.

**See:**

- Dream Out Loud, by Heather Baxter
- VIVID, by Heather Baxter

**Manure Happens! Plants Grow in the Dark**

*“You are rooted in a cylinder of soil, and for that soil to be good and fertile ground where you can flourish, it must be a mass of all manner of organic matter: bacteria, algae, fungi, yeasts, protozoa, bugs, earthworms, and the like.*

*Imagine it. If you are planted in really rich soil, that means one little teaspoon holds millions of microbes. It also produces ample evidence of both life and death. In other words, all of it matters. Even unwanted endings. Even crushing losses. Even death itself.*

*I don't know what your soil looks like at this point in your life, but I'm going to guess that, unless you're among the rarest exceptions, something terrible has happened to you at one point or another. If you have enough years and maturity to get this far in life, your soil already possesses multiple elements that make it fertile - if you're willing to let God use these messy parts to grow you instead of you fighting them off like the most monstrous of foes.*

*Tossed right alongside the teeming life in your soil, death resides - ready, humble, and willing to enrich and increase all that lives.”* Chasing Vines , by Beth Moore pg. 191

Of all the books I've read during my Journey, the books in this section spoke to me the most, I suppose it's because when I first was diagnosed with the cancer, I made the choice early on to allow its presence to make me stronger, braver, kinder, wiser, and more vulnerable and open, and these books showed me how, how to let the pain make me better instead of bitter, and how I could use it to help someone else.

**Woman Evolve: Break Up With Your Fears & Revolutionize Your Life**, by Sarah Jakes Roberts

**Summary:**

Get this book, I love it. I wish I could share everything in it. I have so many notes but I will just have to focus on sharing a few key things.

This book is about coming out of struggle, whether self-inflicted or not, and coming out better than when you started.

## Some Key Takeaways:

### **Chapter 2 Know Better:**

#### **Know Your Environment:**

*“Trust in the unknown is not the result of having answers to every question that plagues your mind. Trust in the unknown is a belief that progress and unanswered questions can coexist.” p. 8/21*

*“The process from thought to seed to fruit is a cycle. The environment determines whether the cycle benefits or destroys us.” p. 8/21*

### **Chapter 3 Eyes Wide Open:**

How to prepare ourselves for the next batch of things to come, that we were never meant to see: p. 7-25/26:

1. **Control (and Replace):** Incubate what you allow yourself to see. *“When what you subject yourself to plays a role in who you become, you become more diligent about protecting yourself from what you - see, read, and listen to.”*
2. **Contain (and Embrace):** *“What do we do with the moments that invade the bubble we’re creating? Organize and place your thoughts and emotions in appropriately sized containers with accurate labels, and ASK: I wonder what good could come of this.”*
3. **Compare (and Release):** *“It’s about stretching your faith to look beyond your perspective on your situation and circumstances and daring to ask God to show what he sees.”*

### **Chapter 5 Work the Wait:**

**Be Purposeful:** p. 6-7/19

**“Purpose is the sustenance you offer to the world.”** It happens in Steps:

1. **Agree:** *“agreeing isn’t about knowing what you’ll become, but that you’re here to become.”*
2. **Protect:** *“Because you’re not sure what you’re becoming, you must be sure to protect your environment from any habit, friendship, relationship, or opportunity that could stunt your growth.”*
3. **Nurture:** *“You will know that something is nurturing your seed when it begins to cut through the fears and insecurities and begins to motivate and empower you.”*

*“Your ultimate purpose may not be evident to you now, but how are you making where you are now purposeful?”*



## Chapter 9 Set It In Motion:

*"I wonder if you could be like Eve when it comes to your seed. I wonder if you could make a decision that just because the seeds you produced in the past didn't become what you had in mind, you won't allow that to keep you from producing seed." p. 14/19*

*"I believe that in every woman is an Eve and a Mary. There's a version of us who knows better but doesn't always do better. Then there's the version of us who has enough faith to say yes to whatever God asks her to do." p. 18/19*

## Chapter 11 Wild Woman:

*"You need to mark the spots in your habits and routines that allow you to feel most aligned with the highest version of yourself. When you finally know where your place is, it gets easier and easier to return there." p. 11/19*

### See:

- Beauty for Ashes, by Heather Baxter
- Girl Get Up!, by Sarah Jake Roberts
- Wild Woman, by Sarah Jake Roberts
- Reset for the Revolution, by Sarah Jake Roberts
- Skin in the Game, by Sarah Jake Roberts

**Believe Bigger: Discover the Path to Your Life Purpose**, by Marshawn Evans Daniels

### Summary:

Get this book, It's another book I love. When I was in the hospital for my second surgery, I was reading a magazine and came across an article by Marshawn entitled "Embracing Disruption: An Invitation to Believe Bigger". This article really helped me and I knew I had to get her book. Marshawn's a woman after my own heart, with her use of acronyms.

