

PICKING UP THE PIECES

The Guidebook for Women to Rebuild,
Renew, & Rediscover Themselves



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Picking Up the Pieces Guidebook
The Ultimate Woman's Guide to Starting Over

Dedication

This book is dedicated to my two little men – William and Ethan who continually inspire me to be a better woman so I can be THE best mom to them.

Acknowledgment

There are so many people in my life who have contributed to this guidebook. Every single person, circumstance, situation, obstacle, opportunity, etc, was all part of creating my vision for a woman's curriculum and a woman's foundation. But there is one person who has been the catalyst of making this guidebook possible by his mentorship and belief in me. He is a man of integrity, a man of his word, a man who has built his success from the bottom, a man who taught me what authenticity and self worth is all about, a man who showed me my greatness, a man who focuses on accountability and results, he is my mentor who I call my "Mr. Miyagi McG". He broke me from living in the shadows of my past mistakes and reminded me of my purpose in this world. And I am very grateful he is in my life.

Preface

The original Picking up the Pieces Curriculum is designed for women who have been through a traumatic event or crisis. The definition of a traumatic event or crisis can vary from each person's experience; it is an event in someone's life where she may have digressed from her current journey, or she has fallen into a negative downward spiral of self destruction, or she has hit rock bottom and does not know what else to do. Therefore, a traumatic situation or crisis can range from various experiences (i.e. - breaking up with a boyfriend, financial hardship, losing a job, relocating, divorce, losing a child or loved one, etc). Statistics have shown that once a person experiences a traumatic situation, he/she creates various emotions and develops coping skills based on that traumatic situation and can then respond the same way when another traumatic situation occurs. For this reason, it's imperative that people understand and work through their traumatic or crisis situation. The Picking Up the Pieces Curriculum is based on real life experiences and studies from various disciplines, theories, principles, and research. The curriculum is to serve as a course of study for women to pick up the pieces from their traumatic event, to rebuild their lives, to redefine their whole being, and to empower themselves to live the life they deserve and desire to live.

Intro to the Introduction - PLEASE READ!

The purpose of this guidebook is to provide you with tangible information and resources that will assist you in picking up the pieces of your life. The information in this guidebook may not be for every woman who has experienced adversity, but I can guarantee that every woman can benefit from at least one part of this guidebook in which they can apply to any aspect of their life. Therefore, if nothing in this introduction or my story resonates or connects with you, do not read on or do not buy the book; you'll be wasting your time. However, if you find that the introduction and my story can help any part of your life, then please read on. But in order to get maximized results from the information shared with you, I only ask that you:

- 1) be open and teachable to the information;
- 2) be patient with the process and the life phase that you are in;
- 3) be honest with yourself as you go through the various exercises in this guidebook

Introduction

The Picking up the Pieces Guidebook was created as an introduction for women to understand what it takes to rebuild their lives and to live the life they desire. This guidebook serves as a reminder that we are all on our journey of self-realization and self-actualization, but there are times in our journey where we make mistakes, use poor judgment, worry about what others think of us, try to please all the people in our lives and live a life not authentic to our true being.

So, who is this guidebook really for? It is for the woman who wants to learn how to have an amazing life. It is for the woman who may have hit rock bottom or fallen away from her success path. It is for the woman who has felt pain, loss, guilt, fear and wants to learn healthy ways of coping with life. It is for the woman who believes and respects herself. It is for the woman who is willing to make changes in her life so that she can attain the results she desires. It is for the woman who wants the generations after her to live a greater, fulfilling, prosperous life.

“A strong woman believes that she’s strong enough to face her journey...but a woman of strength has faith that it is in this journey that she will become strong.”

- Anonymous

So here is part of my story and if you really want to know how I picked up the pieces of my life, you have to read my book *Her Voice Within*.

My life wasn't horrible, I don't have horrific childhood stories; I actually had a pretty "normal" life considering what normal was – divorced parents, raised by a single mom, financial stress, working hard for a better life, etc. But growing up as a child, I was confused about my life, I had "daddy" issues, I was a rebellious teen, and I was angry at

my parents and I knew in my heart that the life I had was not the life I wanted to live when I became an adult. I wanted the so-called “American Dream” because I believed that would lead me to my happily ever after.

So at age 25, I started living the “American Dream,” I just got married, I finished my Masters degree in Educational Psychology, I got *the* big house in the suburbs, I got a great paying career as a high school counselor, and then had two sons two years apart. But then at age 32, I realized my “American Dream” was leaving me feeling empty, unhappy, and lost. I didn't want to be with my husband anymore. I was resentful that my body was destroyed with stretch marks and cellulite because of having two kids. I was exhausted with working an emotionally draining job and coming home to tend to the family. I felt I completely lost myself between managing the career, the marriage and the kids. I was so depleted and pissed at the so-called “American Dream” that all I wanted to do was escape, but I didn't know how. So I reverted back to my rebellious teenage coping skills of smoking, drinking, doing recreational drugs, and being very loose with my choices and actions. I was spiraling downwards and felt trapped like a caged bird trying to flap its clipped wings. And that is when I self sabotaged my whole life by using my unhealthy coping skills and poor judgment decisions which resulted in one major life changing event by having a so called “inappropriate relationship” with one of my students in which I had to resign from my career, go through a criminal investigation process and public scrutiny, battle an ugly divorce process and fight for my rights as a mom. It was the most devastating experience of my life. But my traumatic situation was a self induced trauma because I didn't have healthy coping skills that allowed me to deal with the unhappiness and confusion of my life.

So why did I risk everything when it seemed like I had everything? Because I realized that I was chasing “the dream” that wasn't mine. I've recognized along the way that most of us live our lives based on what we perceive life is supposed to be, which is based on many outside variables (i.e. family, friends, media, etc). But what we often forget to do as we strive to accomplish life, the career, the education, the status, the relationships, the material world; we often forget to check in with our innermost self, the true core of our being that gives us that butterfly feeling or that thrill of freedom and excitement when we do activities that are aligned with our true self. By the time most of us are of adult years, we are so disconnected with that inner self that we begin living life on autopilot as we accomplish our goals.

So why listen to me and read this guidebook that reveals the eight principles to not only pick up the pieces of your life but also live the life you desire? Because it is through living my own disillusion and fantasy of a life, then self sabotaging my life, my marriage, my career not only because I was not fulfilled in my life, but I didn't have healthy coping skills. And then having to pick myself up from the bottom, rebuild my confidence, forgive myself, make amends with people I hurt, redefine my who I am; this is why you should listen to me. I am far from perfect and have fallen many times throughout my

journey, but now I am courageous enough to live through my mistakes, face them, take responsibility for them and make the necessary changes to truly live the life meant for me. And I want to share it with other women.

Therefore, I am confident that everything in this guidebook and my curriculum will help any woman wherever she is in her life journey to pick up the pieces and create the life she wants for herself.

Journal Entry - December 9, 2010

The Opportunity....

Some may perceive my life as messy or as regret for any past mistakes. I view my life as I am given a blessing...an opportunity to face my issues, heal my wounds, recreate my mind, body, soul for it's purpose, to live a life filled with love, peace, compassion, humility, adventure, creativity, and wholeness. Some work a lifetime to get this opportunity, but i got it now & I've got a lifetime to embrace it & share it with the world.

THE 8 PRINCIPLES OF PICKING UP THE PIECES

♥ Surviving the 'SURVIVAL MODE'

♥ SELF IMAGE

♥ SUCCESS RULES

♥ FAILURE HAPPENS

♥ MONEY TALK

♥ HEALTHY BODY, HEALTHY MIND, HEALTHY SOUL

♥ DISCOVERING YOUR PASSION

♥ LIVING YOUR PURPOSE

Surviving the ‘SURVIVAL MODE’

“You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them.”

– Maya Angelou

The first component of Picking up the Pieces is getting through the SURVIVAL MODE. But in order to get through it, you have to understand it and in order to understand it, you must go through it.

So what happens when you first experience a traumatic or crisis situation? Your mindset and thought process go into “survival mode.” Trauma is a deeply distressing or disturbing experience. Survival is the state or fact of continuing to live or exist in spite of difficult circumstances. Therefore, when you experience a trauma and go into survival mode, realistically, you only have two options; which is to lay flat on the floor and let the trauma run you down OR pick yourself up and move forward. And most times, our minds want to move forward because it’s the logical thing to do, but our emotions are so heavy that all we want to do is give up.

So how do you deal with that daunting feeling of defeat?

The answer is simple, but it’s not easy. You have to focus on making at least one step towards moving forward each day, even if it’s just getting out of bed and going for a short walk or answering the phone call from a friend or eating breakfast.

Do you ever wonder why mammals have the greatest chance of survival in the animal kingdom?

Mammals have a greater chance of survival because they can adapt to changes in their environment.

And when you go into survival mode, it’s crucial that you adapt to your changing environment.

Being in survival mode just means you are in a phase of organizing your thought process, healing some of your wounds, and recalibrating your focus. A traumatic or crisis situation doesn’t define you, therefore, don’t get comfortable in The Survival Mode and settle with just getting by in your life just because your plans didn’t go the way you expected.

Remember you are in survival mode because there was a crisis or traumatic event that happened in your life that detracted you from your journey. When a crisis or traumatic event happens in your life, it usually means a loss of some part of your life. Therefore, it is important to understand the basics of the grieving process as you will go through many emotional fluctuations during the ‘Survival Mode’ phase.

You will experience these emotions and this thought process:

- Denial – “Did this really happen to me?”
- Anger – “Why the heck did this happen to me?”
- Bargaining – “Please bring back what I lost and I promise I will.....”
- Depression – “My life sucks, what’s the point”
- Acceptance – “I am at peace with what happened and I forgive myself and others”

The “survival mode” is not a one time phase that comes once in your life, it is a mode that can be revisited often throughout your picking up the pieces journey when traumatic or crisis situations occur. But if you truly get acquainted with what survival looks like, then it will not be a daunting experience as it would just be a passing occurrence of getting to your next phase of rebuilding.

Ideally, when you go into survival mode, you should have an emergency plan, kind of like an evacuation plan of some sort like when a natural disaster occurs. But of course if you are reading this guidebook, and this is your first traumatic type of situation, you are probably thinking “oh crap!” Well not to worry, most people don’t have an emergency plan in the first place, hence why most people are more susceptible to go into “survival mode” over and over again and more often than necessary.

So if you were to have an emergency plan for your survival mode, this is what it would look like:

The Do’s

- Be sure to surround yourself with two types of people – 1) the people who truly have your back and will tell you anything you want to hear; 2) the people who truly have your back and will tell you the truth about yourself and about your situation even if it hurts.
- Stay in action, keep doing different positive activities that take your mind off the crisis situation -- get into action of dealing with your crisis situation (at least one at a time) keep busy.
- Share your burdens and fears with others whom you trust (if you think you don’t have anyone, then write in your journal).
- Be sure to ask for help when you need it, but know the difference between getting help and being helpless.
- Get yourself an accountability partner (more on this later).
- Stay connected to your spiritual core and your spiritual foundation (more on this later).
- Remove the people and things that don't serve you moving forward. If they were part of you falling down, then you probably should not have them part of your ‘survival mode’ phase.

- Prioritize your activities, focus on the activities that will keep you alive first (the basic needs).
- Let people help you even if you feel bad that people are helping you.
- Start the process of forgiving yourself and others.
- Minimize your lifestyle and expenses immediately.

The Don'ts

- Do not date or fall into a romantic relationship while in the survival mode, it will confuse and clutter your mind.
- Don't isolate yourself for long periods of time.
- Don't shut people out of your life even though you may be embarrassed of your situation.
- Don't play the victim in your life and situation; take immediate responsibility for your actions and get real with it.
- Don't live in fear or hold on to the guilt.

Friends change when you go through a traumatic or crisis situation. And most times, it's during these adverse situations when you will discover the value and strength of your relationships. But depending on your situation, some friends will stay by your side, others will not.