Again, I have a notebook full of notes but I'm just going to give a high level summary of the book with a few of my favourite quotes.

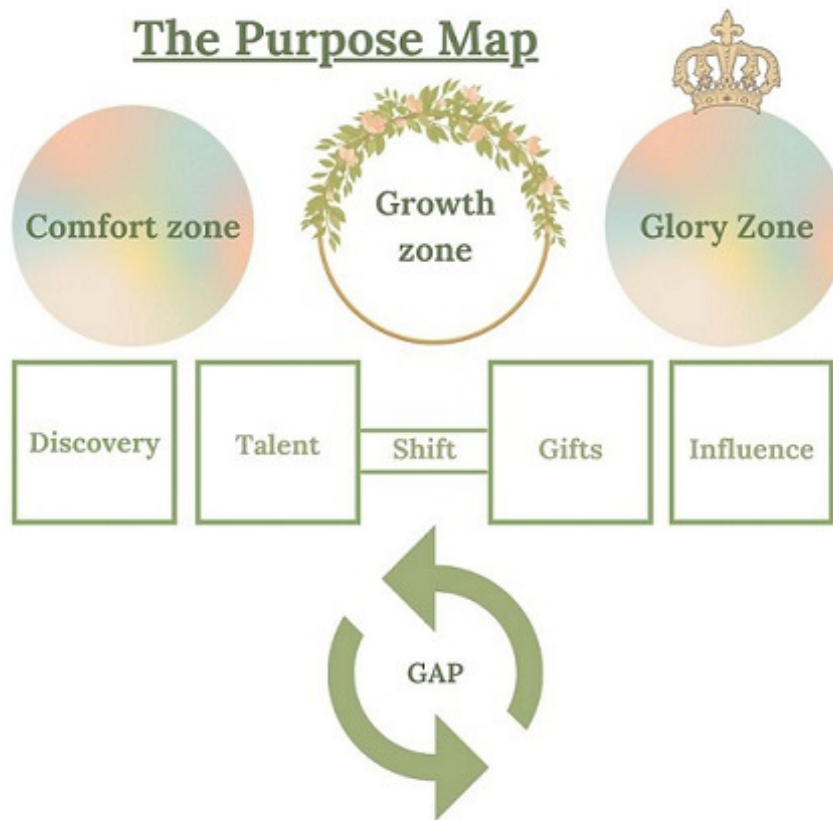
### **Some Key Takeaways:**

#### **Part One Awaken: Disruption is the Invitation**

The particular item that made me want to read this book was Marshawn's description of what she calls a "split-rock-moment", *"one that intentionally strips, strengthens, steers, and supplies us for greater purpose."* This made me think that my cancer was my split-rock-moment.

The book goes through what Marshawn calls *"The Purpose Map"*, the 5 life stages of divine re-invention, it's a process:

## The Purpose Map



### **Part Two Align:**

#### **The Comfort Zone:**

##### **Chapter 4: Stage One Discovery**

This is the stage where we ask ourselves, “Who am I supposed to be?” “It’s where we learn what we like, what’s possible, how the world works, and what to believe about ourselves, we discover who we think we are” p. 1/26

##### **Chapter 6: Stage Two Talent**

This is the stage where we ask ourselves, “Who did I decide to be?” “It’s where we turn our beliefs about where we think we belong into choices that set us on a particular path.”

#### **The Growth Zone:**

##### **Chapter 8: Stage Three The GAP**

This is the stage where we ask ourselves, “What’s happening to me?” “The GAP is a place of transition. A place in-between where you’ve been and who you’re called to be. That place is probably extremely uncomfortable, because you’re no longer in control.” p. 4/52

This is where I found myself.