But either way your friendships sway, do not take it personal and remember that it's not about you but rather a reflection of that person's fears or inability to handle your crisis situation.

Journal Entry – March 30, 2010

As I try to get myself out of bed, my eyes are burning & tired from crying the day before & I have lack of sleep. Before going to bed last night, I was tired, so I thought it would be easy to fall asleep. But this spiritual rehab & cleansing I'm going through is the toughest part ever, it's like I'm realizing so many things about myself, about my journey, about my life. And then it gets a little confusing because now it becomes a "now what". And I guess as I plead with God & I have my conversations with him, I ask him for the guidance & answer to the question "now what" & I just need to listen to his guidance. The main thing is I don't want to get down on myself or get more depressed with myself because of my past or because of the choices I made. I don't wanna keep punishing myself for it. So I guess I got to await God's plan & my Pastor 's guidance for me?

The challenge is that I'm in complete survival mode and it's hard to focus on the vision or on the life I want to have when I can't even live the life I have now. But I guess that's my challenge is the recreating of Roselyn from all facets & all parts of my life & despite that it's the most uncomfortable part of my life, I gotta face it.

And the kids' situation is the hardest part to deal with right now. The challenge of seeing them has become a huge obstacle that I don't even know how to deal with anymore. I'm

trying not to let the pain of it all get the best of me, i'm trying to look at it as the time away from the kids is to build myself up in all parts of my life. I have to believe God has it all planned out for me.

I've committed to apply to 7 jobs today. I actually wrote that on my "to do list" last night which is now going to be one of my "walking in purpose" tasks every night before I go to bed. It'll keep me focused, but also it'll force me to deal with things I'm trying to avoid. And I guess that's another task is trying to figure out why I avoid certain things. I think I'm avoiding some of these financial responsibilities because I don't have the money, so what am I supposed to do. But yet I need to put these responsibilities in the fore front as a way to get to my vision, as a way to get through this overwhelming obstacle. God is on my side, He's protecting me. I got to stop beating myself up & let go of my mistakes. But how when certain things keep reminding me of my poor judgment mistakes.

If you are in the midst of the survival mode while reading this, you may find the rest of the 7 principles of this guidebook not to make sense as you are just trying to get your basic needs met, therefore, feel free to stop here and when you are ready, begin reading the rest of the book. But just know and trust that you will get out of the survival mode, that it is temporary, and everything will work out.

If you really feel stuck in this survival mode and would like further information and resources to help with your basic survival needs, please send an email to: 40ActsofSelfLove@gmail.com.

SELF IMAGE

"Maybe the past is like an anchor holding us back. Maybe, you have to let go of who you were to become who you will be."

- Candace Bushnell

Who Am I? - What is my self image of myself?

When you look in the mirror, who do you see? Do you see a woman of greatness, of beauty, of love and compassion? Or do you see a woman full of flaws, mistakes, and fear?

Journal Entry - February 16, 2011

Mirror, mirror on the wall, what exactly am I supposed to see...because when I look at myself I wonder who am I supposed to be.

A woman, a mom, a friend, an entrepreneur..... a warrior, a creator, a counselor, a motivator.....a fighter, a survivor, a lover, a nurturer..... But sometimes all I see is a being full of error.

As I seek clarity within myself, the mirror serves as a blessing and a curse.

At times, I see the woman full of success.....other times, I see the woman full of failures.....but most times I see an angelic soul trying to bless a world full of anger, hatred, deceit & pain made up of many lost souls.

And so I ask the mirror... is that really me - the angelic soul trying to be the lightor am I the lost soul looking for the light. Either which soul I choose to be, I welcome the pain or the glory of transformation & illumination.... so that I can truly understand the world....and become the woman I'm supposed to be.

When I started going to therapy right at the midst of the divorce battle and my career fall, I remember reading the following poem and it made me realize that despite all my flaws, despite that my life was turned upside down, despite that I was so confused.... I am still OKAY:

Self-Esteem ***by Virginia Satir***

I AM ME

*In all the world, there is no one else exactly like me
Everything that comes out of me is authentically me
because I alone chose it - I own everything about me
My body, my feelings, my mouth, my voice, all my actions,
whether they be to others or to myself - I own my fantasies,
my dreams, my hopes, my fears - I own all my triumphs and
successes, all my failures and mistakes - Because I own all of
Me, I can become intimately acquainted with me - by so doing
I can love me and be friendly with me in all my parts - I know*

*there are aspects about myself that puzzle me, and other aspects that I do not know - but as long as I am friendly and loving to myself, I can courageously and hopefully look for solutions to the puzzles and for ways to find out more about me - However I look and sound, whatever I say and do, and whatever I think and feel at a given moment in time is authentically Me - If later some parts of how I looked, sounded, thought and felt, turn out to be unfitting, I can discard that which is unfitting, keep the rest, and invent something new for that which I discarded - I can see, hear, feel, think, say, and do. I have the tools to survive, to be close to others, to be productive to make sense and order out of the world of people and things outside of me - I own me, and therefore I can engineer me - I am me and
I AM OKAY*

In general, a woman's self image is perceived by so many factors. Most times our own self image is dictated by the media, through other people's compliments and criticisms and through our relationships with men. Ideally, women should gain their self image through their own eyes and be able to create a beautiful image of oneself, but generally that is not the case and that takes practice. But believe it or not, one of the major factors that truly affects how a woman sees herself is through the eyes of other women - our self image is developed through the comparison of how we see other women and the acknowledgment that other women give us. Have you ever noticed that when another woman (authentically) compliments your hair, make up, clothes, accessories, etc., you feel great, you feel beautiful, you feel sexy, you feel smart, you feel empowered.

In the journey of creating one's self image, the biggest challenge that impedes your positive development of your self image is the recurring images of all your past mistakes and negative experiences that you allow to play back in your mind. These images are your hang ups and hurts that keep you stuck in moving forward and will make it difficult in picking up the pieces and rebuilding your life. On your life journey as a woman redefining herself, you may want to consider reprogramming how you see yourself. There are multiple ways to do this and it's an ongoing learning process with recreating how you see yourself.

One activity that will help reprogram your self-image is to imagine yourself at 85 years old and take a moment to really imagine how your life is at that age, where you will be full of wisdom and experience. Imagine how you want to look, dress, live and act. And now, write a letter from your 85 year old self to your younger self and what words of encouragement and advice would you give to your younger self about how to live your life.

Another activity to work on your self-image, is to take inventory of yourself and define your strengths and weaknesses. Have others in your life write a list of your strengths and weaknesses and be open to the insight. Do not take it personally as it's only an opinion, but yet keep an open mind that a person may be reflecting how they see you which ultimately stems from your actions and thought process that you are showing to them. So accept the feedback with open ears and notice any underlying patterns of behaviors in which you want to keep or what you want to discard. Keep in mind that the way people see you could also reflect a repeated behavior you keep showing them.

Reprogramming your self-image involves knowing what you want in your life for YOU that serves your greater self and purpose and you must visualize yourself as that woman. As I was rebuilding my self-image, I remember working out with my personal trainer friend Scott Yonehiro and he was working me hard on the spinning bike. It was at the end of the workout and I was so exhausted and ready to give up and he made me visualize myself riding the bike up a hill where at the top was the woman I wanted to be. And I remember seeing myself full of light, vitality and inner peace and she kept encouraging me to push forward and get to the top of the mountain and at that moment, I realized how powerful it is to visualize the woman that you want to be, not just to get through a grueling workout, but every day in your journey.

The vital ingredient that activates your positive self-image is getting your edge back. What is edge? It is that exuberant energy you exhibit when you walk in a room and everyone notices your presence.

*insert session with Katie when I realized I needed to get my edge back

* insert thought from cinthia regarding not feeling bad for looking good.

As you are rebuilding your life and your self-image, be aware of moments when you feel desperate especially during the survival mode. Desperation breeds contempt and devalues your self worth and if you keep being desperate in your actions, you will stay in the SURVIVAL MODE.

If you would like to hear more about other resources, activities, retreats and programs that can give you insight to your self image and help you in redefining your self image, please go to www.40ActsofSelfLove.com and click on Book a Free Consultation Session.

SUCCESS RULES

“A successful woman takes the bricks the devil throws at her and uses them to lay a firm foundation!”

~ Nishan Panwar

What defines SUCCESS? Is success determined by the money you make, save or invest? Or is success determined by the fame you achieve? Is it based on your education background or the people you know? Is success about having dreams, goals, and working towards them every day of your life? Success can be all of these. Success is defined by YOU and only YOU.

As a woman, we carry many elements of our success formula because of the various roles we naturally attain throughout life. We want to be successful in our career, jobs or education. We want to be successful as a wife, mom, partner, sister, friend. Whatever you define as your success; being successful is not just about “getting there”, it truly is about the journey, it is about the person you become and the habits you develop as you reach your success. No matter what you desire in life, in order to be successful at it, you must acquire success habits and a mindset that nurtures your success journey.

What are some of the success habits that have been used by some of the most successful people throughout history? Here are some proven success habits and techniques:

- live in gratitude – write a weekly gratitude list of who and what you are thankful for.
- put money consistently into your savings – it could be 10% of your income or just start with \$10 a week to get into the habit.
- have an accountability partner – if there is an area of your life that you want to improve, find someone who will hold you accountable and put you in check when you follow through with what you do or do not do.
- get a mentor who has been where you have been and has the success that you want.
- be teachable – allow every person and circumstance as a learning moment.
- have some faith – trust that everything will work out in the end.
- BELIEVE in yourself

Surrounding yourself with positive, healthy, like minded people who have the life you want is imperative for your success. Every now and then, you will have to do some ‘spring cleaning’ of the people and circumstances in your life. Of course there are some people in your life that you can’t completely get rid of, but you can minimize the time you spend with people who do not serve your greater purpose and value in life. Ultimately, you need to get rid of the Energy Drainers in your life.

So who are the Energy Drainers?

- someone who depletes energy from your day by focusing on the trivial, mundane aspects life (AKA – gossipers, complainers, people who play the victim)
- someone who takes away the love and joy from your heart
- someone who attacks your soul and spirit
- someone who puts you down instead of putting you up
- someone who constantly lies to you or deceits you
- someone who has an ulterior motive but masks their intentions with using your strengths against you.
- someone who lights up the room as soon as they leave it.

Journal Entry – April 26, 2011

Dear Energy Drainers,

“Energy Drainers, please move to the side, you’re blocking my path to success. My compassionate heart understands that you may be blocked on your road to success because of your ego, pride and anger towards life (which by the way is really your inner self) which prevents you from moving forward, but there’s an expiration date on energy drainers in my life, so don’t mind if I politely push you off my road.”

Love, Roselyn

The Energy Drainers exist everywhere in your world, so there’s no getting rid of them completely, but you have the choice to allow them (or not) to steal your joy, your peace, your dreams, your hopes, and your future.

Putting some of these success habits into place will take some time, self awareness, and a lot of practice. But if you truly want to rebuild your life, it requires that you change some areas of your life so that you can create the success path you desire. What I’ve learned in my picking up the pieces journey is that it’s not just what we want that makes us successful, it is who we are that makes us successful.

To receive further information of these success secrets, please send an email to 40ActsofSelfLove@gmail.com.

FAILURE HAPPENS

*“Good habits are the key to success. Bad habits are the unlocked door to failure.”
~ Og Mandino*

Ever wonder where life went wrong? Or do you ever question why you haven't reached your goal when you followed the “plan” or instructions? Or do you ever say “why does this [insert unfortunate situation here] happen to me?”

It could be that you just have a severe case of the failure habits. Feel free to find out if you have failure habits by taking a quick quiz, go to this [article](#) to find out more. Don't worry, this doesn't mean you are a failure, it is to make you aware of the habits that may be getting in the way of your true success. It doesn't matter if you practice all the success habits in the previous chapter if you continue to keep repeating your failure habits; ultimately the failure habits will eventually sabotage your success.