“The GAP is like a classroom that teaches you to live at a higher level and in a higher frequency...one capable of attracting what you need and accelerating who you truly are. On the other side of the GAP you’ll learn to activate your voice, gifts, and influence, but this time is about paying attention, unlearning, and discerning what new season God is calling you to enter.” p. 13/52

## **Chapter 11: Stage Four Gifts**

This is the stage where we ask ourselves, “How did God really design me?” “It’s where we find our voice and discover our super powers.”

“Gifts are given to you but are not for you. Gifts are meant to be given...the power in your gift is activated in the giving. That’s where the transfer happens and that’s why we find our calling when we’re in motion, not in contemplation.” p. 15

## **Chapter 13: Stage Five Influence**

This is the stage where we ask ourselves, “Where is God now sending me?” “Purpose is about influence, or it’s about nothing at all.”

“Leadership is about moving others forward by offering our wisdom, gifts, voice, and presence. We can lead where we are now by embracing the core essence of who we are as our life mission.” p. 32/57

There are so many gems in this book, I cannot tell you how highly I think of this as a life tool.

### **See:**

- Beauty for Ashes, by Heather Baxter
- Girl Get Up!, by Sarah Jake Roberts
- Wild Woman, by Sarah Jake Roberts
- Reset for the Revolution, by Sarah Jake Roberts
- Skin in the Game, by Sarah Jake Roberts

**Colliding With Destiny: Finding Hope in the Legacy of Ruth**, by Sarah Jakes Roberts

### **Summary:**

This book was so good. It breaks down the Book of Ruth into bite sized lessons along with Sarah’s story and has Journal prompts and a prayer for each section. I thought it was well written and found it extremely inspiring. Again every chapter had something I want to share but I’m just going to keep it to a few quotes that really meant a lot to me.

### **Some Key Takeaways:**

#### **Chapter 1: Life Doesn’t Always Go as Planned:**

“The things that cause us the most pain are usually the roots that develop our true purpose.”

#### **Chapter 5: Stick With What You Know:**

“But it’s okay for things not to be okay. When life makes us start over, we must do it in a safe place. Never be so prideful that you miss a chance to be vulnerable with those who know you. There’s something special about being able to show someone your scars.”

## **Chapter 6: Do What You Can:**

*“When you face limitations, focus on what you still have and what you still can accomplish. It may not seem like much, but you never know how your seeds planted today might blossom tomorrow...Limitations only limit you if you let them. Instead, let them make you more creative, resourceful, and determined in pursuit of your dreams.”*

## **Chapter 7: You Never Know Who’s Watching:**

*“You never know what giving up on yourself teaches others about you. Be careful, especially in trials, to govern your actions with grace and hope.”*

## **Chapter 13: Extra Protection:**

*“How can we lose and gain at the same time? By making the loss serve our future.”*

## **Chapter 14: The Beginning of the End:**

*“We must bury the old dreams that can no longer come to pass in order for new ones to be planted and take root.”*

## **Chapter 15: It’s Time to Try Again:**

*“It’s a choice of the will to illuminate the darkness of grief with a spark of hope. These moments are when the real seeds of our future are planted.”*

## **Chapter 29: It’s Not About You:**

*“Only those who care to see my scars will understand that the blessing did not come without wounds and that I did all I could to survive.”*

### **See:**

- Beauty for Ashes, by Heather Baxter
- Girl Get Up!, by Sarah Jake Roberts
- Wild Woman, by Sarah Jake Roberts
- Reset for the Revolution, by Sarah Jake Roberts
- Skin in the Game, by Sarah Jake Roberts

***“The remaining question - and no small one, at that - is not whether we have what it takes to be extraordinarily fruitful but whether we’re willing to expose our tender roots to the odd concoction of life and death that makes us grow.”*** - Chasing Vines, by Beth Moore p. 192



**Beautifully Broken**

By: Paolina Calabro

Beautifully broken,  
Words I've not spoken,  
The scars on my skin,  
Proof of the battles I win.

Like a seed that you sow,  
In the dark, I break and I grow.

Like a rose in bloom,  
The breaks made room,  
Letting the light shine through  
Giving me strength I never knew.

Words I've not spoken; but,  
I'm more beautiful for having been broken.