As you are picking up the pieces of your life and as you evaluate the situation you are in, you may want to ask yourself if you did anything to cause the traumatic event or crisis situation. Of course there are other situations such as a death of a loved one that may not be something you caused, but you still have a choice in how you respond to that loss. It is necessary to get acquainted with your failure habits because this will prevent the number of times you fall back into survival mode. Falling back into the survival mode too many times can make you comfortable with just surviving and limit you from your true success and living the life you want.

What are some typical failure habits?

- making excuses
- having pity parties
- procrastination
- breaking agreements with yourself or others
- being unteachable
- blaming others
- start many projects and not finish any
- mind clutter/being overwhelmed
- over thinking/over analyzing
- indecisiveness – not knowing what you want and not able to make decisions
- consistent use of mind altering substances
- overindulging in any type of activity
- living in fear, guilt or shame
- lack of self-discipline
- holding on to past hurts
- negative thinking
- lack of vision, imagination, or creativity

- having no control of your emotions or reactions

An effective way to determine some of your failure habits is take a look at the results in your life, look at the people you surround yourself, the cleanliness & organization of your house and car, take a look at your finances, your health – what common denominator keeps replaying in your life that could be an indicator of a failure habit.

Failure is not necessarily a bad thing nor is it something that should be avoided. Actually, most successful people will admit that their success was achieved through many moments of failing. However, there is a difference between failing, getting back up, moving forward or repeating the same failure mistakes and expecting a different result. The danger zone with repeating the same failure habit is it will keep you in the survival mode or keep you from taking your life to the next level of success.

As a woman, we tend to carry a lot of burden in our life as we tend to become overly concerned with everyone in our life. Naturally, we were created to nurture others, which sometimes makes us want to do a lot for others and we become more apt to bend over backwards for people in our life. And there are moments when we are overwhelmed and cannot do all that we want to do which therein lies the tremendous feeling of guilt. And being overwhelmed and constantly feeling guilt puts us in a mindset that is contrary to our success.

Journal Entry - Jan 16, 2011

Today I wake up with a heavy heart. I don't know what it is or why. Don't know if it's because I haven't seen my kids this weekend. Don't know if it's because I got so much stuff on my plate. Don't know if it's because of specific issues, like I went back on my word with my trainer today with working out. Or because I got into it with my boss about the business & perception of how things are handled. Or because I gotta finish & pay for traffic school. Or because I got a lot of little tasks to accomplish like do laundry & not sure how i'm going to fit it in. Or because I didn't go to church this weekend. Or because I'm not sure what I should feel about the guys I'm dating. Or maybe it's finances I'm anxious about. Or because I want to be physically healthy so I want to maintain my exercise & eating regimen, but time & money is a factor. Or because I just want to "accomplish" so much that I feel like I'm running on a treadmill, but the same issues keep replaying in my life.

MONEY TALK

“While limits and lack follow the one who is scared – health and wealth follow the one who is prepared.”
~ KRS-ONE

In picking up the pieces of your life, you have to understand how money plays an important role in your life and can keep you in either the vicious cycle of the survival mode or it can move you towards living the life you want.

So when we talk about money, what are we really talking about? Are we talking about your salary and how much money you make a year? Are we talking about how to budget your monthly expenses? Are we talking about financial planning, investments, retirement? Or are we talking about how to make, spend, and save money? In this guidebook, we don't touch upon all these topics, but rather this guidebook focuses on how you look at money, how you perceive making it and spending it and how you manage it ultimately affects all parts of your life.

The bottom line with money and in picking up the pieces of your life is:

- are you making enough money?
- are you saving your money?
- are you spending too much money?

But in order to answer these questions accurately, you need to understand your perception of money? What meanings do you have attached to money?

Take an inventory of the statements that go through your mind:

- “money is evil”
- “money is stressful”
- “it's hard to make money”
- “people who have money are mean”
- “I don't need money; just happiness”
- “the economy is so bad, it's hard to make money and save money”
- “it's not about the money, I just want to be happy”
- “I want lots of money”
- “I don't have an education to make more money”
- “I'm too old/too young to make money”
- “I don't know how to make good money”

Most of our understanding of money is based on how we were raised and how our parents presented us with money. Some of us grew up with parents stressing about money or not having much money; some of us grew up with our parents being so giving of money, some of us had to work really hard at a young age for our own money; some of us always had access to money; some of us don't value money. But the fact of the matter is that

money is a universal currency that is so prevalent in our lives whether we want to admit it or not. Therefore, understanding how money impacts your life and the opinions you have about money is vital in picking up the pieces and in rebuilding your life.

You should focus on these basic fundamentals regarding money as you are picking up the pieces of your life:

Minimize your expenses and lifestyle – usually after a major life change or traumatic event occurs in your life, there will be either a decrease of income or an increase of expenses or both, therefore, you will want to reevaluate where you are spending your money. Some of the things you are used to spending your money on (i.e. name brands, accessories, technology, hair, nails, entertainment, etc) may not be necessary as you rebuild your life. This major lifestyle change will be a shock to your ego and you will resist downsizing your lifestyle, but at this point of rebuilding your life, it's all about meeting your basic needs. Overextending yourself in your spending will only keep you in the survival mode.

Find more sources of income – the reality is you may have to make more money in order to get through your rebuilding phase so that you can ease any financial stress you have so you can use your energies to rebuild other areas of your life. Increasing your income can range from picking up another side job, asking for a raise or promotion, or selling some of your belongings that you don't need, or if you have a skill or talent that can be turned into supplemental income.

Create a realistic monthly budget and follow it – I took a course by Dave Ramsey called Financial Peace University. This is where I learned to gain control of my money even when I barely had two nickels to rub together. As I mentioned earlier, the key to rebuilding your life is knowing how much money you make, how much you spend and how much you save, but the underlying factor is your thought process regarding each of these issues.

There are many elements to understanding money, and understanding money is one of the crucial elements of picking up the pieces. The bottom line is that all the money is available to you if you choose, but with great financial gain comes great financial responsibility. If you are interested in hearing how others have made money in any economy and the proven success principles that people use to make money, send an email to 40ActsofSelfLove@gmail.com with the subject MONEY TALK.

HEALTHY BODY, HEALTHY MIND, HEALTHY SOUL

“W.I.S.D.O.M – When I Seriously Decide On More”

Ancronology by ~ SimOne G. Parker

When we think of being healthy, we automatically think it means to be fit and in shape. We want to be a certain weight or wear a specific dress size or look a certain way. When we look in the mirror, we tend to gauge our health based on how we look. There is some truth to that because as we look in the mirror we should be able to see the whole woman from the inside out. But being healthy is much more than how your body looks, it is about nourishing your whole body – mind, body, and soul. There is value in living a healthy lifestyle to produce the results you want in your life. And on your journey of rebuilding – having a healthy body, healthy mind and healthy soul will be the vessel that leads you from feelings of defeat to experiencing the triumph of freedom.

So how do you have a healthy body, healthy mind, and healthy soul? One activity you can do is take a scan of your life. Check out what areas of your life are messier than you prefer. For example, take a look at your living situation, areas of your house, your closet, your car, your bank account, even your junk drawer. How do you actually live your life? Of course this activity is not to remind you of your imperfections, it's merely to reveal how you choose to care for your life. And this will give you the indicator of what area(s) of your life to work on first.

What does it mean to have a HEALTHY BODY?

Simply stated: **FEEL GOOD!**

To a woman, a healthy body means everything to us because when we look in the mirror the first thing we see is the flab or the cellulite or the stretch mark or where gravity has taken over. But a healthy body is more than being skinny or having toned muscles. A healthy body is about eating right and exercise, but it is essential to eat the right foods for your body to fuel it to perform at its optimal level so that you can be productive. There are many diet and weight loss programs out there but it's about putting the right foods in your body for maximum nourishment and strength. And of course maintaining a healthy active regime is vitally important to a healthy body too, but the key is finding the activities that actually motivate you to be active which will lead to more vitality and feeling good.

Why is it important to have a HEALTHY BODY while picking up the pieces of your life?

A healthy body allows you to be active, to keep moving forward, to stay focused on your journey. The worst thing you can do to yourself as you are rebuilding your life is to get stuck and become inactive because it will put you right back into the SURVIVAL MODE.

What are some activities for a HEALTHY BODY?

If you are in tune with your body, you should be able to determine what fuels and what starves your body with proper nourishment and activity.

- while feeding your body, pay attention to how your body responds to what you put in it.
- eating or juicing organic fruits and vegetables
- eating the right amounts of food for your body
- doing moderate cleanses/ detoxes to clear out toxins
- physical activity like dancing, walking, hiking, yoga
- energy work (i.e.- Qigong, tai chi, etc) to rid energy blockages

What does it mean to have a HEALTHY MIND?

Having a healthy mind means that you are free from the mind clutter and you are emotionally stable. It means to have an open mind full of positive thoughts and creative imagination. Having a healthy mind means that when life happens and you are faced with obstacles, you are able to determine the best and effective way of dealing with it. As we mentioned in our discussion about self-image, it is vitally important to rid yourself from your hang ups and let go of past wounds because when you do, it will ultimately lead to less mind clutter which will produce a healthy mind that eventually leads to the success you desire.

Why is it important to have a HEALTHY MIND?

When your mind is clear and clutter free, you are able to be open to see possibility in your life as opposed to focusing on all the challenges in your life from your traumatic event. Also a clutter free mind will allow you to focus on the things you want in life and start thinking about your dreams, what you are passionate about, how you want your life to be and how you want to redefine yourself.

What are some activities for a HEALTHY MIND?

- incorporate some form of meditation and quiet time in your daily routine
- at the end of each day, write a journal to get rid of thoughts rattling in your head
- write down your intentions and to do list for the next day
- read positive and uplifting books
- listen to classical or instrumental music or music that makes you feel good
- listen to a recording of positive affirmations in your own voice

What does it mean to have a HEALTHY SOUL?

When I talk about soul, I am talking about your inner being, your spirit, the person that is within you. Depending on how you were raised, many people judge getting in touch with their soul as something that is a religious journey or something that is an airy fairy approach that only exists in fantasy land. Having a healthy soul means to be in tune and in touch with your real self, your true being. But the only way to truly get in touch with your soul is to remove the layers of the superficial and inauthentic persona that you cover yourself with on a daily basis.

Part of having a healthy soul is being clear from past hurts and hang ups – letting go of situations or people that give you pain and discomfort when faced with them. And learn the art of forgiving yourself and others.

Why is it important to have a healthy mind, body, and soul when you pick the pieces of your life?

It keeps you moving forward, it keeps you focused on what you want in life, it keeps you out of the SURVIVAL MODE.

What are some activities for a HEALTHY SOUL?

- write yourself a forgiveness letter for all the past hurts you have encountered and atone for any wrong doing on your part
- write a forgiveness letter to those you have offended or hurt in the past
- give yourself moments of prayer and give thanks
- stay connected with others who have a healthy soul

Journal Entry – January 5, 2010

Dear God,

I am writing to you as a way of prayer & release from all this pain, anger, frustration, stress, fear, anxiety from all my life situations. All parts of my life are so intertwined & interconnected, that one kink in the system can throw off all parts of the system into a chaotic mess. I am trying so hard to follow in your words & guidelines & I know I'm far from perfect, but yet this overwhelming pain in my heart still exists. I don't feel at peace with everything right now, so what is there to do to alleviate this conflict. The divorce & the kid situation are the biggest stressor of all & I need something resolved with this ASAP. My financial situation is a complete mess and I don't know what more to do to resolve it other than work my ass off. But the crappy part about it is in order to be successful at what I do & make some money, I gotta maintain a positive well being, I gotta be rested, I gotta have a clear mind-but yet these things sometimes are not possible given my chaotic circumstances.

My biggest pain involves my kids & my ability to freely be their mother & be free from my ex's wrath. I know this is not all happening as a way to make me suffer; I do know there is a reason all these circumstances exists as it is. But I can't help but be in pain knowing that seeing my boys is somewhat out of my control. And at the same time I'm trying to not carry heavy guilt that I'm being punished for not seeing my kids either.

Please God-help me work my life through and live the way I deserve to live. I know I deserve great things, great opportunities, great people & relationships in my life, so I'm ready for it. Please forgive me for all my wrong doing & from going away from your guidance. I know there are things I need to still work on & I am continuing to be open to all these blessings & gifts of life & what you have to offer me.

I find myself so scared of making it through this phase and understand that part of my fear comes from being exhausted of everything, of all my efforts, of surviving all the battles, for being so giving to others. I do know that I am working on eliminating things, people, & situations that are negative influences and that work against the spiritual & prosperous life I'm trying to pursue.

Thank you God for all that you've given me thus far. I know there is more to come & i know everything is in your hands. That all the people, things, & situations that I encounter are all part of my spiritual growth.

Love your child,

Roselyn

For more information on the resources and programs that I used to create my healthy body, healthy mind, and healthy soul, please send an email to 40ActsofSelfLove@gmail.com and write in the subject line HEALTHY BEING.

DISCOVERING YOUR PASSION

“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”

~ Eleanor Roosevelt

What does it mean to discover your PASSION? What are you really passionate about? What is your PASSION? Most times when I ask people that question, they give me a blank stare. Most people do not know that answer and it's not because they are not passionate people or that they don't have a passion, it's just that most people have buried the activity that gives them that intense, exciting and exhilarating feeling. Most of us in this world are working our jobs while doing our hobbies (AKA our passions) on the side or when we have time. Why don't we do our passions in our daily life? Why aren't we getting paid to do our passion? When you think about that activity in which you enjoy the most, there is someone else in the world doing that exact same activity but getting paid for it, so why aren't you?

What does it mean to find your PASSION?

Finding your passion simply means connecting the activity that gives you the most joy, it's that activity that gives you that burning desire within, that makes you feel alive every time you do it.

Why is it important to find your passion?

Finding your passion in life is truly an exhilarating feeling; it gives you something to look forward to everyday, it allows you to wake up (even on Monday mornings) feeling alive. When you are on your picking up the pieces journey, knowing your passion will fuel your soul because when you face moments of adversity and confusion, having a passionate activity that you can connect to will actually keep you motivated in moving the ball forward and out of the survival mode.

The risk you take when not feeding your passion is that you settle for someone else's dream or desires. And when you settle for another person's dreams, eventually you will feel discontent and empty with a life that you did not create for yourself and live a life of mediocrity. At that point when you settle for someone else's desires for your life as opposed to living the life you designed, you will experience a great deal of dissonance or lack of harmony between your inner self and the world around you. This inner confusion is what causes most people to make poor judgment decisions and could lead them into The Survival mode.

Anyone who has ever been ultra successful or who has attained a significant amount of wealth, fame and achievement did not play with the game of mediocrity. They knew what they wanted, went full on towards what they wanted, didn't allow others' judgment to stop them & they lived their dream.

If you want to be inspired by people who are living their dreams and pursuing their passions and how many of them started from the bottom, please send an email to 40ActsofSelfLove@gmail.com with the subject DISCOVERING YOUR PASSION.

LIVING YOUR PURPOSE

*“The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.”
- Pablo Picasso*

Have you ever wondered what your purpose is in this world? Not what you want to do or need to do in life. Living your purpose is about living the life you were meant to live on this earth. Think of it as the assignment God has given you in this life on this earth. If you don't believe in God or a higher power, that is fine as this section is not about God, but about you and what you can contribute to this world.

So how do you determine what you are destined to be in this world for others? Some of us may not figure this out and some of us just know what our purpose is. Either way, it's worth knowing your purpose because it will minimize any uncertainty you may have when you make major decisions in your life, career and relationships. But for those of you who have no idea what your purpose is, the Picking Up the Pieces Curriculum will walk you through that, but for now, think about what role you played when you were younger, what did people go to you for, what activities did you find yourself participating in more often.

Living with purpose is having that “knowingness” that every day is purposeful, that every day has meaning, that every thing you do in your daily life is adding to this world. The reason this is so important in your picking up the pieces journey is that it will give you the energy you need to keep moving forward and it will keep you from getting back into the SURVIVAL MODE more times than necessary.

However, do not confuse your passion with your purpose. Oftentimes people will confuse the two and struggle with defining who they are based on what they really want to do in this world as opposed to who they really are for this world.

For example, I have always been a person who helped others or who others would come to me for help, hence why I went into the social services field to begin with. And for the longest time, I thought my passion was to help others, so I always found ways to incorporate helping others in my life. At one point, I thought helping was my passion, so I thought if I made a career out of it or found ways to monetize it, that would make my life complete...well I was wrong. What I realized was that helping others was emotionally and mentally draining for me and not that fun. So how can something that isn't fun be my passion? Well that's when I explored what my passion really is and I

found myself looking back at when I was a young girl and explored the different things I was fascinated with or the life I would dream about. What I found was that I was fascinated with traveling and learning about other people's lives and culture and wanted to be one of those photojournalists who traveled the world learning about people's lives, writing about it, taking pictures, and making coffee table books or a documentary for others to learn about how other people live in this world. I love all forms of art, music, dance but was never good at it (so I believed) but never embraced that passionate desire. But as I was picking up the pieces of my life, I found myself more attracted to traveling and the arts as opposed to helping others. If someone were to ask me: "Roselyn, we're putting you on a plane tomorrow, would you rather travel to another country and write and share about other people's life story or go to another country to help a community of underprivileged youth?"...my honest gut instinct would jump on that jet plane to start my photojournalism adventure. And it's not because I don't want to help others, it's just that I have completely mistaken my passion from my purpose. My passion is for traveling the world, not saving the world. But my purpose in this world is to help people and better the world. Of course, through pursuing my passion of traveling the world, writing about people, I may end up helping people in which case both finding my passion and living my purpose is accomplished.

Remember, your purpose is your assignment on this earth during your life span that you are here. It's almost like the assignment God gave you on this earth. When I distinguished the difference between my purpose and my passion, it freed me to embrace both entities and live it out to the fullest. There are a lot of people where both their passion and purpose are one of the same, but I encourage everyone who is reading this guidebook, to really take a close look at what your purpose is in this world and what you are passionate about. When you really get honest about what your passionate about and then understand your true purpose, it allows you to freely live your passion and walk with purpose without feeling bad or guilty for doing so.

CONCLUSION

“Release yourself from any upset from the past, so that you can exist freely in the present, to be able to live your purpose and create your reality for the future.”

~ Roz

There are many more layers to the Picking Up the Pieces Curriculum, this guidebook is an introduction to what it takes to rebuild your life and redefine who you are. Whether or not you want to go further into this study of making your dreams a reality and truly empowering yourself; I am hoping that you at least got one thing from this guidebook, which is the knowingness that you deserve the best life possible, that you deserve to move forward from any past hurts, that you deserve to create the life that you want and that you deserve to be happy and in love with life.

Journal Entry – October 7, 2012

Just hiked 3.2 miles to the top of a 2943 ft high mountain. It was exhilarating on so many levels. As I climbed the mountain with exhaustion and loss of breath... a plethora of thoughts and emotions flooded my mind. It was a moment of realizations that I've allowed past mistakes, life circumstances and people's judgment to stop me from climbing to the top of my success in all areas of my life. It was an empowering moment of validating my self-worth and self love. That my self-worth goes beyond other people's opinions of me; that my self-worth is not dictated by my past; that my self-worth is not about my net worth; that my self-worth is not about what others can provide for me. My self-worth is about standing up for myself; my self-worth is about standing my ground on what my value is to this world; my self-worth is about knowing all my strengths and sharing that with the world; my self-worth is about serving others for the greater good of humanity. My self-worth is a reflection of MY self love and self love comes from a forgiving non-judgmental acceptance of myself.

And as I reached the top of the mountain, tired and out of breath, I rejoiced in freedom and was filled with gratitude for all that I am, all that I've become and all that I will be. It's these little moments in life that become the greatest gift in life. Your self-worth is one of the greatest gifts you can share with the world.

Epilogue

Journal Entry - July 15, 2013

As I complete my Picking Up the Pieces Guidebook, I reflect on the journey I have been on since my world came crashing down on me in 2008.

- I remember moving out of my big beautiful home when I separated from my husband.*
- I remember having to resign from my career as a counselor because of my poor use of judgment with having a relationship with my student.*
- I remember being so embarrassed with all the public defamation with news articles about my case.*
- I remember being so embarrassed and not wanting to leave my house because I didn't want to see people that knew about my situation.*
- I remember being denied access to my kids preschool because I didn't have custody.*
- I remember all the negative words and being provoked by my ex husband.*
- I remember coming home after getting arrested and drinking a bottle of wine and taking some anti depressant pills to sleep the confusion away.*
- I remember going to family court and fighting for my rights as a mom when my ex husband was trying to take the kids away.*
- I remember having to have a monitor be with me while I spent time with my kids.*
- I remember the lost & painful look from my 3 year old when I dropped him off and drove away.*
- I remember when my oldest son would hold on to me so I wouldn't leave and then watch me with tearful eyes through the window as I drove away.*
- I remember the two year divorce & custody battle and all the money I spent and emotional heart ache we all went through.*
- I remember looking for so many jobs and seeking a career change in a downward economy.*
- I remember losing all the friends who I thought were by my side.*
- I remember meeting new people and making new friends and worried about what they would think of me if they found out about my past.*
- I remember all the feelings of anger, guilt, shame I felt for many years.*
- I remember all the places I have lived in and barely being able to pay for my basic needs.*
- I remember being on my knees pleading to God as to why I'm in so much emotional pain and why my life was the way it was.*
- I remember just dating men that I didn't like just because they accepted me for my past.*
- I remember being asked to have sex for money and being so tempted to do so because I had no money and was about to get evicted from my apartment.*

- *I remember hating checking my mail because all that was in there was past due notices, tax notices, eviction notices and legal & court documents.*

I remember all these things so vividly and I never want to experience it again nor would I want any other woman to experience it. But it's through all those things that I had to go through to be the person I am today.

Picking up the pieces of my life was not easy, but yet if going through that was part of my journey to create this woman's curriculum that will allow women to get back on track with their life, rebuild their life, and teach them how to live the life they deserve, then it was worth the journey.

*With loving gratitude,
Roselyn*

Journal Entry - October 3, 2019 The Day of My Redemption

The day has finally come after 10 years of living in the shadows of my past, where a poor decision led me to rock bottom of losing my career and custody of my kids and leaving me with a criminal record that has kept me self-imprisoned in guilt, shame and despair...a past that I can finally free myself from because it's been judicially cleared.

This past incident broke my spirit to pieces and traumatized my whole being where survival mode was my only option. But through my faith, God's grace and the love of my two boys, I stayed focused and pushed through those dark days when all I wanted to do was run away or disappear. Because how do you pick up the pieces when you're fighting against a stigma that most people shun away from and judge? I found that healing happens by going through the pain and that's just what I did.

My biggest learning lesson came from this quote, "In some ways suffering ceases to be suffering at the moment it finds a meaning" where I realized I had to turn my pain into helping others get through theirs, where I've become an advocate for emotional healing to create programs and organizations for women to heal past wounds and traumas. I have been given a second chance and a new chapter to write and if I can turn all that I went through into something for the greater good, then that becomes my life's mission.

As I'm still processing this surreal moment, I stand in gratitude for all the people who have helped me with this process and who have also been there for me on this journey, who have believed in me, who have reminded me of my greatness, who have loved me for me, who have picked me up when I cried and even those who have left my side because of my past or who have rejected me after they found out. I am forever grateful for what this journey has made me become as a strong resilient woman with purpose.

Resources

The New Psycho Cybernetics
Think and Grow Rich
The Laws of Success in 16 Lessons
The Course in Weight Loss
Outwitting the Devil
The Magic of Believing
Zero Limits
The Greatest Salesman in the World
The Magic of Thinking Big
Ask and It is Given